NEW BOOK DOCUMENTING METHODOLOGY


DATA SOURCES

- Church membership
- Censuses
- Academic books and articles
- Scholars and informants


- First scholarly atlas to document the shift of Christianity to the Global South
- Contextual maps of world issues and major religious traditions
- Global coverage of religious freedom and religious diversity
- First atlas to map religious affiliation at the provincial level
- Ecumenical and global coverage, including all Christian traditions in every country
- Full-color maps of Christian affiliation in every United Nations region in the world
- Historical essays on Christianity 1910-2010 by 64 scholars from every region
- Interactive presentation assistant on CD of all maps and graphics for classroom use

TRENDS IN RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY

1. **Two major changes in religious demographics in the past 100 years.**
   The two immediate differences on this graph are the shrinking of Chinese folk-religionists from 22.3% to only 6.6% and the rise of Muslims from 12.6% to 22.4%. It is interesting that these two trends are not related. Most Chinese folk religionists became agnostics or atheists under communism in China.

2. **A geographic view of religion in 1910 and 2010 shows the shrinkage of animism.**
   In 1910, a map of the world by religion shows much of Africa as well as parts of Asia as majority animist. The same map in 2010 shows these same areas as Christian or Muslim. Animists fell from 7.7% of the world’s population in 1910 to only 3.8% in 2010.

3. **The world is less religious in 2010 than in 1910 but more religious than in 1970.**
   In 1910, over 99% of the world’s population was religious. By 2010 this had fallen below 89%. But this analysis hides the fact that the high point for the nonreligious was around 1970, when almost 20% of the world’s population was either agnostic or atheist. The collapse of Communism in the late 20th century means that the world is more religious in 2010 than in 1970. Here I would recommend the new book *God’s Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (Norton, 2011) by Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shaw. Today religious people represent 88% of the world’s population so it is a significant undertaking both to understand and to interact with people of other religious traditions. Of course, the other 12% are agnostics and atheists who also need to be treated with respect and dignity, regardless of how vitriolic a small number have been in attacking religion. Christians must not answer polemics with polemics!

4. **Century growth rates reveal fastest growth for atheists and agnostics. Current growth rates favor small religions and Islam.**
   Agnostics and atheists grew at 5.39% and 6.55% (on average) per year throughout the 20th century, higher growth rates than any other religion. But from 2000-2010, these were shrinking at -0.36% and -0.09% annually respectively. Today, smaller religions like Daoism (2.45% p.a.) and the Baha’i faith (1.86% p.a.) have the highest growth rates. Islam has the fastest “current” growth rate of large religions (1.82% p.a.).
5. **Africa has experienced the most profound religious transformation over the 100 years.**

   Here the dramatic increase in Christians can be seen, growing from 11.7 million (9.4%) in 1910 to 495 million (48%) by 2010. This represents a 100-year growth rate of 3.82% per year, almost twice that of the population as a whole (2.14%). Muslims also grew from nearly 40 million in 1910 (32%) to 418 million (40.5%) by 2010. Tribal religionists increased from 72 million to 107 million over the 100 years but declined as a percentage of Africa’s population, from 58% in 1910 to only 10% by 2010.

6. **Asia is the most religiously diverse major area.**

   In 1910 over 50% of Asia’s population was Chinese folk-religionist or Buddhist. Today these two total only 22%. Regionally, gains were made by Muslims (16.6% to 26%) and Christians (2.4% to 8.5%), while both agnostics (0.0% to 11.8%) and atheists (0.0% to 2.8%) picked up most of the losses in China.

7. **True religious diversity is limited to the Koreas and Southeast Asia.**

   While Canada and Surinam have the most religions over 0.5% of the population (5) more significant diversity is found in Asia, where 6 countries have 5 or more religions with more than 5% of the population (Viet Nam, China, South Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Brunei). The greatest religious diversity is found in Southeast Asia and Korea, where South Korea has 5 religions over 10% of the population and Viet Nam, North Korea, and Singapore each have 4.

