

The intimate connection of space and time has long been recognized as a distinctive feature of Aztec cosmology. The day-quadrant associations of the *tonalpohualli* provide perhaps the clearest example of what Miguel León-Portilla has called the "spatialization of time"¹ –the tendency to represent periods of time according to areas of space, and vice versa. León-Portilla, J. E. S. Thompson, Jacques Soustelle and others have documented the associations of the days, *trecenas*, years and thirteen year periods of the calendars with the quadrants of the universe and their colors, powers, sexual connotations and other qualities.² To the extent that the calendars related periods of time to extensions in space they were compasses and cosmographs, functioning not only to measure the lapse of time but also to provide an orientation for those who lived according to them in an orderly and harmonious cosmos.

Less attention has been given to the ways in which time and space were homologized at levels above that of the calendars. Near the beginning of the nineteenth century the brilliant naturalist Alexander von Humbolt found a similar identification of time with

¹ Miguel León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*, trans. by Jack Emory Davis, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963, p. 54.

² Among the more important studies on this theme are: Miguel León-Portilla, *Tiempo y realidad en el pensamiento maya* (México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1968), and especially Chapter IV, "El tiempo y el espacio", p. 65-93. In the same volume Alfonso Villa Rojas, "Los conceptos de espacio y tiempo entre los grupos mayances contemporáneos", p. 122-67, distinguishes, as does León-Portilla, between the values and structures of a "horizontal" and a "vertical" cosmology, a distinction which we will employ in a slightly different way below. See also: León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 25-61; J. Eric S. Thompson, "Sky Bearers, Colors and Directions in Maya and Mexican Religion", *Contributions to American Archaeology*, v. 10, August, 1934, p. 211-42; Jacques Soustelle, *La pensée cosmologique des anciens Mexicains*, Paris, 1948, p. 495-503; Hermann Beyer, "El llamado 'Calendario Azteca': descripción e interpretación del *cuauxicalli* de la 'Casa de Águilas,'" *El México Antiguo*, v. 10, 1965, p. 171-200; Walter Krickeberg, "Bauform und Weltbild im altern Mexiko", *Paideuma*, v. 4, 1950; Annie Dorsinfang-Smets, "Les quatre coins du monde azteque", *Eschatologie et Cosmologie*, v. III, 1969, p. 59-72.

space in the great myths which told of the origin and history of the universe through its several ages or "Suns".

According to von Humbolt, "this fiction, which connects the return of the great cycles with the renewal of matter, deemed indestructible, and *which attributes to space what belongs only to time*, goes back to the highest antiquity".³

Von Humbolt thus concludes that the identity of space and time occurs at the cosmic level, as well as at the level of the calendars. It would require a separate study to establish what we will here assume, namely, that in the broadest and most abstract terms, the structure of the Aztec universe—the cosmology—and the structure of the interrelationship of the ages of the world are identical. This parallelism is evident in the arrangement of the glyphs of the five Suns carved on the face of the "Aztec Calendar stone". The sequence of the ages of the world is organized spatially in such a way that the four previous ages form the quadrants of a circle and, taken together, the whole represents a stylized glyph of the contemporary age, *nahui ollin tonatiuh*, "Four Motion Sun". Spatially, the fifth Sun is both the synthesis and the "center" of the history of the world. There is the time of the quadrants and the time of the whole and of the "center". The present Sun is *ollin*, the Sun of the "center", signifying structured and orderly "Motion" or "Movement".

This arrangement implies that the fifth age is constituted by the recapitulation of the "earlier" ages. Somewhat analogously, a complete cycle of the two Aztec calendars, occurring at fifty two year intervals, is made up of the permutation of several cycles of four periods of time, each period being identified with one of the four quadrants or cardinal directions. The structure of the history of the world, as it is set out in the variants of the myth of the Suns, and the structure of the calendars, to this extent, are isomorphic.

Whatever be the verdict on Claude Lévi-Strauss' program for the "structural study of myth", it must be admitted that he has made a strong case for distinguishing between the sequence of events in a myth as the myth is told (that is, its chronological or "diachronic" dimension) and other levels of organization which operate simultaneously (its "synchronic" dimension).⁴ Although we do not here

³ Alexander von Humbolt, *Researches concerning the Institutions and Monuments of the Ancient Inhabitants of America, with Descriptions and Views of the Most Striking Scenes in the Cordilleras*, trans. by Helen Maria Williams, London, Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, [n. d.], v. II, p. 15, my italics.

⁴ Claude Lévi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of myth", *Structural Anthropology*, trans. and ed. by Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf, Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1963, p. 205.

follow Lévi-Strauss' conclusion that all myths operate according to a principle of binary opposition and mediation, his insight illuminates the complexity of the Aztec myth of the Suns.

In one of the most detailed variants, that included in the *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*,⁵ the chronology of the mythical events begins with the existence of a primordial and "uncreated" high god, and relates in sequence the birth of four sons, their alternate periods of dominance over the world, the sacrifice of all the gods at Teotihuacán, and the initiation of the fifth Sun. At the same time, the sequence of the birth, victories, defeats and sacrifice of the gods reveals another order. The myth begins at the "oldest" and "highest" point in the universe, with the existence of a dual diety, Tonacatecutli-Tonacacihuatl, "of whose beginning no one ever knew", "existing at the thirteenth or highest of the heavens", and proceeds as the events unfold, through the vertical tiers of the "heavens", to the establishment of the four horizontal quadrants as each of the sons has his turn as the sun, down through the synthesis of all space-times of the mythical eras into a complex and dynamic age, the fifth Sun.

No one has state this point with more insight than León-Portilla. He says:

In each of the four previous ages, one of the four elements had attained supremacy over the others. While each was in power, an age had existed, but the competition for supremacy had led to combat, the harmony of the ages had been destroyed, and the ages had passed, one after the other. Once again, say the myths, a certain harmony was established by the gods, who agreed to sacrifice themselves at Teotihuacán . . .

