# How to Operationalize Religious Development?

Heinz Streib

How can we assess *religious change and development?*

- Retrospective self-reconstruction, e.g. in narrative interviews
- Retrospective self-report (e.g. questionnaire items) or
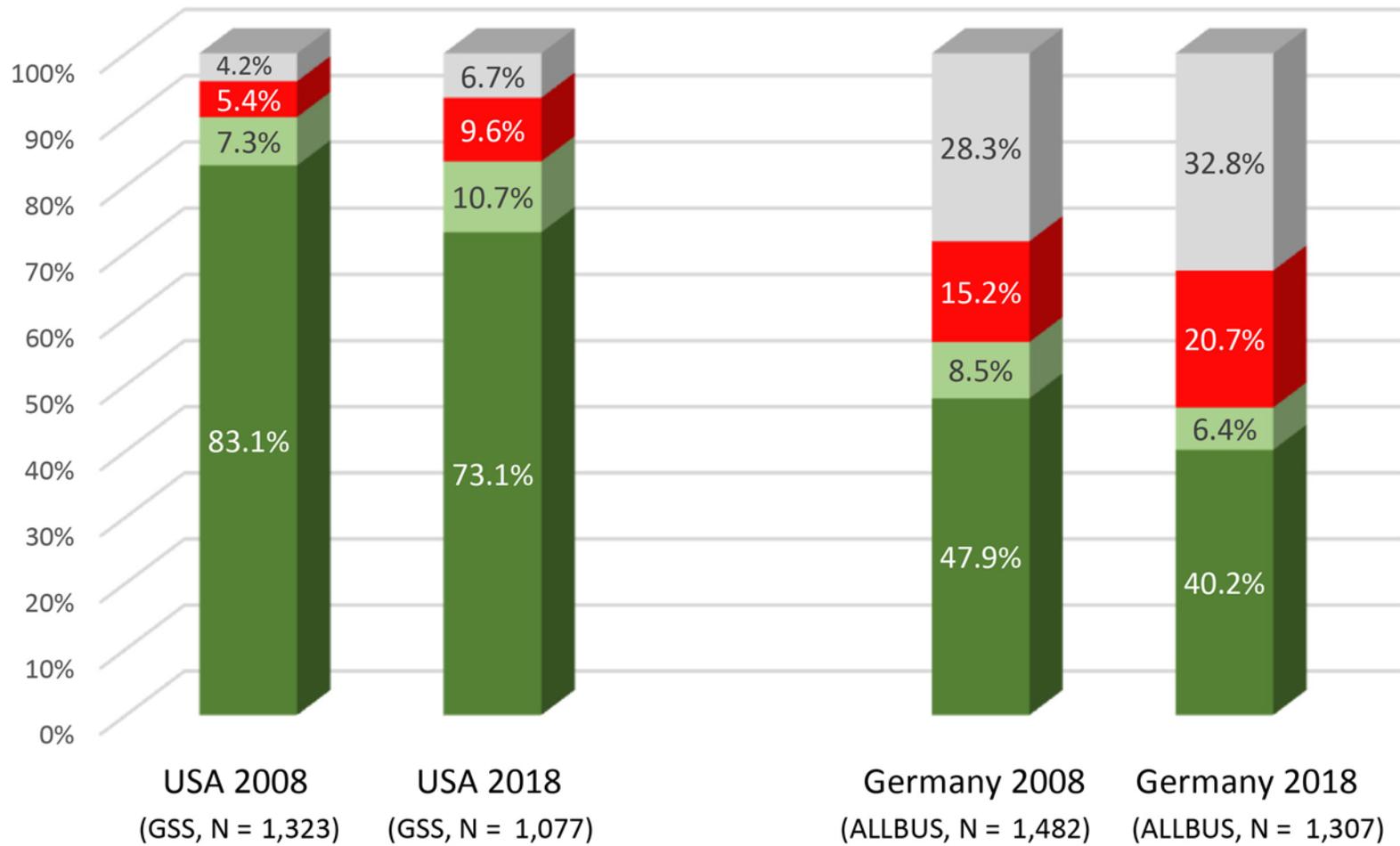
	USA 2008 (GSS, N = 1,323)	USA 2018 (GSS, N = 1,077)	Germany 2008 (ALLBUS, N = 1,482)	Germany 2018 (ALLBUS, N = 1,307)
I don't believe in God now and never have	4.2%	6.7%	28.3%	32.8%
I don't believe in God now, but used to	5.4%	9.6%	15.2%	20.7%
I believe in God now, but didn't use to	7.3%	10.7%	8.5%	6.4%
I believe in God now and always have	83.1%	73.1%	47.9%	40.2%

Change in Belief in God and Spiritual Self-identification 2018 in…

USA (GSS)   and   Germany (ALLBUS)

How can we assess *religious change and development?*

- In cross-sectional data:
  - Retrospective self-reconstruction, e.g. in narrative interviews
  - Retrospective self-report (e.g. questionnaire items) or
- In longitudinal data:
  - Repeated assessment with questionnaire (items; scales)
  - Repeated interviewing

Two theses
  - Multiple waves of data collection allows sophisticated assessment for biographical changes in qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Quantitative analysis can use method such as Cross-lagged Panel Analysis and Latent Growth modeling … which is meeting requirements for researching 'development'
  - A multi-method approach is the ideal way for attention to participants on the individual AND on the group level.

How Do We Operationalize Religious Development in our Bielefeld-Chattanooga Research?