8. **Migration is increasing religious and ethnic diversity around the world.**

   200 million people are on the move today, carrying with them their cultural and religious backgrounds. At least 860 million have now settled permanently outside of their culture’s main country. I recommend Ian Goldin’s book *Exceptional People: How Migration Shaped our World and Will Define the Future* (Princeton University Press, 2011). As the authors point out, never have so many people been on the move, and never have they been so unwelcome! *Faith on the Move*, a new study by the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, focuses on the religious affiliation of international migrants, examining patterns of migration among seven major groups. “Migration, Religious Diasporas, and Religious Diversity: A Global Survey” by Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Bellofatto (*Mission Studies*, July 2012) focuses on the 859 million settled in diaspora.

   Christians and Muslims, though currently 55% of the world’s population, represent over 75% of all migrants.

**TRENDS IN CHRISTIAN DEMOGRAPHY**

1. **Christianity has shifted dramatically to the South.**

   We can see that at first glance there has been little change in the status of global Christianity over the past 100 years. For the entire 100-year period, Christians have made up approximately one third of the world’s population. However, this masks dramatic changes in the geography of global Christianity—a process stretching back to the earliest days of the world Christian movement.

   The next two slides show us the shift in demographics by continent from 1910 to 2010. While 66% of all Christians lived in Europe in 1910, by 2010 only 25.6% lived there. By contrast, less than 2% of all Christians lived in Africa in 1910, skyrocketing to almost 22% by 2010. The Global North (defined as Europe and Northern America) contained over 80% of all Christians in 1910, falling to under 40% by 2010.

   The next slide illustrates these changes by mapping the statistical center of gravity of global Christianity over the past 2,000 years. One can readily see that in the modern period there has been a decisive southern shift. At the time of the 1910 Edinburgh conference the statistical center of global Christianity was near Madrid, Spain. In fact, at that time, over 80% of all Christians were European. In 2010 the statistical center will have shifted well south of Timbuktu in Mali. This 100-year shift is the most dramatic in Christian history.

   The southern shift can also be put in context of the entire history of Christianity. The next slide reveals that Christians of the Global South were in the majority for the first 900 years of Christian history. European domination of global Christianity can be seen as a recent phase of world Christianity that has now passed. Since 1981, Southern Christians are, once again, in the majority.

   This next series of slides was produced by a Chinese immigrant (Yang Liu, a graphic designer) living in Germany. The icons compare the German way of life (on the left in the blue) with the Chinese way of life (in the red on the right). This comparison is useful for us, as we earlier identified the shift of Christianity from the Global North (e.g., Germany) to the Global South (e.g., China). We can also ponder the role of Asian Christians in the future of global Christianity.

   - Punctuality is contrasted in the two societies.
In Germany problems are solved by facing them head on. In China, one deals with problems by going around them.

Queues in Germany tend to be orderly, whereas those in China are more chaotic.

In a similar fashion, opinions in Germany are expressed quite directly, whereas in China it is more polite to take one’s time getting to the point.

Germans have limited numbers of direct contacts, whereas the Chinese live in a complex web of relationships.

Finally, the solitary life of the German contrasts with the community-based life of the Chinese.

At this point, we might ask how the Chinese worldview might actually align better with the way of life outlined in the Christian scriptures. Could the shift of Christianity to the Global South open up new possibilities for the life and health of Christianity around the world?

With this in view, we might ask, as Bishop Hwa Yung has asked, is the future of Asian Christianity one of “bananas”—where Asian Christians are yellow on the outside but white on the inside (Chinese Christians trained by Germans)—or one of mangoes—where Asian Christians are yellow on the outside and yellow on the inside (Chinese Christians with a Chinese worldview)? Is the demographic shift of Christianity really good news if it is not accompanied by theological reflection from fresh cultural perspectives of more recent members of the global body of Christ?

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life recently surveyed Evangelical Protestant Leaders at the Cape Town 2010 meeting. Key findings include a difference of perspective between Christians in the Global South and Global North, major threats to Evangelical Christianity, views of religious groups, and top priorities for evangelization. The report is available at www.pewforum.org.

