

### 1: List of religions and spiritual traditions - Wikipedia

*These small numbers mask the historical importance of this religion. Both Eastern and Western religions can trace ties back to Zoroastrianism, meaning the religion has most likely had more impact on the world than any other belief system.*

Shoko Asahara A blind year-old yoga teacher with 18, Japanese followers, many of whom were young scientists. Asahara convinced them that the end of the world is at hand and that a catastrophic war or natural disaster will result in all the followers going to heaven. On March 20th, , they released poison gas in a Tokyo subway and killed 12 and sent to the hospital. Ahmadiyya Movement - Founder: Hazrat Mirza "Jesus was not a partner in the Godhead, as was not Jacob. Ananda Marga Yoga - Leader: Anthroposophical Society - Leader: Foremost amongst his discoveries was his direct experience of the reality of the Christ, which soon took a central place in his whole teaching. The many books and lectures which he published set forth the magnificent scope of his vision. From he turned also to the arts - drama, painting, architecture, eurhythm - showing the creative forming powers that can be drawn from spiritual vision. This is a state of consciousness Various groups across the U. God, called by different names, is one but unknowable. Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship - Leader: Bawa Muhaiyaddeen "God is a secret and a mystery, but man is also a mystery. Only God can see God. So if man is to see God, he must become God. Man becomes God, and God becomes man. Black Muslims - Leader: A sect of Islam originating in America composed of black Americans. Followers, sometimes called Black Muslims, believe that Allah God appeared in to the last great prophet Elijah Muhammad, in the person of Wallace D. Elijah Muhammad borrowed many beliefs from traditional Islam but introduced important differences. Most notable was the focus on black oppression and equating Satan and evil with the white race. Malcolm X became a notable leader of the movement in the s and the focus on black supremacy and militancy escalated. Malcolm X later converted to traditional Islam and rejected radical black supremacy and was subsequently murdered. Branch Davidians - Leader: At noon on April 19th, , David Koresh formerly Vernon Howell held fast with preaching on the riddle of the Seven Seals of Solomon before luring them into a fiery grave with the promise of immortality. Center for Spiritual Awareness - Leader: Roy Eugene Davis Also called: Buddha, Sri Krishna, and Jesus were enlightened souls. The awakening of individuals to the realization of their own Christ-nature is what will liberate man and transform society" Darshan: The vision of Light, Roy E. Jesus was a man who reached Christ-consciousness and was on earth to share the truth of this consciousness. Children of God - Leader: David Brandt Berg Moses David Started as a fundamentalist counter-culture ministry, but drifted toward belief in the occult, reincarnation, and sexual freedom. Christian Scientist - Founder: Although a distinctive part of Christian Science is the healing of disease by spiritual means alone, its higher purpose is universal salvation from every phase of evil - including sin and death. Church of the Living Word - Leader: John Robert Stevens Also called: According to Stevens, this begins with contemporary revelations which make the Living Word Christ to the World. Although some acknowledgment is made of the inspiration and authority of the Scripture, in practice the source of teaching is current revelation, not the Bible. Church Universal and Triumphant - Leader: Elizabeth Claire Prophet Also called: Summit International or Summit Lighthouse. The Church Universal and Triumphant is a mixture of eastern religions, Theosophy, Christianity, and many other things. Elizabeth is recognized as one of the two witnesses of Revelation Her late husband and founder, Mark, is considered a man that had the Christ Consciousness within him. He was one of many who achieved the "God self" witness. Pandit Usharbudh "God is essentially formless God may manifest Himself- Herself-Itself in any form, at any time, at any place, on any planet Jesus may be accepted as one of the many incarnations of God. Divine Light Mission - Leader: Ji claims the world needs the knowledge of Reality, and he claims to be the source of that knowledge and of peace in the world, according to David J. Hesselgrave, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. It claims to be the way to God- realization via the "ancient science of soul travel. Findhorn Foundation University of Light - Leaders: Peter and Eileen Caddy "The Devic Deva is a being of light would emphasize that man has to do one thing to reverse the trend of events on the planet: They appear to be pantheistic. The group, practicing a form of spiritism, became famous because the Findhorn community in Scotland has a producing garden near the

Arctic Circle which is supposedly taken care of by plant spirits. Hare Krishna Movement- Founder: Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Also called: Salvation comes by chanting the name of their god, Hare Krishna, at least 1, times daily. They believe in the literal interpretation of the Hindu scriptures, but they also accept the Bible as one of the scriptures. Jesus is one of their gurus. Guy Ballard Pen Name: This almighty I Am presence is a pure reservoir of energy stationed over the head which can be drawn on at will. Directs praise and adoration on the 18th century French Occultist, St. This cult is an off-shoot of the Theosophical Society. However, the "I Am" movement still exists as an independent organization. Iglesia Ni Cristo - Leader: We believe in only one true god, the god of creation. Jesus Christ is a great savior and was commissioned by God to be the savior. Inner Peace Movement - Leader: Christ consciousness is the highest. Jesus had reached Christ Consciousness and taught this while on earth. Jesus was a man. They separate Jesus and Christ. Integral Yoga Institute - Founder: Swami Satchidananda "There are not many gods; there is only One. And that One has no name, no form, no place. Thus Christ is not God. He is everywhere - in actuality, neither he, nor she, nor it The two sides are positive and negative, light and shade. Evil is also God. Mahavira A world religion begun as a reform movement of Hinduism, Jainism was born out of teachings of Mahavira b. Later followers, however, deified Mahavira himself calling him the 24th Tirthankara last great savior teacher who descended from heaven without sin and with all knowledge. The Witnesses regard this as a necessary battle to unseat Satan, a battle with over two billion dead, none of whom will be raised up to heaven. One side will use bows, arrows, handstaves and spears, and the other cloudbursts, floods, earthquakes, hailstones, all-consuming fires and flesh-eating plagues. In the first place, God directly tells us that Jesus is now a spirit being" Epiphany Studies in the Scriptures. The proper translation shows that Christ is not Jehovah Liberal Catholic Church - Leaders: Matthews "Obviously, God is not and cannot be a person. Thus, no divine Christ. The persons of the Holy Trinity are representatives or masks for the One God who is beyond individuality; is unlimited; eminent; and transcendent" The One Existence, E. Megiddo Mission - Founder: The angel Moroni told Joseph Smith that a book written on golden plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of North America and containing the "fullness of the everlasting Gospel" as delivered by the Jesus to the ancient inhabitants of North America, had been deposited on a hillside outside the town where Smith lived. Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God More than followers of this movement burned themselves alive March 19, They predicted apocolypse and committed mass suicide. One of them, Joseph Kibweteere, announced that the Virgin Mary had appeared before him in a vision.

