

References for “The World At Our Door: Understanding Key World Religions Around Us”

By Randall Otto

- ¹ All percentages are drawn from http://adherents.com/rel_USA.html#religions. The numbers listed there as 2004 estimates seem generally to be low; hence, most of the numbers of adherents listed here are taken from “The Pluralism Project” at Harvard University. (<http://www.pluralism.org/resources/statistics/tradition.php#Hinduism>)
- ² The New Age movement, though imprecise, grew by 240% from 1990-2000, whereas Sikhism grew by 338% during that period to a present estimated 250,000.
- ³ <http://www.religioustolerance.org/islam.htm>; however, cf. <http://www.bible.ca/islam/islam-myths-fastest-growing.htm>, where it is maintained that, while Muslim growth is double that of Christianity, this owes largely to its predominance in third-world countries, whereas worldwide Christians are actually converting others to the faith as a rate almost double that of Muslims.
- ⁴ So said by the Zoroastrians (<http://tenets.zoroastrianism.com/WhatisReligionHowisitthatthereareMoreThanOneReligions.pdf>), Hindus (<http://www.hinduismtoday.com/archives/1994/3/1994-3-14.shtml>), African traditional religion (<http://afgen.com/atr.html>), as well as Christians and others!
- ⁵ The following is drawn from James C. Livingston, *Anatomy of the Sacred: An Introduction to Religion* (5th ed.; Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2005) 12-15.
- ⁶ Mary P. Fisher, *Living Religions* (6th ed.; Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2005) 69. However, in one of the Upanishads, a sage, when asked how many gods there are, “says there are 303, then that there are 3,003, when pressed further that there are 33, 6, 2, 1½, and finally 1. In the next verse he settles on 33” (Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996] 44).
- ⁷ Interestingly, Aryans who did not migrate into India became the founders of the ancient Iranian (*Iran* means, “land of the Aryans”) religion of Zoroastrianism, which seems to have had some influence on Jewish faith during the time of the Babylonian Captivity under the Persian Empire in the 6th C. BC. “It is a debatable point among scholars in what specific ways and to what extent Persian influence made itself felt among the Jews; but it can hardly be denied that the apocalyptic teaching, for example, concerning such matters as ‘the two ages’, the determinism of historical events, angelology and demonology, the notion of the final judgment and eschatological ideas generally owes much to this source” (D. S. Russell, *The Method & Message of Jewish Apocalyptic* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964] 19).
- ⁸ Flood, *Hinduism*, 58.
- ⁹ Mundaka Upanishad, 1.1.6, cited in Manuel Velasquez, *Philosophy: A Text with Readings* (9th ed.; Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2005), 44.
- ¹⁰ Fisher, *Living Religions*, 75.
- ¹¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Om>
- ¹² Flood, *Hinduism*, 116.
- ¹³ David R. Kinsley, *Hinduism: A Cultural Perspective*, (2nd ed.; Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1993) 55-56.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 115.
- ¹⁵ Geoffrey Parrinder, ed., *World Religions from Ancient History to the Present* (New York: Facts on File 1971) 262.
- ¹⁶ Fisher, *Living Religions*, 129.
- ¹⁷ Such legends are common of the founders and key personages of many religions. Thus, for example, Jewish legend has it that Moses was able to walk and talk the day he was born, despite being three months premature! He was purportedly of exceptional beauty, having been conceived with the glory-cloud of God’s Shekinah overshadowing him, and of such wisdom that at four months he would prophesy that he would receive the Torah (cf., e.g., Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998] 2:264-270). It is worth observing, however, that despite such legends of Moses and of Jesus in the apocryphal gospels, none of this material was deemed to have the credibility and validity necessary to be included in canonical scripture.
- ¹⁸ Parrinder, *World Religions*, 275.
- ¹⁹ Edward Conze, “Buddhism: The Mahayana,” in R. C. Zaehner, ed., *The Hutchinson Encyclopedia of Living Faiths* (London: Helicon, 1988) 309.
- ²⁰ Winfried Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths: A Christian Introduction to World Religions* (Downers Grove, InterVarsity, 1998) 247.
- ²¹ The requirements under Halakah for conversion are that a *beth din* (house of judgment) witnesses and approves of the conversion. Men are circumcised and both men and women are immersed (*t’vilah*) in a

mikveh (ritual bath). There must be an understanding and acceptance of the obligations of being a religiously observant Jew. After confirming that all these criteria have been met, the *beth din* issues a *Shtar Giur* ("Certificate of Conversion"), certifying that the former gentile is now a Jew and will always be one.

²² The Torah, of course, consists of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, but the Prophets consist of the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Samuel [considered one book, not two], 1-2 Kings) and Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Book of the Twelve [Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, all considered one book]; the Writings consist of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, The Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah (considered one book) and 1-2 Chronicles.

²³ Society for Humanistic Judaism, <http://www.shj.org/>

²⁴ Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007) 14.

²⁵ This is seen repeatedly, e.g., in Martin Lings, *Muhammad: His Life based on the Earliest Sources* (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1983).

²⁶ Theodore M. Ludwig, *The Sacred Paths: Understanding the Religions of the World* (3rd ed.; Upper Saddle River, NJ: 2001) 435.

²⁷ Although the Qur'an allows Muslim men to marry up to four wives, providing they can care adequately for all of them, Muhammad had at least eleven wives after Khadijah's death in 621, the youngest of whom was

Aisha, the daughter of Abu Bakr, who was nine years old when they were engaged and eleven when they married. A complete listing of Muhammad's wives may be found at <http://anwary-islam.com/women/prophets-wives.htm>.

²⁸ Lewis M. Hopfe, *Religions of the World* (9th ed.; ed. Rev'd by Mark R. Woodward: Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2005) 339.

²⁹ Parrinder, *World Religions*, 475. Elwood says, "even allowing for the elements of rhythm and allusive eloquence that are presumed to have been lost in translation, one may feel an initial disappointment. The book may seem disorganized, repetitious, or platitudinous" (*Many Peoples, Many Faiths*, 338).

³⁰ Efraim Karsh, *Islamic Imperialism: A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007) 5.

³¹ *Ibid*, 28.

³² Cited by Beverley Milton-Edwards, *Islamic Fundamentalism Since 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 26.

³³ Pipes, "Who is the Enemy?," January, 2002, <http://www.danielpipes.org/article/103>.

³⁴ Robert S. Elwood, *Many Peoples, Many Faiths* (5th ed.; Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1996) 362.

³⁵ Corduan, *Neighboring Faiths*, 108.