

**Using the World Values Survey
To Analyze Social Change:
Can the Russian People find Happiness?**

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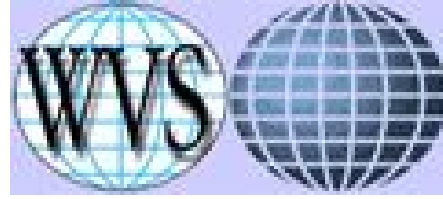
St. Petersburg, HSE
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economic development is bringing systematic value changes

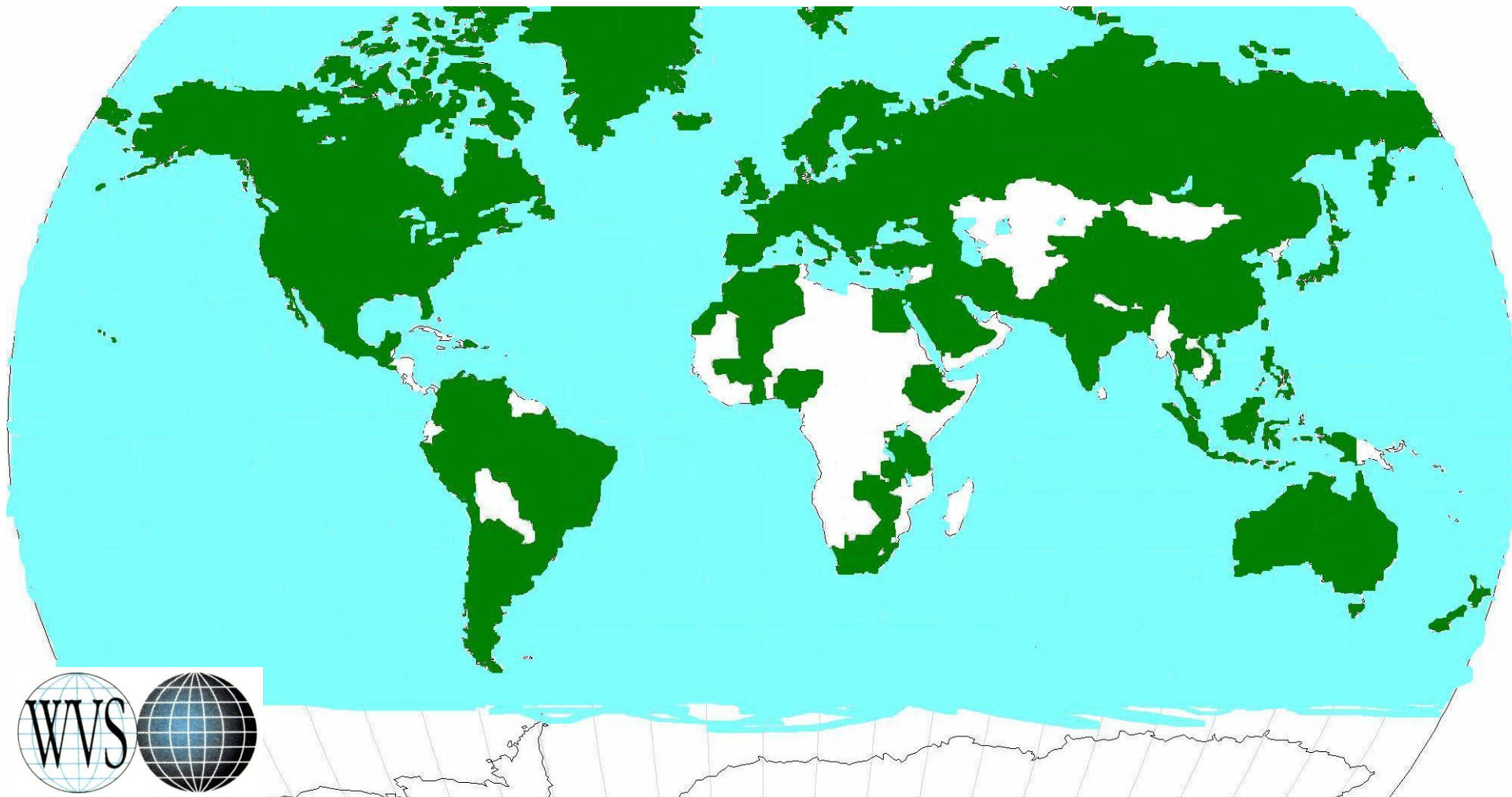
These motivational changes have important implications

Around the world, we observe pervasive trends toward:

- gender equality
- greater tolerance of gays, foreigners, outgroups
- diminishing xenophobia
- **democracy**



These findings are based on
empirical evidence from the first
global survey of mass values and
worldviews—
the World Values Survey



Countries surveyed at least once in the World Values Surveys
99 countries, containing almost 90 % of the world's population (2007)

Development and cultural change move in two major phases

Industrialization brings a shift from **Traditional** values to **Secular-rational** values.

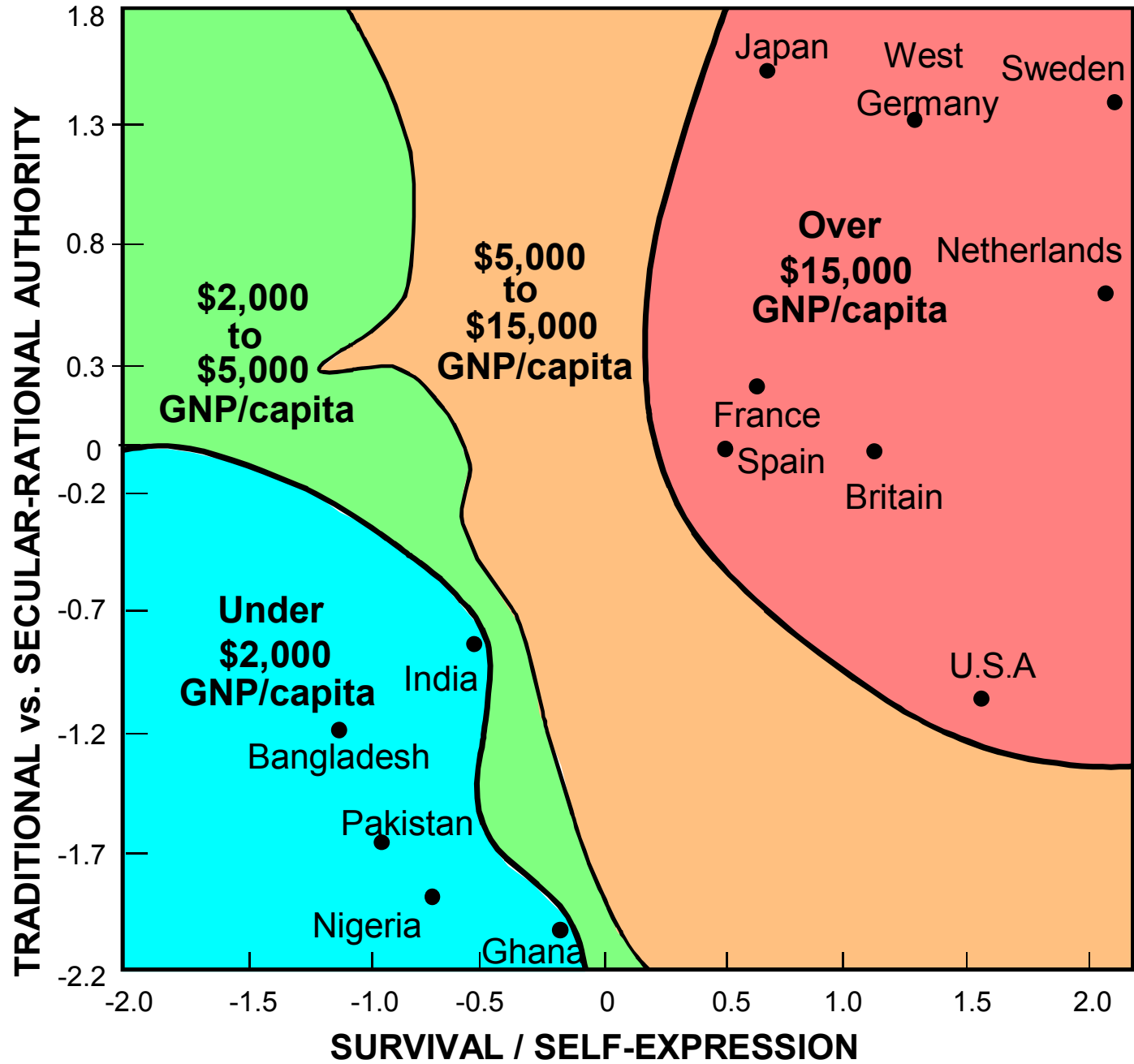
Postindustrial society brings a shift from **Survival values** to **Self-expression** values