But to keep the sun in motion, constantly moving, a concession had been necessary. To each of the four fundamental gods, to each of the four directions, a specified period of time within the Fifth Age was allotted for domination and subordination. This division of time gave rise to the years of the East, of the North, of the West, and of the South.⁶

Structurally, the calendars repeat the order and pattern of the significant actions of the gods. Ritually, the ceremonial "Binding of

⁵ *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*, en *Teogonía e historia de los mexicanos: tres opúsculos del siglo XVI*, ed. by Ángel María Garibay K., México Editorial Porrúa, 1965, p. 23-79. See also the other principal variants of this myth cited by Roberto Moreno de los Arcos, "Los cinco soles cosmogónicos", *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl*, v. 7, 1967, p. 185-87.

⁶ León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 54.

the Years" ⁷ re-establishes the structures of the cosmology by re-enacting the divine sacrifices through which the fifth age began.

Time and space are homologized not only in what Soustelle has called the "moment-loci" of the calendars, but also at the abstract level of the structure of the world and the structure of its history. Cosmology becomes a model for telling of the history and destiny of the universe; conversely, the birth of the gods and the establishment of their proper realms provides a paradigm for organizing the world into vertical tiers and horizontal quadrants.

Among the various kinds of time and space, those which are associated with the "center" stand out as something of an anomaly. ⁸ Soustelle has thus formulated the characteristics of the "center": "The center is looked on as the synthesis of other spaces, sharing in their diverse qualities, and as the stable place". ⁹ But the "center" is still more than the synthesis and balance point of the powers and qualities of the world. It is, moreover, "the disquieting place of apparitions and omens, the point of encounter with foreign worlds". ¹⁰ Soustelle isolates four fundamental characteristics of the "center" which we intend to explore at greater length than he has chosen to do. Almost paradoxically, the "center" is at the same time: all horizontal spaces; the vertical continuum; a stable place; an unstable place.

The pivotal event in the history of the world is the collective sacrifices of the gods at Teotihuacán. ¹¹ Led by a poor, sick and humble figure, Nanahuatzin, these actions had the result of binding together a number of disparate powers into an orderly unity and a cosmos. As León-Portilla pointed out, in *nahui ollin tonatiuh* the separate forces revolve in a systematic pattern of alternative pe-

⁷ See the description of the ritual "Binding of the Years" in Bernardino de Sahagún, *Florentine Codex*, 12 v., trans. with notes by Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, Salt Lake City, University of Utah, and Santa Fe, School of American Research, 1950, book 7, *The Sun, Moon, and Stars, and the Binding of the Years*, p. 25-32.

⁸ In our remarks on the characteristics of the "center" we are relying heavily on Mircea Eliade's studies of the religious symbolism of the "center". See especially the following works by Eliade: *Patterns in comparative Religion*, trans. by Willard H. Trask, Cleveland, World Publishing Company, 1966, p. 367-87; *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1961, p. 27-56; and *The sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, New York, Harper and Row, 1959, p. 36-47.

⁹ Soustelle, *La pensée*, p. 67.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Variants of this episode in the myth of the Suns are found in six sources: the *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas*, *Histoire du Mechique*, *Leyenda de los Soles*, *Anales de Cuauhtlilán*, Book 7 of Sahagún's *History*, and Muñoz Camargo's *Historia de Tlaxcala*. Diego Durán's *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España* (Vol. II in the Garibay K. edition; México, Ed. Porrúa, 1967) also contains a fragment.

riods of dominance and submission. The "center", in this sense, as we have said, is *ollin*, structured and orderly "Motion" or "Movement". Its spatial or cosmological focus is principally a horizontal one, constituting a synthesis of the quadrants and their powers and qualities.

Ollin, like the names of the previous Suns, describes the nature of the age, wherein a particular order and orientation within this order define the age. The gods are concerned with essentially two things following the sacrifices of Nanahuatzin and Tecuciztécatl at Teotihuacán. First they wish know in which direction the new sun will appear, providing a point of orientation in the new universe. In the variant recorded by Sahagún, the gods turned in all directions. "...As to no place were they agreed in their opinions and thoughts; they expected [that he might rise] in all directions."¹² The other concern is that the sun, having now risen in the east, would begin to "move" (*ollin*) and follow its proper course. *Ollin*, as one designation of the "center", refers to the orderly but "dynamic principle" which lies in the "hearts" (*yóllotl*) of the individual and at the center of the world.¹³

The descriptions in the native histories of the founding of Tenochtitlan recall much this same symbolism. The Aztec kingdom is described by one source as "the root, the navel and the heart of this whole earthly mechanism".¹⁴ At the "center" of the world the Aztecs constructed a temple of the tribal god Huitzilopochtli. The god commanded the priests to "divide the men, each with his relations, friends and relatives, into four principal wards [*barrios*], placing at the center the house which you have built for my rest".¹⁵ Huitzilopochtli's order, in effect, is to construct Tenochtitlan on the model of the horizontal cosmos of the four quadrants and the four directions, held together in harmony by the power and authority which issues from the "center".

Ollin, like the names of the earlier Suns, also points to the manner in which the present Sun will come to an end. The end will come in an earthquake or "earth-movement" (*tlalollin*), a chaotic warring of powers which will result in famine, perpetual darkness, and the descent of monsters from the skies who will devour men.¹⁶

¹² Sahagún, Book 7, *The Sun, Moon, and the Stars*, p. 6-7.

¹³ See the discussion in León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 5, 56, 113-15.

¹⁴ Fray Diego Durán, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva España*, v. 11, p. 343.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 50. Cf. a similar passage in Fernando Alvarado Tezozómoc, *Crónica Mexicáyotl*, trans. by Adrián León, México, Imprenta Universitaria, 1949, p. 74.

¹⁶ *Anales de Cuauhtitlán. Quellenwerke zur alten Geschichte Amerikas Aufgezeichnet in den Sprachen der eingebornen. Die Geschichte der Königreiche von Colhuacan und Mexiko*, trans. with notes by Walter Lehmann, v. 1, 1938, p. 62

The "center" as *ollin* is thus the "synthesis of other spaces": it is the "center", as well as the end, of the history of the world.

