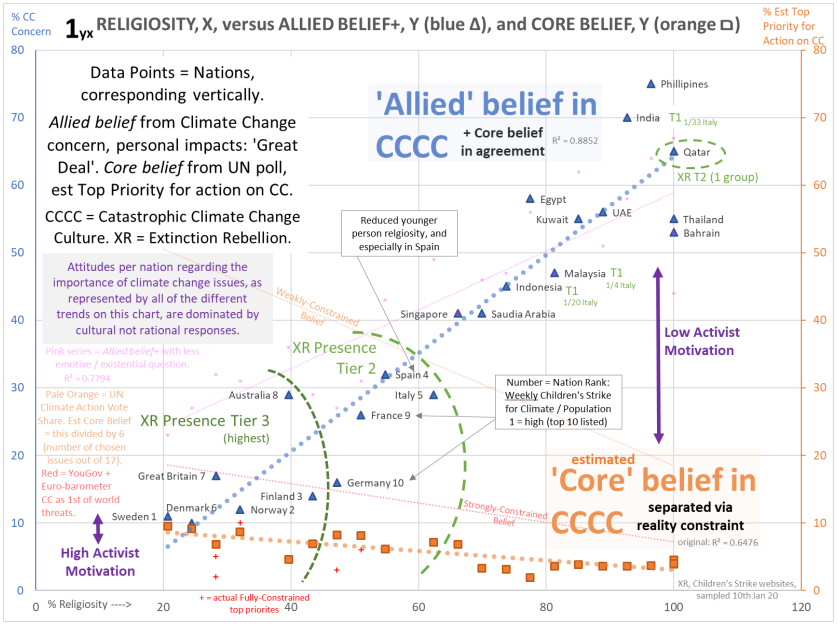
Climate-Change affirmative responses to all survey question types are Culturally determined, and across National Publics related to religiosity. Cultural attitudes inappropriately push Climate Policy.

Prior: Climate-change affirmative responses of national publics to Strongly-Framed questions on the issue, are culturally determined, having dual linear relationships to religiosity. A secondary factor for some responses is GDP-per-Capita. **Here:** Responses to Weakly-Framed questions are explored (also culturally determined, albeit non-linear with religiosity), as is the cultural position of elites and thus expected policy penetration. Post 3 of 3.

1. Introduction

The prior two posts of this series demonstrated a strong correlation across nations between *religiosity*, and responses to (unconstrained) questions aligned to Catastrophic Climate Change Culture (CCCC), from a YouGov climate-change attitudes survey. The thick blue series in Chart 1 shows this, with the faint pink for a less strong alignment. This expression of belief in CCCC I term Allied Belief (ABel); it's caused by a (shallow) alliance of CCCC with the main religious faiths, which disables Innate Skepticism of CCCC.

Chart 1 also showed that very different results are obtained for climate-change affirmative results from reality-constrained surveys (orange and red series), which across nations *anti-correlate* with religiosity. The thick orange series shows the (estimated) Core Belief (CBel) in CCCC, from individuals who still grant it top priority in the presence of ultimate constraint. The faint red trend and red crosses bound this estimate somewhat with actual measurements. Full explanation of all Chart 1 features is in the last post.



