

Final Interpretation Exercise

- I. “The religion of one age is the literary entertainment of the next”. (Ralph Waldo Emerson).
1. Explain very briefly what you understand by this quotation.
 2. In the light of our readings, do you agree or disagree with this quotation ? (Refer to THREE concrete myths).
 3. Compose your OWN evaluation of the changing status of religion from one age to another.

OR

- II. “What is the nature of the universe ? What is our place in it and where did it and we come from ? Why is it the way it is “? (Stephen W. Hawking)
1. Respond to these questions from the point of view of the three most convincing texts we read this semester. Indicate clearly what guided your choice of the particular myths.
 2. If you think all the myths we read are not convincing, then “create’ (or select) a more appropriate picture of the universe. Justify your choice.

OR

III. Aztec Creation Myth

Quetzalcoatl, the light one, and Tezcatlipoca, the dark one, looked down from their place in the sky and saw only water below.

A gigantic goddess floated upon the waters, eating everything with her many mouths. The two gods saw that whatever they created was eaten by this monster. They knew they must stop her, so they transformed themselves into two huge serpents and descended into the water. One of them grabbed the goddess by the arms while the other grabbed her around the legs, and before she could resist they pulled until she broke apart.

Her head and shoulders became the earth and the lower part of her body the sky. The other gods were angry at what the two had done and decided, as compensation for her dismemberment, to allow her to provide the necessities for people to survive; so from her hair they created trees, grass, and flowers; caves, fountains, and wells from her eyes; rivers from her mouth; hills and valleys from her nose; and mountains from her shoulders.

Still the goddess was often unhappy and the people could hear her crying in the night. They knew she wept because of her thirst for human blood, and that she would not provide food from the soil until she drank. So the gift of human hearts is given her. She who provides sustenance for human lives demands human lives for her own sustenance. So it has always been; so it will ever be.



1. Interpret this Aztec myth. (Analyze the various elements in the creation process : creator, method of creation, created, purpose, etc.)
2. Draw your conclusion as to the purpose this myth serves vis-à-vis the religion and vision of the Aztecs.