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Abstract



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Chapter 14

Sacralisation by Stealth? The Demography of De-secularisation

Eric Kaufmann

Introduction

Is religion in decline? Will it fade as science advances and better human organisation conquers the deprivation to which biblical discourse has historically ministered? More concretely, at the national level, the balance between secular and religious subcultures has important repercussions for voting behaviour, party organisation, public policy (i.e. schooling, abortion, citizenship, law) and international relations (i.e. the “war on terror”). Broadly speaking, two forms of secularisation may be isolated, public and private. Many, but far from all, scholars, see the two as intertwined. *Public* secularisation refers to the relationship between religious institutions and this-worldly public functions like government, education, hospitals, the market and the media. *Private* secularisation is used here to denote individual piety, whether expressed through private belief, attendance at services, or both. This article is principally concerned with the latter.

The notion of secularisation – of both public and private life – has dominated scholarly discussions of religion since the Enlightenment in the mid-eighteenth century. Only in the late 1960s did a new strain of thinking come to question the inevitability of religious decline. Even here, secularisation arguments continue to be strongly advanced, whether empirically (Dobbelaere, 2000; Bruce, 2002) or normatively (Dawkins, 2006; Hitchens, 2007). This chapter enters this debate, but introduces a new wildcard: demography, arguing that while secularisation may occur at the micro level of individuals, demography plays a cardinal role in determining the vector of secularisation at the macro level. In fact, we shall find that one can have a situation in which secularisation is taking place at the level of the individual while society as a whole becomes more religious. But first, let us revisit the grand debate over secularisation and modernity which seems so compelling in our time.

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The Secularisation Argument

The singular event which historians use to demarcate the modern era, the French Revolution, was defined by its rejection of religious authority. Since then, secularisation and modernisation have been intimately linked in the minds of many. All three “founding fathers” of sociological theory – Marx, Weber and Durkheim – cast a narrative of modernisation in which religion was an inevitable casualty of advancing rationality. For Marx, under the pressure of industrial capitalism and science, “solid” religious certainties would “melt into air”, profaning the sacred public sphere (Marx, 1973, pp. 70–71). Emile Durkheim, drawing on classical and Spencerian thought, proposed a theory of structural differentiation and moral evolution whereby the role of religious expertise is confined to an ever shrinking sphere. Increasingly, as in France after the Revolution, society worships itself rather than a supernatural deity (Durkheim, 1995 [1893]).

More recently, Steve Bruce has synthesised the work of previous modernisation theorists like Ernest Gellner and David Martin to argue for the irreversibility of secularisation in modern society. Social differentiation drives a relativism that leads to a constricting sphere of influence for religion in both public and private (Bruce, 2002, pp. 2–43, 1998, pp. 5–7, 15). The work of Pippa Norris and Ron Inglehart dovetails with that of Bruce. They claim that rising material wealth and political stability reduce the ontological insecurities that drive religiosity (Norris and Inglehart, 2004). Meanwhile, recent analyses of European survey data find a consistent pattern of religious decline encompassing participation (attendance), belief and affiliation (Voas et al., 2002; Norris and Inglehart, 2004).

Demographic Aspects of Religion

Much of the research on the sociology of religion has focused on religion as a social phenomenon whose rise or decline depends upon the conscious choices of individuals within changing structural contexts. However, it is apparent that even in the absence of socially-inspired revivals/declines of religion, the degree of religiosity in a society can fluctuate. The chief non-social mechanism of change is demography. If we consider “the religious” population affected not only by assimilation/dissimilation into the secular population but by migration, fertility (number of surviving offspring per woman) and mortality, we arrive at a more multivalent picture. David Voas is one sociologist who has urged that greater attention be paid to the use of demographic methods in the study of religion. “People enter, exit, and move within religion”, he remarks, “just as they are born, will die, and migrate, in life” (Voas, 2003, p. 94). For Michael Hout, “demography helps shape the religious landscape The combination of differing demography and stable intergenerational religious socialization would be sufficient to equalize or even reverse the relative sizes of the religions” (Hout, 2003, pp. 79–80). “Silent” demographic effects can be profound in the long term. For example, Rodney Stark

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91 shows how early Christians' favourable fertility and mortality rates as compared
92 to Hellenistic pagans helped to fuel a 40% growth rate in the Christian population
93 of the Roman Empire over several centuries. This gave rise to a population increase
94 from 40 converts in 30 A.D. to 6 million by the year 300 leading to a "tipping point"
95 which helped Christianity become institutionalised within the Empire (Stark, 1996).
96 Currently, many Islamic parts of what was once the Roman Empire have seen major
97 declines in their Christian and Jewish populations due to emigration, lower fertility
98 and mixed marriages (Fargues, 2001).

