

8-1-2020

## Origins of Religion: A Comparison between the United States and Germany

Dawson Adams  
*University of South Carolina Upstate*

Alexander Lorenz  
*University of South Carolina Upstate*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/uscusrj>



Part of the [German Language and Literature Commons](#), and the [Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Adams, Dawson and Lorenz, Alexander (2020) "Origins of Religion: A Comparison between the United States and Germany," *University of South Carolina Upstate Student Research Journal*: Vol. 13, Article 9. Available at: <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/uscusrj/vol13/iss1/9>

This Article is brought to you by the USC Upstate at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of South Carolina Upstate Student Research Journal by an authorized editor of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact [digres@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:digres@mailbox.sc.edu).

---

## Origins of Religion: A Comparison between the United States and Germany

**ABSTRACT.** This research paper discusses the origins of religion in the nations of the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. For the United States, the first religions were those of the European settlers. They brought with them Christianity, both Catholicism and Protestantism, as well as Judaism. Then, as immigration ramped up in the 19th and 20th centuries, many more religions arrived to America, such as Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, as well as many more Christian followers. These immigrants came mostly from China, Africa, the Middle East, and southern and eastern Europe. As for Germany, a significantly older nation than the US, the origins of its religions can be traced back much farther. Germany can trace its religious origins back to the ancient Germanic religions which are largely based on the Norse religions, with Odin being the “God of gods”. Then, as the Romans moved further into today’s Europe, their religion began to gain Roman influence. As the Roman Empire adopted Christianity, so too would Germany. The split of Christianity at the hands of Martin Luther brought Protestantism to Germany. Then as immigration became a widespread phenomenon, so too would other religions such as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Comparing the two nations using statistical data shows that the contemporary United States seems to be more religious than the Federal Republic of Germany. However, this paper also argues that the two nations may find themselves more equal with the apparent growing trend of atheism or irreligion in general.

**DAWSON ADAMS** is a junior at USC Upstate, majoring in History with a Minor in German Studies. This project began as a research paper for the Business German class that he took in the Spring of 2020. Its



original and continued purpose was to compare and contrast the origins of religion in the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany. Dr. Lorenz approached Dawson over the summer and early on in the Fall of 2020 to discuss furthering the paper as he saw great potential in the paper as well as Dawson. This project holds uniqueness in the fact that it compares the religions of, and their origins, two great nations and using that comparison, determines the religiosity of each nation. Dawson’s favorite part of the research experience probably would have been working alongside Dr. Lorenz, who was instrumental in his work being what it is today. As far as Dawson’s future plans, he will continue to work hard and aim to finish on a strong note over the next year and a half. After college, he might teach for a little while to gain some experience before going on to graduate school to pursue his dreams of becoming an Archeologist. Dawson believes that having this experience under his belt will help greatly in the coming years, especially with any more paper writing that he will have to do, both in undergraduate and graduate school should Dawson decide to go that route. For other students if you are ever planning to conduct research of your own, Dawson strongly advises you to do a few things. One, make sure your sources are reputable. We learn in school what sources probably should not be used but make sure that you try to find some good scholarly writings to supplement your work, even if it means having to change a few things. Second and probably the most important thing, do not try to go through this process alone. While the work needs to be all yours, you would do well to utilize whatever resources you

have at your disposal, whether it be a family member, friend, or teacher, to ensure that your paper is as good as it possibly can be.



**ALEXANDER LORENZ** holds a Ph.D. in Germanic Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. His interdisciplinary research is situated in the fields of Second Language Acquisition, German Studies, and Educational Psychology. Dr. Lorenz recently published in *System*, an *International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics* and *Unterrichtspraxis/Teaching German*, a journal devoted to the improvement and expansion of German Studies in the United States. He also presents his research at annual conferences such as the Modern Language Association (MLA) annual conference and the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) convention. Dr. Lorenz grew up in the Soviet Union and Germany. He joined the USC Upstate faculty in 2018. Dawson and Dr. Lorenz met in 2019 when Dawson enrolled in German 101. The idea for this paper developed when Dawson enrolled in a German Film class taught by Dr. Lorenz. Shortly after, Dawson began reading and writing about similarities and differences of religious views between Europeans and Americans.

