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# ELEMENTS THAT INTEGRATE THE WORLD VISION OF THE OTOMÍ TRIBE: THE TRINITARIAN WITHIN THE OTOMÍ TRIBES

**Luis Perez Lugo**

## **Summary:**

The pretext when approaching this subject is to present new elements that show the otomí world vision based in field data and the revision of what has been written. Mythology and the language itself contributed elements to demonstrate the otomíes are guided by a trinity notion which is present within their universe; it is a new way to approach the indigenous world (above all the otomí tribes) in a scientific manner.

This work has the intention of presenting new elements of understanding the vision of the otomí world; the reflections are based on camp dates and specialists, who have written about this. The mythology and the language show elements to conclude that otomíes are guided by a trinity notion present in their whole world; this is a new way of approaching the scientific work to the indigenous world (in particular, the otomí world).

**Key words: trinity, universe, land, human, skin, myth, ritual, vision of the world, and existence.**

## **Introduction**

When undertaking a path it indicates the course to which you must arrive at and how to reach it, the path will be dictated through the word(s), the main element to describe and to communicate the world notion among humans, in this case to show the otomí universe through its word and the significance of this, in the sense *primigenio*, we will understand it like a myth. Therefore, *ñuhu*, that is to say, otomí, is translated like who is on the path. *Ñatho*, is one who speaks their own language. The first one is a dialectal variant of the *Alta Huasteca*; the second, is of the *Valle de Toluca*.

At least four dialect varieties of the otomí are recognized (according to Uribe Villegas): 1) the dialects of the northeast or mountainous dialects, that we alluded in the *Alta Huasteca* ; 2) those of the southwest, or dialects of the *Valle de Toluca* (both located in the region included in this study); 3) the

dialects of the northwest, represented mainly by the dialects of the *Valle del Mezquital*; and 4) isolated languages of Ixtenco, Tlaxcala (ref. Uribe Villegas, 1985: 9). The first two are in our region of study (the otomíes of the *Valle de Toluca*, we will concentrate more in the study of the community of *San Andrés Cuexcontitlán*, municipality of *Toluca* and the municipality of *Temoaya* and the *ñuhu* of the *Alta Huasteca*, in the municipalities of *Zacualpan*, *Zontecomatlán*, *Huayacocotla*, *Texcatepec* and *Ilamatlán*, Veracruz).

*Ñuhu*, alludes to the view point, that of course implies notion of feeling, this is specified in *ñatho*, equipped with its own speech. The word will be an important element of analysis for our investigative task. To the question asked to a *ñatho*, who is he? They would respond in their own language: I am *ñatho*, an *otomí*, translated as the one who is speaking and he speaks towards a view point, on a path, the one most experienced, the oldest, the *tañu*, the great path, the ancients.

It is evident to each one of these words, *ñuhu*, a myth exists alluding to this auto-definition. We have two concepts, word and path, both have a myth. Our phenomenal task will be approached with the word and the myth .

Barthes clarifies how he considers the linguistic and mythical systems within the heart of the myth, "Before ending in the analysis of each terminology of the mythical system, it is advisable to be in agreement on the terminology. We know now that the significance of the myth can be considered from two points of view: as final term of the linguistic system or an initial term of the mythical system. We needed, therefore two names: on the level of the language, that is to say, as the final term of the first system, to the significant I will designate feeling; at the myth level I will designate form to it; with respect to the meaning there is no possible ambiguity, we will give concept to the name. The third term is the correlation of first two, in the system of the language it is the symbol. But we cannot retake this word without producing ambiguity, since in the myth (and this is its main peculiarity), the significance is in the symbolism of the language. To the third term of the myth I will call it significance, the word is justified inasmuch as the myth effectively has a double function: it designates and it notifies, it makes you understand and it imposes ". (Barthes, 1991: 208). In addition "The meaning is also like a space in which the things are put in order with others." (Gadamer, 1999 YOU: 519).

"The language is designated to itself and to its other. This flexibility prolongs what the linguistic call metaphysical linguistic function, but articulates it in another discourse, the speculative." (Ricoeur, 1980: 410). To mention itself and to the other it refers to different aspects, to define and to delimit what is before its world vision in this case the otomí and, as this one conceives to those which are not otomíes.