The Concept-Based Approach

Five Religious Styles – Recent Characterizations

5. Openness for dialog and for being challenged / changed by the encounter with the Other/the Strange; xenosophia

4. Critical and autonomous reflection; in case of conflicting validity claims, models of tolerance are considered.

3. Consent to conventions of one's group or life-world; mutual interpersonal and uncritical harmony

2. Mythic-literal and ethnocentric insistence on the truth of text and teachings of own tradition; system of punishment and reward.

1. Subjective orientation without an awareness of the interiority of the other; dependence on the external authority of others/caretakers

Subjective Religious Style 1

Instrumental-reciprocal or Do-ut-des Religous Style 2

Mutual Religious Style 3

Individuative-Systemic Religious Style 4

Dialogical Religious Style 5
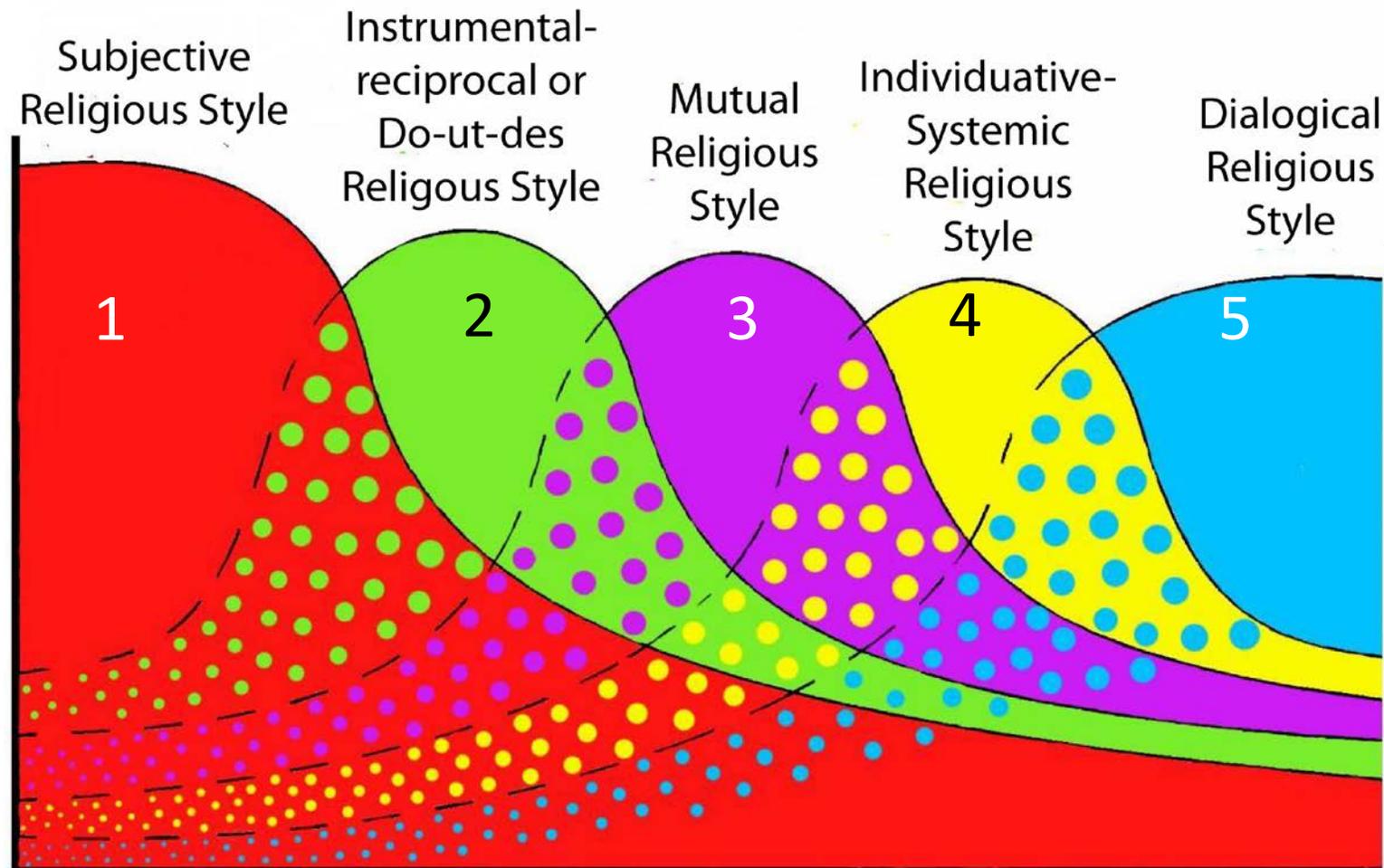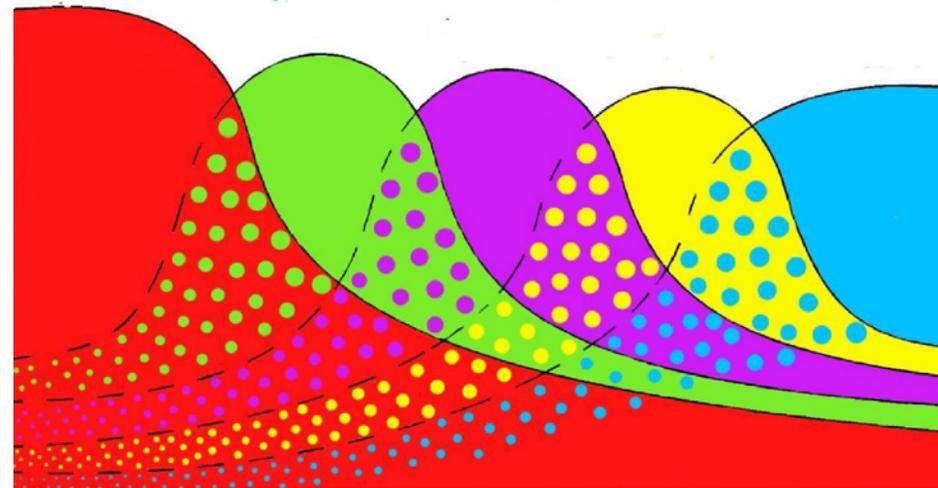
The Faith Development Interview (FDI)

The FDI is the key measure in our research.
The interview is structured by 25 questions that cover...

