

OMETOCHTZIN

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LAS MUERTES DE DOS-CONEJO
THE DEATHS OF TWO-RABBIT

Jonathan Ott



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Esta obra está dedicada a
mi reverenciable maestro

This *Play* is dedicated to
my revered master

R. GORDON WASSON
1898–1986

Él, que desveló los misterios
de las divinas *xóchitli* náhuatl... y
actualmente en Mictlán, convida
con Nezahualcóyotl, Nezahualpilli
y Ometochtzin, un *tochtecómatl*
colmándose del espumoso
xochioctli de los *centzontotochtin*.

He, who unveiled the mysteries
of the divine Náhuatl *xochitli*... and
presently, in Mictlán, shares with
Nezahualcóyotl, Nezahualpilli and
Ometochtzin, a *tochtecómatl*
overflowing with the frothy
xochioctli of the *centzontotochtin*.

OMETOCHTZIN

PRELUDIO / PRÉLUDE
The Deaths of Two-Rabbit

XUCHIAYO CACAOATL in tiqui... vei ynacazyo CACAOATL in tiqui; temecaxuchio CACAOATL in tiqui; VCYO CACAOATL; chilo CACAOATL; tlilxuchio CACAOATL; yuluxuchio CACAOATL.

I take CACAO with ENTHEOGENS... I take CACAO with *hueynacaztli*; we take CACAO with *mecaxóchitl*; OCTLI-CACAO; chile-CACAO; *tlilxóchitl*-CACAO; *yolxóchitl*-CACAO.

Friar Bernardino de Sahagún
Primeros memoriales [1558–1559]

They say Ometochtli asked Tezcatlipoca to kill him, thereby becoming immortal; since his voluntary little death evanesced—as if it had been an ebrious dream—and he reincarnated safe and sound... like his devotees, *aficionados* of the sacred WINE, *TEOCTLI*. Ometochtli, Two-Rabbit, became the first of the *centzontotochtlin*, the ‘four hundred rabbits’, the ‘gods’ of *OCTLI* or *pulque*; on par with Mayáhuel, who noticed that rabbits would inebriate themselves with the *nécuatl*-hydromel, of the divine *teómetl*; and Patécatl, who discovered the *OCPATLI*-root, which could transform the humble beverage into divine *ambrosía*, into *XOCHIOCTLI*... *MACUILLOCTLI*. The ivory froth of his *TEOCTLI*, his *IZIACOCTLI*, overflowed the *tochtecómactli*, ‘rabbit-urns’, to flow-over all the land: from Aztlán to Anáhuac. Its numinous froth overspread the land, forming whirlpools, ever whirlpools. Whirlpooling continually, yes, it spread; undulating, aye: until it had laid its magical varnish over all the living and the dead.

The *tlamatinime* (or sages) said: «*Tezcatzonco moyolcā*»: he, born in Tezcatzonco, born under the sign of Ome-Tochtli; his destiny was ruled by the lord Tezcatzóncatl Ometochtli. Possessed by the spirit of sacred or profane inebriation, he was destined for a violent death: perhaps at the hands of evil men. And so they said: «*vctli qujmoxaiacatia*»: WINE was painted on his face. And so it happened to Ixtlilxóchitl Ome-Tochtli, the lord of Acolhuacan-Tezcoco, assassinated in 1418 by myrmidons of the tyrant Tezozómoc of Azcapotzalco, dispossessing his son and heir, Nezahualcóyotl Ce-Mázatl—thereby condemning him to a decade of flight, until he was able to avenge his father’s regicide and regain his throne, from which he offered the heart of the tyrant Maxtla to his ‘gods’, in 1427, formally crowning himself four years later.

Nezahualcóyotl reigned 41 years, reestablished the glory of Tezcoco and became the greatest Náhuatl poet and a famous *tlamatiní*. Of his 119 children, he designated as heir (then, only seven years old), Nezahualpilli Matlactlionce-Técpatl, and this boy confirmed the wisdom of his father, distinguishing himself in turn as a poet