The myth, in its part, "reveals a certain conscientiousness of the situation in the cosmos" (Eliade, 1951:14) and in a philosophical sense it is "more than a belief, the foundation of all belief" (Nuño, J., 1985:39). We will see that "the myth is already *logos*, precisely elaborated within a philosophical language." (Ricoeur, 1991:182). It would be *logos* whereas one looks for the framework and the sense of the mythical speech.

Diaz Cruz, citing Leach, respectively affirms on "(...) the logic respectively Aristotelian and mythological. First one refers to the physical reality, the second metaphysical reality; the non-logical character of the religious statements, continues, is an indicator of which we find "a belief instead of a knowledge" (...). For the case of objects of religious belief the rules of ordinary logic are not applied, where *p* can be a virgin that it gives birth or "God who is simultaneously father and son of itself" (in opposition to the logic of the technical actions it is possible here to maintain two different entities are simultaneously identical). That is to say, the reference of *p* is a metaphysical reality, an "other" reality, that is not fitted within the rules of the Aristotelian logic, contrary to the ordinary experience. Therefore the religious discourse - organized from "its" own logic, call it myth-logic, not-logic or pseudo-logic is immune to the evaluations and rational critics or realized from another logic. (Diaz Cross, R., 1998: 268). Constant references will be made to this aspect by the resulting importance to the approach of this subject.

It is mainly in a philosophical sense, how to follow its unravel and to expose the contained conceptual structures in any mythical text or the same otomí language. Alfredo Lopez Austin, clarifies that the myths "(...) have been taken seriously again although with the reliability of the scientist and not of the believer (...)" the myth is a social product, arisen from innumerable sources, loaded with functions, persistent to time but not immune to it." (Lopez Austin, 1998: 26). Mircea Eliade considers the myth like "one `sacred history´ therefore a true history" (Eliade, 1985: 12), the true context in the original primitive culture, the author says,

in addition, that the myth has until the last times of "life", "in the sense to provide models to the human conduct and to confer meaning and value to the existence" (Eliade, 1985: 8).

Lopez Austin specifies on the idea of terms as sacred to the tradition "Today exists among the natives a Spanish term that is used widely: "delicate". They are delicate during the time of celebrations, the sacred place, the archaeological remains, the moment of danger, the rite, the image, the sinful act, the doors of the other world. The circumstance is delicate over what the strong supernatural effects can produce". (Lopez Austin, 1998: 173). For the moment we will let the term delicate to understand the sacred, although it does not coincide with the interpretation of Lopez Austin in some scopes he mentions like the sinful thing, because this term does not exist among otomíes. On the other hand, methodologically there is a difficulty as to western science, because, as the western mythical belief divides the world, thinking of, to the ideas, always in two great parts: the sacred and profane, the high and low, hot and cold, the culture and the nature and is taken up again, to where it is possible, the sciences which help this work, such as the anthropology, sociology, literature, linguistic, the theology, the philosophy, this last one is recognized in Mircea Eliade as primitive ontology.

Existing factual concepts given among the referring investigations to the indigenous subject, as the duality, the mezzo-American concept, among others. In the following work appear some other categories to approach the otomí thought, it is the contribution that will immediately be in front of the rest of investigators such as Jacques Galinier, Carrasco Pizana, James Dow, Luigi Tranfo, Beatriz Oliver, Yolanda Lastra, Margarita de la Vega, among many others. In this first approach, we see that instead of the duality it is the trinity; instead of the polytheism, monotheism was found, among others. Taking a reference to the studies made by investigators and complementing them or contrasting them with the results of the field-work .

In accord with the previous, the claim is to show elements that integrate the otomí world vision, such as the concepts of God, skin, vitality, force, house, fire, lack and above all the notion of trinity, among others, and same that transcend in the otomí world vision. Also the objective is to show that although two otomíes regions are compared, differences between both exist.