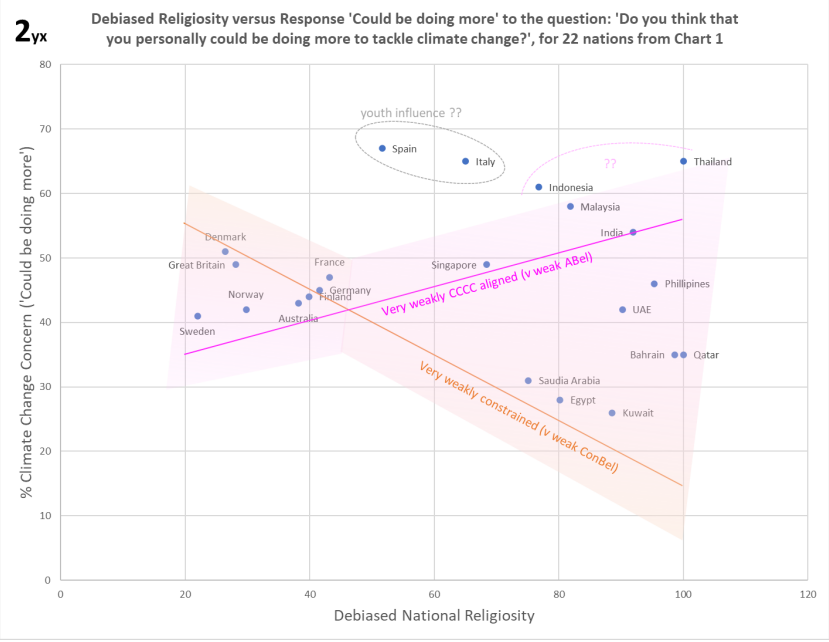
This 'big picture' chart is needed to better understand the following sections. If it's too low-res to read here, access the original in the accompanying Excel datafile. [*US readers especially please note*: due to unusual cultural features, the US (and Vietnam too) are exceptions to the straightforward correlations in Chart 1. See the previous posts as to why, and sections 6 plus 7k) below].

2. The curious case of Weakly-Framed survey questions

In this series so far, I've concentrated mainly upon the responses to Strongly-Framed survey questions, whether of the unconstrained or constrained type. However, it's of interest that religiosity also appears to influence the responses to Weakly-Framed questions (so for unconstrained type, only weak alignment to CCCC, for constrained type, only a weak constraint). On the above chart, responses to the former type would be represented by theoretical trends even shallower than the faint pink line. Responses to the latter type would be represented by theoretical trends shifted even further up on Chart 1 than the faint orange line. It seems that responses to Weakly-Framed questions are smeared between pink and orange 'modes'.

In the first post of the series, it was noted that affirmative responses to the question 'do you think that you personally *could be doing more* to tackle climate change' would not likely be correlated with religiosity, due to low existentiality, lack of definition about meaningful 'doing', much conflation with other domains plus further issues. Lack of correlation was indeed demonstrated. Given also that publics with essentially no climate literacy have little knowledge to inform a rational consideration of this question, and in the absence of strong framing too, one might think their responses would be more or less random. However, it seems that amid all this noise, strong cultural influence (religion and CCCC) still emerges as the main influence. Responses occupy an envelope shaped like a double-ended cone, as depicted in Chart 2 below.

Note: The envelope is *notional*, drawn by using Chart 1 as a guideline for where the orange 'very weakly constrained' and pink 'very weakly CCCC aligned' trends would approximately sit, plus some margin for variability around the trends. In practice, I don't know their precise positions and even less the legitimate variability of data-points relative to same [though orange variability about trend is a lot larger than pink; I didn't bother to depict this]. Yet the envelope covers most data, so is at least indicative of potential cause.