A.   Life Review

B.   Relationships

C.   Present Values and Commitments

D.   Religion

Heinz Streib & Barbara Keller

Manual for the Assessment of

Religious Styles

in Faith Development Interview   s

Fourth, Revised Edition of the
Manual for Faith Development Research

Summary of FDI Evaluation

Perspective-taking: Life chapters (1), Past relationships (2), Changes in relationships (3), Changes in worldview (4), Parents (7)

Social Horizon: Breakthrough (5), Crises (6), Current relationships (8), Groups (9)

Morality: Beliefs, Values, commitments (12), Action right/wrong (16), Always right (17), Sin (23)

Locus of Authority: Your life meaning (10), Change one thing (11), Important decision (15), Purpose of human life (18)

Form of World Coherence: Harmony with the universe (13), Death (19), Evil (24), Religious conflicts (25)

Symbolic Function: Religious Person (20), Religious ideas, symbols, rituals (21), Pray, meditate (22), Changes in Image of God (4), Maturity (14)

2 = Instrumental-reciprocal Religious Style   3 = Mutual Religious Style
4 = Individuative-systemic Religious Style   5 = Dialogical Religious Style

Differences between FDIs …
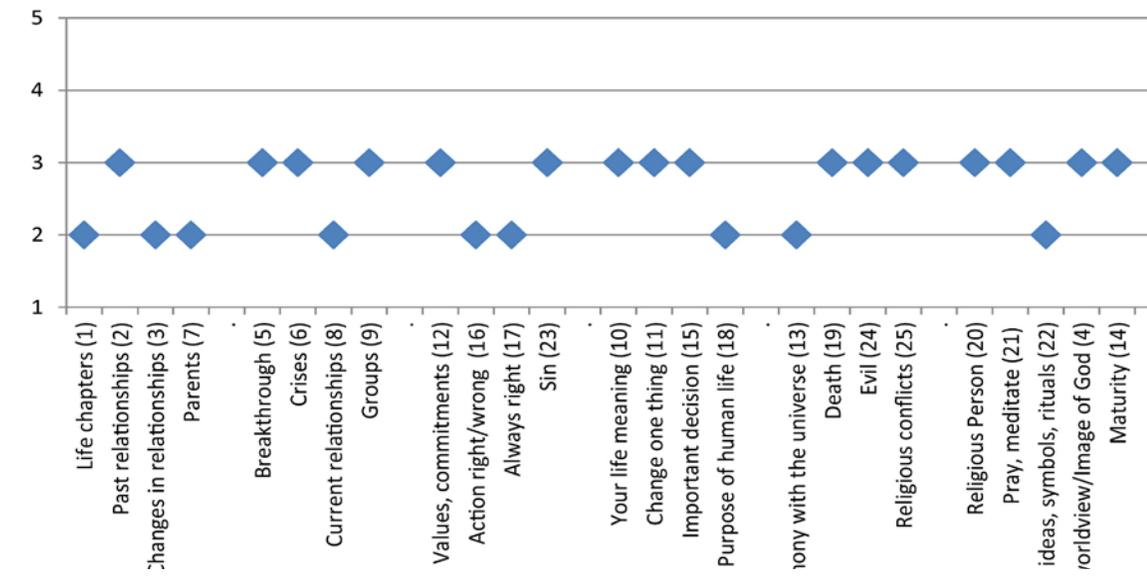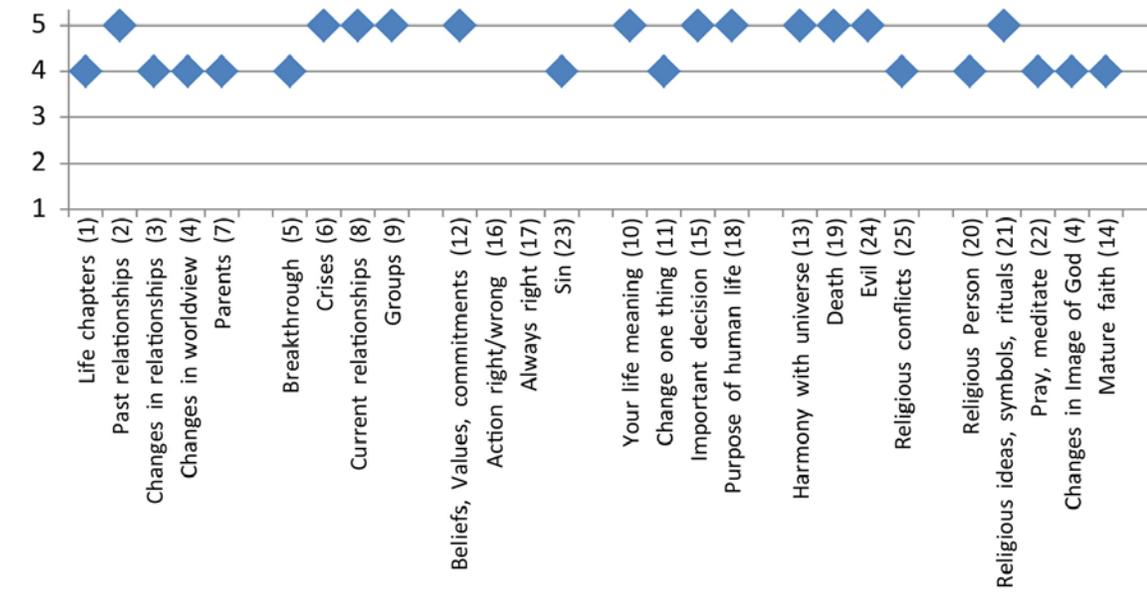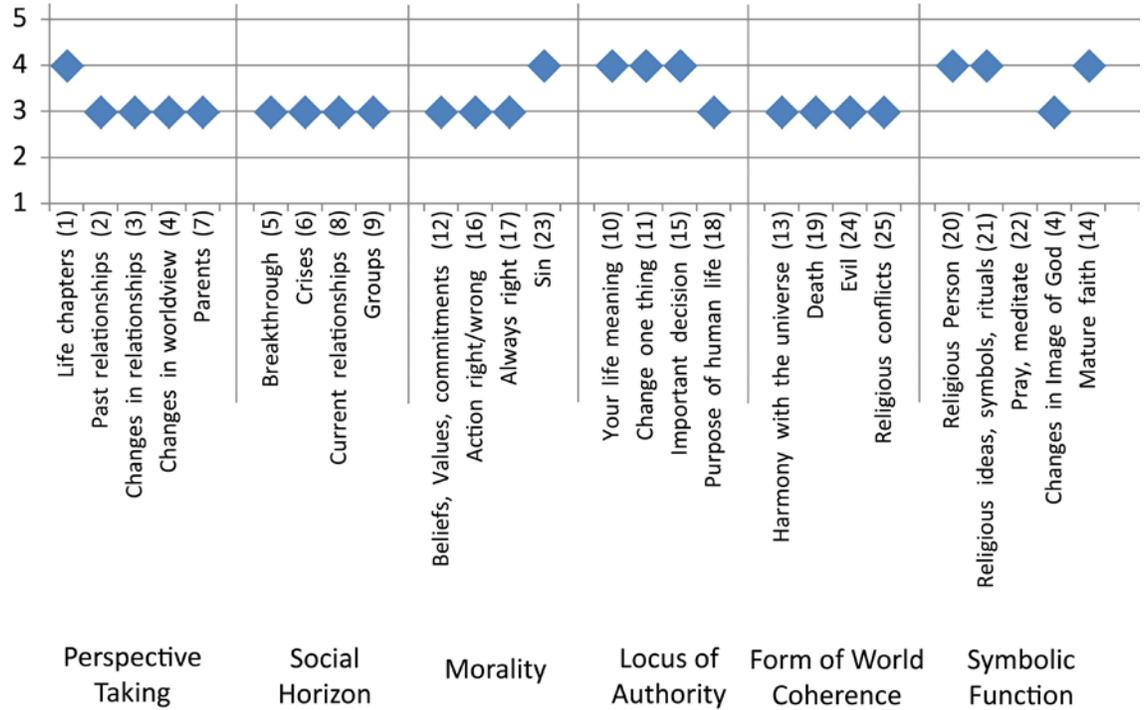
| Perspective Taking | Social Horizon | Morality | Locus of Authority | Form of World Coherence | Symbolic Function |

2 = Instrumental-reciprocal Religious Style   3 = Mutual Religious Style

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Four Typical Summaries of Religious Style Ratings
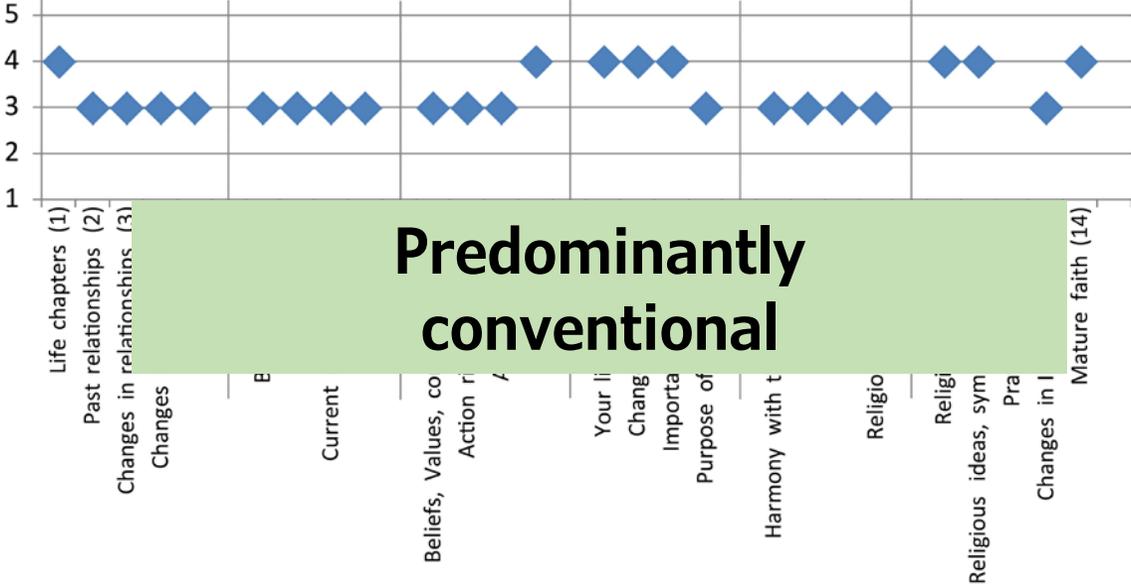
Predominantly conventional