Three parts constituted this outline to the otomí world vision, first is the vision of the universe; concepts like God, fire, trinity, vitality and reciprocity guide this part. Later the words: skin, earth, mountain,

maize, to be born, among others, were present to approach all related to the Earth. Finally, the concepts like life, to think, lack, human body, vitality, force, are what guide this section. Everything to conform the otomí world vision.

## The universe

The *kha* manifests in light form. When he created the world the rainbow appeared, it was the door of the world; the door is special it takes the creator where the dead go. In the creation there was lightning (that demonstrated the door) of different colors, the paradise, the true *ngu*, the supernatural room.

The myth of the door compiled in the *Valle de Toluca* narrates that when one passes to the other life the door appears(*goxti*), if she is black, without light, it is still not their time; if it appears shaded death will be late in arriving, if is clear the expiration will be fast. The doors "Properly constitute an opening to other planes and assure the communications with the Gods, in the different planes, as well as with their late ancestors". (Oliver Vega in Lastra and Quezada, 1998: 228). The one that is lost in some aspect, is said they do not find the door, where the light of the sun enters to open themselves to realize a decision in their life.

Who intermediate before people is the priest, - *mokha* -, - *mo*- the one full of the creator and the one who is before the man and near God. The one who knows the cure, the one who knows everything, the receiver and transmitter of *kha*, essentially in the center of power. The church, - *nikha* -, - *ni* - dance, - *kha*- God, where the harmonious movement of God is manifested, in the old church, - *donikha* -, which refers to the center of original ceremony, in relation to - *nini* -, the town, the place of the dance, of the renovating movement. The public prosecutor - *phonikha*- means "the one that takes care of the church". All the positions related to the church contain in themselves the word - *kha*- like: the butler, - *bochkha*- the sacristan, - *bichkha* -; the assistant, - *tambekha* -; the godfather, - *takha*- father-God; positions related today to the Christian church - *kha ma nor kha* -.

The connection to the universe, the unknown - *ra kjani*- takes place with smoke of the laurel, - *khapi t'oo*- the one that invokes it to which is to come, the spirit, - *ntahi* -. It is not the creator of the life but it comes from the creator, of - *kha* -, of what exists, it is most special for the otomíes.

When something is going to be blessed, - *mo bo kha pi* -, that is to say, it is going to remove, to steal something of - *kha*- sacred and the translation: of - *pi*- is to steal, - *too* -, stick and - *khapi* -, blessed. Let us remember that the otomies were a warrior tribe and there the dimensions of the concepts to clear and to steal situated.

In the region of the Huasteca the blessing regularly is done with smoke, extracted from the tree of copal, myrrh (liquidámbar), and especially in the *Valle de Toluca* there is no copal, therefore a lot of smoke with laurel is used to scare away the rain, so the clouds will disintegrate; also, before the threat of a storm a candle is lighted in the door of the house (Méndez, Ines, 2002:1). Thus the smoke is presented as a medium between the divine and mortals.

God is the director of the custom - *kha co padi*- means the custom; - *kha*- is God and - *padi*- the knowledge, the knowledge about God; also - *te gui kha* -, to carry out the custom or it refers to what you do: - *te* - is understood as life, - *gui* - to carrying out and - *kha*- like God, that is to say, to carry out the life in God. The ceremonies mentioned before take the intention to operate the custom by means of mediation of *kha*, God.

The denomination of God, *kha* for the *Valle de Toluca* and *Okhan*, for the huasteca. In this last one it is said "it will dawn as thus, will be the one that makes all the decisions. They are the lights like what we are: presence" the notion of which God is in any manifestation of existence takes to raise a pantheism form related between humans and God.

## Three entities in which God manifests itself

And a manifestation of God is by means of lightning, - *xi ntonhi* -, the one that came roaring, the one that burst unexpectedly roaring. For that reason the place where lightning falls is invaded by God and the otomies put a cross there. When lightning strikes someone, to cure themselves they go to the hill of the **Campana** (state of Mexico), because it is said God is there, at that height, that is to say, the lightning is related to the mountain. The representation, in otomies of Puebla of "El Señor Relampago. Masculine anthropomorphous

figure, its particularly distinguishing the fingers finish in circles; from the waist the representation of the water in the form of great drops and two water tails. "(Oliver, V., 1997: 20).