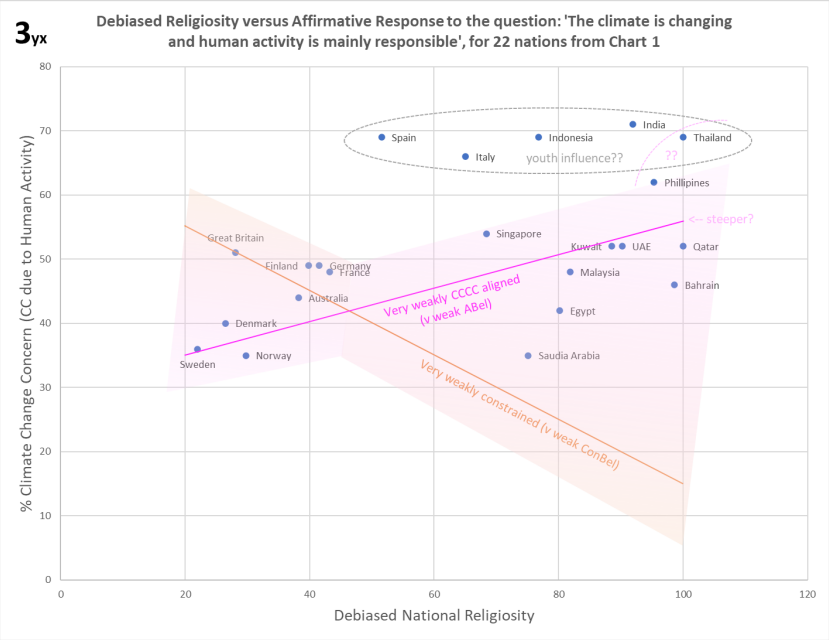
And for *individuals*, that cause appears to me to make reasonable sense. There may be no such thing as a *zero*-constraint climate-change survey question. And with a very weak CCCC alignment (i.e. with very little existential emphasis), such default constraint as exists within people's heads even for an open-ended question (when not over-ridden there ought to be at least some vague reality context), steals from the pink

line to align with the orange one. So, if the data-points were individual people and in the absence of more powerful motivation, they'd respond randomly anywhere within the envelope formed between the two trends, depending on the relative strength of each 'mode' for them.

I find it harder to get my head around the fact that entire nations each occupy specific positions that are spread across the whole envelope, rather than just a kind of average mushy stripe across the middle. But I guess national biases outside of religiosity, plus differences in the *precise* relationship of national faiths to CCCC (below the generic pattern that dominates responses to Strongly-Framed survey questions), must be enough to explain this outcome. *Or*, there are mechanisms I haven't conceived of.

Given I don't know where the edges of the envelope actually are, it seemed reasonable to speculate that Indonesia and Thailand might be legitimately covered, albeit an implication of noisy data. However, if Chart 2 has any meaning at all this couldn't possibly be the case for Italy or Spain, which ought to have much lower climate concern scores, consistent with being closer to the low point between the two cones.

These 2 nations are the same ones that were noted in the last post to have a higher ranking of 'Children's Strike Weekly' (CSW) events than initially seemed likely for their religiosity level. For Spain at least, this is probably due to an unusually high religiosity gap between children and adults (as inferred from young / old adult data, few surveys actually use children[1]). And both these nations also feature very high youth unemployment levels, an open invitation for cultural causes claiming high moral ground, to which youths are more vulnerable. So, when Weakly-Framed survey questions don't invoke more potent effects, might attitudes coming from disaffected and irreligious youth be sufficient to influence whole nations (of adults) to higher climate concern? I don't know. I figured looking at another Weakly-Framed question may help. Chart 3 plots affirmative answers to: 'The climate is changing and human activity is mainly responsible', from a multiple-choice survey question (the very first mentioned in this series). The superimposed pink / orange trends and envelope are the same as on Chart 2 above.



The first thing to note is that this question is slightly more CCCC aligned than I guessed. There appears to be more grouping around the pink line than the orange, albeit this isn't quite enough to have broken the

smeared / dual-mode pattern. This could mean the true pink line ought to be a little steeper, which in turn means Thailand is possibly within the envelope. However, not only are Spain and Italy clearly outside again (and in similar positions), they are now joined by Indonesia and India. Interestingly, Indonesia has recently seen a wave of mass youth protests against perceived threats to democracy and liberal values, in a country where conservatism and Islamist elites are gaining more power. Countering with accusations of blasphemy can only help open a religiosity gulf between secular youth and religious elites (very relevant to the issues here). The linked article notes regional support and even direct links to youth climate protest, with Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines all named. India has a massive youth demographic, with 50% of its population below the age of 25, and has also featured mass youth protests over recent years. These have now coalesced against the new citizenship laws, but this wave started back in 2016 and is ultimately generic opposition to conservative religious power (this time Hindu), again seen as a perceived threat to liberal values and democracy.