Emerging dialogical-xenosophic

Predominantly individuative-reflective

Substantially ethnocentric

Perspective Taking · Social Horizon · Morality · Locus of Authority · Form of World Coherence · Symbolic Function

2 = Instrumental-reciprocal Religious Style
4 = Individuative-systemic Religious Style
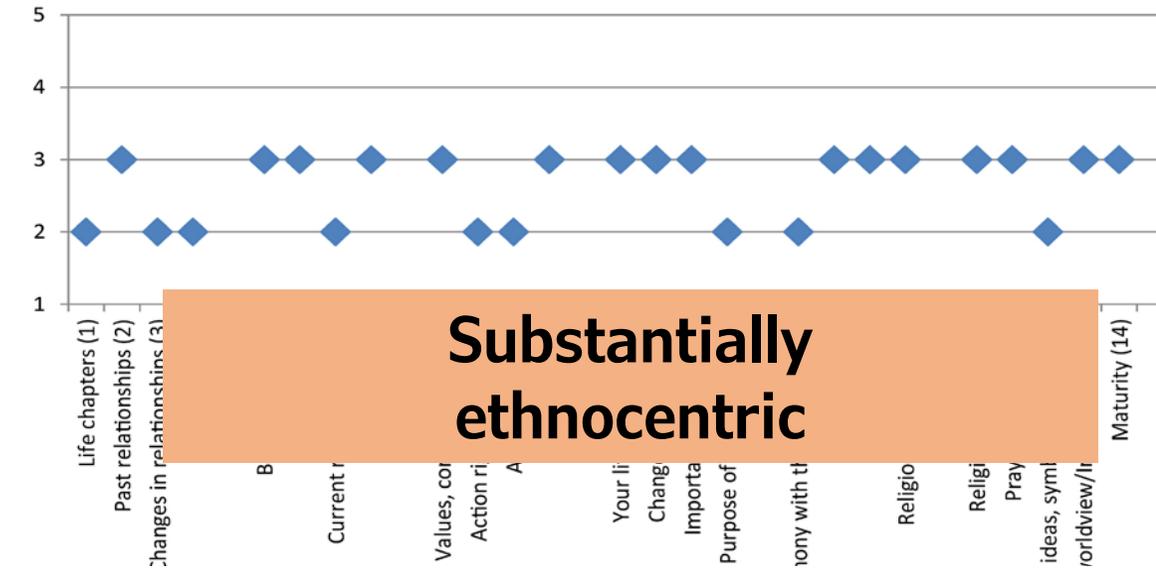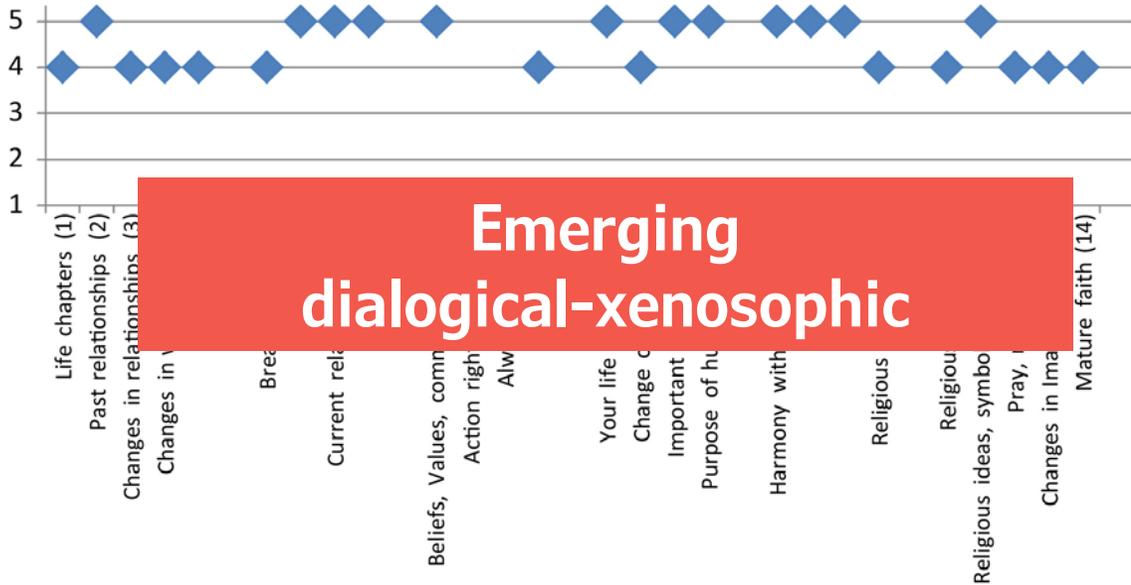
3 = Mutual Religious Style
5 = Dialogical Religious Style

Four Religious Types – Summary Characterizations

Emerging dialogical-xenosophic

On top of the use of critical and autonomous reflection there is an openness for inter-religious dialog and for being challenged or changed by the encounter with the Other/the Strange (xenosophia)

Predominantly individuative-reflective

Predominant practice of critical and autonomous reflection—featuring religious (multi-religious) plurality; in case of conflicting validity claims, models of tolerance are considered.