Human values turn out to be surprisingly coherent. Scores of important values are tapped by just two key underlying dimensions of cross-cultural variation.

Consequently, the world's societies can be plotted on a two-dimensional cross-cultural map.

These two dimensions reflect the fact that

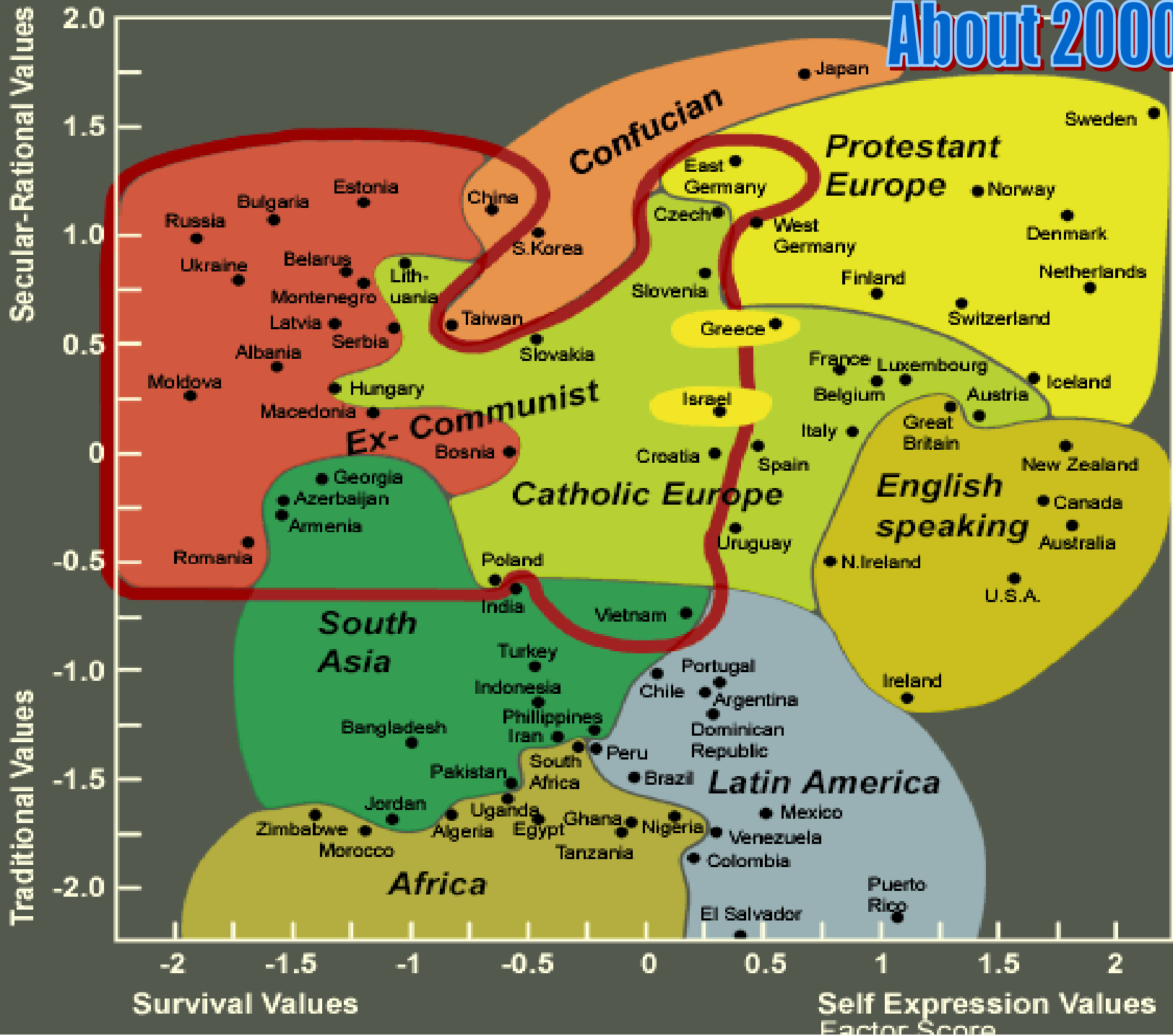
**economic development and
cultural values are intimately linked**



Despite these changes, a society's cultural heritage continues to shape its value system