99 Those who study the religious marketplace in the United States have been
100 impressed by the extent to which denominations have grown through migration and
101 fertility advantage. Sherkat (2001), for example, finds that American Catholics have
102 been able to offset large net losses to other denominations through gains arising from
103 (largely) Hispanic-Catholic immigrants and their higher fertility. Fertility differentials
104 can also play a key role – especially in the long term. Mormons, once a very
105 small sect, now equal or surpass Jews among post-1945 birth cohorts due to their
106 fertility advantage over Jews and other denominations (Sherkat, 2001, pp. 1472–
107 1474). Conservative Protestants, a much larger group than the Mormons, also benefit
108 from relatively high fertility. Using the General Social Survey, Roof and McKinney
109 (1987) noted that Southern Baptists had roughly twice the fertility of Jews and secular
110 (unaffiliated) Americans. A recent article extends this finding by showing that
111 three-quarters of the growth of conservative Protestant denominations is due to fertility
112 rather than conversion (Hout et al., 2001). This has powered the growth of
113 the religious right and increased the base of the Republican party. Indeed, a recent
114 article demonstrates the extremely significant and robust correlation between non-
115 Hispanic white fertility patterns and the Republican vote – especially in 2004. States
116 whose white population tends to be liberal and postmaterialist have lower fertility –
117 as per "second demographic transition" theory (SDT) – and a lower pro-Bush vote
118 share (Lesthaeghe and Neidert, 2006).

119 In Europe, there has been less attention paid to fertility differences between
120 denominations. However, the growth of the European Muslim population through
121 immigration is a trend that is widely acknowledged (Rath and Buijs, 2002). Several
122 studies have discovered that immigrants to Europe tend to be more religious than
123 the host population and – especially if Muslim – tend to retain their religiosity.
124 Though some indicators point to religious decline toward the host society mean,
125 other trends suggest that immigrants become more, rather than less, religious the
126 longer they reside in the host society (Van Tubergen, 2006, 2007). Austria is one
127 of the few European countries to collect religious data on their census. A recent
128 attempt to project Austria's population to 2051 found that a combination of higher
129 fertility and immigration will increase the proportion of Muslims (excluding apos-
130 tates) in the country from 4.6% of the population in 2001 to between 14 and 26%
131 by 2051. Certainly the secular/unaffiliated population increased from 4% in 1981
132 to 10% in 2001, and is projected to grow in the near future. However, the secular
133 population in Austria has a total fertility rate (TFR) of just 0.86 children per couple,
134 limiting its long-term growth potential. This means that in the event that secularisation
135 ceases – to say nothing of religious revival – the secular population will peak

136 and begin to decline as early as 2021 (Goujon et al., 2006. p. 24). All of this sug-
137 ggests that secularisation may fail even if the secularisation thesis is correct. This
138 chapter will thereby test the hypothesis that a combination of higher religious ferti-
139 lity and immigration will lead to a growth in the religious population (defined
140 in terms of belief) that exceeds the net loss of communicants through religious
141 apostasy.

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145 **The State of Current Research**

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147 Work in the sociology of religion, cultural demography and labour economics has
148 uncovered an important relationship between religiosity and demographic indica-
149 tors which can affect the size of religious and secular populations. For instance,
150 one postulate of SDT is that secularisation is linked to lower fertility (Surkyn and
151 Lesthaeghe, 2004; van de Kaa, 1987). Several studies examine the link between
152 religiosity and fertility in Europe and the United States, and most have found a sig-
153 nificant positive effect on fertility in at least some models (Norris and Inglehart,
154 2004: 110; Adsera, 2004: 23; Berman, et al., 2005; Frejka and Westoff, 2006;
155 Berghammer et al., 2006).

156 What is lacking here, however, is some measure of the sociological side of the
157 equation: in other words, are the children remaining with the faith of their parents,
158 or succumbing to secularism? After all, even a strong fertility premium will be of
159 little consequence if most children defect from their religious inheritance to secu-
160 larism and pass a different tradition on to their offspring. One of the few works to
161 encompass both religious fertility and secularisation is that of Norris and Inglehart
162 (2004). These political scientists remark that: “One of the most central injunctions
163 of virtually all traditional religions is to strengthen the family, to encourage people
164 to have children, to encourage women to stay home and raise children, and to forbid
165 abortion, divorce, or anything that interferes with high rates of reproduction. As a
166 result of these two interlocking trends, rich nations are becoming more secular, *but*
167 *the world as a whole is becoming more religious*” (Norris and Inglehart, 2004, pp.
168 22–23, emphasis added).

169 However, the authors view religious growth as a temporary phase. For them,
170 sociology eventually overwhelms demography, allowing secularisation to eventually
171 win out. As human development proceeds, religiosity survives mainly among those
172 who experience lower levels of human security (Norris and Inglehart, 2004, p. 54).
173 Unfortunately, the authors do not systematically test this bold claim with individual-
174 level data – even in the developed world where time series are available. Moreover,
175 research which uses inputs from models of past behaviour to make demographic
176 projections of future secularisation scenarios is missing. Finally, we know almost
177 nothing about the degree to which the children of immigrants retain their religiosity.
178 This chapter attempts to fill these lacunae in the literature and map their theoretical
179 significance. The primary focus is on western Europe, though some comparative
180 attention will also be paid to the United States.