The "center" in a different sense is *tlalli ixco* or *in tlalxicco*, the "navel of the earth", or the "place of the navel of the earth". The "navel of the earth" is the "stable place", the source of creation, renewal, power, purity and knowledge. The symbol of the "earth's navel" is a common one in the history of religions as a designation of the "center" of the world and of the place from which the cosmogony and subsequent creations take place.¹⁷ Such also is the case in Aztec religion where the "Earth God (dess)" Tlaltecuctli was split in half at the navel to form the earth and sky of the fifth Sun.¹⁸

All significant commands issue from the "navel of the earth", whether it is those of the gods or of the Aztec *tlatoani*. It is from the "navel of the earth" or from the "navel of fire" (*in tlexicco*) that the high god Ipalnemoani reigns in México-Tenochtitlan, and "revolves around the sacred fire, sending his commands in the four directions".¹⁹ The "navel of the earth" is also the place of the transforming fire and the purifying waters.

Sahagún recorded a prayer offered by the fire priests to the god Tezcatlipoca on behalf of a newly installed ruler. In it the "navel of the earth" is described:

Is it perhaps man's doing if he indulgeth himself in something, if he in something goeth astray, goeth amiss before thee in the realm there where people are washed, there where rest the dark blue, the yellow waters? There is being bathed thy progenitor, the mother of the gods, the father of the gods, Ueuetéotl, who is set in the navel of the earth, who lieth in the turquoise enclosure, who is [enclosed] with the waters of the lovely cotinga, enclosed with clouds.²⁰

Almost identical references to the "navel of the earth" as the abode of "the mother and father of the gods", the "Old God", and of the "blue and yellow waters", are included in a speech of warning delivered to children on reaching the age of discretion, and in

¹⁷ See the examples cited by Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, p. 374-79.

¹⁸ *Histoire du Mechique*, ed. by Edouard de Jonghe, *Journal de la Société des Américanistes de Paris*, v. 2, 1905, p. 25. Slight variants are found on p. 28-29. Perhaps Gerónimo de Mendieta also had this motif in mind in referring to a primordial earth monster in his *Historia eclesiástica indiana*, ed. by Joaquín García Icazbalceta, México, Antigua Librería, 1870, p. 81.

¹⁹ *Romances de los señores de la Nueva España*, *Manuscrito de Juan Bautista de Pomar, Texcoco, 1582*, ed. and trans. by Ángel María Garibay K., in his *Poesía náhuatl*, v. 1, México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1964, p. 105.

²⁰ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 18-19.

a direct petition by the king to Tezcatlipoca for assistance in ruling the nation.²¹

Portions and fragments of the same stylized speech are found in other contexts as well. The "place of the blue, the yellow waters" is mentioned in the description of the ceremonial bathing of newly born infants, and in the ritual "confession of sins". In the latter ceremonial the "mother of the gods, the father of the gods, Ueue-téotl", are also invoked.²²

It is significant that each of these references to the "navel of the earth" occurs in a ritual setting in which an individual is purified, transformed and made fit for a position and status which he or she does not merit or deserve. "The blue water, the yellow water", says the midwife, "cleanseth out hearts, washeth away our filthiness".²³ The newly born child, after being ritually bathed, is purified and freed from "the evil burden of his father, his mother", and made fit to be given an earthly name. Even the most powerful individual of all, the king, is said to have spent his life in sin, excrement, and filth, with "blindness, paralysis, rottenness" as his only merit. By entering the "navel of the earth" he becomes fit to serve as the "image", "replacement", the "jaw", the "eyes" and the "ears" of Tloque Nahuaque, the "Lord of the Near and Far".²⁴

Entering the "navel of the earth" is equivalent to a new birth and to entering a new time. The newly bathed infant "liveth again, he is born again".²⁵ The penitent in the ritual "confession of sins" entered "the blue, yellow waters" after which he was assured: "Now once again thou art rejuvenated, thou emergest as a child. Once again thou becomest as a baby. Once again, newly dost thou sprout, thou art hatched, thou art born on earth."²⁶ The "center" as the "navel of the earth" is hence the place of rejuvenation, purification and rebirth.

The majority of the studies of the Aztec conception of "sin" and

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 88-89 and 41. The "navel of the earth" may indicate also a place from which it is possible to attain immortality. The word *ayamictlan*, which Anderson and Dibble leave untranslated, and as *das Land der nebelloten*. Seler, *Codex Borgia*, v. 1, p. 119, cited in Sahagún, *Ibid.*, p. 88, n. 9. on this motif see Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, p. 45.

²² Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 176, 202-29, 30, 32; see also *Book 1, The Gods* p. 23-24.

²³ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 202.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 202, 41-42, 50.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32. It is also of note that as penance for his sins, the penitent is enjoined to pass reeds through his penis, an act through which Quetzacoatl first created the human race. The ceremonial confession of sins thus not only utilizes the symbolism of the birth of individuals, but also that of the birth of the human race. See Sahagún, *Book 1, The Gods*, p. 26.

of the ceremonial "confession of sins" have uniformly and rightly emphasized the sexual nature of the sins which required confession.²⁷ Nevertheless, as Guenter Lanczkowski points out, "The Aztec term of 'Sin' . . . included ritual offenses as well as moral ones like falsehood, theft, adultery and drunkenness".²⁸ "Sin" also appears to have some bearing on system, order and cosmology. The fact that many sins were believed to result in "filth", "rotteness", "stench", "excrement" and "refuse" calls to mind the recent analysis of pollution beliefs made by Mary Douglas. Defining "dirt" as "matter out of place", she goes on to stress its relationship to system and order:

Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the byproduct of a systematic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements . . . In short, our pollution behavior is the reaction which condemns any object or idea likely to confuse or contradict cherished classifications.²⁹

This observation bears on the nature of the "navel of the earth". Individuals who were yet without any proper place, name or status, such as unnamed infants, were by that fact considered to be impure. Professions which were regarded as aimless and rootless, such as prostitution, were also impure. The prostitute walks: ". . .back and forth many times along the road; she walks circling, constantly. She nowhere finds lodging. She settles anywhere, she [wakes at] dawn anywhere. In any manner whatsoever night [and] day overtake her".³⁰