All the nations mentioned in the above paragraph have national religiosity 50% or higher (however much less this is for youth), and are at the upper-edge of or above the envelope in either Chart 2 or Chart 3, or both. India, Indonesia and Malaysia also achieve a (low) XR ranking. It seems to me something systemic is happening that is highly unlikely to be noise and pretty likely to be linked to youth protest, but what? The big question in my mind is, why would an effect so noticeable within responses to Weakly-Framed questions (plus some activist rankings) be pretty much invisible regarding Strongly-Framed questions, for which nations behave as expected according to their average (adult) religiosity? After all, both response sets are also for adults only [whereas CSW ranking is explicitly children, and I guess there'll be a child element in XR presence]. I can propose possibilities (e.g. [only] when relatively unaligned themselves, parents back the strong positions of their children, if such are held), but I have no support for any 0:

If I *assume* a youth influence, however this works it may be a pointer to the future of the relevant nations, albeit interpreting that future isn't so easy. It hinges upon what *type* of youth belief is the driver. Although some would represent an increase of core believers in CCCC, albeit occurring because more potent effects are absent the total belief is high, meaning much is likely Allied Belief. However, not this time through an alliance with religious faiths, but political culture, like the strong alliance between CCCC and Lib/Dem culture within the US. So, at the very least the relevant nations would shift leftwards on Chart 1, but could potentially fall out of the plot altogether if like the US (or Vietnam) a more complex local cultural jigsaw emerges, which needs a targeted analysis.

Interestingly, about half the nations hold a similar position in Chart 2 and 3. This plus the bounded area is enough for a fair correlation (r~0.68) between the two responses. See Chart F5. If we needed another hint that it is *not* rationality driving affirmative responses to 'The climate is changing and human activity is mainly responsible', this is it. Publics cannot be providing rational responses to the question 'do you think that you personally *could be doing more* to tackle climate change' (they simply aren't armed to do this, in fact topic conflation specifically disarms them; see the first post). Wrt nations that change position from Chart 2 to Chart 3, Denmark and Kuwait seem to flip mode, from the orange trend to the pink one. Others shift apparently arbitrarily, e.g. Malaysia and Bahrain (modestly, yet likely more than noise), India and the Philippines (with large shifts). I've no idea why some are stable and others not, but these responses are from more marginal influences so I guess stability throughout shouldn't be expected.

The apparent lack of rationality in the above responses prompted me to hunt for *any* rationality. I used the same 'envelope' charts as above, mapping responses to one of the most objective questions from the main

YouGov climate-change attitudes survey. This Weakly-Framed question asks which countries have had the most negative impact on climate-change and, as demonstrated in the first post of the series, responses aren't linear with religiosity. Answers are available from relatively common and culturally unconflicted knowledge. However, even in this case rationality plays a very modest role, very much second fiddle to cultural influence that occurs via the same two modes as above. Due to word-count limitation, I shunted this analysis to Footnote 2.

3. Elite attitudes

Similarly to children, another sub-demographic within irreligious nations at the LHS of Chart 1 where core belief in CCCC prospers more than in the general population, is the elite (i.e. inclusive of many not elected). Even within democracies, small elites can heavily sway policy to a direction not supported by the populace. For instance, the UK, Germany and Scandinavia, all have very strong emissions policies despite per the blue series having a very high national skepticism of *existential* climate issues (plus, *all* nations have very small core belief in climate catastrophism). This wouldn't be a problem if the policies were aligned to mainstream science conclusions. But ultimately, being initiated by an emotive belief in CCCC, they are latterly and inevitably trending towards CCCC goals; i.e. the emergency avoidance of imminent global catastrophe. The easy acceptance of Greta/CSW by secular elites is not a coincidence.