2. Christianity is fragmented.

Christians are now found in nearly 43,000 denominations. These range in size from millions of members to fewer than 100 members and are listed for each of the world’s 232 countries in the World Christian Database. The individual Christian is located in these on this slide. The next slide shows three huts in which a man stranded on a desert isle has a home, a church, and the church he used to attend! Note that the vast majority of denominations are in the Independent and Protestant traditions. By 2025, there will likely be 55,000 denominations.

3. Christian demographics are determined by six different factors.

The next slide shows the formula for calculating the annual change of Christians in any one country, region, or continent. These six are births, converts, immigrants, deaths, defectors, and emigrants. Mapping these changes globally for 2009-2010 shows a net increase of 27.8 million, which is the result of gains of 65.2 million (45.2 million births and 16 million converts) and losses of 37.4 million (21.8 million deaths and 11.6 million defectors). Thus, the global Christian population in 2009 was 2,265 million, increasing to 2,293 million by 2010.

4. Christians are experiencing unprecedented renewal.

There are many forms of renewal within global Christianity, including Evangelical movements, liturgical renewal, Bible-study fellowships, and house church movements. One of the most significant is the Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal, which coincides with the 100-year period that we have been reflecting on. The numbers of Christians involved in these renewals include 300 million Evangelicals (WCE-structural), 500 million Evangelicals (OW-theological), 600 million Pentecostals, and 700 million Great Commission Christians. The locus of the Renewal is clearly in the Global South, where the majority of its practitioners live and where it is growing the fastest.

5. Christian resources are not evenly distributed.

Christians of the Global South represent 60% of all Christians but receive only about 17% of all Christian income. This puts them at a disadvantage in many areas including health, education, communications, and overall quality of life. This imbalance is one of the great challenges of global Christianity.

6. Christians speak a multitude of languages.

Spanish is the number one mother tongue of Christianity. The others in the top 5 are English, Portuguese, Russian, and Mandarin. Note the many non-Western languages climbing up this list of the top 25 mother tongues such as Tagalog, Amharic, Korean, and Yoruba.
TRENDS IN MUSLIM DEMOGRAPHY
1. Islam has increased by 7 times in 100 years and almost doubled as a % of the world’s population. In 1910 there were 221 million Muslims. By 2010 this had grown to 1.55 billion. This represents a growth from 12.6% of the world’s population in 1910 to 22.4% by 2010. Over the century, world population has grown by 1.38% p.a. whereas Muslims have grown at 1.97% p.a.

2. Muslim growth around the world is uneven. The fastest growth of Muslims is found in Oceania (which includes Australia) but the numbers are still small. Africa has the next fastest rate but it is still slightly behind. From 1910-2010, Africa’s share of the world’s Muslims increased from 18% to 27%.

3. Most Muslims live in Asia and Africa outside of the Arab World. Indonesia is the country with the most Muslims followed by India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The 6 countries with the most Muslims are all in Asia. The next 4 are in Africa.

4. Muslims speak languages other than Arabic. The top 5 mother tongues of Islam are Bengali, Urdu, Western Panjabi, Turkish and Javanese, representing over a quarter of all Muslims worldwide. One of the many forms of Arabic (Egyptian) appears only at number 6.

5. Muslims are a significant minority in a number of key countries. A list of the countries of with the largest number of Muslims living as minorities reveals that one of the world’s largest Muslim countries is India where up to 15% of the population is Muslim. The majority of the population is Hindu. Other key countries are Ethiopia where the majority of the population is Christian and China, where the majority is nonreligious.

6. Europe is not becoming Muslim but the Muslim minority is influential. Only 6% of Europe’s population is Muslim and this is expected to rise to just 8% by 2030. But the Muslim minority has a disproportionate impact in politics and society. In some countries, Islam is expected to grow significantly over the next 20 years (e.g. Macedonia, Sweden, and Belgium).

7. The number of Muslims in the US is contested. The Pew Forum says there are 2.3 million Muslims. Other estimates run as high as 10 million. The World Religion Database says 4.5 million. There are three components to these estimates. 1) Immigrants from Muslim countries. 2) African-Americans, and 3) formerly non-Muslim women married to Muslim men.

8. Muslims will continue to grow as a percentage of the world’s population. The Pew Forum projects that Muslims will grow from under 20% of the world’s population in 1990 to over 26% by 2030 (doubling from 1.1 billion to 2.2 billion).