and *tłamatini* during his long reign. At his decease in 1515, and thanks to the patronage of his uncle, Motecuhzoma Xocoyotzin, King of the Mexica (‘Aztecs’), his son, Cacamatzin Ome-Tochtli, ascended to the throne, to continue this great heritage of Poët-King... but his reign was short, sullied by civil war, and he was unable to escape the shadow of ill augury under which he had been born, and died beside his uncle, Motecuhzoma, in 1520—wretched hostage of that evil Pedro de Alvarado. Never more were there kings in Tezcoco, nor in Tenochtitlán, nor in the other lacustrine lordships of the valley of the eagle/serpent/nopál, and the following year the bearded barbarians conciliated a hegemony of *iron* over Tlalocan and the terrestrial paradise of those *centzontotochtin*. So came to pass the parlous prophecy of Nezahualcóyotl of 1467, the year CE-ÁCATL, when was inaugurated the terrible and bloody temple of Huitzilopochtli, savage hummingbird-warrior-god of his Mexica allies/antagonists. The great *tłamatini* presaged, that in the coming year CE-ÁCATL (1519): «this temple now being inaugurated will be destroyed... and the lordships will be finished, such that the tiny and tasteless *Agave* will be cut-down»; doubting only, if it would be his son or a grandson, who would preside-over suchlike disaster. To his felicity, his son Nezahualpilli did not live until the next CE-ÁCATL—year in which the strangers appeared, as if they had been ‘gods’, upon moving mountains of white clouds, with their gigantic ‘hounds’. But his grandsons did: such as the ill-starred Cacamatzin who, before dying tormented and tortured by the Spaniards, lamented that a blessed rain of the *FLOWERS* of Xochipilli vilely had been displaced by a dastardly deluge of darts. Kings no more, the sons of Nezahualpilli took-turns governing Tezcoco, until the rubric of «principal Indian», or Governor, fell-upon the shoulders of Don Carlos Ometochtzin... as if it had been that Two-Rabbit-Cape, *ometochtilmatli*, with its doleful destiny; aye, the very *ometochchimalli*-shield of the *centzontotochtin*,... proudly sporting that lustral insignia, *ometochtlauitzli*.

To the conquest of *bodies*, there followed an assault on *souls*... souls which put-up a much stiffer resistance. In 1523, the first squadron of this spiritual expedition invaded New Spain; and the Franciscan vanguard arrived the following year. The year 1529 was signal—marking the arrival of the Franciscan Friar, Bernardino de Sahagún, along with the first aggression against the esoteric essence of Indigenous spirituality—their *ENTHEOGENS*, or sacred inebriants. By royal decree dated 24 August in Toledo: «against PULQUE, which is the same as BALCHE»; was prohibited the sowing of «a root»—*OCPATLI*—and/or its use to: «fortify... a certain WINE which is called PULQUE». Anticipating by 42 YEARS, the establishment of the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in New Spain—and by 91 YEARS, its proscription of the more infamous psychoptic cactus, *PÉYOTL*—was prohibited the mysterious *OCPATLI*-

root of Patécatl, able to transform *OCTLI* into *XOCHIOCTLI*; alcoholic *PULQUE*, into an entheogenic potion; of unleashing an ambrosial alchemy within the *tochtecómatl*, yielding *TEOCTLI*—the quintessential *MACUULLOCTLI*! Nevertheless, the use of *OCPATLI* continued, and it was documented by the ‘King’s inquirer’, Francisco Hernández, FIVE DECADES after that decree; as well as by Friar Diego Durán, not to mention by Francisco Clavijero and others, later still. On the other hand, there can be no doubt, that this chauvinistic and cruel act of the exploiters—combined with their tradition of ludicrous drunkenness, hitherto strictly proscribed—swiftly converted the once limited sacred inebriation by *TEOCTLI*, into the quotidian crapulence with a profane *PULQUE*, literally, an *octli poliuhqui*, *corrupted*; not to mention the alcoholic Apocalypse that was consequent to the introduction of distillation by these invaders, adding the menace of the novel *MEZCAL*, to the rotting of *TEOCTLI*, into vile *PULQUE*.

Within their circumscribed possibilities, Sahagún and his Brothers took the part of the Indians, thereby opposing the *conquistadores*, clerics and colonists, who considered them *subhuman*—mere beasts of burden—useful only to be enslaved and exploited in the fields and mines, under a feudal system. Insisting that Indians *did* possess human souls, the Franciscans strove to convert and baptize the Indians; to instruct them, in the reigning Christian doctrines... themselves in ferment in Palæogæa, due to the Reformation, the Counter-Reformation and the Humanistic ideas of Erasmus of Rotterdam and others. On 6 January 1536, they inaugurated the IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF SANTA CRUZ OF TLATELOLCO, to give a polished education to indigenous children—beginning to endow some 60 children of the nobility, in Latin, Castilian and music; followed by rhetoric, logic, philosophy and theology. Meanwhile, Sahagún, Professor at the College and, having studied at the University of Salamanca, among the best educated of those Franciscans, cultivated a growing admiration for the Indigenous Cultures, and a parallel interest, in documenting them; the while his Brother-Monk, Alonso de Molina, began his lexicographic work, which culminated in his bilingual Castilian/Náhuatl *Dictionary*. In Tepepulco, in 1558, the *PROTO*-anthropologist Sahagún commenced documenting, in Náhuatl, *PRE*-Columbian history and knowledge, which bore fruit in his so-called *Primeros memoriales*, augmented/expanded by later investigations in Tlatelolco, bequeathing us that monumental *Florentine Codex*—written in Náhuatl—as well as a *Book*, in Castilian, likewise of considerable value: *General History of the Things of New Spain*.

