

An Examination of Creation Stories

Directions: Please respond to the following discussion questions. Posting an organized response to these questions on your blog will be part of your homework this month.

1. Why do you think almost every human culture—from the Native Americans to the Australian Aboriginals—formed some sort of creation story/myth? What does this reveal about the human condition? Put another way, why do humans attempt to explain their origins? Do creation “myths” still have a place in the world today? Where do you see them operate and inform the modern world?
2. What do the specific creation stories from the Maori and the Australian Aboriginals reveal about each culture specifically? From the stories, can we begin to tell what they value, even on a very basic level? If so, what are those values? While quotations aren’t necessary to prove your point, you should at least refer to the texts in answering this question.
3. What are the similarities and differences between the various creation stories you read in class? What might account for these differences?
4. It might be easy to say that the “creation myths” that the Aboriginal and Maori cultures produced are outdated, that they have been proven by a modern world to be “untrue.” What eternal problems of the world, though, do the myths reveal? In other words, while science may explain to us why the sky is blue and why there is wind, what aspects of the creation stories are universal and go beyond science? What problems do these cultures and their creation stories struggle with that still exist today?
5. Creation “stories” still have a place in society today, even if we don’t directly call them “creation stories.” How do you account for human life? That is to say, what is the “creation story” you believe in? How does it inform your thinking? How does it help shape your values and your understanding of the world today? How does it become a lens through which you view the world? What factors have led you to believe this to be the case? Your creation story can be rooted in your specific faith background, but that may not necessarily be the case.