Data and Results

In order to test our religious demography hypothesis, we draw upon data from several sources. These include the European Values Surveys (EVS) of 1981, 1990 and 1999–2000 and the second wave European Social Survey (ESS) of 2004. We use these data sets because of their time-series dimension and the fact that they ask the same (or similar) questions on religiosity and fertility. The study is limited to ten west European countries, France, Britain, Holland, Ireland, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Iceland. This is because these are the only cases that were sampled across all specified waves of the EVS on our variables of interest. Germany, though also consistently sampled, was dropped because of the difficulties of pre and post-Unification data collation. The second wave ESS data was used because, unlike wave 1, this data set has a fertility measure and enabled us to match countries with the EVS. Rather than weighting our sample by relative country population size (i.e. weighting Britain at 180 times Iceland), we have opted to create a standardised west European data set with roughly 1,000 cases per country. This is to maximize case diversity by preventing large countries from dominating the results. We will also be using three surveys of ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom to probe the phenomenon of second-generation immigrant religiosity: the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities, 1993–1994 (Berthoud et al., 1997), and the 2001 and 2003 waves of the UK Citizenship Survey (Home Office, 2003; Office for National Statistics and Home Office, 2005). These are augmented by data from the ONS Longitudinal Survey (ONS-LS) of 2001 (Office for National Statistics, 2001).

Western Europe

We begin our story in western Europe, the historic home of secularisation.

Religious Attendance

The first trend to note (Fig. 14.1) is that the proportion of respondents attending religious services on a weekly basis has systematically declined across birth cohorts in these ten west European countries. Roughly 30–40% of the generation born 1915–1925 attends weekly, and this falls to 10% or less among those born in 1975–1985. This pattern holds across survey waves, demonstrating that the effect is a generational, i.e. secularising, one and not a life-cycle pattern in which younger people attend more as they age.

However, when we narrow our focus to the societies which secularised earlier (Britain, France and four Scandinavian countries), we see a curious pattern. Attendance falls as expected across the generations, but then proceeds to flatten out among post-World War II (1945) cohorts. This trend is confirmed across survey waves, and seems to indicate that secularisation has hit a floor of around 5%

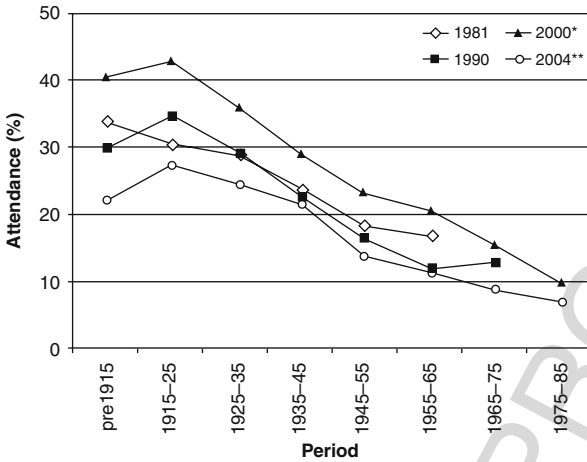


Fig. 14.1 Weekly attendance by cohort, 10 western European countries, 1981–2004 (Sources: EVS 1981, 1990, 1999–2000; ESS 2004)

*Data for 2000 uses Norway responses from 1997

**Data for 2004 from ESS which uses same question but different methodology
 N=10,860 (1981); 10,860 (1990); 7,336 (1999–2000); 10,860 (2004)

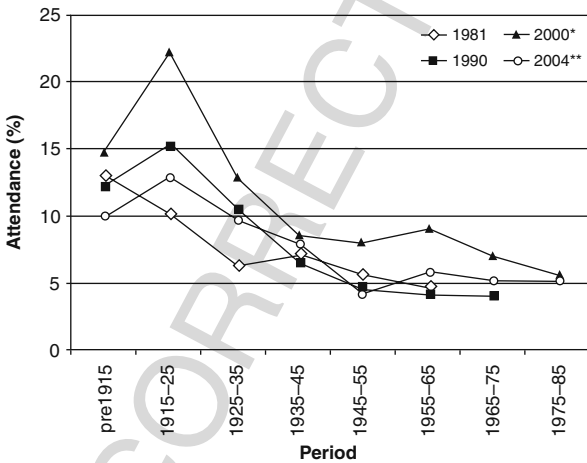


Fig. 14.2 Weekly attendance by cohort, early secularising societies (Sources: EVS 1981, 1990, 1999–2000; ESS 2004)

*Data for 2000 uses Norway responses from 1997

**Data for 2004 from ESS which uses same question but different methodology
 N=5,978 (1981); 6,002 (1990); 3,245 (1999–2000); 6,017 (2004)