In highly religious countries, much of the influence of elites and the functioning of society is still closely tied to religious expression. Notwithstanding the relatively new (and superficially high, i.e. from ABel) climate concerns, those elites and indeed society generally haven't to date abandoned this model, as Chart 4 confirms. Yet within countries where religion has long atrophied over generations, it seems that a newer culture can pretty easily muscle into the elite layer via the provision of high-moral-ground plus emotive persuasion. Subconsciously, these features are extremely desirable as shortcuts for promoting / extending an elite profile[3]. Extremist politics or catastrophic climate beliefs are both examples of cultural systems that can readily reverse frequently low extolment rates for rational behavior in governing elites (although both polarize too), when exhausted religion no longer supplies this service.

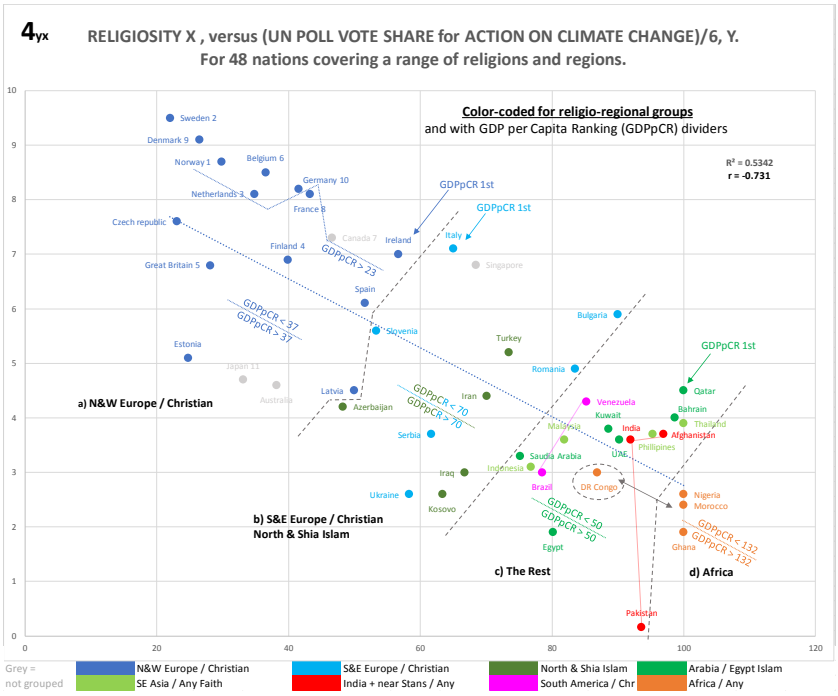
Major XR and CSW presence within irreligious nations (per the last post) are *not* expressions of what the local publics think, en-masse, but extreme frustration expressed by small minorities because for sure their local publics mostly *don't* think like them. In mistakenly assuming such actions reflect popular feeling, and thus compliantly onboarding extreme demands (which also contradict mainstream science), already culturally compromised elites are marching dangerously further and further out of alignment with the mass of their own publics. There's evidence that tension from such dislocations is already causing some significant backlash[4]. Highly religious nations are protected from similar extreme policy choices, by the strongly continuing commitment of their elites to much older irrational fairy stories, aka religions.

The expectation is that policy push from elite attitudes would occur most within nations from the LHS of Chart 1, much like XR and CSW presence. This expectation can be checked by looking at the penetration of highly challenging policies (socially or to infra-structure or both) that also have a high virtue-signaling aspect. Whether or not the policies truly provide major benefit to emissions reduction or the environment generally, is not particularly relevant. A suitable such policy is the promotion of Electric Vehicles (EVs).

4. Policy push case - EVs

Chart 4, introduced in the last post, represents either of the orange series on Chart 1 (depending on the scale), at a higher resolution and with more nations thrown in. The Y scale happens to match estimated CBel, i.e. the original UN poll vote-share for climate action, divided by 6. The chart shows the overall *anti-correlation* of ConBel / CBel with religiosity, see the last post for why. The blocks a) to d) and the color-coding, show religio-regional groups. Significant variability about the main trend is largely due to GDP-per-Capita (GDPpC) *within each religio-regional group*. [so spot-points: the Czech Republic has a lower GDPpC than Ireland, Italy, Singapore and various Arabic nations, yet still higher climate concern due to lower religiosity. Going oppositely, i.e. right to left, Qatar has the highest GDPpC of all nations, yet still less climate concern than many due to its high religiosity. As GDPpC itself is a secondary factor, Qatar still beats its own group for climate concern, plus some other nations mostly within nearby groups].