God, fleshed in lightning, can also declare in a signal that it comes pleased or angry, everything depends on the roar of the thunder. - *Mafi tsi kha* -, it means God comes shouting, it comes pleased, it comes giving signs of water. If rain is normal it is pronounced benevolent, but if it is in a storm it is angered. - *Ban toni tsi kha* -, God comes angered, it appears uproarious, strong, threatening, - *hia* -.

When a storm appeared, they threw tenemaztles (hot stones) from the fire to the outside of the house to calm the torrent.

The places of treatment for lightning patients are the mountains of Atarasquillo, the El Cerro de la Campana and the one of Ajusco, white flowers must be taken. In their houses today they have lightning saints, often they were acquired in some of the chapels located in one of those three hills. Informed Cecilia Velasquez an elder from the *Valle de Toluca*.

The otomies relate the lightning to the fire and this is another incarnation of God, *kha*, lightning is like the fire of the sky. The fire is actually an otomí deity, it differentiates itself between a flame, *tsibi*, and a fire *gospí*. The second, as will be seen ahead, it has a special connotation. This way it is another manifestation of God, *kha*, for the otomies.

On the characteristics of fire other things can be said, not contemplated by the investigators, according to an informant of the Sierra Madre, *bospí*, is the ash derived from *beespi*; the flame is what heats, which burns and, the *bospí*, is something that maintains the fire, no longer worn-out but it maintains the fire, the similarity is like a live coal, that is the *beespi* it is like the spirit, the strength remain in the *bospí* that is to recognize the whole, when there is no longer fire, there is no longer a flame, earth and heat; then, it becomes *bospí* but when it becomes *bospí* it has left the place sacred.

Still the heat remains, after the fire is put out, depending of which wood was used in the fire, if the wood is of live oak, or "camaroncillo", or "hueso de tigre", these are tropical hard woods, therefore the heat of the ashes. The heat in the ashes is maintained up to one night, because it no longer exists in the coals, that is to say, *bospí* no longer exists, the heat maintained there is the *beespi*; but it is in the pure spirit form even



though cold ashes remain, for example (the human) would be *beespi*, according to informants of the Alta Huasteca region.

In order to make fire in a kitchen there must be three stones "fire (*gospi* - house of the fire -); the elders in the mountains of Temoaya recommend" that smoke can be seen from the house so it can be seen there is life ", because it is believed when the fire is reactivated (...) you feel the heat, it chases away the sadness. A fire or furnace is different from a simple flame *tsibi* (...) because the first one must have three stones and not the other "(Perez Lugo, 2002:1).

The *N'yu*, means three "denomination of the man, of the otomí (*n'yuhu*, the skin *hu* of *n'yu*), of phallic, in esoteric terms. *N'yu* has the same origin that *nyu*, which is usually confused phonetically. Within the terms derived from *n'yu* there is *yui* (name of stones of the furnace), *n'yuni* (the nourishment), *n'yusbe* (the sexual act), the exact penetration of the penis *n'yus'i* in the woman *be*. "(Galinier, 1990:497). Woman is called *weme* in the Huasteca language and *behña* in the State of Mexico, in both places it denominates to *me*. It does not correspond to the translation of Galinier. It would also have to do with *neyi*, the rain, and *nyui*, the cigarette. The man *nyehe*, is conformed of *dehe*, water, in both words we see *he* in its completion.

The three stones, according to an informant of the Alta Huasteca region, "obey to the roundness of the pot, this is the support of the world, even though you see a ball is round, but not because it is round does it require four stones, with three it is sufficient to sustain it, also it is better there are three stones than to have four. Because with those three the weight is very equitable, in addition it allows the three sides to bring forth the fire, because if there are four stones, there is little fire brought forth on each side and the firewood what are you going to do? There is no space, for that reason three are so perfect it can be used for everything, as much for the pot, as for the flame and the fire also "(Mérida, Juan, 2001:2).

Thus we see that "the otomí language and the mythical story contribute evidences to understand their vision of fire from the otomíes. The first criterion sends us to the scopes of the meaning of this deity and the second enriches us and confirms to what it represents. The presence of fire within this group is significant: from there the importance of considering it like an element helps us to understand the vision of the otomian world "( Pérez Lugo, en Albores B. Y Ballesteros, V. Et. Al, 2001: 35).

