

Institution: Birkbeck, University of London

Unit of Assessment: 21 Politics and International Studies

Title of case study: Sacralization by Stealth? The Political Demography of Religion

1. Summary of the impact

Professor Eric Kaufmann's research into the interrelations between religion, demography and politics has made a significant contribution to public awareness of and engagement with issues concerning the political demography of religion and has informed American foreign policy. His book *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth: Religion, Demography and Politics in the 21st Century* (2010) received considerable public attention, including numerous reviews, media interviews and invitations to speak. Kaufmann has challenged the widely-held view that religion must inevitably decline in Europe. He has arguably contributed toward lowering the temperature of concern over the 'Eurabia' question; and has improved governments' understanding of the demographics of religion – especially its role in Israeli politics, where the fast-growing ultra-Orthodox are tilting the balance of power toward hawks and away from those advocating a two-state solution.

2. Underpinning research

The underpinning research, undertaken between 2005 and 2009 and encapsulated in 'Sacralisation by Stealth: Demography, Religion and Politics in Europe' (Ref 1) and his book, *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?* (Ref 2), concerns the hitherto underexplored relationship between population change, religion and politics. Specifically, Professor Kaufmann used the World Values surveys to uncover a near-universal effect of religiosity on women's fertility, controlling for education, income, age and other factors. In Muslim countries, support for Shari'a law increases fertility while backing for religious authorities holding political power predicts higher fertility rates. In Europe, using survey data, he found that religious Jews have twice the number of children as the nonreligious. Kaufmann and colleagues made projections which revealed the likely effect of religious immigration and fertility on European, American and Israeli secularisation to 2050 (Refs 3-6). Theoretically Kaufmann has drawn attention to the way global population dynamics are countering the decline of religious piety in the West. Furthermore, he is the first to highlight how the 'second demographic transition' – in which cultural values play an enhanced role in determining family size – empowers religious fundamentalism. He also points to the success of moral conservatives in mobilising for political action across faith lines, domestically and internationally. Finally, Kaufmann locates these developments as challenges to grand narratives of secularism, progress and Enlightenment which underpin western modernity.

Professor Kaufmann began his research in 2005 with an ESRC grant entitled 'A Dying Creed?: the Demographic Contradictions of Liberal Capitalism.' Quantitative research, augmented by qualitative work, resulted in a series of policy reports (one an ESRC briefing paper, another for the Institute of Jewish Policy Research (JPR), Ref 1). Consequently a cover story commissioned from Kaufmann for the November 2006 edition of *Prospect* magazine, 'Religion Returns to Europe' drew attention to the fact that immigration from religious parts of the world, coupled with strong religious retention among second-generation non-Christians in Europe, has the potential to slow and ultimately reverse the secularisation process in western Europe. This was picked up by the press, and a version featured on the cover of *Newsweek International* (November 2007). Kaufmann was subsequently approached by Andrew Franklin, editor of Profile Books, the largest independent nonfiction trade publisher in Britain, to write *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?* (Ref 2).

Dissemination and public engagement is embedded in Kaufmann's research practice. His work on

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Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth? was supported in 2008-9 by a Belfer Center Fellowship at Harvard University's Kennedy School, and a Leverhulme Trust grant. During this period, while he completed research for his book, Kaufmann delivered numerous talks in the United States, including presentations at the State Department and National Intelligence Council (NIC) on the demography of religion in Europe, Israel and the Middle East. He also co-authored an article on Israel in *Foreign Policy* in 2009, a magazine widely read by US foreign policymakers. In addition, Kaufmann organised a conference at Harvard's Weatherhead Center in 2009 and forged connections which led to the publication of a co-edited book, *Political Demography*, with US-based political scientists Jack Goldstone and Monica Toft (Ref 4). This book was launched at the Wilson Centre in Washington and Monterey Institute in California. It was also launched at Birkbeck with the formation of the Population, Environment and Resources Group which formalises links between departmental colleagues working in cognate fields.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Kaufmann E. '[Sacralisation by Stealth: Demography, Religion and Politics in Europe](#),' JPR (Institute for Jewish Policy Research) pamphlet, June 2007
2. Kaufmann E. *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth: Religion, Demography and Politics in the 21st Century*, Profile Books 2010: approximately 3,000 in sales
3. Kaufmann E., Anne Goujon and Vegard Skirbekk, '[The End of Secularization in Europe?: A Socio-Demographic Perspective](#)', *Sociology of Religion*, 73 (1), 2012, pp. 69-91
4. Kaufmann E., V. Skirbekk, "'Go Forth and Multiply": the Politics of Religious Demography' in *Political Demography: identity, conflict and institutions*, edited by J. A. Goldstone, Eric Kaufmann and Monica Duffy Toft. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), approx. 1000 sales and translation into Arabic [01/07/13]
5. Kaufmann E., Vegard Skirbekk and Anne Goujon, '[Secularism, Fundamentalism or Catholicism?](#) The Religious Composition of the United States to 2043,' *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 49, no. 2 (June) 2010, pp. 293-310
6. Kaufmann E. '[Sacralisation by Stealth: the demography of de-secularisation](#)' in Stillwell, John et. al (eds.), *Spatial and Social Disparities* (Springer, 2010), pp. 217-32