Cultural change is path-dependent

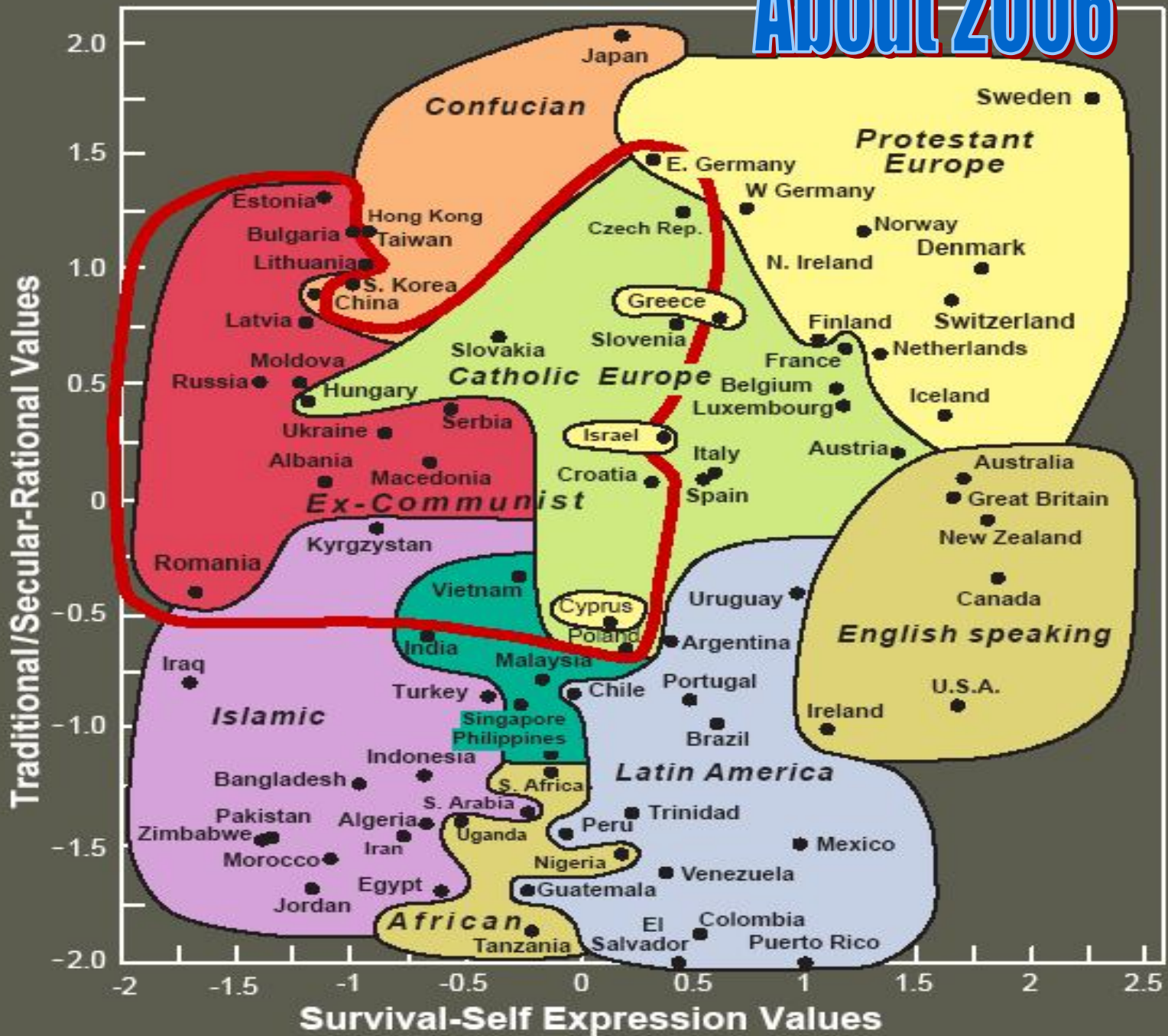
About 2000



These two dimensions of cross-cultural variation are very robust

- They emerge when measured in many different ways, using different indicators, different sets of countries and they emerge in the 1990, 1995, 2000 and 2006 waves of the World Values Survey

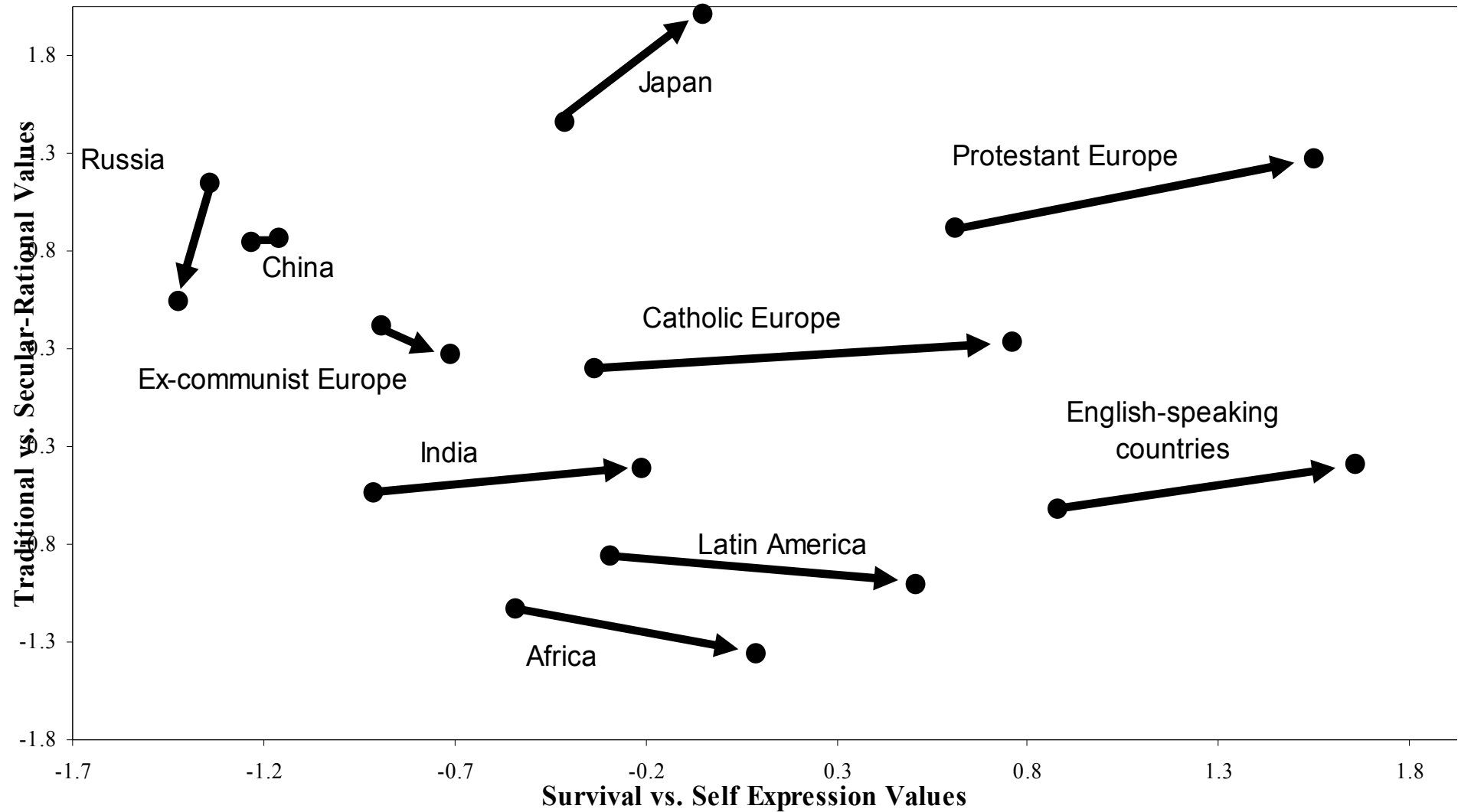
About 2006



Cultural change

- From 1981 to 2007, all high-income societies moved (in varying degrees) from the lower-left toward the upper-right on the cross-cultural map— placing increasing emphasis on Secular-rational values and Self-expression values
- In much of the former Soviet Union, the economic, political and ideological implosion that followed the collapse of communism, led to a resurgence of traditional values and survival values.