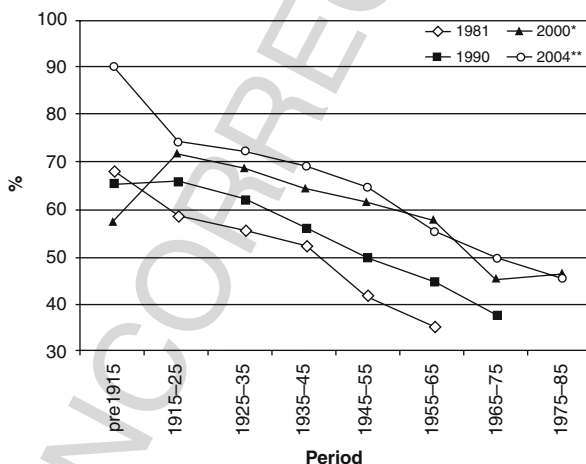
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271 attendance in these societies and is holding steady (Fig. 14.2). This is a lower level of
 272 of attendance than in the ten country sample as a whole, but while attendance in the
 273 Catholic societies (Spain, Ireland, Belgium plus part-Catholic Holland) is higher, it
 274 continues to fall sharply in contrast to these six – mainly Protestant – societies.
 275
 276

277 **Religious Belief**
 278

279 When we shift the focus of our attention from attendance to religious belief, we
 280 find that western Europeans suddenly appear to be five to ten times more religious
 281 (Fig. 14.3). This phenomenon reflects Davie’s insight that Europeans are “believing
 282 without belonging” (Davie, 1994). For instance, a majority of respondents from
 283 the six “early secularising” societies claim to believe in God. When asked whether
 284 they are “a religious person”, a majority say yes. Even among the most recent birth
 285 cohorts, 40–50% answer in the affirmative. We also find that – unlike attendance –
 286 religious belief seems to rise with age since each birth cohort tracks upward across
 287 survey waves. So, while the lines all trend downward, the starting point of each line
 288 seems to be rising or holding steady. This means that, in contrast to attendance, life
 289 cycle effects are at work which counteract cohort effects. The result, paradoxically,
 290 is therefore similar to what we find for attendance: a steady state in which there is
 291 no further evidence of secularisation among post-1945 birth cohorts.
 292

293 Should trends in Catholic Europe follow those in the early-secularising countries,
 294 we may well see a future in which western European church attendance falls to very
 295
 296



312 **Fig. 14.3** Religiosity by cohort, early secularising societies (Sources: EVS 1981, 1990, 1999–
 313 2000; ESS 2004)

314 *Data for 2004 from ESS which uses same question but different methodology $N=5,581(1981);$
 315 $5,711(1990); 3,053(1999-2000); 6,035(2004)$

low levels (i.e. 5%) even as society remains fairly evenly divided between religious and non-religious populations.

Recall that our thesis concerns the balance between secularising and demographic forces. We have examined secularisation in some detail. We found a historic pattern of secularisation which continues strongly in Catholic western Europe but appears to have exhausted itself in the six relatively “mature” societies which have a long history of private secularisation.

Religious Fertility

Let us now turn to the other, demographic, prong of our argument. Here the evidence corroborates current research. For instance, the fertility difference in terms of number of children ever born (among women aged 18 or over) between those who describe themselves as “religious” and those who describe themselves as “not religious” or “atheist” averages between 0.5 and 0.6 of a child (50–60 percentage points) depending on the wave of the EVS or ESS we consider. In 2000, for example, adult females in the EVS who were religious bore an average of 2.19 children over their lifetime as against 1.59 for the non-religious. These numbers are misleading since religious respondents tend to be older and thus are more likely to have completed their fertility and come from more fertile cohorts. However, when we control for cohort, age, and a series of background variables, we find that religiosity retains its significance for fertility. Its coefficient of 0.176 (Table 14.1) suggests that, all else being equal, a religious woman in these ten west European societies will bear 15–20% more children over her lifetime than her non-religious counterpart.

Table 14.1 Regression coefficients on number of children ever born, females aged 18+

	EVS 1981–2000		ESS 2004	
Marital status	0.353***	(0.007)	0.246***	(0.015)
Religiosity	0.176***	(0.028)	0.045***	(0.008)
Postmaterialism	−0.089***	(0.023)	–	–
Income	0.002	(0.007)	0.008	(0.012)
Education	−0.059***	(0.004)	−0.025***	(0.007)
Age	0.036***	(0.008)	0.035***	(0.005)
Cohort	−0.031	(0.046)	0.116	(0.080)
Wave year	−0.088	(0.039)	–	–
_cons	2.607***	(0.337)	73.072***	(15.230)
R ²	0.356		0.205	
N	12,046		3,980	

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Sources: 1981–2000 EVS; 2004 ESS