By way of contrast, the pure man, the wise man, the *tlatimini*,

²⁷ Among the more important studies of the Aztec notion of sin are the following; Raffaele Pettazzoni, "La confession dei peccati nelle antiche religioni americane", *Congresso Internazionale degli Americanisti*, v. 2, Rome, 1926, p. 277-88; Konrad Theodor Preuss, "Die Sünde in der mexikanischen Religion", *Globus*, v. 83, 1903, p. 253-57, 268-73; Georg Höltker, "Das Südenbewusstsein bei den Azteken im alten Mexiko", *Anthropos*, v. 31, 1936, p. 213-33; Alberto Estrada Quevedo, "Neyolmelahualiztli: acción de enderezar los corazones", *Estudios de Cultura Náhuatl*, v. 11, 1960, p. 163-75; Yóloul de Lesur, "The Concept of Pollution among the Aztecs", *Proceedings of the XIth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*, v. 11, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1968, p. 39-43.

²⁸ Guenter Lanczkowski, "Redemption in Ancient Mexican Religion", in *Studies in the History of Religion, XVII: Types of Redemption*, ed. by R. J. Zwi Werblowsky and C. J. Bleeker, Leiden, E. J. Brill, 1969, p. 123.

²⁹ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1966, p. 48.

³⁰ Sahagún, *Book 10, The People*, p. 94. See also the description of sodomites, procurers, hermaphrodites, perverts and the like on p. 37, 55-57.

"bears responsibility, shows the way, makes arrangements, establishes order . . . he serves as a physician; he makes one whole".³¹

Any action by which man refuses to acknowledge his proper place in the world as created is impure. Among the gravest and most impure actions are those which are motivated by pride, "brazenness", "arrogance", and "independence". Vanity, presumption and pride, coming to look on the earth and the empire as one's own "property and possession", provokes the anger of the "Lord of the Near and the Nigh", and leads one into "filth", "excrement", "corruption" and "smut".³² The earth, the nation and the people are all property of the gods. "Thy mother is not thy mother; thy father is not thy father", say the informants of Sahagún. Rather, Tloque Nahuaque is "thy real mother, thy real father", and "the maker, the owner" of babies.³³ The earth, the fifth Sun, is given to man only "on loan" to be used in the service of the gods. The evil ruler violates his office by using "thy property, thy possessions" in the manner that he wisheth because of "impudence" and "presumptuousness".³⁴

Pride and the contravention of order lead inevitably to pollution. A mother of noble lineage cautions her daughter: "Although we are the parents, and although thou art born of goodly parents, thou art not to overesteem it; thou wilt offend our lord. For that he will pelt thee with dust, refuse, debauchery . . ." ³⁵

The conception of "sin" hence involves both a "cosmological" as well as a "moral" fault. Violations of the structures of the fifth Sun and of man's status as a *macehualli* lead to impurity. Pollution is cleansed by entering the "navel of the earth", the source and ground of system and order. From this point of the "center" people are purified, cleansed and made fit for "the sweeping, the cleaning, the ordering" of things that is the duty of men.³⁶

The "navel of the earth", finally, is the source of knowledge. As we might expect, this knowledge pertains especially to judgments about the worth and character of other individuals and to the pride and arrogance of persons who would make such judgments. The gods who reside at the "navel of the earth" are described as "the knower[s] of men, seer[s] into men's hearts and men's thoughts", and the ones who "knoweth, seeth, heareth the things within the

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

³² Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 25-26, 27, 33, 53, 9, 29, 31-33 and *passim*.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 79, 190.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 63, 25.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33, 48, 53, 88, 214.

rocks, within the wood".³⁷ Apart from the gods, however, "no one is the navel of the earth". This native idiom was said to mean that: "We are to belittle no one; that is, to detest him. Although he may appear detestable he is perhaps prudent, perhaps discrete, perhaps able."³⁸

Coming to the "navel of the earth" does not alter man's status and condition as a *macehualli*, an "undeserving one". On the contrary, it renews his sense of finitude and insignificance and recalls his proper but minor place in the cosmic order.

The relation of the "center" to system, order and structure is further elaborated when the "center" is spoken of a *nepantla*, the "middle" or "in between". Fray Diego Durán noticed that many of the Indians, although nominal converts to Christianity, still persisted in the native custom of naming their children according to the day name on which they were born, but also gave them a second name taken from a parallel list of Christian saints. Aware that this use of the saints of the Church derived from the native use of the *tonalpohualli* dieties, Durán became concerned enough to inquire from an old man about this mixture of Christian and native customs. He was told that the Fathers should not be fearful because of it since the Indians were in *nepantla*, still "betwixt and betwen" (*en medio*), "neither fish nor fowl" (*neutros*), and in a situation of transition from one faith to another.³⁹

Nepantla signifies the "center" as the "disquieting place, of apparitions and omens", a place of danger, uncertainty, ambiguity and anomaly. A place, state, figure or situation is *nepantla* when it is unstable and in transition from one status or position to another. Any number of Aztec beliefs exhibit the characteristics of *nepantla*. Crossroads, standing "no-place", were feared as places haunted by Tezcatlipoca, the arch sorcerer, and as locations where strange events occurred, where unearthly beings appeared at "midnights" (*ioalnepantla*).⁴⁰ Unclassified and unstructured periods of time, such as the five unnamed days at the end of the year, the period known as *nemontemi*, a period of "no-time", were marked by fear and hedged by strict prohibitions. Eclipses of the sun and the period at the end of each fifty-two year cycle were "between times", between calendrical counts and homologous to the period of darkness between the fourth and fifth Sun. They were periods fraught

³⁷ Tezcatlipoca, for example, in *ibid.*, p. 17, 18, 25, 49, 70, 91, 111.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

³⁹ Durán, *Historia*, v. 1, p. 236-37.