### 2: Major Religions Ranked by Size

*\*An estimate of the number of pioneer workers needed for initial church planting among unreached people groups by country. Estimates are calculated only for unreached.*

Teaching[ change change source ] A religion is passed on from one person to another through teachings and stories which are often called "myths" which may be written down like the Bible , or told from memory like the Dreamtime stories of Australian Aboriginal people. In many religions, there are people who take the role of "priest" and spend their lives teaching others about the religion. There are also people who take the role of "pastor" and spend their life caring for other people. A person may be both a priest and a pastor. They are called by different names in different religions. Symbols[ change change source ] Symbols are used to remind people of their religious beliefs. They are also used or worn as a sign to other people that the person belongs to a particular religion. A symbol might be something that is drawn or written, it might be a piece of clothing or jewellery, it might be a sign that a person makes with their body, or it might be a building or monument or artwork. Picture symbols for different religions are shown in the box in the introduction to this article. Witness and conversion[ change change source ] In many religions, it is thought important that people should show other people that they are following a particular religion. This might be done in a general way by wearing a symbol or a type of clothing. Many people believe that it is important to tell other people about their religion, so that they can believe as well. This is called "witnessing". These Sikhs in Canada wear a head-dress of turban or head scarf as a symbol and witness to their religion. There are many ways to witness. A young person might simply say to their friends "I do not use drugs or get drunk because of my religion". This is a witness. A person may tell their classmates, workmates and friends about their beliefs. A person might have printed material such as books or leaflets that they give to other people to read. A person might travel to a different country to teach, to work in a health service or to help people in some other way. People who do this are called "missionaries". These are different ways that people witness to their religion. When a person hears a witness and decides that they will join the religion, this is called a "conversion". Usually a person decides to join a religion because they like what they have read or been told, and they believe that they are hearing the truth. They join the religion because they choose. However, throughout history there have been many times when people have been forced to join a religion by violence and threats. This is still happening today. In most countries of the world, people are free to belong to whatever religion they choose. This is generally thought of as a basic human right. However, there are parts of the world where it is illegal against the law to witness to any religion except the one accepted by the government of the country. People who belong to other religions may be threatened, put in jail or murdered. A Carmelite nun meditating on the Bible Ritual[ change change source ] Rituals are an important part of the tradition of many religions. In many religions, it is the tradition for people to meet for a celebration on one day in every week. There are also major celebrations that may be held only at certain times of the year, for example, on the birthday of a person who is honoured in that religion. Some religions have celebrations for different seasons of the year, or when the sun or moon is in a certain part of the sky. Birth, naming, reaching an age to think for oneself, reaching adulthood, marriage, childbirth, sickness and death are all celebrated by some religions. Having a celebration or special traditions when a person dies is very common. It is the traditions that are about death that give the earliest evidence of religious beliefs. Scientists have discovered that , years ago, Neanderthal people started burying their dead. Early Homo sapiens put tools and other things into graves with the bodies, as if they could use them in the afterlife. From 40, years ago, many of the objects in graves are small artworks. Scientists believe that these objects were put there for religious reasons. Leaders in two religious institutions, the Dalai Lama Buddhist and Archbishop Desmond Tutu Anglican Groups and institutions[ change change source ] An institution is one name for an organization. Many religions have organizations that manage the way that people who follow the religion are to act. The organization might employ religious leaders, educate people into the ideas of the religion, manage money, own buildings and make rules. Many religions have sub-groups which are called denominations. Buildings[ change change source ] A Jewish man reads the Psalms of David at the Western

Wall, Jerusalem Most religions have special buildings where people meet. They are often called temples. In Judaism , they are called synagogues. In Christianity , they are called churches. In Islam , they are called mosques. In Buddhism there are pagodas , temples and monasteries. In Hinduism they are called Mandirs. People often try to make their religious building as beautiful as possible. Some religious buildings are great works of architecture. Art and music[ change change source ] People often make artworks that are about their religion, or that are used in religious celebration, or are put in a religious building. Religious art comes in all shapes and sizes, from tiny pieces of jewellery to huge statues and paintings. Artworks often give important clues to historians about different ancient religions that are not well understood. Music is often important in religious celebrations. Singing, chanting and playing musical instruments are often part of regular religious gatherings of people. Special music is often used on special occasions. Many famous composers have written religious music. The words of songs that are 3, years old are used every day in Christian churches and Jewish synagogues.

