

Burkert, Walter: "The Logic of Cosmogony": some tentative notes of main points

page	direct quotation from B, who uses single quotes to quote others [in brackets my paraphrases]	Exegesis, explanation, explication, comments by JVS
87	It has often been assumed that cosmogonic myth... the very centre or even the essence of mythology	B's "assumed" implies that this is open to query
	cosmogonic myth, i.e. tales about the origin of the universe,	i.e. = <i>id est</i> "that is to say": affirmed as right by B.
	Take the definition of myth...	example of wrong assumption
	'A myth...expression of <u>the sacred</u> in words; it <u>reports realities & events</u> from <u>the origin of the world</u> that [*] remain <u>valid</u> for the <u>basis & purpose of all there is.</u>	problematic definition. [JVS marks <u>problem terms</u>]
I	'origin of world' in <i>relation</i> to 'all there is'...central concepts of cosmogony [I mark 'relation' to emphasize that belief in RELATEDNESS & REFERENCE marks ALL thinking about myth: humans start with what they experience, e.g. birth & death, male & female, night & day, rain & shine, which they RELATE VIA METAPHOR to what they do not experience & know directly, e.g. the world before & after – prior & posterior to – their time]	B picks out & restates [JVS adds that: every mention of RELATEDNESS & its sister, REFERENCE implies METAPHOR, i.e. transfer one semantic domain to another
	leave the notion of 'sacred' out...rather take 'traditional tale'...myths traditional tales with <i>special relevance</i> ...secondary but <i>important reference</i>	B redefines, replaces <u>problem terms</u> with <i>his own terms</i>
	[topics, themes: cosmogony not "the very center" but relatively rare] [tale type, <i>signifiant</i> = 'signifier', e.g. quest, form of narrative: combat, sex & progeny]	cf. B's criterion 'important reference' = <i>signifié</i> = 'signified'
88	[cosmogony NOT a tale type, so defined by subject, theme, topic –] 'all there is'...itself a problem	cf. above <u>problem terms</u>
I.	'all', 'everything', 'universe'...logical concept not mythical intuition... combined with the notion of 'first', of 'beginning', a hybrid of logical postulate and mythical determination...not the basis but rather a problem....	
	psychological approach...'kosmos' a metaphor for the inner world...not a general theory of myth, rather a very special...	
	preference for cosmogonic myth...comes from...philosophy... <i>arche</i> ...later, Christianity...one creator god [examples follow from Greek philosophy & Christianity]	<i>arche</i> (Greek)= 'beginning> authority to rule', cf. <i>menarche</i> , <i>archaeology</i>
89-91	[cosmogony as just defined & illustrated also Near Eastern: examples given]	
91	All cosmogonic texts...form of narrative...naïve...'just so'...'In the beginning there was...then came...and then'	'all' most basic "logical concept" used in thinking & writing
II	speculative achievement...concept of 'first', of 'beginning'...not the normal beginning of a tale, which is 'Once upon a time, there was'	NB!! = Note Well!!!
	myth usually takes what [it claims] has happened once as a model for what is now... Beyond this...cosmogony insists on a time which was the 'first' of all	cf. [*] above 'that remain valid'; also 'model' implies metaphoric transfer
92 III	further achievements of speculation [cf. II]...reversal & antithesis, a basic logical function [examples follow, e.g. 'Water...']	cf. I 'logical concept'
III.A	the typical beginning of cosmogonic myth...subtraction...'Not yet'	
III.B	Water	
93 III.B.1	water has attracted the theories of psychologists....	
III.C	togetherness is bound to dissolve: differentiation...out of the one...	