⁴⁰ Sahagún, *Book 1, The Gods*, p. 19, and *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 197.

with danger, when the bat—or spiderwomen, the *tzitzimime*, or the divinized women who had died in childbirth, the *mocihuaquetzque*, descended to eat men.⁴¹

The “center” as *nepantla* is a marginal and ill-defined place or time, standing outside or between the normal and usual classes and categories. *Nepantla* stands in contrast to *ollin*, structured “Motion” or “Movement”. *Ollin* is structure; *nepantla* is anti-structure. *Ollin* is permanent “Movement” distinguished into an orderly succession of well-defined elements; *nepantla* is homogeneous, “betwixt and between”, always in transition. *Ollin* classes and categorizes; *nepantla* cuts across or falls between classes and categories. In so far as the fifth Sun is both *ollin* and *nepantla*, it is not only the age of the “center”, it is also the age in the “center”.

A mother cautions her daughter about the need for constant care and discretion in the contemporary age. “We travel along a mountain peak”, she says, “with an abyss on either side”, and “only in the middle [*nepantla*] doth one go, doth one live”.⁴² Life on earth is life “in the middle”, bounded by birth and death and by the creation and ultimate end of the fifth Sun. Life is defined by extremes. The earth is: “. . . The place of torment, the place of pain, where it is hot, where it is cold, where the wind bloweth, a place of thirst, a place of hunger. It is not true that it is a good place . . .”⁴³

This identical sentiment runs throughout the speeches recorded in the traditional “Speeches of the Elders”. The earth “. . . is a dangerous place, a revolting place, a boundless place, a place of no repose, and a painful and afflicting place”.⁴⁴

The fifth Sun itself, under the totality of the history of the world from its inception to its ultimate dissolution, is only an interim period and transitional time where “things slip, things slide”.⁴⁵

In spite of the dangers, the extremes of heat and cold and the inevitable sufferings, it is still necessary to live and act during this interim. Life in *tlalticpac*, “on the earth”, is harsh, but the gods have granted amelioration in the form of sleep, laughter and the sexual act. But, even were this not the case, even if it were true

. . . that man lives only to suffer, were this the way things are on the earth, must man, then, live always in fear? Must he drown

⁴¹ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 37; Durán, *Historia*, v. 1, p. 226, 293; Motolinía, *Historia de los indios de la Nueva España*, p. 25; Mendieta, *Historia eclesiástica indiana*, p. 98.

⁴² Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 101; cf. p. 53, 125.

⁴³ Sahagún, *Book 2, The Ceremonies*, p. 176-77.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁴⁵ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 63.

himself in tears? Man lives on this earth! Here, there are lords, there is power, there is nobility. Who goes about always moaning that thus it is on earth? Who tries to put an end to himself? ⁴⁶

In order to live "between times" it is necessary to strike a balance between the momentary but real pleasures of human accomplishment and the ultimate futility which is inherent in them. So long as "it is still our time", and "the club, the rock of the lord fall not yet", the ambiguity of an existence where joy is mixed with suffering, and purpose with futility, must continue. One is to live in a manner appropriate to and consistent with the time "in the center": to eat and drink "in moderation" (*nepantla*): to "speak in a medium voice" (*nepantla*); to "carry, emit thy spirit, moderately, middlingly" (*nepantla*); to "go deliberately" and "travel prudently".⁴⁷ Moderation and humility are the greatest virtues for living in the time "in the center".

At the heart of this concern with propriety, balance and moderation is the idea of man's "service" to the gods. "We mortals owe our life to sacrifice", says the *Leyenda de los Soles*, "because for us did the gods sacrifice".⁴⁸ This is echoed in a defense of the native faith made before the original twelve Franciscans three years after the fall of Tenochtitlan: "It was the doctrine of the elders that there is life because of the gods; with their sacrifice, they gave us life. In what manner? When? Where? When there was still darkness."⁴⁹

Just as the gods did in the time of *nepantla*, when they sacrificed themselves that the contemporary age might begin, so must man do now in *nepantla*. It is the duty of men to live "in the middle of the battlefields, the plains". It is the service of women to live "in the middle of the home, the hearth".⁵⁰ Warfare and childbirth, each being an action whereby a victim was seized for the nourishment of the sun, reciprocated for and re-enacted the divine sacrifices which created an age, the human race, and its sustenance.

In order to live properly in the time "in the middle" it is necessary to live and act such that all actions are seen as sacrifices per-

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁴⁷ Sahagún, *Book 2, The Ceremonies*, p. 96; *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 126, 101, 122.

⁴⁸ *Leyenda de los soles. Ms. 1558*, trans. and edited with notes by Walter Lehmann in *Quellenwerke zur alten geschichte Amerikas Aufgezeichnet in den Sprachen der Eingeborne. Die Geschichte der Konigreiche von Colhuacan und Mexiko*, v. 1, Berlin, Ibero-Amerikanisches Institut, 1938, p. 338.

⁴⁹ Cited in León-Portilla, *Aztec thought and Culture*, p. 64.

⁵⁰ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 203-04, 172. See also p. 171-72 on the custom of burying the umbilical cords of infants "in the middle of the plains" and near the hearth.

formed in service to the gods. Thus the *macehualtin* conform to the purpose for which they were created. "He is thy possession", exclaims the midwife, lifting the infant towards the sun: "He is dedicated to thee. For this he was created, to provide thee drink, to provide thee food, to provide thee offerings. He belongth to the battle field there in the center [*nepantla*], in the middle of the plains." ⁵¹

The struggles among the gods, and their ultimate deaths in the creation of the fifth Sun, are perpetuated in the era "in the center" as forms of sacrifice to the gods.

The tenuousness of living in *nepantla* becomes even more acute when the entirety of the history of the world is viewed as a fragmentation and rupture of the primordial wholeness which existed prior to the birth of the universe and its powers. In some of the late texts this vision leads to a disavowal of the reality of the existence of the fifth Sun and of the human condition itself. It is still necessary to live "at the center", although the "center" here takes on a significance quite other than those we have so far described.