## 1. Introduction

Religion can be defined as human beings' relation to what they regard as holy, sacred, absolute, spiritual, divine, or worthy of especial reverence. However, even as there are an untold number of different religious ideas among the human populace of Earth, there is certainty in that religion and the idea of religiousness is a wholly human concept and an integral part of the human condition [1]. On one hand, religion exists to make life more comforting and provide people with rewards that they would want but may never have. On the other hand, it is sometimes theorized that religion does not concern the world as a whole, just the manner of human society [2].

This research paper focuses on two nations, the United States of America, and the Federal Republic of Germany. By focusing on these two nations, it was possible to explore the origin of religion in each nation and then compare these origins with each other in order to trace the development of contemporary religion within two nations. In this comparison, statistical differences of the development of religion in the US and in Germany are evaluated and the societal similarities and differences are discussed.

The thesis consists of two parts, as there are two claims that are to be made in a comparison of religion between the US and Germany. The first claim is that using demographic data for exact numbers of religious peoples, the United States is more religious, generally speaking, than the Federal Republic of Germany. The second claim explores the belief that neither American nor German society is more religious than the other in any explicit way. This is important because in order to understand the rise of atheism, or non-religious thinking, one has to look at the historical development of religion in the United States in comparison to its development in Germany. Also, in order to understand the history of these two nations and their religious journeys, one must understand that religion is an integral part of humanity.

## 2. Methodology

The methods used in this paper were mostly based on historical literature and utilizing contemporary search engines. Britannica Encyclopedia, for example, has been a valuable resource, providing many of the sources used within this paper. Another website that was of great use for the purpose of collecting information for this research paper was the Pew Research Center. Additionally, some of the information, particularly of historical value, came from personal knowledge but were corroborated and reinforced by scholarly sources.

### 3. Background

It is a challenge to ascertain the origins of religion in the United States, partly due to the US being only 244 years old and made up by immigrants from many different backgrounds [3]. The origins of religion in the United States consist of a mixture of Protestant settlers from England, Catholics from France and Spain, and untold numbers of followers of other religions from Africa, eastern and southern Europe, the Middle East, and the Far East. However, going back to the first people to inhabit the lands of the United States, one notices a totally different religious group; the Native Americans. This group brought culture from Asia across the land bridge and began settling in the Americas [4]. Along with their culture, came religion. In many of the Native American religions, there is a single deity that created everything and is known as the Great Spirit [5]. To the Native Americans, every aspect of the Earth, whether it be rain, good harvest, or successful hunts, was sacred and a blessing. But, as is plainly seen, this is not what the majority of American people believe and adhere to and therefore Native American religion does not play a major part in this paper. With this in mind, what is the “origin” of religion in America? To answer the question of origin, one must look at the religious customs that the United States adheres to. Many of the holidays and customs that are observed and celebrated in contemporary United States are based on customs and religions brought by the European settlers of generations past [6]. This is evidenced with many of the holidays in the United States such as Christmas and Easter [7]. A vast majority of the United States is Christian, “71%” [8], with each of them being put into many different groups (Figure 1).

Unlike other nations of the world, where Christianity may only have one or a few different denominations or sects, in the United States there are numerous kinds, sometimes differing by region. For example, you have the Catholics (both Roman Catholic and Orthodoxy, mainly in Alaska or among immigrants from Eastern Europe), Baptists, Methodists/Wesleyans, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, and so many more (Figure 2).

### 4. Religion in Germany

While the origin of the German people is obscure, it is somewhat easier to determine where these people came from. Most sources agree that the people of Germany can trace their ancestry back to the tribal groups of the Baltic Sea coast as well as the upper parts of Scandanavia (modern day Norway and Sweden) to some degree [9]. These people from the Baltic coast and Scandanavia descended into central and southern areas of what is now known as Germany, bringing their religious traditions with them. These tribal groups would form the “barbarian wilderness” that would border the Roman Empire [9]. These tribes were pagan, much like the rest of the “known” world (i.e., Europa) at the time, in that they believed in a pantheon of gods (much like the Greeks, Romans, and the rest of the Nordic peoples) with Odin being the “god of gods” [10]. They remained this way until the coming of Christendom during the Middle Ages. At this time, the prevailing religion was Catholicism, anything else was considered blasphemy or Jewish. This too came to change when in 1517, a priest by the name of Martin Luther began preaching his interpretations of the Bible and caused a schism that broke the Church in two groups [11]. Henceforth, there would be two groups of Christianity, the Catholics and the Protestants. This remained the same over the course of time with more and more different groups emerging. Jehovah’s Witnesses arrived in Germany in 1902 [12], Jewish communities began to spring up all across Europe with there being 505,000 Jews in Germany in 1933 [13], and there were many more denominations of Protestantism springing up all over the place.