### 3: Top 10 Religions You Never Knew Existed - Listverse

*Builders of the Adytum (or BOTA for short) is a religion created in California by Dr. Paul Foster Case. The religion teaches its adherents by correspondence but also has bases around the world where people meet and perform religious ceremonies.*

A Multimedia Exploration, has 28 religious groups on its menu. Among these, 16 are major Christian denominations, 6 other religious groups, 5 families of religions and no religion. Together, these covered the religious identity of approximate The Professional Edition of the CD-Rom details another 90 small religious groups with less than 5, people identifying. What are these groups and where have they come from? The list we have prepared for the Professional Edition has its origins in a database of new religious movements which was developed by Dr Rowan Ireland at LaTrobe University in We are most grateful to Dr Ireland and his team which compiled the list, contacted religious groups and gathered information about them. To that list, we added some ancient world religions which are represented in Australia by just a few people and some small Christian denominations, such as the Religious Society of Friends. We checked the detailed list of religious groups prepared by the Australian Bureau of Statistics from the Census. We have not included all the bodies mentioned in Ward and Humphreys, but only those whose continued existence we have been able to verify independently either through direct contact, the availability of census statistics or through the telephone book. We have sought to contact all the organised groups in the list, checking with them the information that we had obtained from these various sources. Most of them have responded to our requests and have provided such information. Zoroastrianism is probably or more years old and was the major religion in Persia. Having been largely superceded by Islam in that region, Zoroastrianism was kept alive in a part of India. Recent immigration has brought some Zoroastrians to Australia. Taoism is an ancient religion of China, while Shintoism is a development of ancient tribal and animistic religious beliefs in Japan. A religion with a thousand years of history is Druse. Drawing on some themes from Christian and Islamic sources, along with its own teachings, the Druse faith is found in some parts of Syria, Lebanon and Israel, and has come to Australia with recent immigration. For example, in many parts of the world, ancient animistic beliefs in a world populated by spiritual beings associated with a range of living and other natural objects such as trees, rocks and rivers continue to be held. Such beliefs are overlaid with the philosophies of Buddhism, and sometimes with Christian or Islamic beliefs. For many people, Confucianism a moral code and instructions about the ordering of society. Confucianism is also combined with Buddhism and other beliefs. Modern Immigrant Religions Several more modern religions from Asia have arrived in Australia largely through immigration. Caodism arose in Viet Nam around A Vietnamese man claimed to have contact to a great spirit, Cao Dai. Tenrikyo is another Japanese religion, established in the late 19th century, by Nakayama Miki who claimed revelation of the divine. More recent is Subud, which arose out the extra-ordinary spiritual experiences of Muhammed Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo, a Javanese man. The movement has spread internationally since World War II. Small Denominations with a Christian Heritage Religious Society of Friends Since the Reformation there have been a number of movements which have resulted in the formation of new denominations. Those central to the movement have generally been large, while, in general it might be said that the groups which have taken more extreme positions have remained smaller and more peripheral. On the periphery of the Reformation itself, in the 17th century, was the Quakers or the Religious Society of Friends. They took more seriously than most the reformation idea that the spirit of God could inspire all people. Consequently, the saw no need for ordained clergy or prepared services of worship. The Religious Society of Friends continues to be a small but active group in Australia. Unitarianism In the 18th century, many Christians sought to combine new understandings of the natural laws on which the world operated with their Christian beliefs. Some found it hard to reconcile ideas such as the Trinity within that context, and for many, the idea of the miraculous seemed incongruous with the evolving understanding of science. Some of these people developed Unitarian ideas, identified by the rejection of the idea of the Trinity. For many years, there have been a few churches in Australia which have been explicitly unitarian. The Holiness Movement