In 1629, one Century after the arrival of Sahagún, the parish-priest of Guerrero, Hernando Ruiz de Alarcón, published his *Treatise on the Superstitions*... He being so zealous, in his personal *autos de fe*, he was granted the position of judge, by the Holy Office: the same that in 1620 formally had decreed that divination by *PÉYOTL*

and kindred plants was a heresy. This Reign of Terror, of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, and Ruiz de Alarcón, attested to the survival of the archaic practices, and the Inquisition celebrated numerous *autos de fe* against divinatory use of *PÉYOTL*, *OLOLIUHQUI*, *TEONANÁCATL*, *PICIÉTL* & *PIPILTZINTZINTLI* (species of *Lophophora*, *Turbina*, *Amanita*, *Psilocybe*, *Nicotiana* and *Salvia*). Even two Centuries of an Inquisitorial tyranny were insufficient... and use of these psychoptic plants survives to this day.

Our history took-place in México City (originally Tenochtitlán) between June and November of 1539. Don Carlos Ometochtzin, «principal Indian of Tezcuco» and grandson of Nezahualcóyotl, was denounced as a *heretic* and *idolator*, and tried by Juan de Zumárraga, Bishop and Apostolic Inquisitor of New Spain. It must have pained Sahagún and Molina—both being deputized as interpreters for his trial—to see the scion of that noblest family from the *PRE*-Colombian universe reduced to a prisoner, fighting for his life... the son of the great Nezahualpilli; grandson of the immortal Nezahualcóyotl, being menaced by this rabble that two decades previously had, in so cowardly a manner, murdered his brother Cacamatzin... Ometochtzin, born under that same inauspicious sign. But this anticipates our history...

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Xalapa—Barcelona—Salta

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OMETOCHTZIN
The Deaths of Two-Rabbit

[NARRATION]

It had been rolling since the dawn of Anáhuac... that Celestial Calendar, of two intermeshed wheels... rolling without rest nor reason. They say it is like a portentous press, that promulgates posterity; or rather, a maleficent mill, that tritulates TIME and expresses HISTORY... History, yes, this one... which commenced, as it had to conclude, on the date CE-ÁCATL (ONE-REED): being the year of your lord, 635. From the confines of Chicomoztoc, rupestrian cradle of seven caverns, the Chichimecas erupted-into the *crepusculum*, to divagate adrift, according to the destinies dictated by their deities. With each augurious turn, that stellar clockwork expressed another epoch of 52 years... rolling towards a FUTURE already PAST, recreating or returning anew to CE-ÁCATL. The Chichimecas rolled the dice of destiny, and scored SEVENTEEN, won that many cycles, to dare the *dénouements* of their destinies... aye, inherited this strand of HISTORY, O!, this tissue of TIME, just made to order for their mortuary shroud... seventeen epochs of 52 YEARS, or 884 YEARS... neither more... nor less.

[FADE-IN, SCENE I]

Sixteen times CE-ÁCATL returned, now in the year of your lord, 1467. Behold! The King of Tezcoco, the great Prophet-Poët Acolmiztli Nezahualcóyotl, then was obliged to dedicate a Tezcocan temple, to Huitzilopochtli: the ‘god’ of the Mexicas... he was forced to participate in the sanguinary saturnalia of sacrifices to that sinister hummingbird. Suddenly the venerable visionary descried the void, O! at the coming turn of that PRESS OF POSTERITY. The *amate*-paper of Anáhuac was running-out—it sufficed for SEVENTEEN folds—and SIXTEEN already had been painted. He presaged the final fold of the Chichimecan Codex; proper it was, to paint it a presagacious *Prologue*; a *Prologue*, aye, which at once was an *Epitaph*. Alas!, that furry portent was on-the-run, that damned rabbit was zigzagging towards his home; towards the waning mansion of the mellifluous *maguey*, where Huitzilopochtli was not welcome.

