12.5: Patterns of Belief

Patterns of belief focused on one or more god of extrahuman origin is called a **theism**. The pattern may be a reflection of social organization, e.g., the more centralized and stratified the society, the fewer gods.

- **Monotheism**: belief in one god (Judaism, Christianity, Islam)
- **Henotheism**: worship of only one god, while acknowledging that other gods exist. Henotheists do not necessarily view other gods as legitimate objects of worship, even while acknowledging they exist (Hinduism)
- **Polytheism**: belief in many gods (Aztec, ancient Greeks, Egyptians)

References