The "center" in the last of its aspects is *in topan in mictlan*, the "above and the below", the "point of encounter with foreign worlds". The "above and the below" signify the "center" as the vertical axis extending through the "navel of the earth" and connecting the three cosmic regions—the "above", *in topan*, the "surface of the earth", *in tlaticpac*, and the "below", *mictlan*.

The vertical axis of the "center" is the avenue of passage from one cosmic region to another, or from one "foreign world" to another, and functions to express fundamental, ontological changes in the human condition—passage from non-existence to existence, from mortality to immortality, from illusion to reality, and from suffering to happiness. The "center" as *in topan in mictlan* relates to the absolute origin and absolute dissolution of individuals and individuality, and of all form, particularity and differentiation. In the interim between life and death the individual lives "on the earth", within the horizontal cosmos and subject to the conditioning forces and powers which make up the universe of the fifth Sun, *nahui ollin*.

Time and space are closely linked in the vertical cosmology as well as in the periods and quadrants of the horizontal universe. A pregnant woman is exhorted: "Perhaps for this reason it was determined above us, in the land of the dead [*in topan in mictlan*], in

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

the beginning [*in iooaian*], that our lord wisheth to place life in thee"?⁵²

The "above and the below" are positions at the opposite ends of the vertical axis of the center, but they are also equivalent to *in iooaian*, "darkness", the "beginning". The "beginning", the "oldest time", and the "above and the below", the poles of vertical space, are identical.

Time is still linked with space, but it is a time which is an eternal stasis and a space without structure, qualities and attributions. The time and space of *in topan in mictlan* do not revolve as do the historical time and space of the quadrants of the fifth Sun. The poles of the vertical axis of the center are the points of stability and unity.

There are numerous instances in which this vertical axis is the zone along which the creation and absolute beginning of things takes place. The individual soul descends from *omeyocan* at the summit of the universe into the womb of the mother at the time of conception.⁵³ Tamoanchan, the "House of Descent", sometimes identified with *omeyocan*, is the birthplace of maize and of the maize deity Cintéotl; it is "the place where children are made", the original home of the gods and the place where the lore and traditions of the tribe were discovered.⁵⁴ Quetzacóatl or Xólotl descends to *mictlan* in search of the bones of the ancestors from which the present race of man was created.⁵⁵ Maize kernels are taken to Tamoanchan to be chewed in the mouths of the gods, prior to being given to man.⁵⁶ Nanahuatzin, Tecuciztécatl and Quetzalcóatl all ascend into the sky to be transformed into heavenly bodies.⁵⁷ Huitzilopochtli is miraculously conceived when a ball of feathers falls into his mother's bosom from the heavens, and a similar story tells of the miraculous conception of the Aztec emperor Moctezuma Ilhuicamina.⁵⁸

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 141. On the "above and the below" see also: Ángel María Garibay K. "Semejanza de algunos conceptos filosóficos de las culturas hindú y náhuatl", *Cuadernos Americanos*, v. CII, 1959, p. 121; and, León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 14-15, 124-33.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ On these motifs see: Eduard Seler, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zu Amerikanischen Sprach- und Alterthumskund*, 5, Berlin, Ascher and Company, 1902-1923, v. II, p. 1065; Eduard Seler, *Codex Borgia. Eine altemexikanische Bilderschrift der Bibliothek der Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*, Berlin, 1904-09, v. I, p. 84, 233-34; Soustelle, *La pensée*, p. 13; Sahagún, *Book 2, The Ceremonies*, p. 212, and *Book 10, The People*, p. 190.

⁵⁵ *Leyenda de los soles*, p. 330-38; Mendieta, *Historia eclesiástica indiana*, p. 78.

⁵⁶ *Leyenda de los soles*, p. 338-40.

⁵⁷ *Anales de Cuauhtitlán*, p. 79, 90-92; Sahagún, *Book 7, The Sun, Moon, and the Stars*, p. 6-8.

⁵⁸ Sahagún, *Book 3, The Origin of the Gods*, p. 2-5; Tezozómoc, *Crónica Mexicáyotl*, p. 90-95.

It is also at the poles of this vertical axis of the "center" that things reach their absolute end. *Mictlan* is the place where "the dead are completely destroyed", the "end of the journey", "where forever all things end", and "a place without a smokehole and without a chimney".⁵⁹ *Omeyocan*, "Two Place", lies at the top of the universe and is the "place where one truly lives", "from which there is no return", and is "the place of reality".⁶⁰

Passage along this axis is marked by events which are similar to the tests, trials and ordeals of "rites of passage"—forging rivers and crossing deserts, passing between clashing rocks, walking along narrow ridges, and journeying through obsidianbladed winds.⁶¹ Passage from "life on the earth" to another cosmic region is achieved at the "center". By the latter half of the fifteenth century, however, if not before, in some of the royal courts and among the state poets, the perspective on life which is implicit in the symbolism of the "above and the below" becomes even more dominant.

Life itself comes to be viewed as a "rite of passage", an interim and transitional period, a fleeting "dream" and "illusion", marked by this same pattern of tests and ordeals. The quest for salvation lay in transcending "life on the earth" to recover the fullness existing from the beginning of time at the summit of the world. One poet laments:

Oh that I would not have come into the world,
Oh that I would not have been born! ⁶²

And another:

In vain I am born,
In vain I descend from the house of the Lord
to the earth:
I am an orphan! ⁶³

Birth and the descent from *omeyocan*, whether of the individual or of the universe, comes now to be seen as an act of estrangement, separation and abandonment.

In two collections of poems, the *Romances de los señores de la Nueva España* and the *Cantares mexicanos*, and especially in the genre of

⁵⁹ Sahagún, *Book 3, The Origin of the Gods*, p. 39, 42.

⁶⁰ *Cantares mexicanos. Manuscrito de la Biblioteca Nacional de México*, trans. with notes by Ángel María Garibay K. in his *Poesía náhuatl*, v. 1, México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1965, p. 139, 41, and the *Romances*, p. 65.

⁶¹ Sahagún, *Book 3, The Origin of the Gods*, p. 41.

⁶² *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 126.