The end of the 18th century saw revival, led by the teaching of John Wesley and leading to the formation of the Methodist Church. A renewal of Wesleyanism in the late 19th century, particularly in the United States, stressing the need for the holiness of Christians, led to the formation of several new denominations which are now represented in Australia. Another denomination which emerged out of the holiness movement and renewal of Wesleyan ideas was the Salvation Army. Apostolic Churches Another Christian movement of the early 19th century arose from the teaching of Edward Irving, originally a Presbyterian minister. Irving believed that it was important to recover the faith of the early church. For him, this meant recovering the miraculous gifts of which the New Testament speaks, such as the gift of speaking in tongues and of prophesy. Irving also believed that the Christ would come again to the earth in the near future, and that people needed to prepare for that. The ideas spread to Europe and to other parts of the world. However, disagreements over leadership of the group led to several different denominations being formed, two of which are found in Australia including the New Apostolic Church and the Apostolic Church of Queensland. In many ways, the teaching of Irving pre-empted a variety of themes from which later emerged a great variety of other denominations. The emphasis on miraculous gifts emerged again with the Pentecostal churches. The emphasis on returning to the New Testament patterns of church life emerged in the churches of the restoration movement including the Brethren, the Churches of Christ and the Christadelphians. Millennial groups The Seventh-day Adventist church emerged in the United States in the latter half of the 19th century. A more extreme expression of some of these ideas was found in the World Wide Church of God which developed from the teaching of Herbert W. Armstrong in the s. The World Wide Church of God has since moved considerably in its teaching to a more traditional evangelical stance, but has splintered in the process. A quite different approach to the second coming of Christ was taken by a German group which sought to prepare for the second coming by establishing communities in Israel. This group, known as the Temple Society, was expelled from Israel, and some of its members found their way to Australia. Christian Science While some new denominations which emerged in the late 19th century and early 20th century in the United States emphasised holiness, others stressed the idea of healing and wholeness which Christianity offered, often with a emphasis on spiritual healing. Other 20th Century Groups with a Christian Heritage The Ratana movement which developed from the experiences of healing of a Maori man by the name of Tahupotiki Witemu Ratana in the s, also combined Christian teaching with a special emphasis on healing. The Jesus movement of the s has come and largely gone. People caught in the enthusiasm of that movement have entered various denominations, and have encouraged the growth of the charismatic movement in Australia. However, one small specific remnant of that movement remain. The Family, formerly known as The Children of God, has put into practise the communitarian ideals of that movement. Another modern movement which has arisen from Christian commitment which has not found a place within pre-existing churches and denominations is the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches. This Fellowship has sought bring together groups of gay Christians. The Spiritualism Movement Swedenborg While the Unitarians of the 18th century grappled with Christian faith and science in one way, another approach was pioneered by Emanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg was a greater thinker who influenced a range of developments in science as well as theology. He believed that science and theology could be reconciled, but did so within the context of emphasising the distinctiveness of the spiritual and material realms. Swedenborg was influenced strongly by some special religious experiences and visions which confirmed, for him, the new directions in his thinking. Followers of the teaching of Swedenborg developed societies and churches through which his teaching could be studied and his expressions of religious faith practised. A family of closely connected churches in Australia associate themselves directly with the teaching of Swedenborg including the New Church in Australia and the Church of the New Jerusalem. Blavatsky and Olcott and Theosophy Ideas of the division between spiritual and material realms were taken a step further by Helena Blavatsky and Henry Olcott who both lived in New York in latter part of the 19th century. They believed that there was some spiritual truth in most religions, and were attracted to the Eastern religions of Hinduism and Buddhism as providing insights into the mystical and spiritual dimensions of life. At the same time, they believed that the spiritual dimension of life could be examined scientifically. There were natural spiritual laws which were known by some of the ancient and Eastern religions, which could be discovered and which people could put

into practise in order to find harmony with the divine principles. Blavatsky and Olcott began the Theosophical movement which first found its way into Australia late in the 19th century. Due to differences of emphasis and authority of leadership, the Theosophical movement has developed a range of expressions. In particular, Rudolf Steiner, developed expressions of Theosophical ideas which gave greater importance to Christianity, and expressed in Anthroposophy. Leadbeater, a former Anglican minister, combined Christianity and Theosophical ideas in the formation of the Liberal Catholic Church. Alice Bailey, on the other hand, stressed the more esoteric side of Theosophy, giving rise to several groups including the Arcane School, the Sydney Goodwill Unit of Service and the Australian Transmission Meditation Network. Spiritualism The ideas about there being a spiritual world and that it was possible to make contact with that spiritual world were developed by the Spiritualists. The ideas of mediums being able to communicate with the spirit world had been around in various ways for a long time. However, interest in such ideas took off in the mid 19th century in the United States. Seances and mediums became popular. While spiritualist ideas have been in Australia since the mid 19th century, there has been renewed interest in them as expression of some New Age ideas. There are several groups in Australia which continue the traditions of spiritualism. Such ideas have emerged at various times in history. The Gnostic Sects of the 2nd century AD could be described in such a way. Another group emerged in Germany in the 17th century, claiming to follow the teach of Christian Rosenkreuz who had lived years earlier. This group, which became known as the Rosicrucians, claimed they had secret knowledge which was available to initiates and which could lead to people living a more satisfying life. Similar emphases on secret knowledge made available to initiates and allowing them to live a more fulfilling life can be found in a range of other groups in Australia, such as the Holy Grail Movement which originated in Austria in the s, the Builders of the Adytum, Gnostic Institute of Anthropology and the International Metaphysical Ministry. Two Australian groups which were founded in the s in Australia with an emphasis on recovering ancient secret knowledge include the Gnostic Apostolic Church and the Path of the Heart Movement. Scientology was founded by L. Hubbard developed processes of auditing, a form of spiritual counselling, through which this development of the spiritual nature could occur. This counselling might be described as a process in which spiritual awareness is developed. Eckankar was established in the United States in by Paul Twitchell, claiming that Eck was the essence of God as revealed by ancient religions. Eck is seen more as a life force than as a personal being. It draws on various religions, but particular on spiritualist traditions. Occult Aleister Crowley, born in England in , has had a significant impact on a range of new religious groups. He was interested in secret knowledge not as a means of self-fulfilment but as a means of controlling situations.