N.B. No data for Norway in 2000. Postmaterialism not asked in ESS. For cohort, higher values refer to most recent

Projections of Religiosity

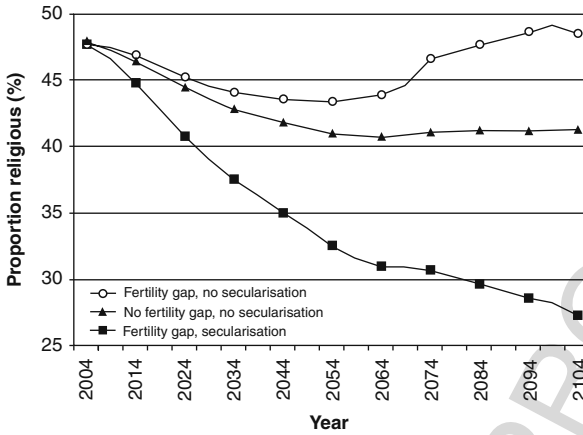
361
362
363 Alone among the surveys considered here, the 1991 EVS asked respondents: “Were
364 you brought up religiously at home?” Cross-tabulating this question with the “are
365 you a religious person” question in the same survey gives us a picture of how many
366 religious individuals have left the faith and how many of the secular have become
367 religious. We find that women in the childbearing age ranges are much more likely to
368 remain religious than men, which has implications for the transmission of religious
369 orientations to the next generation since we assume that females are the conduit for
370 inter-generational transfer of beliefs. Men tend to return to faith later in life, and if
371 women had the same life cycle behaviour as men, we would find a reduced rate of
372 religious socialisation of children and hence a faster rate of secularisation.

373 In the following analysis, we focus on the six countries which secularised earlier
374 as they are arguably in the vanguard of religious apostasy and thus closest to the
375 endpoint envisioned in secularisation theories. Apostasy/conversion rates by 5-year
376 age group and sex for the two groups (secular and religious) come from the 1991
377 EVS (the only survey which asked about previous belief). Using the 2000 EVS, we
378 derived assumptions regarding the age structure of the two base populations by sex.
379 Age and sex-specific fertility rates for the groups come from the same survey. Thus
380 we produce tables for total population, fertility, transitions between religion and sec-
381 ularism, and mortality for each 5-year age band. Using *People 3.0* software, these
382 inputs enable us to produce a cohort component projection of the religious composi-
383 tion of these countries to 2100. Allowing our input assumptions – notably on fertility
384 and conversion – to vary from their current values results in alternative projection
385 scenarios. This is certainly a long-term projection, more suited to theoretical explo-
386 ration than the concrete policy and planning objectives of many demographers who
387 work with shorter-run data. We begin with an assumption that religious women will
388 have a constant total fertility rate of 1.8, as against 1.6 for non-religious women.
389 This represents an average intra-cohort fertility difference between religious and
390 non-religious women in 1991 that is in the 10–15% range.¹ Next, we calculate a
391 constant annual “net migration” flow of apostates/converts between the religious
392 and non-religious populations for each 5-year age band. In practice, the fluctua-
393 tions in migration by age that we see are only partly the result of life cycle effects,
394 and most likely reflect period or cohort effects or statistical fluctuations in the data.
395 Consequently, we opt to smooth out fluctuations by averaging the flows into three
396 20-year age bands.²

397
398
399
400 ¹ Note that this figure is for the six most secular countries and is somewhat less than the 15–20%
401 for all ten countries sampled.

402 ² These grouping assumptions have important consequences for our projections because the
403 unsmoothed data show a large influx of female converts in the 18–24 age group and a slow apostasy
404 thereafter whereas the smoothed results assume a more modest influx of female converts into the
405 childbearing age ranges. Smoothing substantially reduces the proportion of religious population in
2104, by around ten percentage points.

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420 **Fig. 14.4** Projected religious population, six early secularising societies, 2004–2104 (Sources:
421 EVS 1990, 1999–2000)
422 Base $N=8,326$

423
424
425 Figure 14.4 shows the results of our projection under three scenarios. First,
426 as the highest line, is our expected scenario (1.8 vs. 1.6 religious-secular
427 fertility gap, and six-country conversion/apostasy trend), labelled “fertility gap, no
428 secularisation”. Next comes a projection, labelled “no fertility gap, no secularisa-
429 tion”, which assumes the same conversion/apostasy trend, but with no fertility gap
430 (TFR 1.8 vs. 1.8). Finally, we consider a “fertility gap, secularisation” scenario
431 in which there is a 1.8 vs. 1.6 religious-secular fertility gap, but with conver-
432 sion/apostasy flows drawn from an average across all ten countries in this study
433 (including fast-secularising Catholic ones). Figure 14.4 shows that secularisation
434 has flattened out by around mid-century in the first two models, but continues
435 strongly in the “fertility gap, secularisation” model since this postulates a reversion
436 to rates of secularisation which are closer to what is now taking place in Catholic
437 Europe but were last witnessed among pre-1945 cohorts in the six mainly Protestant
438 countries in our sample.

