

Reaction Paper 1

Does Modern Religion correspond to Dreamtime? In many ways modern religion does correspond with Dreamtime. The first way that it corresponds is that Dreamtime encompasses the past, present and the future. This is also true with a lot of religions that we see today in modern society. They all have a record of the past. For example Muslim culture has the Koran in which Mohammed is seen as the final prophet. Christianity also has a record called the Bible. Both of these religions also have guidelines on how to live life day to day. They might be in the form of a story or they might be in the form of rules. They also have the future and what is to come.

The aborigine's Dreamtime also is a story about creation. In all the societies of the world, the religion almost always has a creation story. In Dreamtime the creator of the entire universe is the Great Rainbow Serpent, which is believed to be a woman. In their story the Great Rainbow Serpent comes to earth and takes a husband. They had offspring like humans. The first people who arrived in Australia were thought to be ancestral beings, along with giant kangaroos, crocodiles and lizards. This is also a record of the Aboriginal past. To the aborigines, it is sort of like their fossil record or their Bible. There are also hieroglyphs found on the walls like a record, but the aborigines seem to have preferred to pass on their history through song and dance.

This seems to be the first way that probably religions first kept the history of their people. Aside from them being descendants of animals, many religions still believe that they descended from ancestral beings. The aborigines believed that they descended from supernatural beings and animals just as Christians believe that we directly descended from Adam and Eve.

In their culture they also have elders who pass on their knowledge to the younger of the group. Dreamtime is also not like other religions in this way. Dreamtime is a way of survival in which the elders pass on wisdom to the youngsters of the tribe. The youngsters of the tribe learn through a lifetime of rituals. They learn how to hunt and survive off the land no matter how desolate it may seem in the outback. In modern religion, the religion is hardly ever taught alongside knowledge. This is what sets DreamTime apart from modern religion. In schools today if you even mention God or the pledge of Allegiance you may be fired or banned in the United States. This is one part of going to private school that I liked. They had no problems with teaching about God in our school. The aborigines took it one step further with the meshing of religion with their lifestyle.

Aborigines also believe in spiritual healing. Spiritual healing is practiced around the world and even here today in Hawaii. In Hawaii the spiritual healers are called Kahunas. For the aborigines their spiritual healers are called Clevermen. They use their hands to heal as do many spiritual healers around the world. Even scientists such as the woman in the video seek the Clevermen's help. This is very odd to see a person, quite possibly in the medical field attempting to receive treatment by unscientific means. For me I would try everything I could to get out of having surgery and chemotherapy like she will probably face. There is another thing that stands out about their healers. There is such a thing as a Kadajiman. He is sent when an

individual of the tribe breaks a key law or by disrespecting a certain sacred site. They are believed to be able to chant to make people sick. This has never been proven, but cultures around the world believe in certain figures in their culture having the power to heal or make ill. In Hawaii a Kahuna is also believed to be able to pass curses on people. When I was younger, I participated in a group tour given by Glen Grant in Downtown Honolulu. He described Hawaiian priests being able to make someone sick by getting a piece of hair and wrapping it with tea leaves. The Kahuna would recite a verse and then leave it at the corner of the residence. Later the owner of the residence was believed to become ill or even die.

Aborigines also believed that things could come to them in their dreams. They had great respect to the land and even may have appreciated it. I think that the aborigines treated the land accordingly. They do not abuse it like Americans abuse it. I think that they even view it as a living being. They know where to go to find food and it seems to me that they respect and revere, but most of all are a thankful culture in the sense that they do not abuse the land. Dreamtime also reflects that they are also superstitious. For example the tree that for no reason fell in the middle of the forest. This is interesting because the Dreamtime Video states that the direction that the tree fell was in a direction that corresponded with bad luck. Personally, my religion being Christian, I would have never thought that a perfectly healthy tree being split in half would bring anything to my attention. The aborigines also believe strongly in reincarnation. When things die in Australia, they are believed to fly to the cave of Mujhingha. There these spirits wait to be reborn. This is like countless other cultures around the world that believe that there is still life after death. Personally, I hope for another chance at life after I die even though my religion does not believe in this. In the video, interviews were given and one man even could

tell when a baby was born, who the spirit was. It may have even been a friend that had just past away. This is pretty cool to think about reincarnation in that way. Maybe if there is a next life for me, I can have a second shot at righting my wrongs and doing well from the very start.

Bibliography

1. Producer: Andrew Rothstein, "Dreamtime of the Aborigines", Film Roos, Inc. for A&E Network.