Research grants and fellowships:

- 10/2005 - 03/2006 - Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) grant RES-163-25-0013, 'A Dying Creed,' (£40,000). PI: Eric Kaufmann. Grade: 'outstanding' (September 2006).
- 2008-9 - Belfer Center Visiting Fellowship, Harvard University, US\$34,000
- 2008-9 - Leverhulme Trust grant, £21,000

4. Details of the impact

Kaufmann's research and commitment to public engagement and sharing his findings through authoritative but accessible writing, the use of non-academic channels and contributing to policy reports has led to strong interest in his work in public arenas and among policymakers. Profile Books approached him following his report for the Institute for Jewish Policy Research: 'Sacralisation by Stealth: Demography, Religion and Politics in Europe.'

The wide media coverage of his subsequent book, *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth: Religion, Demography and Politics in the 21st Century*, with book sales of around 3000 copies, provides evidence of the impact of his research in the broader public. The Director of Profile writes that the book 'was widely reviewed in the mainstream press and had a significant impact in the literary and policy worlds.' (Source 1)

The book was reviewed in most UK broadsheets (*Telegraph*, *Times*, *FT*, *Independent*, *Observer*), covered in leading magazines (*Newsweek*, *Time*, *Prospect*) as well as popular outlets like the *London Metro* and *Big Issue Scotland*. It was also widely reviewed in Canada, Australia and the

United States. Comments include, 'This has been a delicate issue since right-wing demagogues started scaremongering about Muslim 'breeding rates' but Kaufmann avoids falling into any nasty traps and this remains a provocative and well-informed addition to the debate' from Robert Murphy, *London Metro*, 31 March 2010, and 'Kaufmann's enjoyably argued thesis, the subject of great media attention and shouts of alarm in this deeply non-religious country, begins with the truism that the most fundamental adherents to Abrahamic faiths believe in having more babies than the rest of us' from Doug Saunders, *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 17 April 2010 (Sources 1 and 4). His political demography of religion work has been cited over 50 times in non-academic publications, including in *Time*, *The Economist*, *Atlantic Monthly* and *Intelligent Life*. Kaufmann has also been commissioned to write over 13 articles in non-academic publications, including *Prospect* and *The American* (Source 5).

Kaufmann appeared on TV and radio internationally in 2010 and 2011, including BBC Radio 4's *Thinking Allowed* programme (7/4/10, 4/10/06), on Fox TV News in the US, the *Pat Kenny Show* on RTE (Ireland), and on *John Cleary* (29/9/10), *Philip Adams* (29/9/10) and the *Sunday Night Safran* (Triple-J) radio shows in Australia [3/10/10]. Other appearances include BBC World Service, Premier Christian Radio (UK), BBC Scotland and the Clay Naff radio show (US). Kaufmann was approached by two film production companies, one of which, Clover Films, filmed a short segment for a two-part documentary, and is currently attempting to interest broadcasters in the US and Europe in funding the documentary.