Changes over time, 1981-2007



These individual-level value changes
have major societal-level consequences

The linkages between individual-level values
and societal-level phenomenon such as
gender equality in economic and political
life are remarkably strong

Tolerance of foreigners is strongly related to a society's level of "existential security"

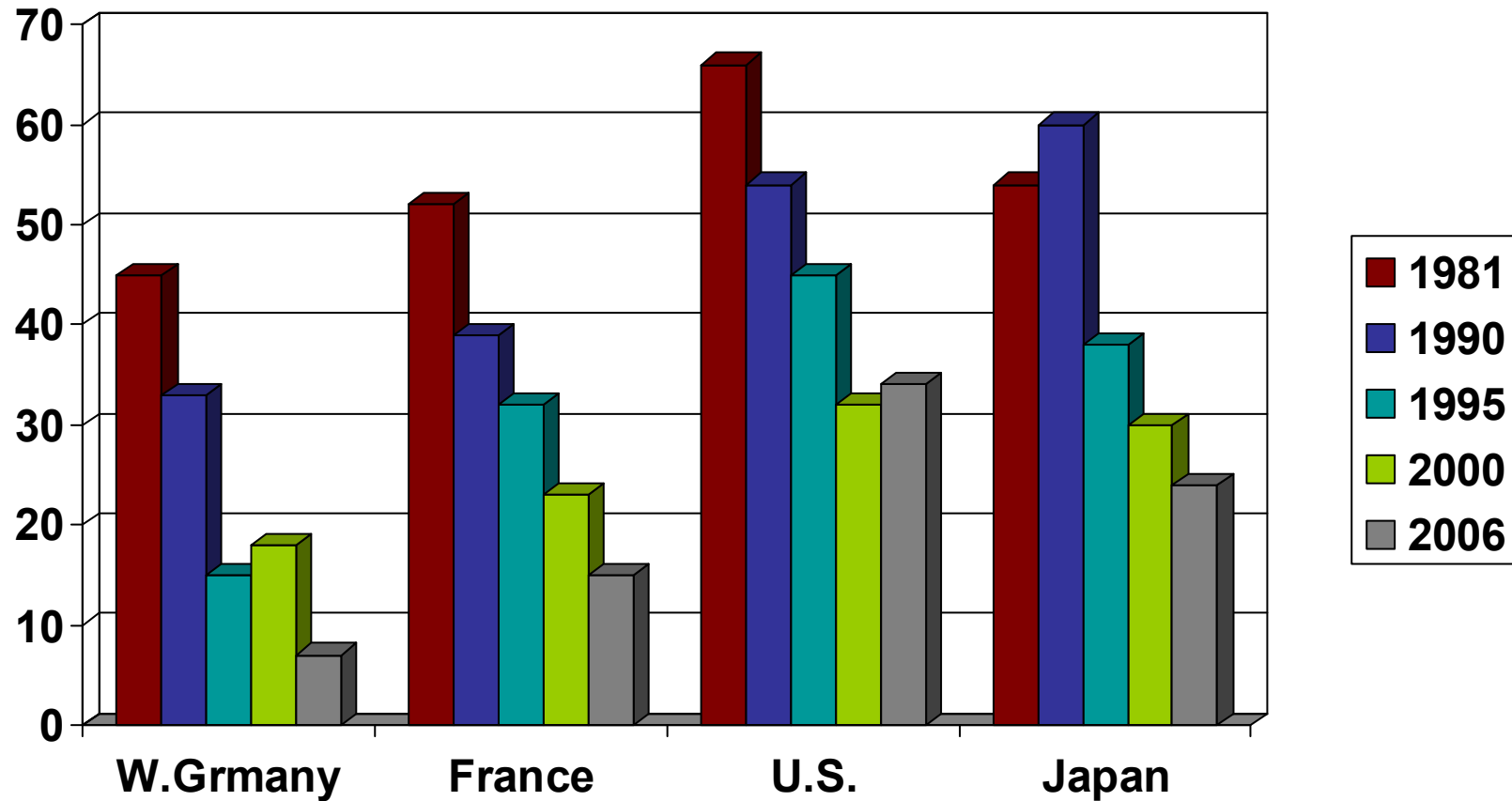
The rise of the knowledge society brings rising tolerance of diversity –

conversely, xenophobia has become increasingly widespread in insecure societies such as the former USSR and Iraq

Conversely, high levels of existential security lead to

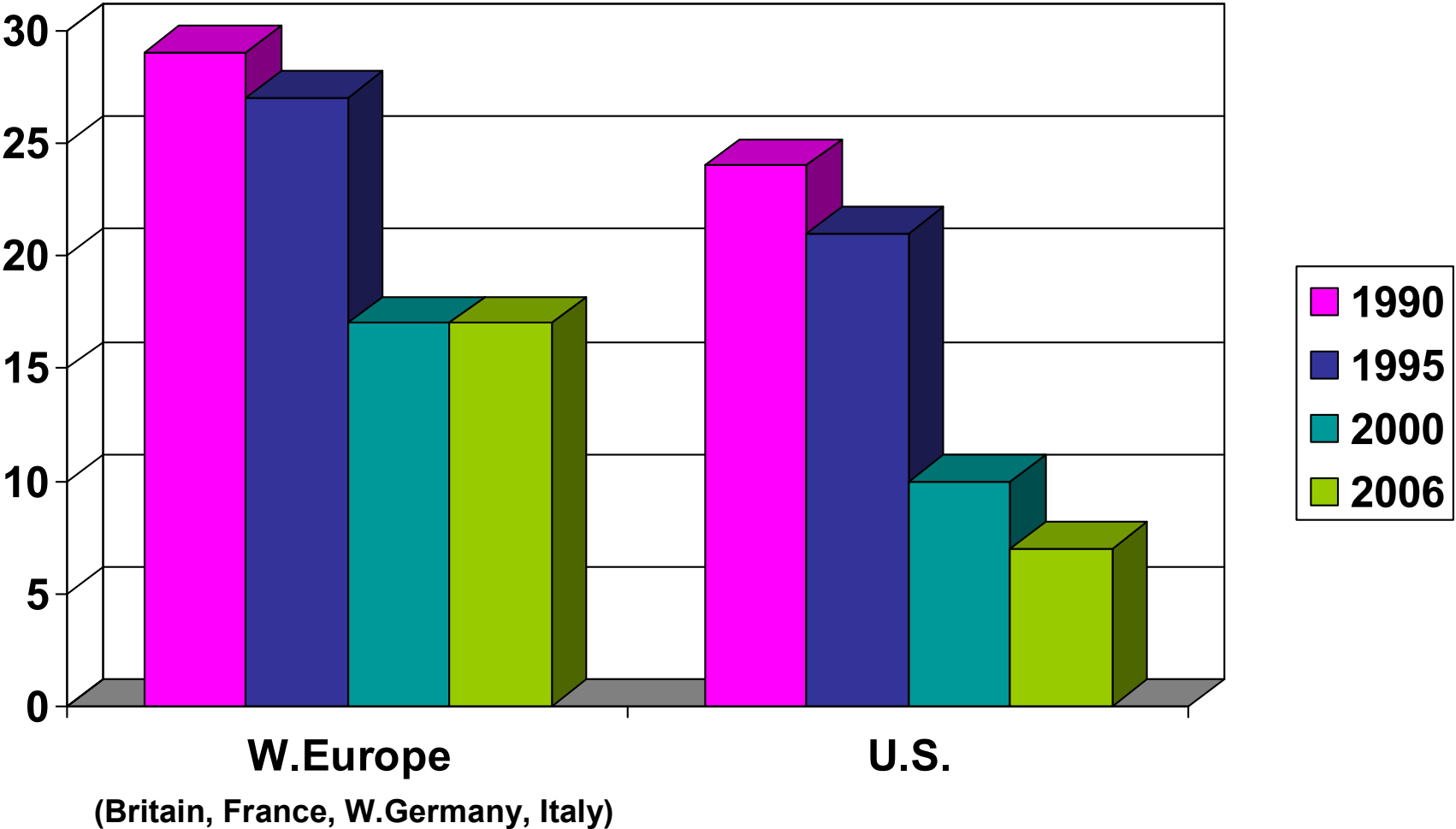
- Rising support for gender equality
- Increasing tolerance of gays and lesbians