### 4: Christianity and other religions - Wikipedia

*Some academics studying the subject have divided religions into three broad categories: world religions, a term which refers to transcultural, international faiths; indigenous religions, which refers to smaller, culture-specific or nation-specific religious groups; and new religious movements, which refers to recently developed faiths.*

By Antonia Blumberg Clothing worn by religious leaders and people of devout faith often is much more than a fashion statement. Below are dress guidelines of six religious groups and why they wear what they wear: There are commonly three components to the robe: Buddhist nuns typically wear a vest and a bathing cloth. According to the Directory for the Ministry and Life of Priests, prepared by the Congregation for the Clergy and approved by Pope John Paul II in , clergy must dress in a way that distinguishes them from the laity. Many priests also wear a clerical collar, a narrow, often white band that attaches to the clergy shirt. This can be worn with a tab-collar shirt revealing just a small square of the collar at the front of the throat or a neckband shirt revealing the entire collar. Orthodox Jewish women are encouraged to cover their hair and wear skirts below their knees as a sign of modesty. Clothing styles vary somewhat from sect to sect. Jain monks and nuns are encouraged to live austere lives. Many show this by wearing plain, white robes. In the Digambara sect, however, monks reject all forms of worldly possessions, including clothes. Being full of blemish, you deserve disgrace. Sikh spiritual clothing, or bana, includes a turban , modest attire and the five articles of faith. The turban, or dastar, acts as a symbol of piety and dedication, according to the Sikh Coalition. Sikhs often wear their hair unshorn as the founders of the Sikh faith did and in keeping with religious requirements. Guru Gobind Singh introduced the five articles in as a way of identifying members of the faith and binding them together. Full-time Mormon missionaries, called elders and sisters, are required to wear modest clothing and plain hairstyles. Women must wear either blouses with skirts, or dresses that cover to the knee. Men must wear business suits. Sweatshirts, backpacks, tattoos and body piercings, other than ears, are not allowed.

### 5: Judaism - ReligionFacts

*Cults and Small Religions. The Church Universal and Triumphant is a mixture of eastern religions, Theosophy, Christianity, and many other things. Elizabeth is.*

A humorous quotation, but one that is uncomfortably close to reality. They are claimed to be harmful to their members. They are claimed to be undermining American values. Cults are claimed to be just about every bad thing in the book these days, and with the pervasive images of Manson and Jim Jones hanging over us, any group that is called a cult is immediately associated with those two people. It is a derogatory term, and I have never seen it redeemed from the derogatory connotations that it picked up in the sociological literature in the s. Many common religious terms lack a generally accepted, single, current definition. This leads to confusion over the meanings of certain religious terms, such as Christian , cult hell, heaven , occult , Paganism , salvation , Witch, Witchcraft , Unitarian, Universalist , Voodoo , etc. A reader must often look at the context in which the word is used in order to guess at the intent of the writer. In the newsgroup alt. They have so many meanings that they often cause misunderstandings wherever they are used. Unfortunately, most people do not know this, and naturally assume that the meaning that they have been taught is the universally accepted definition of the term. The term "Unitarian" is a good example: Belief in a single God and the rejection of the Christian concept of the Trinity. A creedless and dogma-free religious organization. Utter confusion reigns when an author is using one definition of "Unitarian," while a reader assumes the other meaning. Misunderstandings also happen when an author assumes that both definitions refer to the same organization or belief. One of the most confusing and dangerous religious term is "Cult". The word is derived from the French word "culte" which came from Latin noun "cultus. However, the term has since been assigned at least eight new and very different meanings. The original meaning of "cult" remains positive; more recent definitions are neutral, negative, or extremely negative: Oxford English Dictionary defined "cult" as: It simply means that the Pope devotes special attention to the Virgin Mary. The word is often associated with cult films, cult bands, or cult TV programs. Here, the term "cult" refers to a small but devoted following of a movie, entertainment group or television program. Avid supporters of Star Trek may be referred to as devoted cultists. A small religious group that exists in a state of tension with the predominant religion. Hinduism might be considered a cult in North America; Christianity might be considered a cult in India. An innovative, fervent religious group, as contrasted with more established and conventional sects and denominations. An English newspaper seemed to use the term to refer to any small religious group, no matter what its age or teachings. A small, recently created, religious organization which is often headed by a single charismatic leader and is viewed as an spiritually innovative group. A cult in this sense may simply be a new religious movement on its way to becoming a denomination. The Christian religion, as it existed in 30 CE might be considered a cult involving one leader and 12 or 70 devoted disciples as followers. The Mormon denomination was started in the 19th century by Joseph Smith and a few followers; it met this definition of "cult" but has since grown to become an established denomination of about 15 million members. They define a cult as any religious group which accepts most but not all of the key historical Christian doctrines e.

**6: Small Religious Groups In Australia Â« Christian Research Association**

*Belief that (1) God, if it exists, is by nature unknowable and will always be unknowable, or, (2) that the individual being asked cannot conclude if god exists or not for lack of evidence one way or the other.*