During the 17th and 18th centuries, an event known as the Enlightenment took place. This time is called the Enlightenment due to the great advances in the sciences and other fields of reason. For instance, Sir Isaac Newton published his laws of motion as well as described gravity. John Locke published his idea of “three basic human rights”, before this time, most basic rights were afforded to someone by the ruler of a nation or the status at which they were born into [6>14]. After this period of history, more and more people began to use reason and science to explain the world around them. While this also happened in the United States, it became more and more common in Europe. By the 20th Century, non-religious people were fairly common.

Today, there are many different religious groups to be seen in Germany. There are, of course, the Catholics (both Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox), the Protestants (Lutherans), Jehovah’s Witnesses, Jews, Muslims, and even a staggering population of non-religious folk (Figure 3). One can observe a similar situation in the United States. With continuously growing immigration to the US, there are now Muslims, Hindus, Jews, Catholics, Protestants (and the many different branches), and a growing atheistic population (Figure 1).

Statistically, Germany is a predominately Christian country with over 60% of the nation believing in the Christian God [15]. This does not however mean that Germany is a church-going nation. In fact, the majority of Germans rarely go to church, if at all. According to a 2013 survey, only 8.4% of Germans go to church once a week while 34.4% of Germans practically never go to church (Figure 4). This is, to Americans at least, rather strange that a nation with such a high Christian population would not go to more church services. Like much of the Western World, Germany to is observing a growing population of Atheists. The majority of Atheists live in the Eastern part of Germany, due in part because of the nation’s past as the German Democratic Republic and a Communist nation, wherein religion was frowned upon. As of 2018, 37.8% of Germany identifies as Atheist or otherwise having no religion [16]. As for the other groups, as of 2018, 27.7% of Germans are Roman Catholic, 25.5% are Protestant, 5.1% are Muslim, 1.9% are Orthodox Catholic, 1.1% are of other Christian groups, and .9% of Germans are of some group other than these (Figure 3).

## 5. Religion in the United States

Much like Germany, the United States is predominately Christian with 71% of Americans being Christian [8]. 2% of the American population is Jewish, 1% is Muslim, 1% is Hindu, 1% is Buddhist, another 2% is identified as other, and 22.8% of the American population is unaffiliated with any religion [8]. As shown in this data, the United States is seeing the same trend as much of the Western World, wherein more and more people (mostly among the younger populations) are beginning to leave religion and are either Atheist or indifferent about religion. Even so, Americans tend to go to church much more often than Germans with 37-39% of Americans actually attending church service once a week; a stark contrast to church attendance in Germany.

## 6. Results & Discussion

With a growing trend for people to leave religion behind, again especially among the younger populations, the number of religious people in Germany is decreasing but still remains the vast majority. As of 2018, 62.2% of the 82.79 million German citizens adhered to some kind of religion, whether it be Christianity, Judaism, Islam, or something else. While religion holds the majority of the population, Atheism holds 37.8% of the population [16].

As for the United States and its population of 318.4 million people in 2014, 76.6% of the American people adhered to some kind of religion. The observed trend of Atheism is growing in



the United States just as it is in Germany. As of 2014, Atheists made up 22.8% of the population in the United States [17].

## 7. Comparing Religious Demographic of the Two Nations

The following questions related to the thesis of this research paper arise: Which of these nations would be more religious than the other? Is one of them more religious than the other? Or are these two nations closer in comparison than previously thought? According to the data, the United States is staggeringly more religious than Germany. This can be seen by how Germany, while having a smaller population than the US, is still able to have more people that do not adhere to any religion, than the United States.

Now that the statistical question has been answered, the next to be answered is the same question but with different parameters. Which nation is more religious than the other, the United States of America or the Federal Republic of Germany? Statistically, it seems like the United States is far more religious than Germany. But what remains is the question of which of these two nations have the more religious society?