Percentage saying “Homosexuality is NEVER acceptable”



Source: World Values Survey

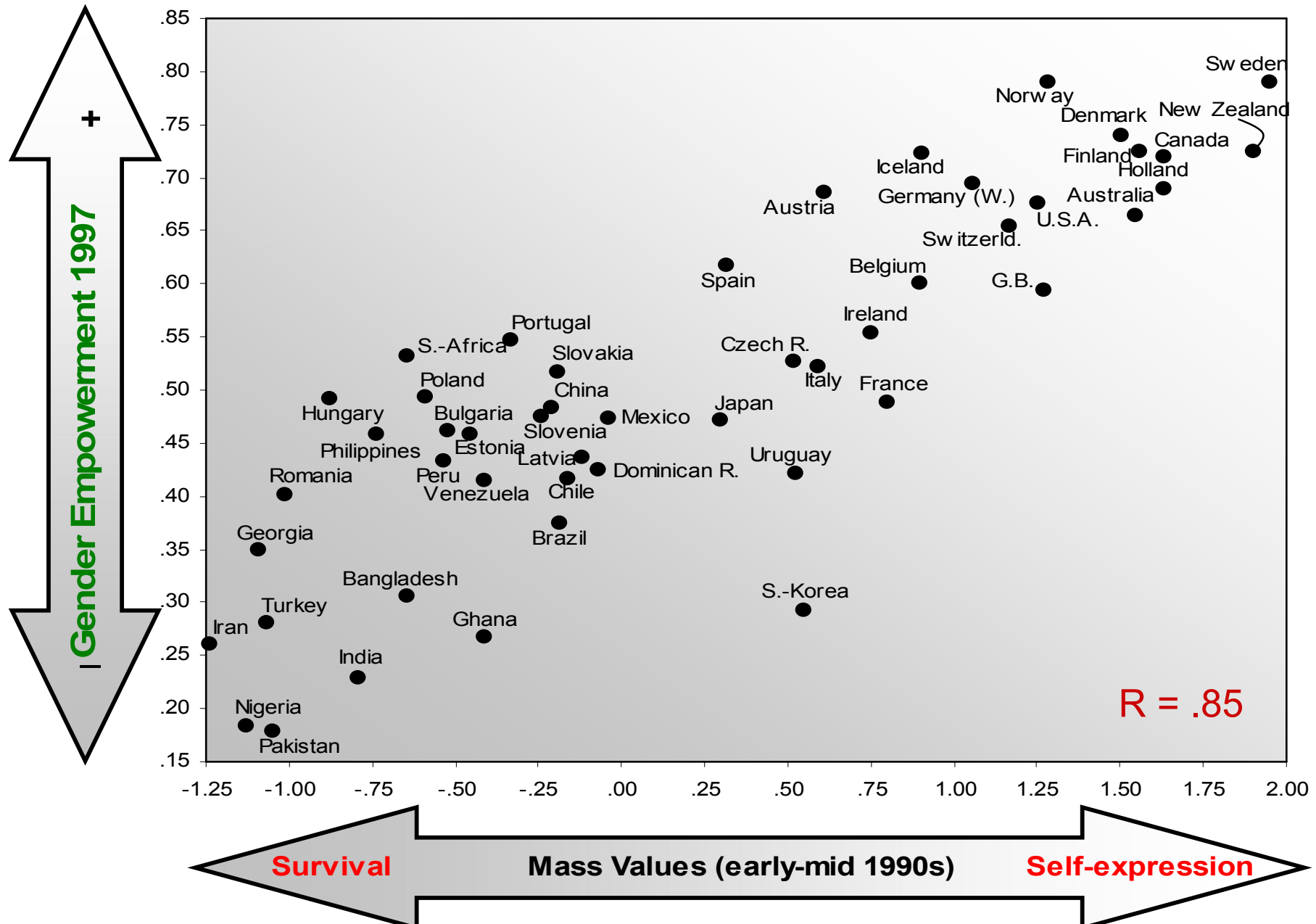
% saying “When jobs are scarce,
men have more right to a job than women”



rising mass emphasis on Self-expression values is strongly linked with societal-level **gender equality**

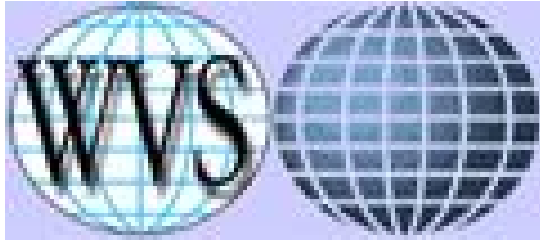
(as indicated by the
UN Gender Empowerment Measure)