April 2, The Future of World Religions: Over the next four decades, Christians will remain the largest religious group, but Islam will grow faster than any other major religion. If current trends continue, by 2050 the number of Muslims will nearly equal the number of Christians around the world. The global Buddhist population will be about the same size it was in 2010, while the Hindu and Jewish populations will be larger than they are today. India will retain a Hindu majority but also will have the largest Muslim population of any country in the world, surpassing Indonesia. In the United States, Christians will decline from more than three-quarters of the population in 2010 to two-thirds in 2050, and Judaism will no longer be the largest non-Christian religion. Muslims will be more numerous in the U.S. Four out of every 10 Christians in the world will live in sub-Saharan Africa. These are among the global religious trends highlighted in new demographic projections by the Pew Research Center. Islam was second, with 1.5 billion adherents. If current demographic trends continue, however, Islam will nearly catch up by the middle of the 21st century. As a result, according to the Pew Research Center projections, by 2050 there will be near parity between Muslims and Christians. 2. The global Buddhist population is expected to be fairly stable because of low fertility rates and aging populations in countries such as China, Thailand and Japan. In 2010, censuses and surveys indicate, there were about 240 million Buddhists. At the same time, however, the unaffiliated are expected to continue to increase as a share of the population in much of Europe and North America. As the example of the unaffiliated shows, there will be vivid geographic differences in patterns of religious growth in the coming decades. One of the main determinants of that future growth is where each group is geographically concentrated today. Religions with many adherents in developing countries where birth rates are high, and infant mortality rates generally have been falling are likely to grow quickly. Much of the worldwide growth of Islam and Christianity, for example, is expected to take place in sub-Saharan Africa. Globally, Muslims have the highest fertility rate, an average of 3.1 children per woman. Worldwide, Jewish fertility is 1.8. All the other groups have fertility levels too low to sustain their populations: Another important determinant of growth is the current age distribution of each religious group whether its adherents are predominantly young, with their prime childbearing years still ahead, or older and largely past their childbearing years. All the remaining groups have smaller-than-average youth populations, and many of them have disproportionately large numbers of adherents over the age of 40. In addition to fertility rates and age distributions, religious switching is likely to play a role in the growth of religious groups. But conversion patterns are complex and varied. In some countries, it is fairly common for adults to leave their childhood religion and switch to another faith. In others, changes in religious identity are rare, legally cumbersome or even illegal. The Pew Research Center projections attempt to incorporate patterns in religious switching in 70 countries where surveys provide information on the number of people who say they no longer belong to the religious group in which they were raised. In the projection model, all directions of switching are possible, and they may be partially offsetting. In the United States, for example, surveys find that some people who were raised with no religious affiliation have switched to become Christians, while some who grew up as Christians have switched to become unaffiliated. These types of patterns are projected to continue as future generations come of age. For more details on how and where switching was modeled, see the Methodology. For alternative growth scenarios involving either switching in additional countries or no switching at all, see Chapter 1. Over the coming decades, Christians are expected to experience the largest net losses from switching. Globally, about 40 million people are projected to switch into Christianity, while 100 million are projected to leave, with most joining the ranks of the religiously unaffiliated. All told, the unaffiliated are expected to add 97 million people and lose 36 million via switching, for a net gain of 61 million by 2050. Modest net gains through switching also are expected for Muslims (3 million), adherents of folk religions (3 million) and members of other religions (2 million). Jews are expected to experience a net loss of about 1 million people due to switching, while Buddhists are expected to lose nearly 3 million. International migration is another factor that will influence the projected size

of religious groups in various regions and countries. Forecasting future migration patterns is difficult, because migration is often linked to government policies and international events that can change quickly. For this reason, many population projections do not include migration in their models. But working with researchers at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis in Laxenburg, Austria, the Pew Research Center has developed an innovative way of using data on past migration patterns to estimate the religious composition of migrant flows in the decades ahead. For details on how the projections were made, see Chapter 1. The impact of migration can be seen in the examples shown in the graph at the right, which compares projection scenarios with and without migration in the regions where it will have the greatest impact. In Europe, for instance, the Muslim share of the population is expected to increase from 5. In North America, the Hindu share of the population is expected to nearly double in the decades ahead, from 0. Beyond the Year This report describes how the global religious landscape would change if current demographic trends continue. With each passing year, however, there is a chance that unforeseen events – war, famine, disease, technological innovation, political upheaval, etc. Owing to the difficulty of peering more than a few decades into the future, the projections stop at Readers may wonder, though, what would happen to the population trajectories highlighted in this report if they were projected into the second half of this century. And, if so, when? The answer depends on continuation of the trends described in Chapter 1. After that, the number of Muslims would exceed the number of Christians, but both religious groups would grow, roughly in tandem, as shown in the graph above. Due to the heavy concentration of Christians and Muslims in this high-fertility region, both groups would increase as a percentage of the global population. It bears repeating, however, that many factors could alter these trajectories. Or if disaffiliation were to become common in countries with large Muslim populations – as it is now in some countries with large Christian populations – that trend could slow or reverse the increase in Muslim numbers.

### Regional and Country-Level Projections

In addition to making projections at the global level, this report projects religious change in countries and territories with at least , people as of , covering Population estimates for an additional 36 countries and territories are included in regional and global totals throughout the report. Ongoing growth in both regions will fuel global increases in the Muslim population. One exception is Hindus, who are overwhelmingly concentrated in India, where the population is younger and fertility rates are higher than in China or Japan. As previously mentioned, Hindus are projected to roughly keep pace with global population growth. Europe is the only region where the total population is projected to decline. While Christians will remain the largest religious group in Europe, they are projected to drop from three-quarters of the population to less than two-thirds. Over the same period, the number of Hindus in Europe is expected to roughly double, from a little under 1. Buddhists appear headed for similarly rapid growth in Europe – a projected rise from 1. In the United States, for example, the share of the population that belongs to other religions is projected to more than double – albeit from a very small base – rising from 0. And by the middle of the 21st century, the United States is likely to have more Muslims 2. But Nigeria also will continue to have a very large Christian population. Indeed, Nigeria is projected to have the third-largest Christian population in the world by , after the United States and Brazil. As of , the largest religious group in France, New Zealand and the Netherlands is expected to be the unaffiliated. About These Projections While many people have offered predictions about the future of religion, these are the first formal demographic projections using data on age, fertility, mortality, migration and religious switching for multiple religious groups around the world. The projections cover eight major groups: Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, adherents of folk religions, adherents of other religions and the unaffiliated see Appendix C: Defining the Religious Groups. Because censuses and surveys in many countries do not provide information on religious subgroups – such as Sunni and Shia Muslims or Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christians – the projections are for each religious group as a whole. Data on subgroups of the unaffiliated are also unavailable in many countries. As a result, separate projections are not possible for atheists or agnostics. The projection model was developed in collaboration with researchers in the Age and Cohort Change Project at IIASA, who are world leaders in population projections methodology. The model uses an advanced version of the cohort-component method typically employed by demographers to forecast population growth. It starts with a population of baseline age groups, or cohorts, divided by sex and religion. Each cohort is projected into

