

Ch. 6. Religion

I. Understanding Religion

A. Defining it.

1. Religion is a set of beliefs and activities that often help humans celebrate and understand their place in the world.
2. Religion can have a profound effect on human interaction with their environment and other cultures, thereby shaping the development of a people's cultural landscape.

B. Universalizing vs. Ethnic Religions

1. Universalizing religions try to have a universal appeal and attract all people to their beliefs.

Ex) Christianity, Islam, Buddhism

2. About 60% of the world's people follow a universalizing religion.

3. Universalizing religions can often be broken into branches, denominations, and sects.

a) Branches are large fundamental divisions in a religion

b) Denominations are groups of common congregations within a branch.

c) Sects are smaller groups that have broken away from a recognized denomination within a branch.

4. Ethnic Religions attempt to appeal to only one group, perhaps in one place or of one ethnicity.

Ex) Judaism and Hinduism.

C. Monotheistic vs. Polytheistic Religions

1. Monotheistic: Religions that believe in one supreme being

Ex) Christianity, Islam, and Judaism