1. TEZCOCO, PLAZA MAYOR, A NIGHT IN THE YEAR 1467. It is the solemn inauguration of the new temple to Huitzilopochtli—consecrated with human blood. Nezahualcōyotl presides with the King of the Mexicas, Huehue Motecuhzoma Illhuicamina. Both near the ends of their lives. Nezahualcōyotl observes, how the expert Mexica sacrificers toss the last of four victims into a fire at the base of the pyramid, only to extract him, still alive, and *half*-roasted, then to wrench-out his heart. Lastly, they lay a beautiful naked damsel atop their four cadavers. While they cut her throat and collect her blood, the «famished coyote» turns his back on the disgusting spectacle... ayé, Nezahualcōyotl turns towards the void, as he versifies his voracious vision...

NEZAHUALCÓYOTL: In such a year as this, this temple now being inaugurated will be destroyed: who will be present?, will it be my son or my grandson? Then the Earth will be diminished and the lordships will be finished; such that the tiny and tasteless *Agave* will be cut-down...

The tiny and tasteless *Agave* will be cut-down...

The camera pans from Nezahualcōyotl's silhouette, before the fire, to peer-into the cup of the maiden's blood, held-aloft by a priest who is sprinkling it into the fire, with the fingers of his left hand. It follows the drops, until it focuses-on the flames, which begin to mount, until they cover the temple; and from those flames the camera emerges-into the next scene: now, the flames... of the Inquisition's stake...

[72 YEARS LATER]

2. MÉXICO CITY, ZÓCALO, MIDDAY OF SUNDAY, 30 NOVEMBER 1539. A morbid, tumultuous crowd surrounds this scaffold... upon which, we discover the Bishop, and Apostolic Inquisitor of New Spain, Juan de Zumárraga; the Franciscan friar, Bernardino de Sahagún; the grandson of Nezahualcōyotl, then King of Tezcoco, Carlos Ometochtzin; and some anonymous executioner. Zumárraga, impassive, stands to one side of the scaffold; Ometochtzin, to the other—bound to a post, surrounded by many logs of firewood, which are being lighted by the executioner, a torch in his hand. Sahagún stands in the middle, with both hands, raising to the level of his forehead, a chalice of WINE. *The camera emerges from those flames. With the post in the middle, and the logs protruding like a crown 'round them, the profile of the stake is strangely similar... to an immense, flowering Agave. There is no*

dialogue. Taking-in this scene, the camera concentrates, consecutively, on the faces of Sahagún, Ometochtzin, Zumárraga... and also that, of a young Indian, standing in the first row... he is Francisco Maldonado, Ometochtzin's nephew. In his face one can appreciate a macabre mixture... of horror... and enjoyment.

From his visage, the camera pans, onto the surface of the WINE in the chalice, suddenly ebullient; it develops froth, froth which mounts-up, the while it becomes whitish... the camera plunges-into the froth, to emerge-into the next scene. Now, it is the white froth overflowing a bowl of XOCHIOCTLI or TEOCTLI, FLOWERED or divine Agave-WINE, a <PULQUE> fortified with various psychoptic or visionary roots. This is MACUILLOCTLI, or <FIVE-OCTLI>... that is, the quintessential PULQUE.

[EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE]

3. TEOTIHUACAN, PATIO OF QUETZALPAPÁLOTL PALACE, A SPRING-NIGHT IN 1539.

The camera emerges from the white froth on a bowl of TEOCTLI raised by Ometochtzin. A fire blazes in the center... a rustic altar to one side, featuring some small stone and jade -icons, a few roots, a brazier with copal, and an AMOXTLI, or painted book. There also is an ACÁYETL, decorated reed filled with tobacco and inebriating <flowers> (or PSYCHOPTICA). Ometochtzin is seated before the fire—with both hands raised to the level of his forehead, he holds the bowl of TEOCTLI. He stands, to cense the potion through the aromatic copal-smoke. Four times he offers libations to the flames, sacrificing OCTLI to the crossed chapels of the heavens; and a FIFTH time, to the ardent AXIS. This is the quintessence, MACUILLOCTLI... <FIVE-OCTLI>, the fifth cup of Agave-wine for the axle of the stars. Pensative, he then sits upon the ground, and commences his chanting—begins to embroider the warp and weft of silence.

The dialogue begins in Náhuatl, which continues in the background, as appropriate English, both in the protagonist's voice, overcomes it.

OMETOCHTZIN: I am the priest TWO-RABBIT / I am the priest / I am the TEOCTLI-shaman, I am the divine XOCHIOCTLI / I am the ocelot-shaman / I am he who knows / I am the wise *curandero* / I know the things of Mictlán, below; aye... and those, of Tōpan, above / I am the noble son of the gods / I am the messenger, I am your little brother / I am the true god / I am he who has no father.