439 Notice the trajectory of our expected model. It shows that for these six vanguard
440 countries, secularisation will begin to move in reverse after mid-century, culminat-
441 ing in a slight return of religion by 2104 compared to 2004. This runs counter to
442 much of what has been written about west European religious trends and, at the
443 very least, should raise a question mark over the secularisation thesis. On their own,
444 our projections largely point to long-term stability rather than religious increase.
445 But, if we consider that these projections contain virtually no ethnic minorities and
446 take no account of immigration, which will be the biggest demographic driver of
447 religious growth in these countries, we must conclude that religious growth is in
448 fact the most likely prognosis.

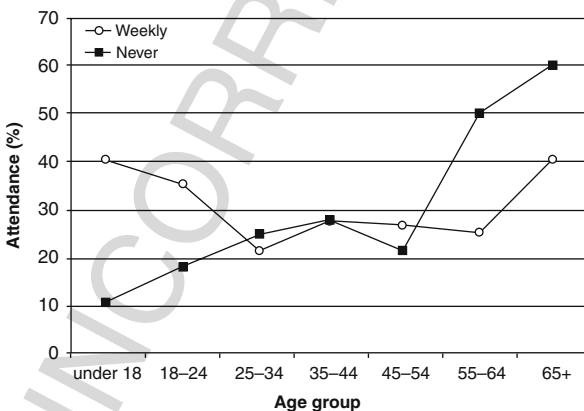
449 David Coleman (2006), for example, drawing on extant official estimates of the
450 foreign-origin population, indicates that the proportion of non-European origin in
the major western European countries in 2050 will range from a low of 5.1% in

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451 Austria to a high of 24.5% in Britain, with many countries in the 10–15% range
 452 (Coleman, 2006, p. 414). There are several reasons to treat the non-UK projections
 453 as highly conservative, as Coleman rightly points out. Consider that the projec-
 454 tions for countries outside the UK assume that the third generation is no longer of
 455 foreign origin and has been absorbed by the ethnic majority. This greatly underesti-
 456 mates the size of the ethnic minority population. These projections also assume no
 457 increase in immigration as a result of an aging population. In Austria, for instance,
 458 where Coleman’s cited projections envision a 5% minority population in 2050, more
 459 precise projections work with the Austrian census finds that Muslims alone will
 460 comprise between 14 and 26% of the total population in 2050 (Goujon et al., 2006).

461 Most non-European immigrants come from highly religious developing coun-
 462 tries, largely Christian or Muslim rather than secular. In many deprived London
 463 neighbourhoods, pious Muslims from the Indian subcontinent rub shoulders
 464 with Pentecostalist Christians from Africa or the Caribbean. A slight majority
 465 of London’s practicing Christians are now of non-European origin and, across
 466 England, weekly Muslim worshippers outnumber those from the largest Christian
 467 denomination, the Church of England (Islamonline, 2005). Since Muslims have his-
 468 torically comprised a significant share of the European immigrant inflow and come
 469 from societies that are connected to Europe through family networks and are geo-
 470 graphically quite close to Europe, they merit closer attention. Data from both the
 471 EVS (2000) and ESS (2004) confirm that young Muslims across Europe are as
 472 religious as their parents and grandparents (Fig. 14.5).

473 Indeed, Fig. 14.6, based on ethnic minority surveys, shows that there is little
 474 or no decline in religious observance between immigrant (solid bar) and British-
 475 born (bricked bar) Muslims. By contrast, East European and Afro-Caribbean
 476 Christians experience significant secularisation between the first and second gen-
 477 erations. Ethnic minority surveys from Holland show similar patterns, this time



493 **Fig. 14.5** European Muslims, attendance at religious services, by age, 2004 (Source: ESS, 2004)
 494 Note: Muslims comprise just over 3% of the sample, in this instance drawn from ten countries:
 495 Holland, Britain, Ireland, France, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Belgium, Spain
 N=173, or 3.17%