Fire is the symbol of life, of spirit; on the contrary *bi huiti*, extinguishes, finishes what has life, fire must be lite within oneself sufficiently to obtain the vitality in its totality (*gotho*).

The fire is vital, through its thermal radiation it is the main element to enter the whole - *gotho*- in the part - *tengu'tho*- based on the mutual aid - *nfozte*- for the work - *mefi*- of the Earth - *hoi* (Ref. Perez Lugo, 2000: 16 -15).

A third element where the otomí God incarnates is the sun, is the director of time and emitter of the heat, gives sense to the inhabitants, gives direction and sense to the house, orders, vitalizes and gives force to the community. The Sun, - *jiadi* -; - *jia* -, the head, the potent expression, all embracing, which bathes and – *di* – goes forth, because the sun is always on the top, no one to extinguishes it, from there other allusions are made to the same, to the top, at the head, for example, - *ma bo jia* -, wash your head. The grandparents when greeting, incline their head, bathing the other with energy. The plants need the sun to bathe them, the water needs the sun to bathe it to evaporate and thus it makes rain. The sun bathes our forehead and it bathes it of wisdom.

It is the reason of why "- *padi* -, designates to the knowledge of - *pa* -, light, the one that opens you, the one that is full of wisdom of the light; and – *di* – in front of, - *jiadi* - that all human beings must bear wisdom. The excess of heat, warms up the body, - *nzepa* -, exceeded destabilizes the human-universal relationship "(Diaz, Isaac, 2000:2).

Also of - *nzaki* -, the universal vitality (this vitality is not only possessed by humans, it is also possessed by the stones, the plants and animals, as it will be shown later), this word broken down to - *nza*- related to - *nze* -, star, light is being filled, expanding with light, like the light of the sun.

Also *nzaki* is broken down to - *Za* -, of the tree, (axis of the world, the powerful one, - *sunzahki* -) also of - *nze* -, light and - *mu*- accumulating wisdom, in the extent that you travel the path of existence -*ñu* -, thinking -*ñunfeni* -."- *Ñu*- is the way, and - *feni* -, the deer, - *fani* - the one that helps to transport you, for that reason -*ñunfeni*- is to help to walk, to transport. God is shown also in the same thought, like - *kha ma nfini*- my thought "(Diaz, Isaac, 2000:1).

The sun like the emitter of energy, - *tzedi* -; - *tze* -, stars and - *di* -, in front of; he is the one that burns, - *ra tzee*- and it connects us with- *tetzee* -, without exceeding with the anger, - *tzeya*- or with sneezing - *jetze* -, or its opposite the weak, - *jinga ntzedi* -, simply what allows us to arrive, - *tzete* -, or to set (fire) - *tzeke tsibi* -, to the optimum thing and not to the dangerous thing, - *ntzetho* -, without stumbling, - *nfetze*- to go to the unique, - *ratze* -. The advice and corrections are: Straighten yourself, raise your forehead like the sun! In the case of when an individual walks looking down or crestfallen. When an individual sets out to project themselves to influence their life, it rises as the sun and says in name be of God, immediately acts with force on its objective, on invoking it is like saying make me strong, like when reinforcement is requested in the congregation of Atixtaca.

In Atixtaca at noon all came to a stop, said the leader, "take into account that at noon not a bird sound, nor a cricket, the murmur of the wind, nothing is heard. Take your hat off and immobilize, without thought, without movement; later we wait that a bird, a cricket or something emits the first noise "(Perez, Angels, 1997:1), so we can continue working. It can be understood like - *kha* -, the supreme energy, the one that it invites activity, to the movement, the one that marks the time - *made ra pa* -, noon, which is the starting point, where God and the devil interchange responsibilities, God guides the existence from the midnight to noon and the devil from noon to midnight, this being an ominous time, the elders and initiated take a pause at noon, for a half an hour. The God passage is referred to as the heat - *pa*- and the one of the devil is referred to as the cold - *ra tze* -, to the star.