## 8. The Older of the Two Religious Bases

There is no question that Germany has the undeniably older religious base. German religion can be based to the old Germanic Pagan traditions. Then came the Romanization of the tribes and then Christendom arrived. During these early ages and the years that would come after, many German folk tales were created with many of them having some religious themes. The great split of the Catholic Church even happens before America's birth. This split is culminated by the Reformation. The Reformation is brought about by Martin Luther in 1517 when divided German Christians between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism. Following this, The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 introduced the idea that the inhabitants of Germany's numerous territories should follow the religion of the ruler. Thus, the Southern and Western parts of Germany became Roman Catholic, and the Northern and Eastern parts became more Protestant [11].

Fast forward a few hundred years, and now the people of Germany are free to practice whatever religion they choose. Separation of church and state is a concept that is within both the United States and Germany, however, there are some differences in both nations. For instance, many of the holidays in both Germany and the US are religious (Christmas, Easter, etc.). In Germany, one of the major political parties is the Christian Democratic Union [18]. However, in the United States, none of the political parties are inherently religious but many of the members will promote Christian ideals. These days, in the US, the political right is typically seen as more Conservative Christian while the political left is seen as more atheistic or a mix of other religions including more Liberalistic Christian [19]. In the United States, churches are not taxed and are in fact expected to fund themselves through contributions from their members [20]. This is quite the opposite in Germany where there is a "church tax". This is where the tax offices collect the tax for the churches from their members [21]. This tax is 8% of your income in Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg and 9% of your income in the rest of Germany. For example, if a Berlin resident made 30,000 euros a year, then they would pay 800 euros in church tax [22]. Due to this, some Germans tend to renounce church membership to avoid the tax.

In Germany, Catholic and Protestant classes are typically part of the school curriculum. However, if you aren't of these religions, you do not have to take these classes [18]. On top of that, theologians study at state universities and if someone wishes to become a teacher of religion or a professor of theology, they would need the consent of his or her church [21]. This is quite

different from the United States, where religious symbols and teachings are banned from most schools with exceptions being Religions classes, wherein the instructor cannot just focus or advocate for a single religion. As for studying religion in college, many schools do have religious studies and there are even religious colleges.

## 9. Church Attendance in Germany and the US

As far as actually going to church, Germans do it significantly less than Americans. In Germany, very few Germans are church goers, as little as 8.4% of the population. Instead of holding church services, many of the cathedrals in Germany are tourist attractions and tributes to the storied history of the nation [23]. This is however drastically different to the United States where, depending on region, going to church at least once a week is expected. Unlike Germany, church going is far more frequent in the United States, more-so in some regions than others. For many, going to church is almost an expectation rather than a choice. It is estimated that somewhere between 37% and 39% of Americans go to church at least once a week.

## 10. Atheism in Germany and the United States

The final topic related to the thesis is atheism and how it is viewed both in the United States and in Germany. But what exactly is atheism? Atheism is the disbelief in the existence of God or gods. Typically, atheists rely on reason and scientific studies to explain the unknown. There is a growing trend throughout the Western world where the younger members of the populace are beginning to turn away from religion and turn towards atheism, or otherwise unaffiliate themselves from any belief.

In Germany, atheism is looked at as just another belief system. Atheists make up 37.8% of the people in Germany [16]. On top of that, atheists are not viewed as negatively as in the US; instead, they are simply viewed as other people that have different beliefs. In fact, the Eastern part of Germany is mostly atheistic, much like a lot of Eastern Europe in general. On top of that, many Germans, if they even believe in God, do not take the bible literally [18]. One of the reasons that the Eastern part of Germany believes in God less than other places could be attributed to that area formally being the Communist ruled German Democratic Republic [24]. However, even though Germany has a high atheistic population, the nation still holds massive distrust for the Church of Scientology and have even debated banning the church all together [18].