Predominantly conventional

Predominant inclination for consent to the conventional beliefs and prescriptions of one's group or life-world; desire for mutual interpersonal harmony, while avoiding critical questioning.

Substantially ethoncentric

Characterized by a substantial mythic-literal, ethnocentric and mono-religious claim to the exclusive truth of texts and teachings of one's own tradition and to a system of punishment and reward in morality

How did we construct validate the religious types in our data?

Past and Current Bielefeld-Chattanooga Studies

| **Deconversion Project** (2002-2005)	**Spirituality Project** (2009-2012)	Longitudinal Study of Religious development (2014-2017)

Heinz Streib / Ralph W. Hood Jr.
Barbara Keller / Rosina-Martha
Csöff / Christopher F. Silver

Deconversion

Qualitative and Quantitative
Results from Cross-Cultural
Research in Germany and the
United States of America

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht

Heinz Streib – Ralph W. Hood Jr.   Editors

Semantics and Psychology of Spirituality

A Cross-Cultural Analysis

Springer
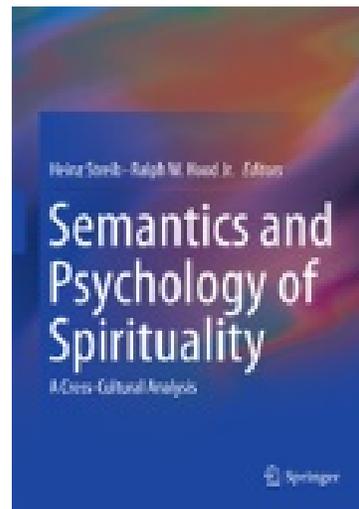
Deconversion revisited

Sample Characteristics of FDI Subsamples for Type Construction

	Deconversion Sample	Spirituality Sample	2017 Sample
Field Work Years	2003-2005	2010-2011	2015-2017
N	272	104	301
n_{USA}	123	54	89
$n_{Germany}$	149	50	212
Gender: % female	50.9%	52.9%	47.3%
Mean Age	36.6	43.0	45.8
Age Range	16-86	18-76	16-84

Profiling the Four Religious Types

with Percentages of Style Ratings

Streib, H., Chen, Z. J., & Hood, R. W. (2019). Categorizing People by Their Preference for Religious Styles: Four Types Derived from Evaluation of Faith Development Interviews. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion,* doi: 10.1080/10508619.2019.1664213