⁶³ *Romances*, p. 56. Cf. *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 126.

poems known as *icnocuícatl*, the "Songs of orphanhood" or "Songs of Desolation", an intense skepticism about the value and reality of historical existence emerges.⁶⁴ But it is also attested elsewhere. The native chronicler Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, writing some eighty years after the Conquest, said that king Nezahualcóyotl of Texcoco (1402-1472) "believed to be false all the gods that were worshipped on this earth", and that in truth "there was only one god, and that he was the creator of heaven and earth, existing above the nine heavens and never seen in human or in any other form on the earth".⁶⁵ In honor of the "true god" (*nel téotl*) Nezahualcóyotl ordered a temple to be constructed with nine levels, "signifying the nine heavens", and "with no statue or forms of his figure" in the sanctuary at the top of the temple.⁶⁶ The architectural prototype of the temple, as Ixtlilxóchitl explicitly states, was the upper, vertical axis of the world with its nine levels and the high god residing at its summit.

The emphasis on the transcendence of the god and the almost singular attention to the "center" as the "above and the below" had consequences more far-reaching than changes in templo architecture. In many of the poems from these two collections, the god, while still the source of all life and sustenance, no longer "carries the city in his arms".⁶⁷ Ometéotl has withdrawn from any active involvement in the affairs of the earth and of nations.

The will of the god is unfathomable. "He has hidden his glory and renown on the earth."⁶⁸ The relationship between god and man has broken and ruptured. One poet in the collection *Cantares mexicanos* says that "No one is a friend of the Giver of Life", and even more simply and forcefully, "No one matters at all to the Giver of Life".⁶⁹ The contrast between the absolute reality of the high god and the evanescence of "life on the earth" is such that all human achievements and even life itself have lost their value and "In vain I am born . . ."

Birth is an act of abandonment, estrangement and the beginning of orphanhood. The earth is only "the place of anguish and of grief [in which] we live", and "We are left as orphans on the earth". The interim between birth and death is only a "fleeting moment"

⁶⁴ For commentary see: Ángel María Garibay K., *Historia de la literatura náhuatl*, v. I, México, Editorial Porrúa, 1953, p. 189-207.

⁶⁵ Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl, *Obras históricas de Don Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl*, 2v., ed. by Alfredo Chavero, México, 1891-92, v. 1, p. 243.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 227-28.

⁶⁷ *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 29.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 128; cf. p. 125.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

through which "we pass without purpose". The earth "is not the place where we really exist" but is "only a dream we pursue", and "illusion" and a "trick".⁷⁰ Men stand before the god as "your spectacle and performance with which you amuse yourself".⁷¹ Things men take seriously serve as diversion and amusement for Ometéotl. In a powerful statement of the detachment and majesty of the high god, Sahagún's informants said that:

Our master, the Lord of the Near and Far, thinks and does what he wishes; He decides, He amuses Himself. As he desires, so it will be. In the palm of his hand he holds us; at his will he shifts us around. We shift around, like marbles we roll; He rolls us around endlessly. We are but toys to Him; He laughs at us.⁷²

Because the fame and the purposes of Ometéotl cannot be discerned by man, the ideal of human existence as service to the gods in birth and battle recedes. The remoteness of god, the hiddenness of his desires and the illusory nature of existence lead to a skepticism more humbling than does the simple admonition, "No one is the navel of the earth". Rather, "Does man possess *any* certainty? Is *anything* lasting and stable?"⁷³ This vision of the majesty of the god relegates the battles through which historical time and space turn to insignificance.

In this situation the counsel of the poets and wise men is twofold. Enjoy the "flowers and songs", the "nobility and friendship", the "springtime" and the momentary pleasures. For although these are ephemeral and fleeting, they are "the precious liquor which enshrouds and intoxicates man", sent from the interior or the sky to provide a temporary respite from the sorrows and anguish of "life on the earth".⁷⁴ But also, the poets advise, strive for immortality and escape the "dream" by attaining oneness with Ometéotl. Only by living near to Ometéotl can one endure on the earth, and only by ascending to *omeyocan* can one attain the realm "within the heavens [where] there is happiness [where], one lives and there is joy", and "from which there is no return".⁷⁵

Jus as the birth of individuals and the origin of the cosmos pro-

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 129, 122, 102, 101, 83, 125, 133, 136.

⁷¹ Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, ed. by Miguel Acosta Saignes, 3 v., México, Editorial Nueva España, 1946, v.1, p. 461.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 494.

⁷³ *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 125, my italics. León-Portilla argues that *in topan in mic-tlan* refers to "what is beyond our knowledge, what is beyond our experience", a kind of knowledge which is "permanent, metaphysical, transcendental". See his discussion of "truth" (*neltiliztli*) in *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 7-8, 14, 178-79.

⁷⁴ *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 42.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 135, 41, and *Romances*, p. 12-13, 65.

ceeds from the highest point above the heavens, so the restoration of the unity lost in creation and the recovery of immortality can be gained by ascending to the top of the universe and to the undifferentiated time of absolute beginnings. This quest for salvation, in the words of Rudolf Otto, is a quest for "deliverance from existence" rather than for "deliverance from sin", which was the express purpose of the ceremonials held at the "navel of the earth".⁷⁶

It is undeniable that some of these poems are critical of blood sacrifices, and others of the empire forged by king Itzcóatl and the supportive martial ideology of Tlacaélel.⁷⁷ It is an oversimplification, nonetheless, to speak of such sentiments as moral protests against "human sacrifice" or "the political use of religion".⁷⁸ Rather than being moral homilies reaches "with only the light of reason" and "in spite of their religious beliefs",⁷⁹ they conform in their own way to the vision of the origin, history and structure of the cosmos which is set out in the myth of the Suns.

A part of the power of these poems is their presentation of a coherent perspective on the universe and its history; in so doing however, they utilize the structures of space and time in a way that is different from the calendars. The almost exclusive concern with the vertical dimension of the world leads to a rejection of the value of ritual sacrifices, warfare and conquest, and the cosmic mission of service to the gods. Still, this criticism is only one part of the vision which minimizes the significance of every human action and accomplishment.