So, we expect EV policy penetration to largely be dictated by cultural motivation, and hence be highest at the LHS. BUT… this won't be wholly independent of economic issues; those countries that are motivated for this policy must also have a robust enough economy to create incentives plus charging infra-structure, plus a high enough GDPpC for the local market to afford EVs. Adapted to economic necessity, the above prediction suggests that nations with strong economies (in an absolute sense) plus at the *top*-leftmost, will have the greatest EV penetration.



The numbers trailing some of the nation labels derive from the Top 18 Electric Car Countries in 2020, showing penetration per nation by market-share of new EV sales. Eleven nations in Chart 4 also appear within that league table; I compressed the ranking into a scale 1 to 11, in order to skip the missing ones. While strict ranking order from top-left isn't observed, all but one of the ranked nations are indeed at the top-left corner, *as expected*.

The only exception in that peer-group without a ranking, is the Czech Republic, which has the lowest absolute GDP (45th in IMF list) of the peer group. Conversely, the only nation *not* in the top-leftmost bunching, is Japan. This nation (in a unique religio-regional group unrelated to the dark blue coding),

possess the highest absolute GDP (3rd in IMF list) on the chart. This data reasonably confirms the above expectations from cultural positioning, with secondary economic considerations.

As noted in section 4 of the last post and even in normal times, a huge problem for those governments trying to push this and other challenging policies, is that once the public grasp the reality issues associated with implementation, their support is unlikely to get beyond the thick orange Core Belief line in Chart 1, maybe at the most the faint red Strongly-Constrained Belief line. Unless for special circumstances, like the immense amounts of hydro-electricity in Norway. And in current times, a huge new reality constraint has appeared in the form of COVID-19, which for a year or two at least will squeeze even the CBel line still further downwards regarding the choice of a true top priority; likely to fervent CCCC believers only.

5. What this series tells us

Assuming findings are confirmed, and that my explanations are the best fit for same.

The most affirmative attitudes to climate-change in the public sphere are cultural. As such they're also the product of net cultural interaction, mainly with wrt the long-established religious faiths. A surface alliance of CCCC with religion creates an impression of faith support, which flips into resistance for any *reality-constrained* circumstances. Overall, where religiosity is low, climate activism is higher (including child religiosity for child activism), likewise for main policy. A secondary influence in *reality-constrained* scenarios is GDP-per-Capita. This likely exacerbates a cultural factor, modulating the main religiosity trend. Core Belief and policy-support is lower where GDPpC is lower within any religio-regional group.

Even responses to Weakly-Framed questions appear to mainly be determined by cultural influence, albeit occupying a wide envelope. While prediction from religiosity of climate attitudes *inside* that envelope is not possible, that they smear between the two main cultural modes is good support itself of the overall cultural explanation. Systemic excursions from the envelope are perhaps due to youth influence; merely a culturally divergent sub-demographic. Even the most objective climate survey question yields very little rationality in responses.

As shown by Post 1 Chart 1, less affirmative attitudes to climate-change are correspondingly diluted from linear trend, but even at weakest likely slip into dual mode, in the same manner as responses to Weakly-Framed questions. Essentially, cultural influence dominates all strengths of affirmative responses to all types of questions.

[In nations where strong enough political cultures / polarizations are also in play, the simple relationships with religiosity depicted here, don't hold. This is so for the US and Vietnam, likely China too. This extra complication changes local outcome, but not the principles involved].