He is a sought after speaker, commentator and advisor on political demography in the West and Middle East. In total, he has delivered more than 30 invited talks on the book at universities, literary festivals, think tanks, public libraries and other fora, reaching some 3000 people (Source 6). Following the publication of his book, he was invited to speak at the Festival of Dangerous Ideas in Sydney, Australia, to an audience of approximately 1000, and a video of this has continued to receive large viewing numbers with, for example, 24,916 views by July 31 2013; and two excerpts of which, on YouTube attracted 5666 and 5871 views respectively by the same date (Source 7). He also spoke at Jewish Book Week (200 in attendance) and the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) in London, the webcast of which registered 7212 views on YouTube (Source 8).

Evidence that his research has informed foreign policymakers is reflected in his being a consultant on the demographic sections of the National Intelligence Council (NIC)'s Global Trends 2025 report in late 2008 and on the Europe section of the Pew Forum for Religion and Public Life's 'The Future of the Global Muslim Population' report (2011) – both published after a decade of rising concern in Europe and America over the demographic growth of Islam following the 9/11 attacks. He addressed a number of prominent Washington think tanks in 2008-11, including the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), the New America Foundation, Pew Forum, and Woodrow Wilson Center as well as the Canadian Department of Public Safety and Department of Canadian Heritage. A political economist with AEI writes of Kaufmann: 'His work on religiosity and demography has been widely discussed in Washington think-tank circles' and for example, 'In 2009 he delivered the keynote luncheon address at a UN National Intelligence Council conference in Washington on the future of Muslim communities in Europe and elsewhere' (Source 3). The Pew Forum's 2011 report and David Brooks' column on the 'Muslim baby bust' (NY Times 13/3/12) – entirely derived from the work of Brooks' AEI colleague, informed by Kaufmann – arguably helped change the terms of the 'Eurabia' debate.

Kaufmann has addressed the US State Department and NIC on several occasions, and his papers and presentations fed into both the widely-cited Future Trends 2025 report and a subsequent NIC report he co-wrote in 2010. 'Dr. Kaufmann brings an empirically well-explored theoretical position

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on the confluence of ethno-demography and political dynamics to NIC workshops. Clearly (since we have imported him from the UK on occasion), his expertise is highly valued and difficult to replace,' writes a consultant demographer at the NIC. The same consultant lists six policy briefings for NIC which Kaufmann contributed to and adds that his work has 'been influential in turning policymaker attention to the issue of ultra-Orthodox population growth and its implications for future political stability in Israel.' (Source 3)

5. Sources to corroborate the impact**Testimonials**

1. Founder and managing director of Profile Books.
2. Political economist with the American Enterprise Institute
3. IC-Associate and Demographer in residence, The Stimson Center; Consultant for the National Intelligence Council

Additional sources of evidence

4. A file of media reviews (~25) can be supplied, including reviews from *Telegraph*, *Times*, *FT*, *Independent*, *Observer*, *London Metro*, *Toronto Globe and Mail*
5. A full list of Kaufmann's published non-academic articles (13) can be supplied on request, including articles such as 'Religion Returns to Europe' in *Prospect* and an article in *The American*
6. Invitations to speak at over 30 public events (such as The Festival of Dangerous Ideas, Sydney) can be supplied on request
7. Videoed talk at Festival of Dangerous Ideas in Sydney Australia: On [Fora TV](#) (24916 views and 23 comments [31/7/2013]; [YouTube](#) 1 (5666 views; 123 likes; 7 dislikes [31/7/2013]); [YouTube](#) 2 (5871 views; 118 likes; 19 dislikes [31/7/2013])
8. Videoed talk at [RSA](#) (7212 views; 26 likes; 5 dislikes [31/7/2013])
9. Consultancy report: National Intelligence Council. 2008. '[Global Trends 2025](#)' (Washington, DC: NIC 2008). The report is also available [here](#). See esp. pages 23-27 which can be cross-referenced with the consultancy report: Richard Cincotta and Eric Kaufmann, 'Uncompromising Demography in a Promised Land: The Growth of Dissonant Minorities and the Escalation of Demographic Politics in Israel,' in NIC Special Report, July 2010 (Washington, DC: NIC) (supplied on request).
10. Consultancy report: Pew Forum for Religion and Public Life 2011, '[The Future of the Global Muslim Population](#)', Section V-subsection D. See [Appendix C](#) for the list of consultants which includes Kaufmann.