All human actions from birth to death fall under the same judgment, not because they are seen to be "inmortal" or "barbaric", but because they are human. As Nezahualcóyotl put it:

...when you depart from this life to the next, oh King Yoyontzin, the time will come when your vassals will be broken and destroyed, and all your things will be engulfed by oblivion... For this is the inevitable outcome of all powers, empires and domains; transitory are they and unstable. The time of life is borrowed, in an instant it must be left behind.⁸⁰

"Someday my fame will be nothing", say the *Cantares mexicanos*,

⁷⁶ Rudolf Otto, *Die Gnadensreligion Indias und das Christentum; Vergleich und Unterscheidung*, Gotha, 1930, p. 71.

⁷⁷ Eg., *Romances*, p. 76, *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 85, 133.

⁷⁸ As does Laurette Séjourné, for example, throughout her *Burning Water: Thought and Religion in Ancient Mexico*, New York, The Vanguard Press, 1956.

⁷⁹ León-Portilla, *Los antiguos mexicanos a través sus crónicas y cantares*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1961, p. 124; and, León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 178.

⁸⁰ Cited by León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, p. 72.

"nothing of my fame will remain". "The jade will be broken, the gold will be crushed, the feathers will be torn."⁸¹

The consistent focus on the "center" as the "above and the below" in the traditional Nahua cosmology reveals a coherent vision of the value of space and time. It is as though the history of the world can be "read" either "horizontally" or "vertically". Depending on the direction one sees in history, or on the balance which is achieved between these two orientations, the conclusions will differ radically as to the reality of the world and existence within it. For the poets, the "center" continues to be the place of "salvation", not as *ollin*, the orderly sequence of periods, powers and directions, but rather as *in topan in mictlan*, the vertical axis along which one can ascend to recover the changeless time and space of *omeyocan*. Accordingly, the history of the universe with all its cosmic Suns, divine sacrifices and perpetual struggles has been only a "dream" and a "joke" and thus "nothing at all".

You are making a joke of us; we are nothing,
in nothing you keep us,
you hold us in oblivion, you are destroying us here.⁸²

It is unnecessary and even misleading to credit the authors of these "Songs of Orphanhood" with the "construction of a new concept of the world".⁸³ They do not begin *de novo*, but continue to utilize the traditional patterns of Azteca myth and cosmology. The contemporary age, *nahui ollin tonatiuh*, contains within itself all the possibilities in the history of the universe. Formally, this history is always recoverable through sacrifice, conquest, taxonomy and the calendars. The radical departure of the *icnocuicatl* lies in the singular attention they give to the absolutely primordial and *pre*-historical time and to the spatial symbolism of the summit of the world which is identified with it.

From this perspective, life "on the earth" and the life "of the earth" equally come to represent the inversion of all truth, value and honor: "...the humbling, the bowing, the inclining, the weeping, the tears, the sighing, the meekness—these same are the nobility, the estimable, the valued; these are the honor".⁸⁴

Carried to its conclusion, this insight means that earthly happi-

⁸¹ *Cantares mexicanos*, p. 101, 4.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁸³ León-Portilla, "Mythology of Ancient Mexico", *Mythologies of the Ancient World*, ed. by Samuel Noah Kramer, Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1961, p. 467.

⁸⁴ Sahagún, *Book 6, Rhetoric and Moral Philosophy*, p. 109.

ness is ultimately anguish, that achievement is futility, and, as the Indians themselves stated it, the "The hour of birth is called the hour of death."⁸⁵

This pattern of inversion and reversal is all the more striking in that it is a recurring one in other religious traditions and often seems to appear full-blown in times of cultural uprooting, crisis and extensive empire building.⁸⁶ It is also striking that the rebellion against the "horizontal" order of creation is commonly formulated in a way which identifies the "highest" point in the universe with the absolutely primordial time preceding the creative acts of the gods. Paul Mus, for example, found much the same symbolism underlying the Buddhist temple complex at Barabudur in Java. Summarizing Mus' remarks, Mircea Eliade cites a passage from the *Majjhima Nikaya* in which the Buddha at his birth took seven steps and shouted, "I am the highest in the world, I am the best in the world, I am the oldest in the world: This is my last birth; for me there will never be a new existence". According to Mus and Eliade:

The symbolism of these seven steps is quite transparent. The phrase "I am the highest in the world" signifies the spatial transcendence of the Buddha. For he attained to the "summit of the world" by transversing the seven cosmic stories, which, as we know, correspond to the seven planetary heavens. But in so doing he likewise transcends Time, for in the Indian cosmology, creation begins at the summit, which is therefore the "oldest" point.⁸⁷

We may suggest, in conclusion, that further attention to the symbolism of the "center" in Aztec religion can shed light not only on the mythical patterns which underly certain of their beliefs, practices and institutions, but may also refocus much of the atomistic comparisons which have been drawn between Mesoamerican, Asian, Greek and other religious traditions within a contest of religious and cosmological forms.

⁸⁵ Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, v. 1, p. 599.

⁸⁶ See the treatment of the Gnostic symbolism of cosmic reversals by Jonathan Z. Smith, "Birth upside Down or Right Side up?", *History of Religions*, v. 9, May, 1970, p. 281-303; Henri-Charles Peuch, "Gnosis and Time", in *Man and Time*, ed. by Joseph Campbell, New York, Pantheon Books, 1957, p. 38-84; see also, Wayhe A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity", *History of Religions*, v.15, February, 1974, p. 165-208; Carl Hentze, "Cosmogonie du monde dresse debout et du monde renverse", in *Le symbolisme des monuments religieux*, Rome, 1957, p. 91-117. For a discussion of the homologies between patterns of inversion in primitive rituals and the expansion of this symbolism in other religions see Turner, *The Ritual Process*, p. 166-203.

⁸⁷ Mircea Eliade, "Time and Eternity in Indian Thought", *Man and Time*, ed. by Joseph Campbell, New York, Pantheon Books, 1957, p. 188.