6. Some concluding thoughts

While each of the mainstream faiths is theoretically a separate cultural entity, their relationships with CCCC as presented in this series don't appear to depend on the particulars of any faith, only on national levels of belief. At least purely in respect of reactions to the newcomer of CCCC, *currently*, all faiths appear to act as though they're part of a *single* culture. If we accept this approximation in the domain of climate-change (some literature does not[5]), what Charts 1 and 4 are showing at heart is the interaction between two major cultures (religion and CCCC) that have come under each other's influence. [Although

for conflicted topics, perfectly legitimate science can invoke cultural reactions / resistance from religious or political culture, the interactions here indeed only make sense for two cultures. Plus, CCCC directly contradicts mainstream science in any case].

For an analogy, I'm reminded of those illustrations of two stars falling into each other's orbit, with the occurrence of complex gravitational and energy interactions. To further this analogy, one a bright young star (CCCC) and the other an old red giant (mainstream religious faith). Except we may know less about the cultural case right here upon Earth than the stellar one millions of light years distant. Stretching the analogy, most people from the relevant social-science disciplines don't actually recognize a CCCC; it's kind of 'invisible'. But like a black hole orbiting the old red giant, we can tell it must be there because behaviors in the region only make sense if *two* bodies with mass and energy (here, cultural mechanisms) are interacting. Hence a culture (of catastrophe) must be exerting powerful influence within the social domain of climate-change, and interacting with religion.

There are other bodies in this equation, in the US particularly the heavyweights of Rep/Con and Dem/Lib culture, which entangle old religion and new CCCC both (and enough to locally disrupt the global trends shown here; the US has a 4-way cultural dance). Overall though, I'm surprised at just how consistent the entanglement of religiosity and CCCC appears to be, globally. Which also means we can use religiosity as a reliable lens to make the workings of CCCC clearer.

The false narratives of CCCC (all strong cultural narratives are false, their 'purpose' requires this) are powerfully affecting nations and faiths of all types across the globe. Over the years, many commenters have articulated in some form that the movement against man-made climate-change is effectively 'a religion' in itself. The effects presented here are yet more confirmation that for the public domain (the enterprise of science is neither sampled or assessed by proxy), they're right. Such people are intuiting 'a cultural entity', where religions happen to be the cultural entities they're very familiar with. Considering CCCC's scale, the now generations-long trend, especially within Western societies, of less rule by the emotive and more by rationality, could well go into reverse through this single phenomenon alone. The only thing holding off its irrationalities in many nations, ironically, is religious faith.

Covid-19 Addendum: I've seen comment to the effect that Covid-19 is likely to be fatal for catastrophic climate-change culture. My money on this is no better than anyone else's. But it says that once Covid-19 is in the rear-view mirror, however long that takes, CCCC will still be a serious force. Long evolved bio-cultural mechanisms make cultures tenacious, they can pivot to new circumstances and come back from heavy damage; even turn adverse conditions into advantage (there are already crude attempts, but they'll get more sophisticated). CCCC's wagon is hooked to science, which ought to be fatal on its own one day. But I doubt that day is here. For guidance, the major faiths span a millennial scale and survived the Black Death plus many more real-world calamities, their fairy-tale fears plus hopes still intact. This doesn't mean the little secular sister of CCCC necessarily has similar staying power, but ultimately, it works on the same underlying mechanisms.

7. Summary of Series provisional findings

ABel = Allied Belief (belief via a cultural alliance). ConBel = Constrained Belief (belief as expressed when reality constraints are also in play). CBel = Core Belief (an ultimate ConBel still expressed when the maximum constraint is in play). ISk = Innate Skepticism. RCsurvey = survey featuring reality-

constrained questions. UCsurvey = survey featuring unconstrained questions. CCC[C] = Catastrophic Climate-Change [Culture]. XR = Extinction Rebellion. CSW = Children's Strike Weekly. *Assuming confirmation…*

a) Across nations, attitudes of strong concern about CCC obtained via UCsurvey, are correlated with higher national religiosity. This is because via (shallow) cultural alliance, religious belief disables ISk about narratives propagated by CCCC. Hence Alliance Belief, ABel. Correlation robustness depends on total cultural appeal and…

b) The more aligned to the existential, emotive and personal are survey questions per a) above (so probing closer to ideal CCCC support), the steeper will be the trend relating climate concerns and religiosity. *Note*: As cultures are polarizing, greater cultural engagement increases *both* the rejection response of ISk *and* the loyalty response of core CCCC adherents. (Although the latter generally much outweighs the former, still more so for irreligious nations).