Self-expression values and gender equality

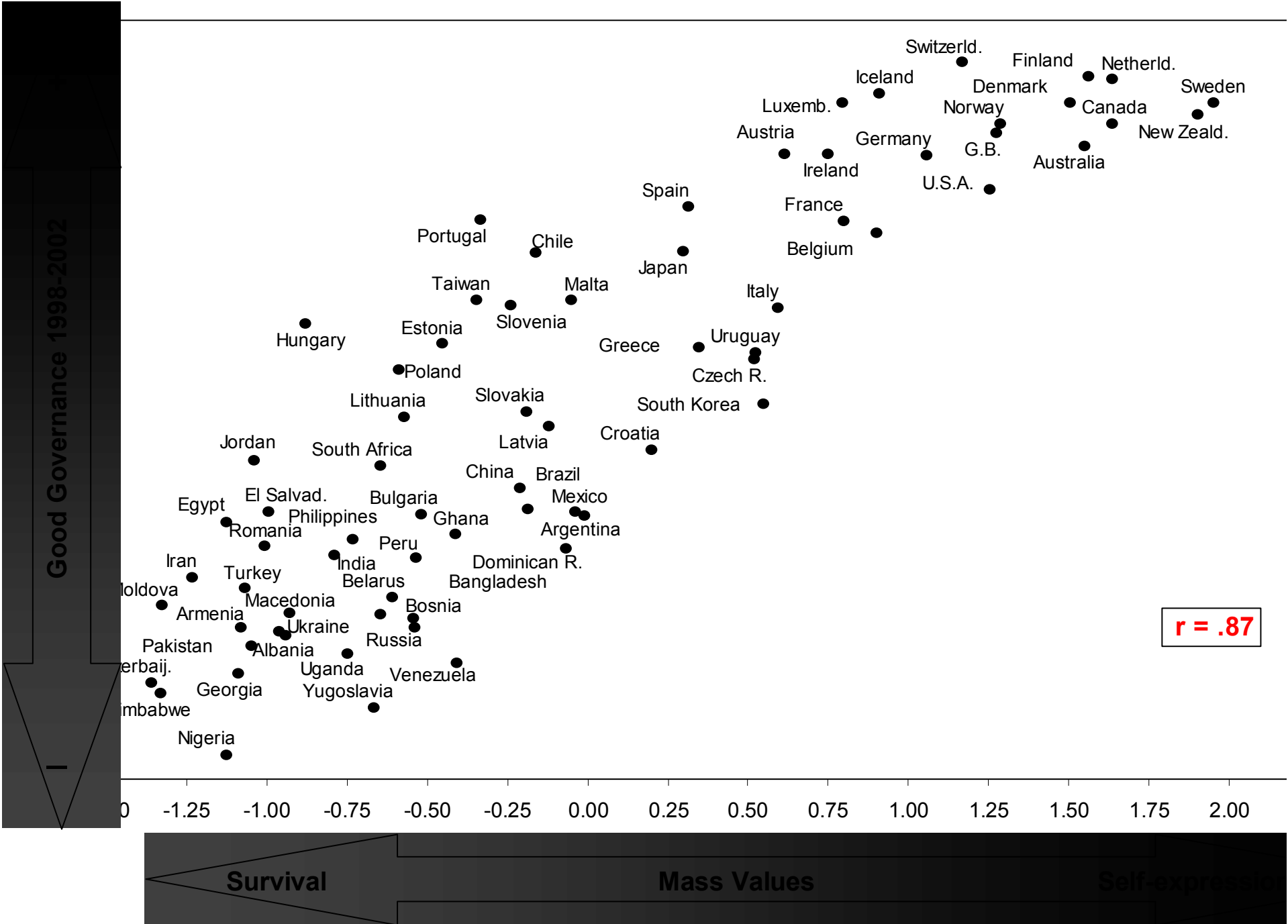


Cultural change → good governance

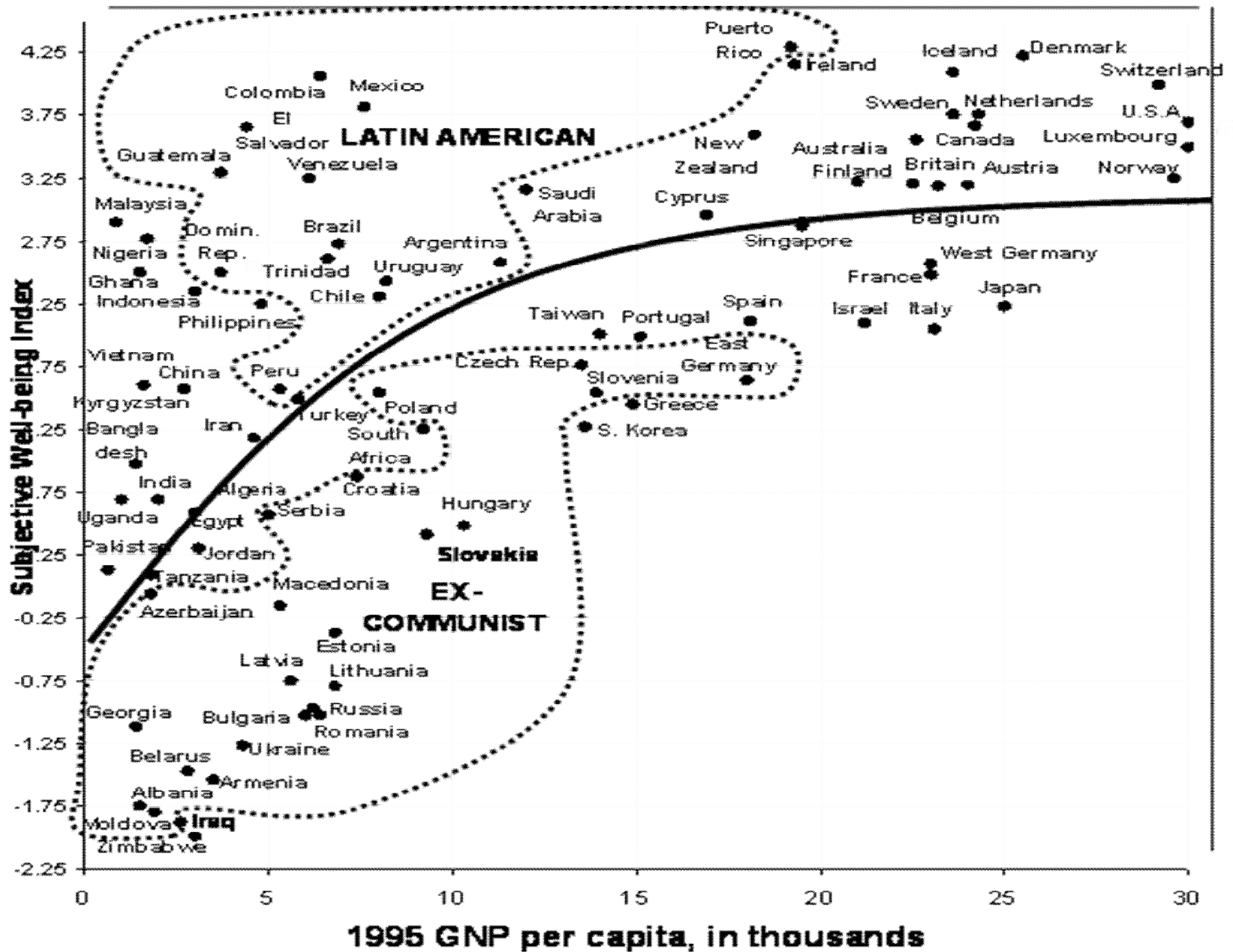
- Rising emphasis on self-expression values leads to publics to exert growing pressure on elites to govern more responsively, more effectively and with less corruption



a society's relative emphasis on survival or self-expression values is strongly linked with good governance, as measured by the World Bank's overall Good Governance index (see Kaufman, Kraay and Mastruzzi)