a. Substantially Ethnocentric Type

b. Predominantly Conventional Type

c. Predominantly Individuative-reflective Type

d. Emerging Dialogical-xenosophic Type
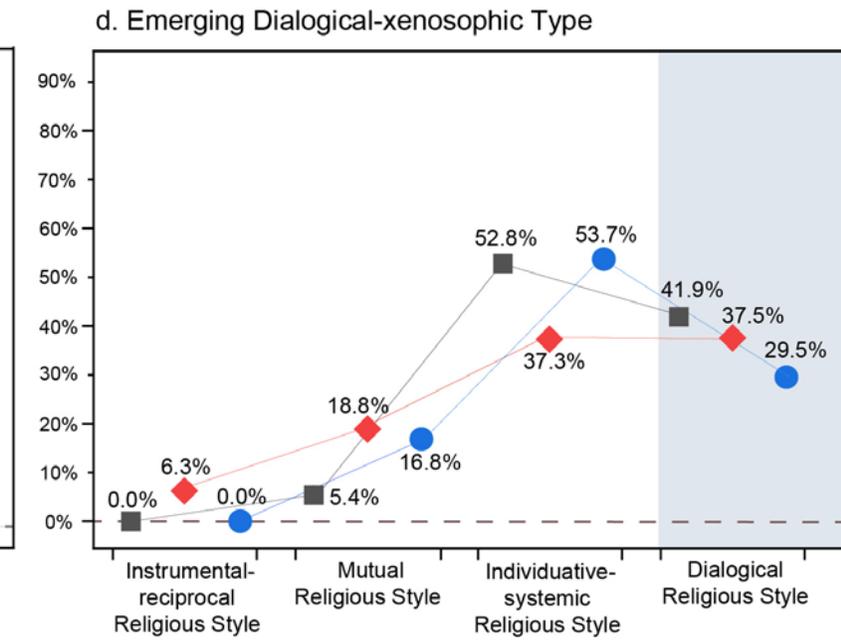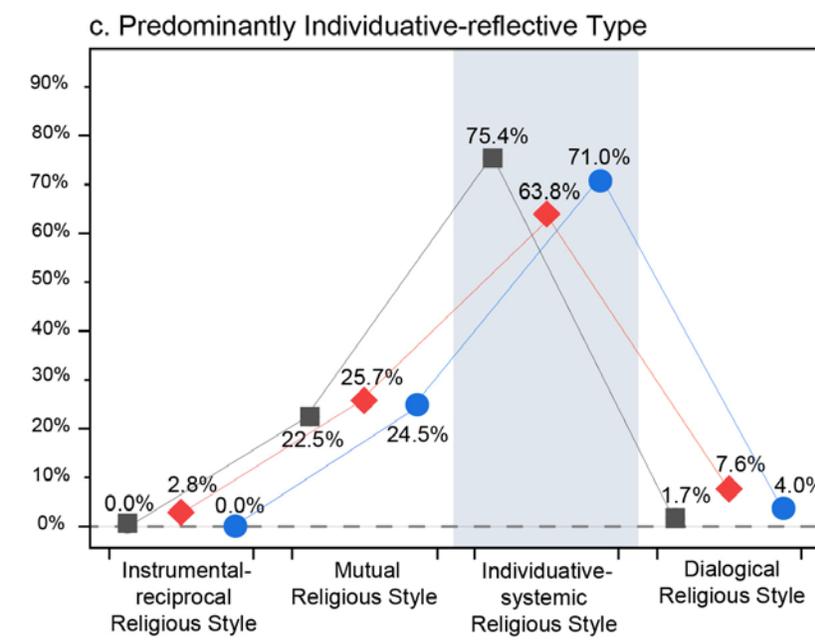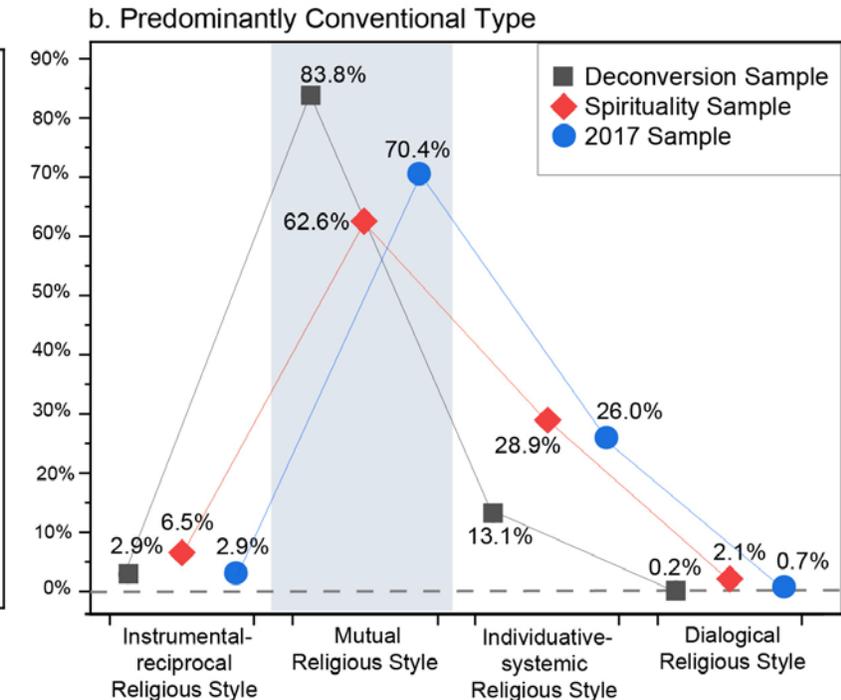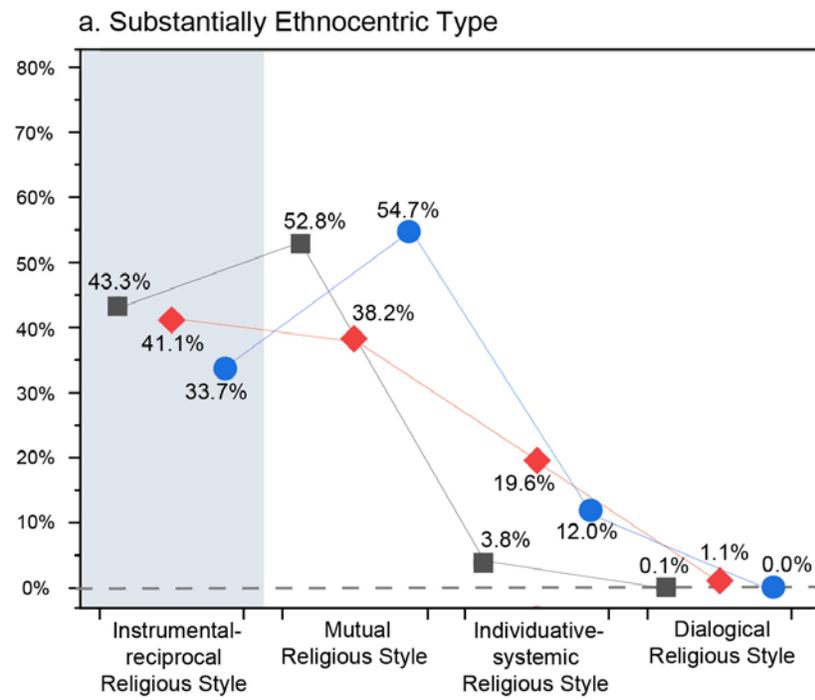
Convergent Validity Using Latent Class Analysis (LCA)

LCA/LTA indicated that a model with four latent classes can be regarded the final solution.

The distribution of religious style percentages in the four classes clearly demonstrated that the highest means of each style are distinctively associated with one of the four classes.

