

and well worth reading for anyone who is asking the question of what makes someone good.

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Believers: Faith in Human Nature, Melvin Konner, W. W. Norton, 2019 (ISBN 978-0-393-65186-7), xxv + 244 pp., hb \$28.95

The Enlightenment freed humanity from the idea that the world is flat, that the earth is the center of the universe, that the species brought into being at creation never evolved, that human history is predestined, and that agentic power is God's. As the Enlightenment view of the world spread, religious views of the world were cast into doubt. Now, when asked to indicate one's religion, more and more people check 'none of the above', generating a population of 'nones' (not to be confused with 'nuns'). But does the Enlightenment mean the demise of religion?

Melvin Konner (whom I have known for a long time) undertakes to examine this question in *Believers: Faith in Human Nature*. Konner was brought up as a traditionally religious Jew, went on to read widely in philosophy and science, became an anthropologist, spent time with the San Bushmen in Africa even participating in their rituals, and finished a medical degree at Harvard. In the course of his life itinerary, Konner encountered Bertrand Russell, Richard Dawkins, Steven Weinberg, William James, Emerson, Freud, Marx, Darwin, Durkheim, neuroscience, hallucinatory drug and ecstatic seizure studies, cognitive anthropology, and research on chimpanzees. *Believers* is the dialogue Konner had with all these worlds.

In the course of his dialogue, Konner returns again and again to the complexity of religion. It is the experience of belief, community, life and death, meaning, written and oral texts, liturgies and rituals, rites of passage, socialization of children and adolescents, and the experience of awe and the awareness of goodness. He even speculates that religion is culture built around awe (p. 143) and around goodness (pp. 153ff.). In addition, Konner notes in detail his own spiritual experience as a participant in the San Bushmen trance dance (pp. 35–40), the experience of awe of a chimpanzee at a waterfall (p. 134), and the difference between analyzing the brain scan of Renée Fleming and the inspiration of listening to her sing (p. 170).

In the end, Konner reaches the conclusion that religious inclinations are 'built into the human brain', that they are developed in childhood, that

they evolve by natural selection, and that there is a 'human hunger for commitment to something that really gives life larger meaning'. Enlightenment secular humanism has the right to question religion, but it does not have the right to proclaim its demise (pp. 173–176).

Ever faithful to the reality that is before us, Konner offers a modern 'Guide for the Perplexed' that favors no religion or theology but affirms the reality of religious inclination in humanity.

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The Missing Martyrs: Why Are There So Few Muslim Terrorists? Second Edition: Updated for the Age of ISIS, Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, 2019 (ISBN 978-0-19-090797-6), viii + 256 pp., hb £19.99

One of the main misperceptions in the Western mind is that mainstream Muslims are waging a *jihad* (war) against the Western world as instructed by their Holy Quran that teaches hatred and incites them against all other faiths. This negative stereotype image about Islam, inscribed in the Western mind and fed by a deep ignorance of Islam, had widened the gap between East and West since the same is happening on the other side. So the intriguing question Charles Kurzman had chosen to be the title for his book, *The Missing Martyrs: Why Are There So Few Muslim Terrorists?*, comes as a provocative challenge for his Western and even Muslim readers, particularly as the second edition comes out with the same title and theme.

The first edition of Kurzman's book was published in 2011 when optimism filled the air. The Al-Qaida terrorist organization had been reduced to tiny, remote camps in Pakistan and Yemen; the Taliban threatened only the fringes of Afghanistan; the Islamic State in Iraq had been forced underground after a failed uprising, as had Boko Haram in Nigeria; the Shabaab had lost control of much of Somalia; massive pro-democracy movements had shaken much of the Arab region, overthrowing dictators in several countries and threatening to overthrow dictators in several others. It was an optimistic moment for liberal opponents of Islamist terrorism, and the book reflected that optimism (p. 22).

According to Kurzman, the aim behind writing his book is 'to reduce the panic by examining the evidence about Islamist terrorism – the actual scale of it and the reasons it is not more widespread' (p. 25). Kurzman's intention is not to minimize the potential for violence of small groups of