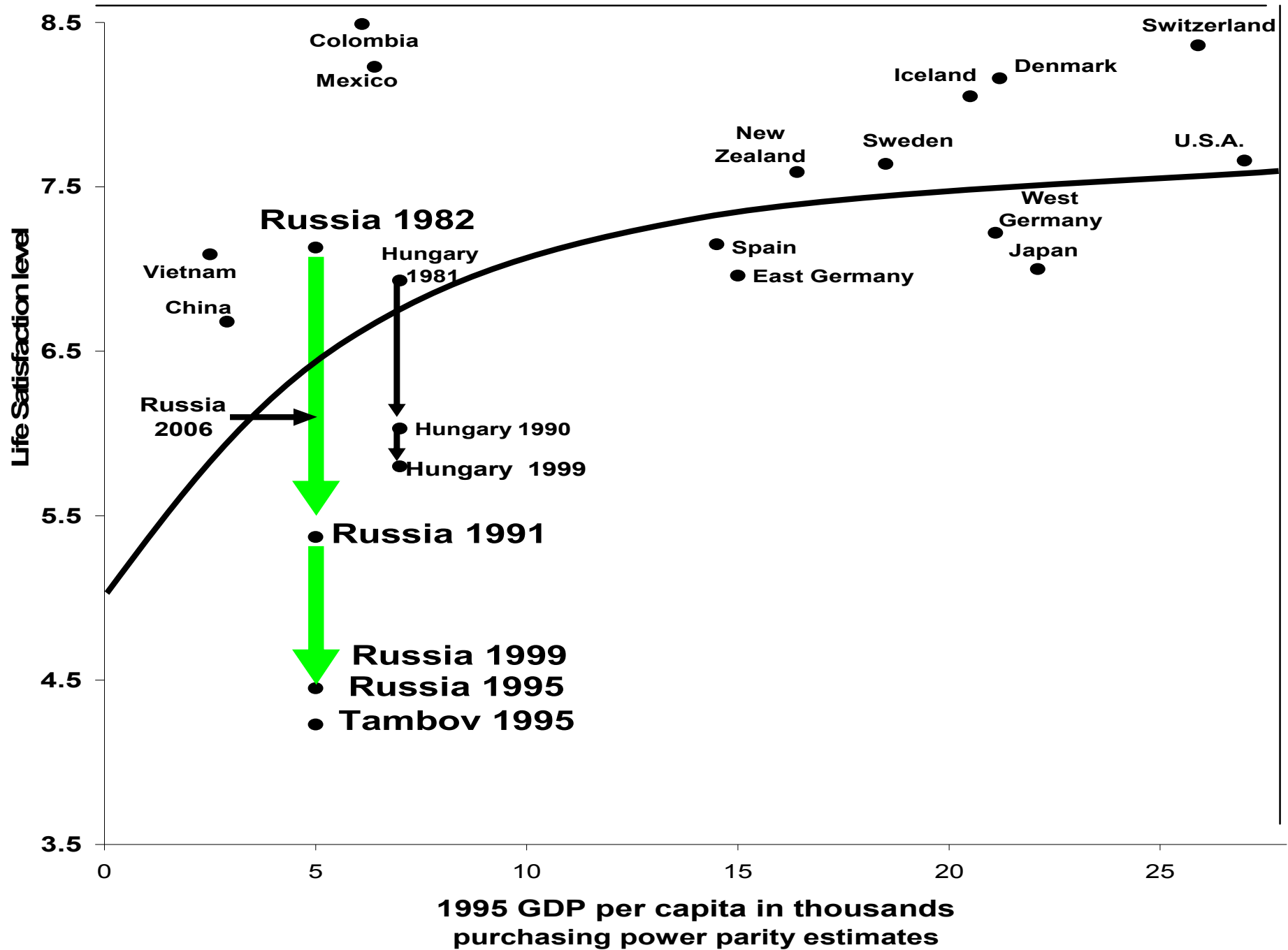
- Economic development tends to bring higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction
- But belief systems matter:
- All **Latin American societies are over-achievers**, showing higher levels of subjective well-being than their economic level would predict—



- And virtually all of the **ex-communist countries are under-achievers**, showing lower levels of subjective well-being than their economic level would predict.
- (the Asian communist countries– still officially communist and thriving economically– have happiness levels that are slightly above the regression line.

- Economic factors are not the sole determinant of SWB. Belief systems also matter.
- Latin American societies are characterized by a strong religious beliefs and relatively strong feelings that one is in control of one's life -- this helps explain their higher than predicted levels of SWB

The collapse of communism in the USSR was followed by a sharp decline in subjective well-being



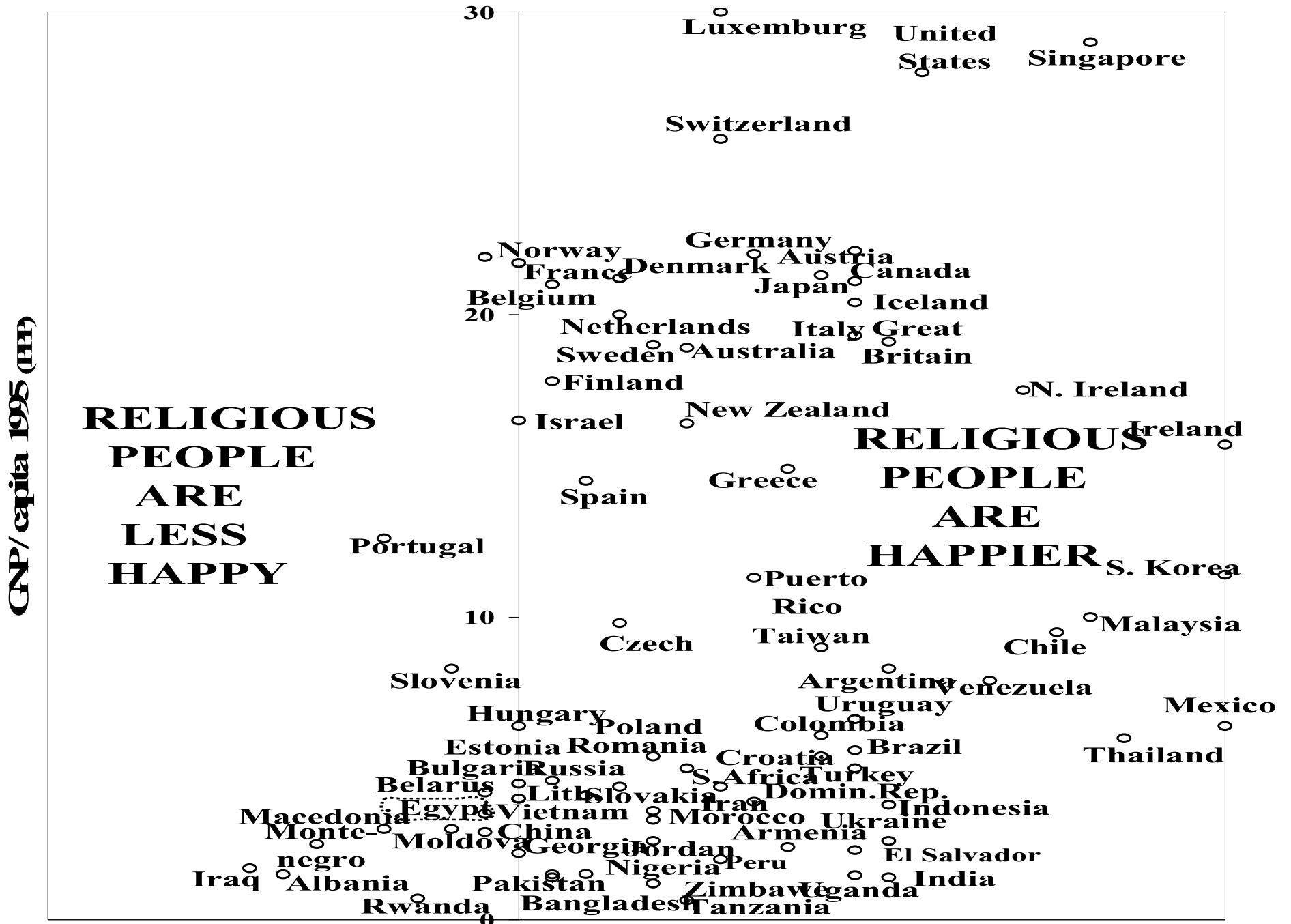
except for Russia and Hungary, life satisfaction reflects levels in the 2000 surveys