TRENDS IN CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM INTERACTIONS
1. Christians and Muslims together have increased from only a third of the world’s population and could soon be two thirds. In 1800, 33% of the world’s population was either Christian or Muslim. Today, together they represent about 55% of the world’s population, or four billion people. By 2050 this percentage is expected to rise to 62% and by the end of the century it could be over 66%.

2. Most Christian outreach never reaches non-Christians, let alone Muslims. Over 85% of all Christian evangelism is aimed at other Christians and does not reach non-Christians. Close examination of virtually any Christian evangelistic activity reveals this massive imbalance. Much missionary deployment is trying to keep up the growth of the churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. What is surprising today is how missionaries from the Global South have also been drawn into mission primarily to other Christians. Deployment studies in Nigeria and India have shown this to be the case, although there is a perceptible shift in the past decade toward work among non-Christians.
3. **Christians are out of contact with Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists.**

Recent research reveals that as many as 86% of all Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian. This has to be viewed negatively in light of the strong biblical theme of incarnation that is at the heart of Christian witness. Christians should know and love their neighbors! In the 21st century it is important to realize that the responsibility for reaching Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists is too large for the missionary enterprise. While missionaries will always be at the forefront of innovative strategies, the whole church needs to participate in inviting people of other faiths to consider Jesus Christ.

4. **Many of the most responsive peoples are Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist.**

Our analysis in the World Christian Database reveals that of the top 100 most responsive people groups over 1 million in size, 31 are Muslim (25%). In the top five most responsive are the Southern Pathan of Afghanistan (Muslim). A world map of response to the gospel shows that most responsive groups appear to be in the least-Christian areas. One related and growing phenomenon is insider movements—defined as “movements to Christ where the Gospel flows through pre-existing communities and networks, and believing families remain inside their socio-religious communities, retaining their natural identity while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of scripture.” Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists around the world are following Christ while remaining within their own communities.

5. **Christians lack knowledge about other religions.**

A recent Pew survey showed that American evangelicals are less knowledgeable about world religions than atheists and Jews. Evangelicals answered an average of 17.6 out of 32 questions about world religions accurately while atheists/agnostics, Jews, and Mormons answered over 20 out of 32 correctly. The survey and its results can be downloaded at [www.pewforum.org](http://www.pewforum.org).

6. **Americans overemphasize the “Clash of Civilizations”**.

Too much attention is given to conflict between Muslims and the West. Good relations between the Western World and the Muslim World are essential for the future of mankind. I recommend Miroslav Volf’s *Allah: A Christian Response* (HarperOne, 2011) for a discussion on whether or not Christians and Muslims worship the same God.

7. **Christians lack hospitality and friendship with Muslims.**

As previously stated, 86% of Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian. Christians should know and love their neighbors. The whole church needs to participate in inviting people of other faiths to consider Jesus Christ. Note that Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists are now neighbors in “Christian” lands.

**FIVE MODEST SUGGESTIONS**

1. **Rethink Christian identity.**

A picture of the Golden Gate Bridge illustrates Christian identity in story about a guy who is about to jump off a bridge. Our identity is first in Christ and then in the many particulars that define us as individuals and groups.

2. **Empower churches to interact in religiously diverse communities.**

Missionaries could go to religiously diverse communities to reach religionists. Church members living in religiously diverse communities could be trained to interact with religionists.

3. **Deepen knowledge on world religions in congregations and missionaries.**

Mission strategy is supported by the understanding that congregations and missionaries have of the religions of the world. I recommend Stephen Prothero’s *God is Not One* (HarperOne, 2011)

4. **Strengthen theological understanding on world religion in congregations and missionaries.**

Mission strategy is eroded if congregations and missionaries don’t understand the theology of world religions. I recommend Gerald McDermott’s *God’s Rivals: Why Has God Allowed Different Religions?* (IVP, 2007).

5. **Train congregations and missionaries in hospitality and civility.**

Mission strategy is strengthened by the civility that congregations and missionaries practice toward other religionists. I recommend Richard Mouw’s *Uncommon Decency: Civility in an Uncivil World* (IVP, 2010).