c) Attitudes to climate-change obtained via RCsurvey, give completely different results to a). Concerns are lower in general, and *anti-correlate* with religiosity, albeit with more variability about the trend than for a) above. Reality constraints emphasize the CCCC challenges to long-established (and religiously-orientated) values, and potentially even direct well-being, which re-enables ISk about CCCC for all but the emotively committed 'core believers' in CCCC. This wipes out what in religious nations especially, otherwise looks like very strong support per a) above.

d) While always anti-correlating with religiosity across nations, the proportion of the populace continuing to keep climate-change issues high within RCsurvey priorities, shrinks as the constraint strengthens. For the ultimate constraint, only core belief in CCCC (so, CBel) remains, which is low (<10%) for all nations.

e) Motivation for climate activism is stronger where Abel is lower and CBel is higher (albeit still a small minority). Core believers are defending their culture of apocalypse from enormous national skepticism of said apocalypse, i.e. low ABel / high ISk (and good defense is attack; cultures are often aggressive). For high religiosity nations, there's far less motivation and also many less core believers to sustain activism.

f) XR / CSW activity appears consistent with e). For CSW activity, given religiosity in children is notably less than in adults for many Western nations, as a demographic they behave as though they're further left on Chart 3. This effect may be different per nation, depending upon its specific adult/child religiosity gap.

g) Systemic variability around the ConBel / CBel trend anti-correlating with religiosity, is due to GDPpC. This effectively increases reality constraints; where wealth is less, people are even less willing to commit to [further] heavy (CCCC) cultural values, or alternatively risk a switch from religious faith to CCCC.

h) Penetration of culturally conformant yet challenging climate-change policy, is expected to follow elite attitudes, which in turn should be more invested in CCCC where religiosity is low [and activism per f) is high]. The case of EV penetration confirms this, with secondary dependence on GDPpC as expected for an expensive policy and also in line with g).

i) The points a) to h) mainly concern responses to Strongly-Framed questions. Regarding the responses to Weakly-Framed questions (i.e. low existential / emotive alignment to CCCC, or weak constraint), these occupy a wide envelope, the shape of which nevertheless still appears to be determined by the cultural

interaction of CCCC and religious faith. There's some indication that systemic exceptions outside of this envelope for a minority of nations, may be a result of influence from the cultural position of (less socially served / more irreligious / more liberal / more disaffected) youth.

j) Cultural influence dominates responses even to a very objective survey question probing common and unconflicted knowledge within a climate-change context.

k) While there's variability in all nations and hence not *exact* conformance to a) through j), some nations having unusual cultural setups are definitely outside the scope of these rules. E.g. the US and Vietnam. If their cultural set-up is known well enough, the same mechanisms are applicable even if different (secular) cultural entities alter the relationships. Regarding ABel, 24 nations are reasonably conformant (first post), as are 48 for ConBel / estimated CBel (Chart 4), with a subset of 16 also bounding that CBel estimate in a couple of ways (second post), plus 22 for all of ABel / ConBel / estCBel (Chart 1).

Note: all of the reported effects are statistical over large populations. Even in high religiosity nations such as Malaysia or India, say, there'll be religious folks who *don't* align with CCCC in response to culturally engaging questions in UCsurveys. Similarly, for those who buck any trend reported here, in any nation. Also, individuals reporting the same level of religiosity don't necessarily behave the same when they are embedded within a low or a high religiosity nation. Cultures are group phenomena that cannot be used to analyze individuals; there will be communal aspects to ISk too.