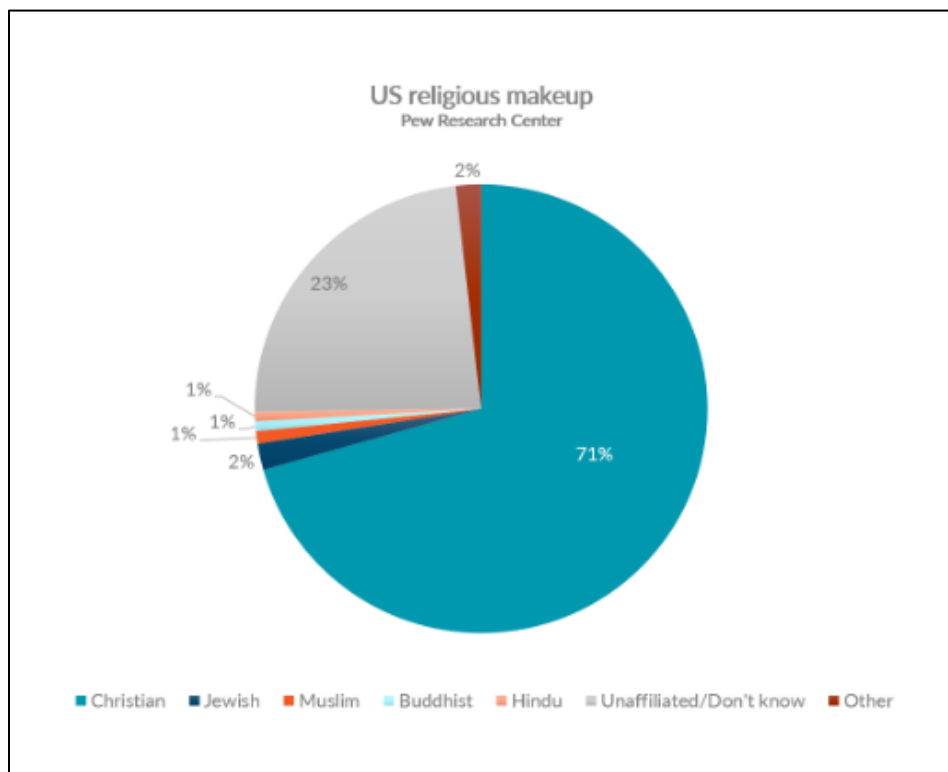
Atheism in the United States is vastly different, however. Here in America, depending on the region, it is less likely for the people to accept atheism. If someone is found to be atheist, especially in the South and Midwest, they could be ostracized from their friends, family, and community. If someone is running for public office in Alabama and it comes out that this person is atheist, it is highly unlikely that this person would be elected. In fact, he or she may face public backlash at their non-belief in a God [25]. This can largely be attributed to the fact that Alabama is part of the "bible belt" or many of the states in the south and deep south of the United States. In this section of the US, these states are inhabited by a majority Christian populace, so much so that the politics of this region of the country are influenced by Christianity [26]. Many in the United States are faced with disrespect from Christians and even other groups and are often accused of being horrible or even evil people just because they are atheists; while this happens often, this is not the rule as plenty of people are accepting of others or they simply go about their own business. However, if someone were to go to the West Coast or the North East, they would find that people are more welcoming of atheists in those places [27].

## 11. Conclusion

This research paper provided data on the role religion plays in American and German society. Through these observations, answers to two very difficult questions were brought forth. The first question, which nation is more religious, statistically speaking? It was found that the United States is, statistically, more religious than Germany by a staggering amount and likely will remain so due to the history of the young nation. As for the second question, which nation has a more religious society? It was found that the United States is more religious in popular opinion, but German society tends to be more religious in official practice. However, both nations share similarities in how they govern themselves with a separation of church and state.