Re-interviewee subsample (*N* = 87)

Assessment of Development over Lifetime Using Religious Types

Past and Current Bielefeld-Chattanooga Studies
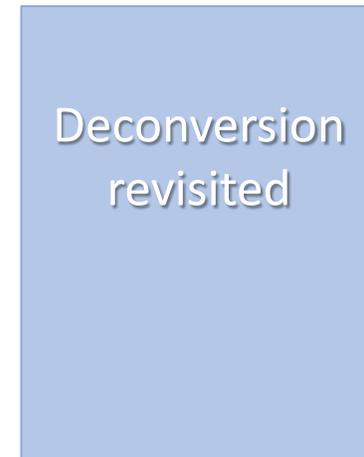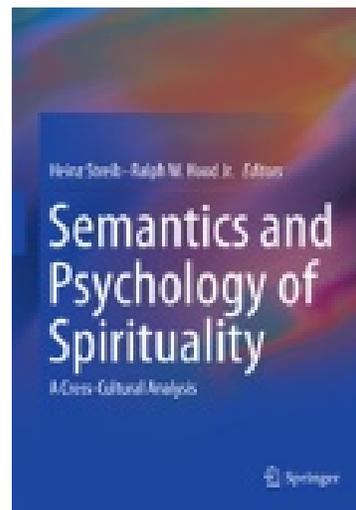
Developmental Trajectories in Religious Types
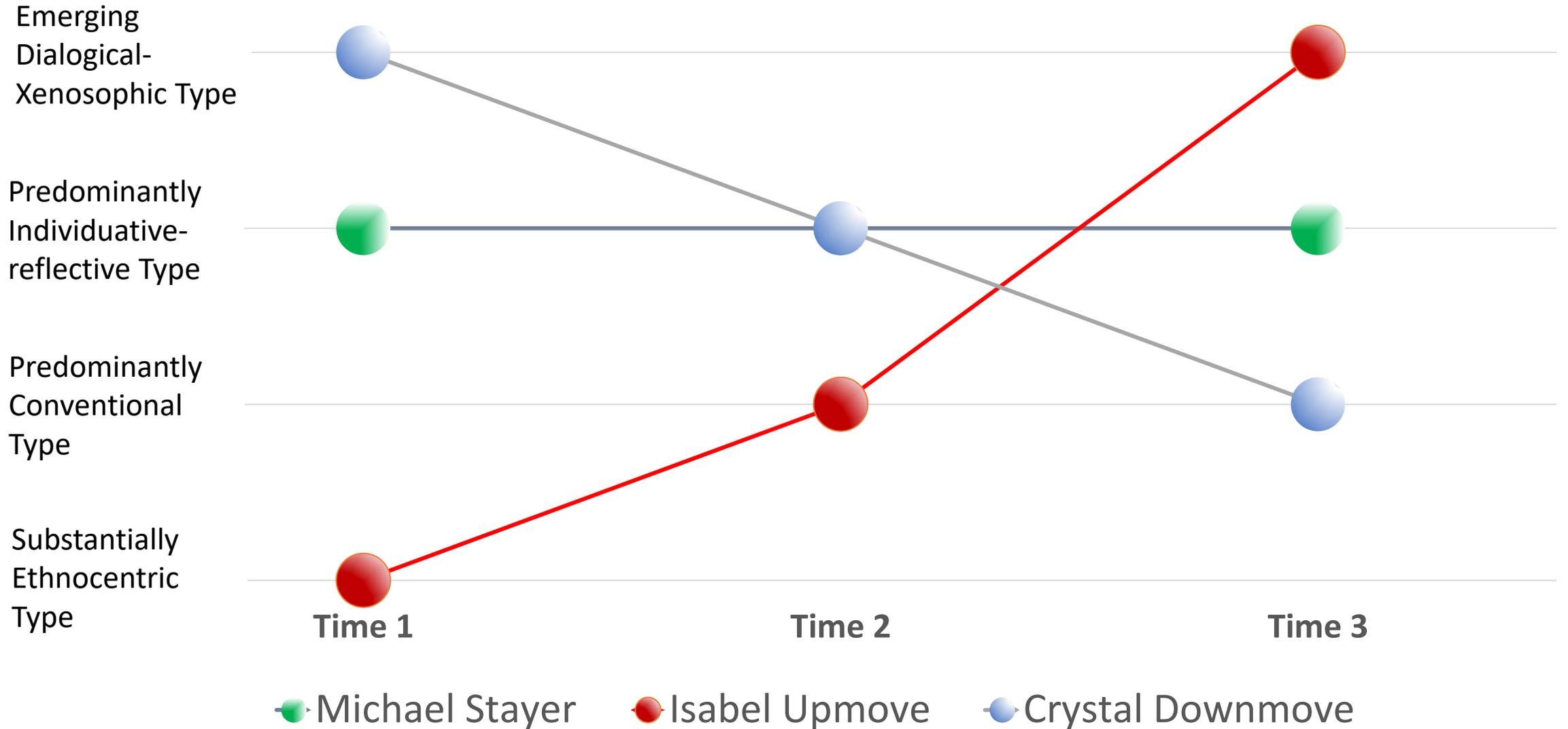
Developmental Trajectories in Religious Types

Movers and Stayers Time3 - Time1 * Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation) Crosstabulation

			Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation)		
			Deconversion (De)	Spirituality (Sp)	Total
Movers and Stayers Time3 - Time1	**Mover downward between Time 1 and Time 3**	Count	5	13	18
		% within Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation)	14,7%	34,2%	25,0%
	Stayer between Time 1 and Time 3	Count	15	9	24
		% within Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation)	44,1%	23,7%	33,3%
	Mover upward between Time 1 and Time 3	Count	14	16	30
		% within Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation)	41,2%	42,1%	41,7%
Total		Count	34	38	72
		% within Original Project (first-time questionnaire participation)	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Concluding Remarks

- Our recent results confirm the assumption that religion, spirituality, meaning-making are not monolithic, but there are **structurally different** versions.

- The model of religious types addresses such variety in a way that can be related to and triangulated with other sorts of data.

- Researching religious development is an ambitious project, when based on the faith development interview. But re-interviewing the same person some years later is the best start to account for religious **development.**

Thank you for your attention!