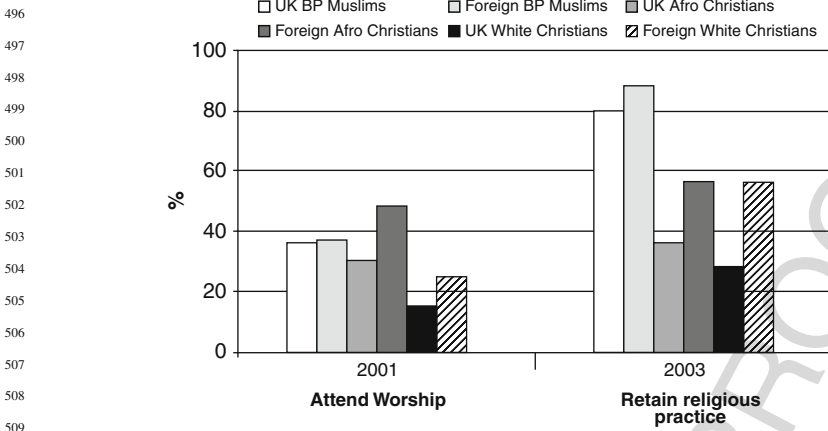


Fig. 14.6 Religious retention by faith and birthplace, UK, 2001–2003 (Sources: Office for National Statistics and Home Office, 2005; Home Office, 2003)
 For 2001, $N=409$ (UKBP), 936 (FBP), 1,071 (UKAC), 580 (FAC), 8,893 (UKWC), 400 (FWC)
 For 2003, $N=277$ (UKBP), 817 (FBP), 57 (UKAC), 39 (FAC), 6,304 (UKWC), 151 (FWC)
 Note: “BP” designates Bangladeshi and Pakistani, and “Afro” refers to African and Caribbean. Excludes non-identifiers. Practice is self-description

between largely North African and Turkish (rather than Indian subcontinental) Dutch Muslims and the more assimilated Afro-Caribbean Christians from the Antilles (Van Tubergen, 2006).

The second generation appears to be holding the line against assimilation in other ways. Consider the high endogamy rates of Muslim ethnic groups (i.e. Bangladeshi, Pakistani) in the UK (Fig. 14.7). Inter-marriage between Muslims and non-Muslims

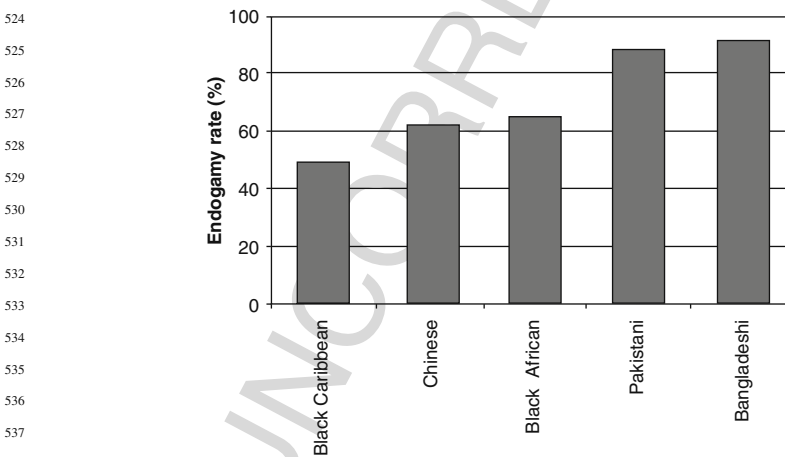


Fig. 14.7 Ethnic endogamy rates, couples, 2001 (Source: ONS Longitudinal Survey 2001)
 $N=3,558$ B Caribbean, 2,061 Chinese, 2,710 B African, 8,798 Pakistani, 3,298 Bangladeshi

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541 in Britain remains rare – less than 10% of couples which include a Muslim are
 542 religiously mixed, though it should be noted that Sikhs and Hindus (both from the
 543 Indian subcontinent) have similar endogamy rates (Office for National Statistics,
 544 2001). This is reinforced by the Islamic practice of returning to the home coun-
 545 try (i.e. Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Morocco) to find a spouse. These statistics
 546 on intermarriage and secularisation contrast sharply with the far more assimila-
 547 tionist behaviour of Black Caribbeans and East Asians in Holland and Britain.
 548 Black Africans, for instance, are a relatively recent, heavily foreign-born group,
 549 yet, already, one in three couples involving a Black African is a mixed marriage
 550 (largely with White British Christians). Thus we seem to have two paths emerging
 551 in Europe: an assimilationist path for Blacks and East Asians, and an ethnic reten-
 552 tion path for most Muslim ethnic groups (as well as Sikhs and possibly Hindus), and
 553 one cannot simply assume that the all groups will converge toward assimilation.

554 Immigration is likely to continue at current levels into the foreseeable future
 555 due to Europe's aging population, strong migrant networks and escalating depen-
 556 dency ratios (Pedersen et al., 2006; Jackson and Howe, 2008). The largely religious
 557 immigrants, mainly Christian and Muslim, will eventually replace the ageing secular
 558 population in their new host societies. From the limited evidence we possess on the
 559 immigrant second generation, it appears that Christian immigrants will begin to sec-
 560 ularise while Muslim (and perhaps Hindu and Sikh) immigrants will largely retain
 561 their faith. In combination with a cessation of further religious decline among the
 562 European host populations, this picture points to a long term increase in European
 563 religiosity by the end of the twenty-first century.