the future by adding likely gains immigrants and people switching in and by subtracting likely losses deaths, emigrants and people switching out year by year. For more details, see the Methodology. An initial set of projections for one religious group, Muslims, was published in , although it did not attempt to take religious switching into account. Some social theorists have suggested that as countries develop economically, more of their inhabitants will move away from religious affiliation. While that has been the general experience in some parts of the world, notably Europe, it is not yet clear whether it is a universal pattern. Rather, the projections extend the recently observed patterns of religious switching in all countries for which sufficient data are available 70 countries in all. And the projections assume that people gradually are living longer in most countries. These and other key input data and assumptions are explained in detail in Chapter 1 and the Methodology Appendix A. Since religious change has never previously been projected on this scale, some cautionary words are in order. Population projections are estimates built on current population data and assumptions about demographic trends, such as declining birth rates and rising life expectancies in particular countries. The projections are what will occur if the current data are accurate and current trends continue. But many events – scientific discoveries, armed conflicts, social movements, political upheavals, natural disasters and changing economic conditions, to name just a few – can shift demographic trends in unforeseen ways. That is why the projections are limited to a year time frame, and subsequent chapters of this report try to give a sense of how much difference it could make if key assumptions were different. For more details on the possible impact of religious switching in China, see Chapter 1. Finally, readers should bear in mind that within every major religious group, there is a spectrum of belief and practice. The projections are based on the number of people who self-identify with each religious group, regardless of their level of observance. What it means to be Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or a member of any other faith may vary from person to person, country to country, and decade to decade. Acknowledgements These population projections were produced by the Pew Research Center as part of the Pew-Templeton Global Religious Futures project, which analyzes religious change and its impact on societies around the world.

### 7: Definition of terms: cults, sects, denominations

*Other organized religions: These are smaller religions, with a well defined belief in deity, humanity and the rest of the universe. Of the many hundreds of faith.*

Today, we speak to theologians and psychologists about worship, fanaticism and blurred lines. Maggie Craig cult, n. A particular form or system of religious worship or veneration, esp. A relatively small group of people having esp. The Oxford English Dictionary The rise of interest in cults in the s and s cemented them in the American consciousness. So what is the actual difference between a cult and a religion? Can a cult grown into a religion and can a religion birth a cult? We reached out to psychologists, theologians and spiritual leaders to get a clear sense on where the line is between what we call a religion and what we call a cult, and where this line sometimes blurs. Like Classic Coke and Diet Coke, both religions and cults look alike even if they taste different. A religion belongs to the wider culture; its adherents come and go freely. A cult tends to be counter-cultural, restricting the social life of its adherents to other cult members. The key characteristic of a cult is the axis mundi, the shamanic leader at the center of the organization. The cult leader claims exclusive access to transcendent reality, and dispenses power and grace as he or she sees fit. The most interesting cult operative today, in my opinion, is the UFO cult oriented around its leader, Rael Claude Vorilhon , who connects his 60, adherents to extraterrestrial wisdom and power. I suspect that each of the higher religions underwent some cult-like stages at their beginning. When a cult grows too large for the leader to control or when the leader dies, spontaneous leadership democratizes the belief system and a religion can begin to spread. Note that the distinguishing characteristics have to do with leadership more than with theological content of the belief system. In the s, the word "cult" became quite pejorative due to anti-cult organizations. Scholars such as myself tended to substitute the term "new religious movements" or NRMs so as to ascribe a level of legitimacy to otherwise innocent experiments with religion. Even so, when a NRM exhibits a tight organization around an authoritarian leader, I get worried. This almost always leads to violence. If the word "cult" connotes the potential for violence, I suggest we simply exercise care in using the term rather than dispense with it entirely. Cult Stats There are over 4, cults in the US, with approximately 4 million members. They fall into 4 basic types: Offer expensive "enlightenment" seminars, people manipulated into spending more for "advancement" Political: Organized around a political dogma, like rebel extremists.

### 8: Waifuism>all other religions : justneckbeardthings

*Comparing other religions to Christianity. WICCA. Witchcraft, or Wicca - an Old English word meaning female and male witches - is a form of www.enganchecubano.com is a shamanistic nature religion with two main deities honored and worshipped in Wiccan rites: the Goddess (female aspect) and her consort, the Horned God (the male aspect).*

