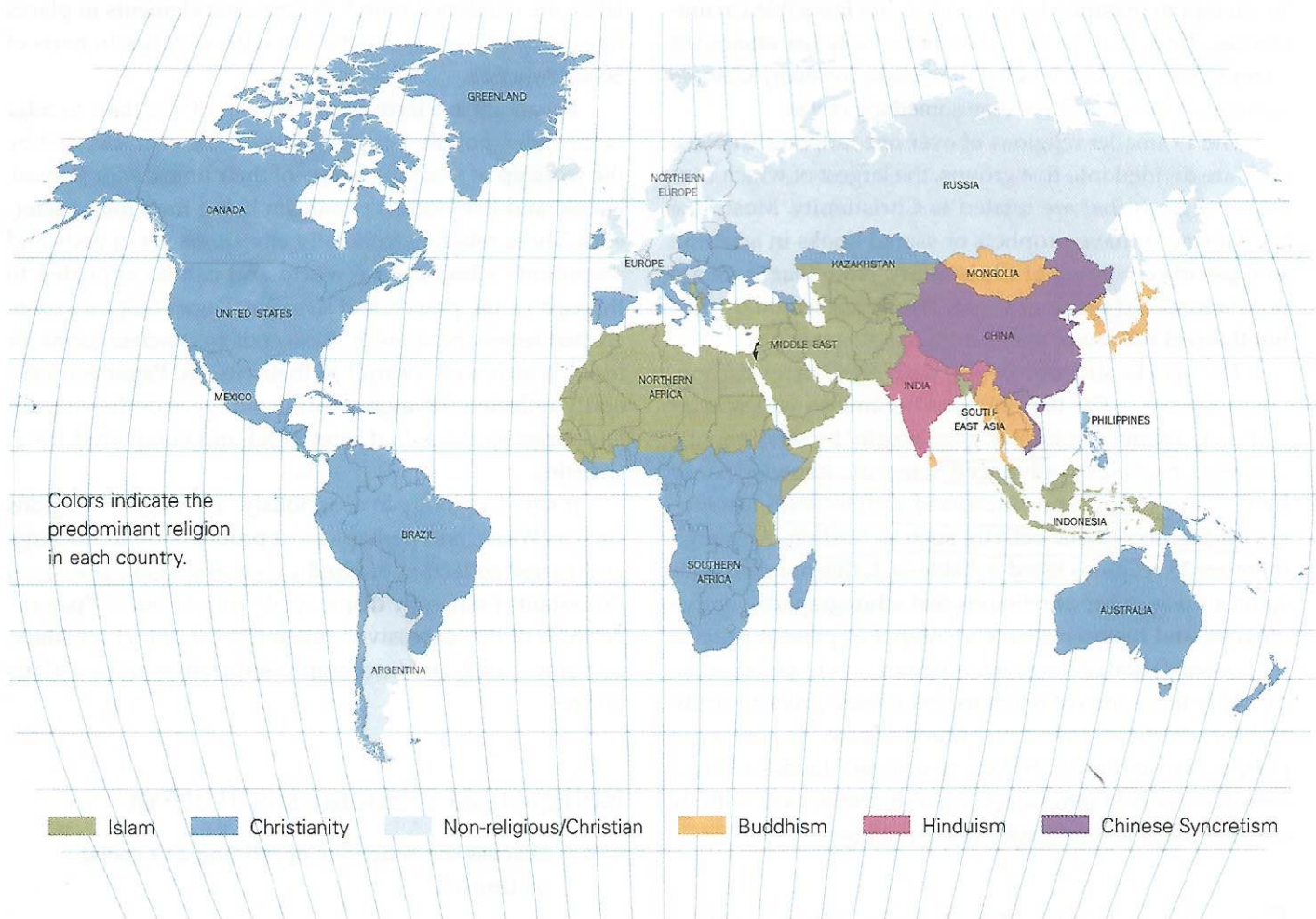


1 million adherents today. (The inclusion of Scientology is also problematic, in that although the movement claims more than 2 million adherents, outside estimates are as low as 70,000, but we have included it here.) And even as a picture of contemporary religion, Table 14.1 is very approximate and incomplete. A complete and nuanced listing would take at least a book. For example, to save space we have compressed Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Baptists, and other religions into a single category: Christianity. The adherents of those sects might strongly disagree with being lumped together. At the same time, we give separate space to Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons, whose adherents consider themselves Christians but also have crucial additional beliefs and doctrines that make them very different from the rest of Christendom (and would not be considered "Christians" by most other Christians).

The table also combines Sunni, Shiite, and Sufi Muslims into a single category, which also does not capture the very important differences among these different groups of Muslims. In fact, all of the major religions had early periods in which geographically separated areas practiced somewhat different versions. Only later were these forged into a relatively consistent pattern through force or compromise. Later still, perhaps, these experienced schisms produced newer and divergent versions of what was for a while considered a single religion.

To give you a sense of where the major religions of the world are practiced, the map in Figure 14.1 shows where in the world the five (or six) religions with by far the most adherents dominate: Christianity, with approximately 2.2 billion adherents, is the largest; Buddhism, with 360 million, is the smallest. The sixth "religion" is

Figure 14.1 A Global View of Religion



Six countries are shown as split Islam/Christianity: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cote d'Ivoire, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Eritrea.

SOURCES: Based on data from C.I.A. World Factbook (2012); ReligionFacts.com; European Commission's Eurobarometer (2005).