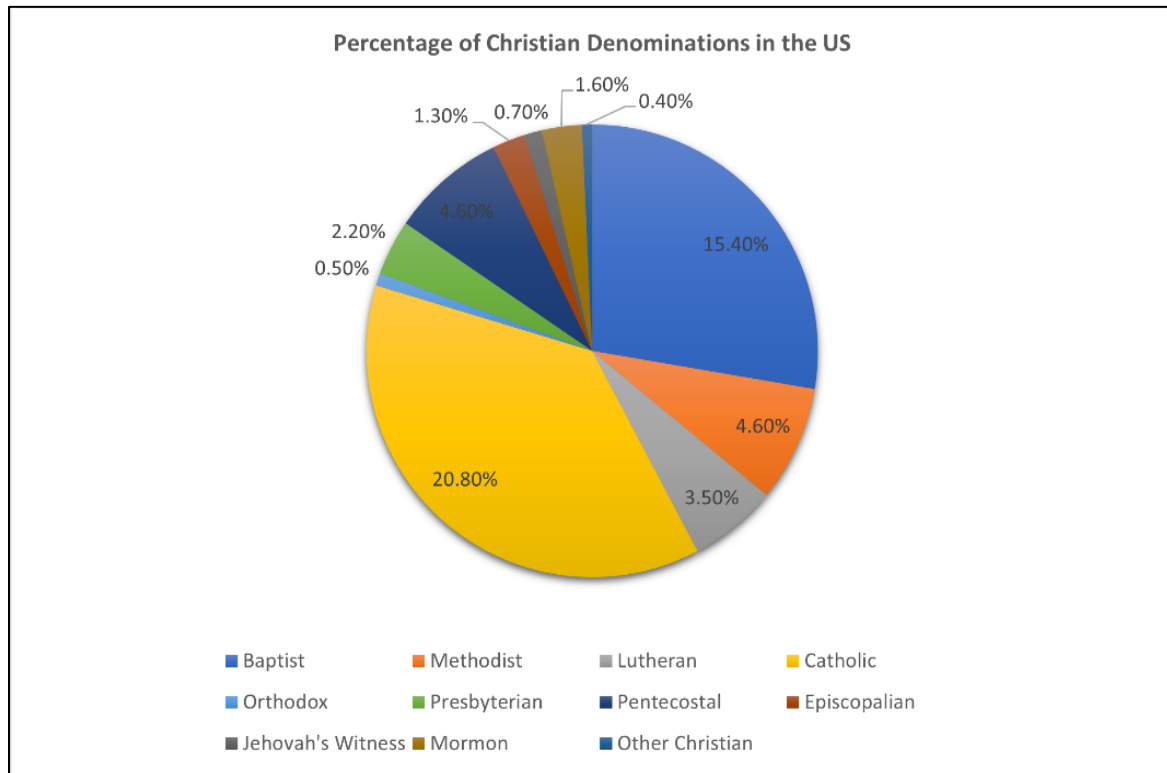
One major difference between the two nations was the view of atheism. In Germany, it is viewed in a kind light and as just another belief, but in the United States and particularly in the South, atheists are seen in a more negative light. While it can be said that while one nation may be more religious by the numbers, both nations are close to being equally different and similar. Regardless of whether or not one nation is more religious than the other, there is one aspect that is certain. It's certain that, given the history of each nation as well as the deep human connection to religion and religious thinking, the growing trend of atheism, and irreligion in general, is a fascinating phenomenon that needs further examination. Will this trend simply plateau at some point in the future, becoming just another event in the history of these nations? Or, will the trend continue, going against the connection to religion that is ingrained in the human mind? Regardless of the future that awaits, one can take solace in the knowledge that these nations are far more alike, in some regards that is, than the people that inhabit them like to believe.