Share Shares I expect most people will have heard of at least one or two of these, but if eight are new to you, I will be happy. So here is a list of 10 religions that you probably never knew existed. Cheondoist theology is basically monotheistic, pantheistic and panentheistic. Cheondoism is rooted in Korean shamanism and Korean Buddhism, with elements drawn from Christianity. It has become so popular in Communist North Korea that it is now the leading religion there. The religion believes that God exists in each of us and that we should all strive to make earth a paradise. It attempts to transform the believers into intelligent moral beings with a high social consciousness. Cheondoism central temple] 9 Mazdakism Mazdakism is a religion founded by Mazdak, a socialist Persian Iranian reformer in the 6th century BC. He claimed to be a prophet similar to Mohammed 1, years later and instituted communal possessions and social welfare programs. Despite the concepts of good conduct and Pacifism, the followers of Mazdak raided the palaces and harems of the rich, removing the valuables to which they believed they had equal rights. The religion teaches its adherents by correspondence but also has bases around the world where people meet and perform religious ceremonies. Most of the beliefs and teachings are based on esoteric psychology, occult tarot, Hermetic Qabalah, Astrology, and meditation techniques. A believes that the Qabalah is the mystical root of both ancient Judaism and the original Christianity, but people of all faiths are accepted if they are mystically inclined. According to the religion, there are four key deities and several minor gods. Adherents usually live in communities called Kindreds. While the original Norse would have participated in animal sacrifice, modern worshipers offer mead, a honey-wine, to the gods. Major holidays revolve around the changing seasons with Yule being the most important. It is celebrated in late December and continues for twelve days. The religion teaches that spiritual growth is only possible through special meditative exercises similar to yoga. Through these practices, the soul can escape the physical form and enter the Sugmad, or spiritual realm. It survives today with approximately four million believers, called J. This polytheistic faith preaches that many gods exist alongside humans in a complex hierarchy. The Jain gods are symbolic of common human ideas. Those who succeed in this endeavor are called jinas. Jain worship centers on icons and numerous Jain temples in India contain images of the 24 tirthankaras, revered spiritual leaders. Offerings are frequently made to these images as part of Jain ritual. Meditation and monasticism are also key features of Jainism. It claims around one million adherents, mostly in Nigeria. Aladura is directly related to the Anglican movement of Christianity. It was founded as a response to missionary movements in Africa. The religion emphasizes divine healing and a strict moral code. Its practices mix Anglican traditions with African rituals. Many ritual objects are involved in the practice, and the faiths leaders are known as prophets who are entrusted with healing believers through rituals and prayer. It was founded in and claims up to 6 million adherents. Believers worship a vast array of saints, which includes such notable figures as Julius Caesar and Pericles. The eclectic nature of Cao Dai complements its idealistic mission to create a more tolerant world. Adherents see all humans as sharing a divine heritage. The practices of this faith are somewhat occult and derived from Taoist traditions. Believers hold seances in addition to group prayer and elaborate ritual ceremonies. This doctrine emphasizes duality in nature and the harmonious union of masculine and feminine. True joy and love can only be achieved by creating a perfect, sinless family. Only in this way does the Unification Church believe the Kingdom of God can be created. While there is no description of an afterlife, the faith preaches that the spirit will live for all eternity. It was founded in China in by Li Hongzhi. It combines elements of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism with traditional Chinese folklore. Falun Gong aims to obtain mental and spiritual renewal through meditation. Adherents practice special exercises to awaken their center of spiritual energy and rid themselves of physical and spiritual ailments. The faith has received extensive criticism from the Chinese government, which initially saw the new cult as a threat.

### 9: A List of All Religions and Belief Systems

*The Big Religion Chart. This "Big Religion Chart" is our attempt to summarize the major religions and belief systems of the world - Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and dozens more - into a quick-reference comparison chart.*

In light of the recent tragedies in America, please note that most American Muslims do not promote or support terrorism. The vast majority of Muslims condemn such acts. See this statement from the Council on American-Islamic Relations. Muslims believe they are the true heirs, through Ishmael, to the promise God made to Abraham. For Muslims, Muhammad is the last and greatest of the Prophets, surpassing Jesus. He was born in A. However, when Muhammad moved to Medina, he was not well received by the Jewish people. Recitations regarding the People of the Book both Jews and Christians became more belligerent: "Who so of you makes them his friends is one of them. God guides not the people of the evildoers" Surah 5: The Book preexisted in heaven before Muhammad received the command to recite and he simply brought into physical being what already existed in completeness. There are 4 books which are considered inspired by the Muslims: Muslims believe the former three contain error because they have been tampered with by Jews and Christians. One of the most difficult verses reads: "And those you fear may be rebellious admonish; banish them to their couches, and beat them" Surah 4: In matters of inheritance, women are to receive half of what men receive Surah 4: Men are the "managers" of women Surah 4: Islam is a religion of duty and submission in which human effort leads to salvation rather than proceeds out of it. There is no view of redemption. There is no original sin in Islam, only original purity. We, also like Adam, have the capability to right ourselves and rehabilitate our standing before God, through submission and through the five pillars. Islam and War "So let them fight in the way of God who sell the the present life for the world to come; and whosoever fight in the way of God is slain, or conquers, We shall bring him a mighty wage. Fight you therefore against the friends of Satan; surely the guile of Satan is ever feeble. It includes a religious war against unbelievers with the object of converting them to Islam or subduing all opposition see Koran 9: It is the sacred duty of the Muslim nation to ensure that Islam triumphs over all religions. It is considered a general duty of the nation as a whole, not of individuals. Furthermore, it is a duty which relates only to religion. It has nothing to do with economic exploitation, political repression or imperialism in any form. In his early career Mohammed spread Islam by teaching and persuasion: When, at Medina, he declared that God had allowed him and his followers to defend themselves against infidels, and later when he proclaimed that he had divine leave to attack them and set up the true faith by the sword. Muhammad himself fought in nine battles and ordered many more.

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