564 Goujon and Skirbekk's work on Austria and Switzerland provide the only cohort
 565 component projections of religious affiliation available to date for Europe. These
 566 display an increase in the proportion of Muslims to around 10% in Switzerland
 567 and no less than 14% in Austria by 2051. Such projections also predict a rise
 568 in the religiously unaffiliated (i.e. "secular") population in both countries, but,
 569 tellingly, their trajectory hits its zenith by the middle of the twenty-first century.
 570 If secularisation were to slow down Europe-wide, as indicated by the evidence
 571 for the six early secularising northwest European societies reviewed above, then
 572 the proportion of seculars would peak and start to decline between 2020 and
 573 2050.

574 These findings may be usefully compared to those from the United States in
 575 Fig. 14.8. Recent projections, based on General Social Survey (GSS) and U.S.
 576 Census immigration data, show the proportion of secular Americans – which grew
 577 markedly in the 1990s to 14% – peaking in 2030 and embarking upon a gentle
 578 decline thereafter. This is mainly because of low secular fertility (TFR of 1.66
 579 among the religiously unaffiliated versus the national average of 2.08). Second
 580 demographic transition effects can also be seen in the fertility gulf between pro-
 581 choice (TFR of 1.83) and anti-abortion (TFR of 2.47) Americans. In addition, new
 582 immigrants to America are 83.2% religiously affiliated (close to the 85% rate found
 583 in the native population), which places yet a further impediment to the growth
 584 of the secular population within an increasingly diverse society (Skirbekk et al.,
 585 forthcoming).

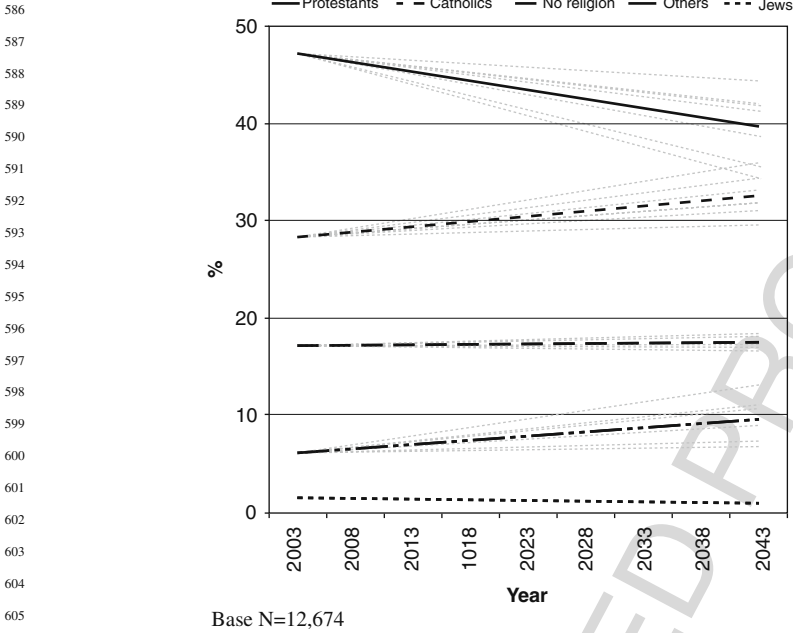


Fig. 14.8 Projected religious composition of the United States, 2003–2043, expected trend with variants (Source: Skirbekk et al., 2009)
Base N=12,674

Conclusion

Ever since the Enlightenment in the mid-eighteenth century, social thinkers have assumed that secularisation and modernisation proceeded hand in hand. Late twentieth century trends in west European church attendance and religious belief seemed to confirm these hypotheses. However, religious decline at the individual level need not imply religious decline at the national level. Strong demographic growth among the religious population can offset secularising processes within individuals. This chapter contends that just as the globe is becoming more religious because more people are being born in religious than in secular countries, so too Europe will become more religious in the twenty first century for demographic reasons. Already, a slowing rate of secularisation in northwestern Europe is combining with large-scale religious immigration to bring about religious “revival” – notably in major immigration gateways like London and Amsterdam.

Across western Europe, the United States and in the world as a whole, religious populations have significantly higher fertility than seculars (Kaufmann, 2008). Cohort component projections for western Europe and the United States presented here show that despite the young age structure of the current secular population and a continued net negative outflow from religion, religious fertility and immigration will contribute a growing counterweight to secularisation at the macro level.


14 Sacralisation by Stealth?

631 On current trends, by the mid-twenty first century, Europe and America seem des-
 632 tined to enter a “post-secular” mode in which the proportion of secular people peaks
 633 while these societies embark upon a gradual path toward greater religiosity. This
 634 is a counterintuitive finding which raises searching questions about the future of
 635 the Enlightenment and the meaning of modernity. Perhaps the exhaustion of many
 636 of the potent “secular religions” of the past two centuries (nationalism, socialism,
 637 anarchism), which did so much to combat clerical influence, has opened the gates
 638 for religion to again play a lead role on the stage of history. If so, this is a story –
 639 much like the European conquest of the Americas or the rise of Christianity – in
 640 which demography plays a hidden, but central, mediating role.

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721 **Chapter 14**

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