## 12. Figures

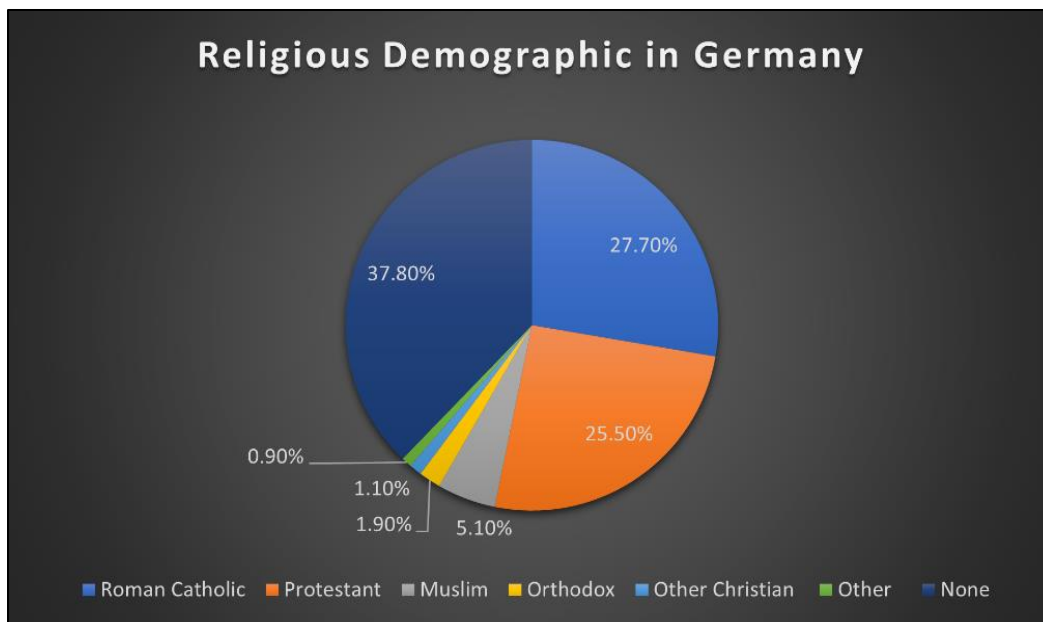


**Figure 1:** Religious Makeup United States (2015) [8]

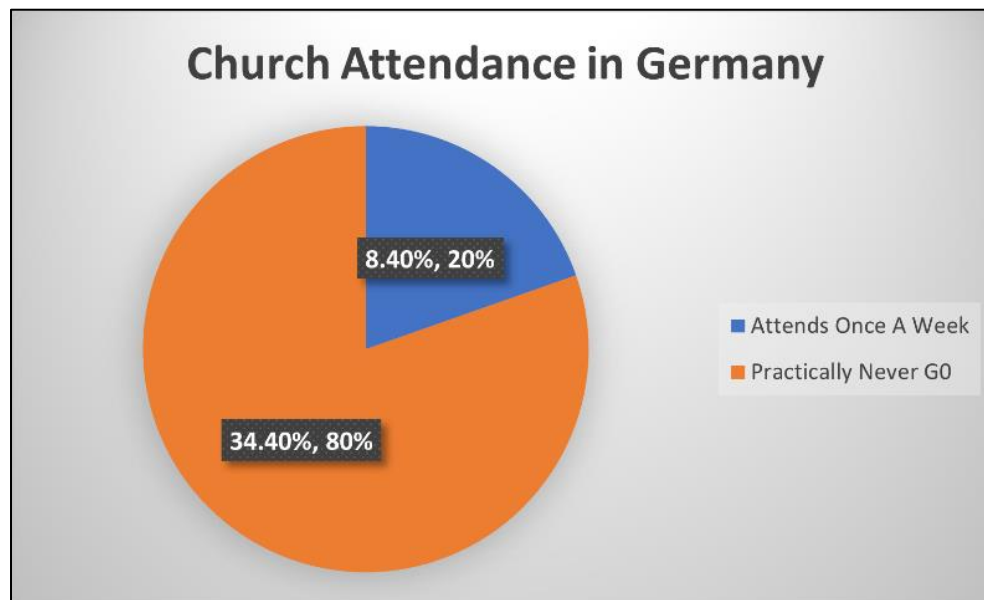




**Figure 2:** Percentage of Christian Denominations in the United States (2015) [15]



**Figure 3:** Religious Demographic in Germany (2013) [16]



**Figure 4:** Church Attendance in Germany 2019 [23]

### 13. References

- [1] J. Jensen, *What Is Religion?*, 2nd ed., Abingdon, Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2020, pp. 1-15.
- [2] S. Guthrie, "Religion: What Is It?," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 35, no. 4, 1996, pp. 412-419.
- [3] AS.com, "How Old Is America On July 4Th 2020 And What Was Its Population When Founded?," 2020 [cited Sept 15, 2020], retrieved from [https://en.as.com/en/2020/07/04/latest\\_news/1593870094\\_185404.html](https://en.as.com/en/2020/07/04/latest_news/1593870094_185404.html).
- [4] W. Haag, "The Bering strait land bridge," *Scientific American*, vol. 206, no. 1, 1962, pp. 112-123.
- [5] Encyclopedia Britannica, "Native American Church.," 1998 [cited Aug 25, 2020], retrieved from [academic.oup.com/levels/collegiate/article/Native-American-Church/55029](https://academic.oup.com/levels/collegiate/article/Native-American-Church/55029).
- [6] M. Gordon, "Protestantism in the United States." *Encyclopedia of World Religions: Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, 2016 [cited Oct 10, 2020], retrieved from [https://login.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/fofe/cvt/protestantism\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states/0?institutionId=6481](https://login.pallas2.tcl.sc.edu/login?url=https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/fofe/cvt/protestantism_in_the_united_states/0?institutionId=6481).
- [7] Platform. Globig.Co "US Holidays | Religion | Holiday Calendar", 2016 [cited Oct 25, 2020], retrieved from <https://platform.globig.co/knowledgebase/US/us-expansion/holidays-in-us>.
- [8] Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, "America's Changing Religious Landscape", 2015 [cited Aug. 18, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape>.
- [9] Germanculture.Ua, "Early History Of Germany – German Culture", 2020 [cited Oct 8, 2020], retrieved from <https://germanculture.com.ua/germany-history/early-history-of-germany/>.
- [10] Encyclopedia Britannica, "Germanic Religion And Mythology", 2019 [cited Oct 10, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Germanic-religion-and-mythology>.
- [11] W. Berensten and P. Heather, "Germany - Religion", 2020 [cited Oct. 20, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/place/Germany/Religion>.

