

THE DAWNING AND THE INITIATE IXBALAMQUE

(From *Spiritual Turning Points of North American History* to be published in 2008)

AUTHOR'S NOTE: The book *Spiritual Turning Points of North American History* is written upon the foundation of a spiritual-scientific view of history. It does not contradict historical research, but adds to it an understanding that is usually missing from a mostly materialistic view of history. This enables us to reconcile Native American and Western consciousness—the record of North and Mesoamerican mythology (i.e.: Popol Vuh, Aztec and Iroquois legends) with the discoveries of archaeology, ethnology, linguistics, etc. A previous knowledge of key concepts of spiritual science, or an openness to explore them, is essential to the reading and understanding of the book.

American mythology is permeated with the recurrent idea of ages beginning and finishing. Images that refer to these cycles vary. The Hopi and Pueblo Indians refer to the Emergence from the underworld; in South America the myths speak of a Second Creation. In Mesoamerica a central element of cosmology is the so-called Dawning.

Is it possible to ascertain what Mesoamerican cosmo-vision was two thousand years ago? What was the deeper spiritual essence of the Olmec and Mayan cultural revolutions? This would have been a nearly impossible task given the difficulty of penetrating Native American iconography and esotericism. Fortunately it has been made more approachable by the groundbreaking work of archaeologist and anthropologist Rafael Girard, who studied ancient Mayan tradition and its continuation into the present, both in a scientific and in an imaginative way.

Girard made two major discoveries. Mayan culture jealously preserved an esoteric knowledge whose roots dive deep into the past. The elders, after many years of acquaintance, allowed him access to rituals and ceremonies that up to his time had remained secret. Comparing the past to the present through mythology, linguistics, archaeology, and anthropology, one can reconstruct and understand the deeper essence of the Mayan worldview. The deeper revelations of Maya knowledge are faithfully preserved in the most precious document of the Americas, the *Popol Vuh* or Book of Council, written down in the fifteenth century by the Maya-Quiché. No archaeologist has been able to make full use of this document. Having decoded the book, Girard could see all the connections between its imaginative language and the stages of American pre-history and history. In essence his work began bridging what is still felt as the gap between American myth and history. Through the knowledge attained by spiritual scientific research, it is then possible to go a step further. The images portrayed in the Mayan sacred book can be associated with the events indicated by Steiner in the year 1916.

The *Popol Vuh* depicts the development of American civilization through the successive Four Ages. Crucial to our concern is the transition from the Third to the Fourth Age. This corresponds to the momentous changes from pre-historical times to the first stages of recorded American history, the events recorded by the dates of the Mayan stelae. The Fourth Age is ushered in by the deeds of those whom the *Popol Vuh* calls the Twins (Ixbalamque and Hunahpu), born of the virgin Ixquic. Their descent to the underworld, their confrontation with the Lords of Xibalba, and most significantly their

resurrection, mark the transition to the Fourth Age. Historical times are inaugurated at this point together which the sacred text calls “the Dawning.”

Every step of the life of the Twins is associated with an equivalent practice in the agricultural operations performed ritually by the Maya in the maize fields—in the present as well as in the past. In fact, Popol Vuh mythology, astronomical observations, and agricultural practices are completely intermeshed in the ritual part of the year called “Tzolkin” or sacred calendar, running from February to the end of October.

The Sacred Calendar and the so-called “Calendar Wheel” (or “Short Count”) were the innovation introduced in the Third Age by the historical Olmecs. The Short Count could only compute 52-year cycles. The “Long Count” introduced by the Maya marked a revolution in the computation of time.

With the Long Count the Maya entered the period of historical (recorded) time. For the first time, the concept of eternity had found its place in the calendar and in astronomical observation. The ceremonial center of Izapa stands in a singular place in the development of the new Maya culture and the central images of its mythology, particularly those of the Popol Vuh in relation to the deeds of the so-called Twins. In Izapa the odyssey of the Twins is portrayed most faithfully and completely for the first time in the carved stelae of various ceremonial groups of the site. This and other indices mark the site from which the revolution of the Fourth Age rayed out. To history it is known that Izapa’s art marked a turning point in the history of Mesoamerica.

The Dawning is the point of intersection of changes that occurred in Mesoamerican consciousness. The resurrection of the Twins marks the end of the dread of death that accompanies the Third Age. Humanity of the Fourth Age beholds immortality within as it beholds eternity without (the Long Count). The fear of death of the Third Age was closely associated in its later stages with the grim cult of human sacrifice, instituted by the Lords of Xibalba. The Popol Vuh indicates that the resurrection of the Twins marks the end of those practices. These would only reappear in a new way first in Chichen Itza and then among the Aztecs (See Aztecs and Iroquois document).