a paradox

- Within most countries, lower income groups are more religious than higher income groups
- Religion is stronger in low-income countries than in high-income countries ($r = -.45$); and
- Happiness has a strong correlation with GNP/capita ($r = .6$ to $.7$)
- **NEVERTHELESS:** within most countries, people with strong religious beliefs are happier than those who place little or no importance on religion

Why would religion → happiness?

1. Religion dampens aspirations.
2. Religion provides a sense of solidarity
3. Religion provides a sense of certainty in an unpredictable and dangerous world.
4. Religion provides a sense of meaning and purpose in life.



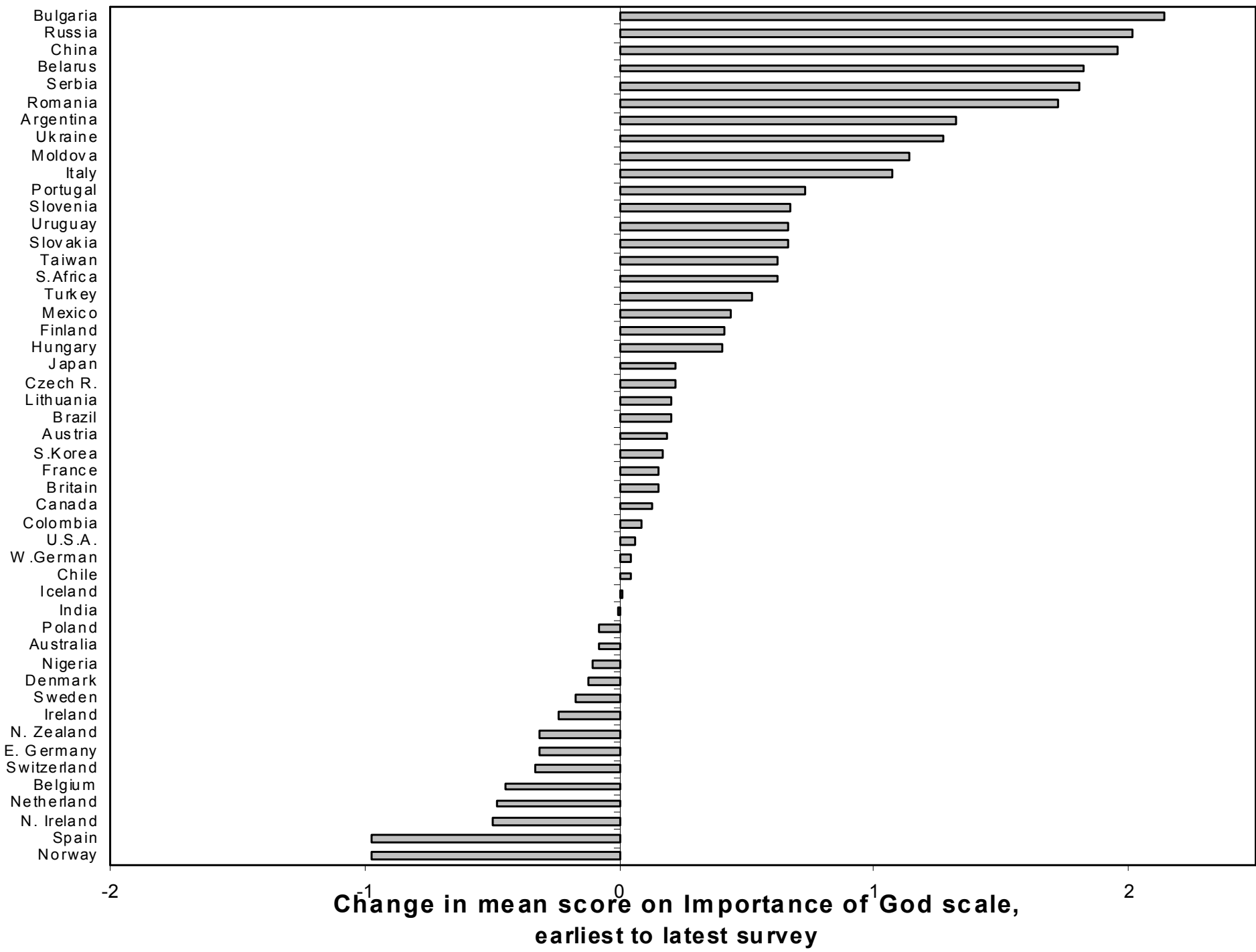
-0.14

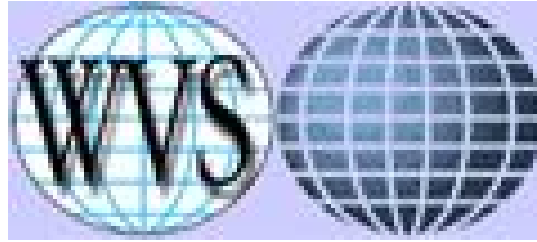
Correlation between religiosity and SWB Index

A few countries show **negative** correlations between religiosity and happiness

- Most of them are ex-communist countries.
- The negative correlation seems to reflect a recent influx of unhappy people who have been turning to religion to fill the ideological void left by the collapse of communism

- The importance of God in people's lives, rose in ex-communist societies and developing countries, but decreased in most rich democracies.
- The largest increases were in Bulgaria, Russia, China, Belarus, Serbia and Moldova. This is consistent with the interpretation that the collapse of communism produced an influx of unhappy new adherents → a negative correlation between religiosity and happiness





END