- 
- [12] Encyclopedia.Ushmm.Org, "Jehovah's Witnesses In Germany: From The 1890S To 1945", 2020 [cited Oct 25, 2020], retrieved from <https://encyclopedia.usmmm.org/content/en/article/jehovahs-witnesses-in-germany-from-the-1890s-to-the-1930s>.
- [13] Encyclopedia.Ushmm.Org, "Germany: Jewish Population In 1933", 2020 [cited Oct 10, 2020], retrieved from <https://encyclopedia.usmmm.org/content/en/article/germany-jewish-population-in-1933>.
- [14] B. Duignan, "Enlightenment | Definition, Summary, History, Philosophers, & Facts", 2020 [cited Oct 20, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/event/Enlightenment-European-history>.
- [15] Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, "Appendix B: Classification Of Protestant Denominations", 2015 [cited Aug. 10, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/appendix-b-classification-of-protestant-denominations>.
- [16] Cia.gov, "Europe :: Germany — The World Factbook - Central Intelligence Agency", 2020 [cited Aug 10, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/gm.html>.
- [17] Cia.gov, "North America :: United States — The World Factbook - Central Intelligence Agency", 2020 [cited Aug 25, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/us.html>.
- [18] German-Way.Com, "Cultural Comparisons 3 – The German Way & More", 2020 [cited Aug. 20, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.german-way.com/history-and-culture/cultural-comparisons/cultural-comparisons-part-3/>.
- [19] M. Lipka, "U.S. Religious Groups And Their Political Leanings", 2016 [cited Aug 25, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/02/23/u-s-religious-groups-and-their-political-leanings/>.
- [20] J. Ferguson, "Tax Exemptions". Freedom Forum Institute, 2008 [cited Sept 28, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.freedomforuminstitute.org/first-amendment-center/topics/freedom-of-religion/establishment-clause-overview/tax-exemptions/>.
- [21] Deutschland.de, "Five Facts About State And Religion", 2018 [cited Sept 28, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.deutschland.de/en/topic/politics/state-and-religion-in-germany-the-five-most-important-facts>.
- [22] Mittelstand, WW+KN, "Church Tax (Kirchensteuer)", WW+KN Steuerberater Für Den Mittelstand, 2010 [cited Aug 25, 2020], retrieved from <https://wwkn.de/en/about-german-taxes/church-tax-kirchensteuer/>.
- [23] Platform. Globig.Co "German Religion | Holidays | Festivals | Holiday Calendar", [cited Dec 18, 2020] retrieved from <https://platform.globig.co/knowledgebase/DE/landscape/holidays-in-germany-festivals>.
- [24] P. Froese and S. Pfaff, "Explaining a Religious Anomaly: A Historical Analysis of Secularization in Eastern Germany," *Journal of the Scientific Study of Religion*, Wiley, vol. 44, no. 4, Dec. 2005, pp. 397-422.
- [25] P. Edgell, D. Hartmann, E. Stewart, and J. Gerteis, "Atheists and Other Cultural Outsiders: Moral Boundaries and the Non-Religious in the United States", *Social Forces*, Oxford University Press, vol. 95, no. 2, Dec. 2016, pp. 607-638.
- [26] A. Pariona, "The Bible Belt Of The United States", *Worldatlas*, 2017, [cited Oct 15, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-bible-belt-of-the-united-states.html>.
- [27] S. Omondi, "The Belt Regions Of The United States", *Worldatlas*, 2017 [cited Oct 15, 2020], retrieved from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/the-belt-regions-of-the-united-states.html>.
-