

YAKAMA CREATION LEGEND

This legend has been told and retold from generation to generation to recall the history of the Yakama People.

In the beginning, our Creator spoke the word and this earth was created. He spoke the word again and all living things were put on earth. And then He said the word and we, the [Indian] people, were created and planted here on this earth.

We are like the plants of this earth. Our food was put here as plants to feed us; just like when we plant a garden. That is the way our earth was in the beginning.

There were salmon, deer, elk, and all kinds of birds. It is as if our bodies are the very end of this earth, still growing while our ancestors are all buried in the ground.

He named everything He created. He put water on this earth. He made it flow into the rivers and lakes to water this great garden and to quench the thirst of the people, the animals, plants, birds and fish.

He took the feet of the people and made them walk on this earth. He created the horse, which is like a human being. He put the horse and the people together to help one another.

All of the land where we live and where our ancestors lived was created for the [Indian] people.



This doll is made of buckskin, cotton and wool fabric. The decorations on it are made of glass beads, brass beads, and a few shells. The hair could be human hair, but is more likely horsehair. It is from the Plateau region and could be of either Yakama or Nez Perce origin. It dates from around 1880-1910. Courtesy Washington State Historical Society.