For the case of the initiates it seems this could happen at any time and it designates him not-to do, thus "In the case of seeing a tree, what I knew to do was to focus immediately on the foliage. The shades of the leaves nor the spaces between the leaves never worried me. Their final recommendations was to begin to focus on the shades of the leaves of a single branch for later, without haste, to travel across the rest of the tree, and not allow my eyes to return to the leaves, because the first deliberate step to put together personal power was to allow the body "not-to do" (Castaneda, 1999:251). Later Don Juan defined when doing "- To do is what makes that rock a rock and that bush a bush. To do is what it makes you be you and me being me "(Castaneda, 1999:262). Let us remember that in otomí the verb to be does not exist, this can be seen how Pedro Macario maintains an otomí of the Valle del Mezquital, when providing to those who follow his lessons of treatment assigning them a stone to prepare it and to ask questions through that rock, also Don

Juan is in agreement because "- That rock is a rock by all the things that you know to do to it - he said. I call that to do. A man of knowledge knows, for example, that the single rock is a rock because of doing, and if he does not want the rock to be a rock the only thing he has to do is not "to do" "(Castaneda, 1999:262).

The sun marks the ceremonial times, also at six in the morning, they cross-themselves and kiss the Earth. At noon they take off their hat and express, thank God it is twelve noon! At dusk they cross themselves again and kiss the Earth. From noon to midnight it is another period and from twelve midnight to twelve noon is another one. The first is the exclusive ambient of the devil and of the second period is of God a matter adopted by the catholic church with the masses of Sunday at the 6 a.m, 12 a.m. and 6 p.m in St. Andrés, State of Mexico and other towns.

The macro time is measured by the nights, moons; a month is lunar. The term in *ñuhu* has the same designation for month and moon, for both is *zana*. The week has, half of its days bad (Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays) and half good (Thursday, Friday and Saturdays), Sunday is neutral. The good ones are for curing or seeding. The year begins on the 19th of March with the ceremonies of fire, this data must be reconsidered, the cause is that some informants in the state of Mexico maintain the day of the Holy Cross and the 2<sup>nd</sup> of May is the dawn of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. Another very important date is in June, today related to the day of San Juan, Juan was related to the growth of the herb, *xihua*; the name designated to Juan in otomí is *Xua*, they related it to June because at this time the grass and plants grow.

## The Earth

The *xi* talks about the plants, Earth's cover; the human skin is *xifani* and the animal skin is *xinfani*. *Fani* comes from the word deer, a special animal within the animals by its intelligence.

The plants are the bridge between the Earth, animals and humans. The *mui* (Earth belly) is the Earth, alludes to its capacity to germinate, what she can produce, the plants feed *mui* (it is to say to the stomach)

human and animal. Then the Earth's stomach gives birth to nutrition (the plants) and this one as well feeds the stomach of animal and human.

The *xi* is the layer that surrounds the Earth, the arable, fertile layer. When a mountain has remained barren, without trees, it is compared as to one who is bald, without hair; they no longer have its *xi*, the bald one lives the life preoccupied, or that it gave something good, it destined its life to some benefit and it remained without hair; the mountain to have undergone deforestation, an erosion, an induced mistreatment (human) or natural. "The hill of Acambay being a man falls in love with the woman, the hill of Jocotitlán; at being rejected its *xi* falls, its hair, the trees, it remains bare, of pure sadness from not obtaining the love of the other mountain, the woman "(Valencia, Israel, 2000:2).

The forest has a more abundant *xi*, since more heat and water exists to activate the growth of the *xi*. On the other hand the desert possesses the most indispensable *xi* which is the cover of dust immediately upon the Earth's surface.

The next immediate sacred *xi* is the one of the mountain, *Xante*. The *xi* of the mountain is covered simultaneously by other *xi*: *xitso*, the tree; *paxi*, the grass, *nxa*, wet dew, *xa*, the plants or the cloud that goes to the mountain by means of which it sends rain to feed *mhye*, guardian of the water that has to do with *xante*, *xa* of *xi* and *the* of *dehe*, water.

As far as the territorial boundary, there is a mountain of the sacred tree, that is in the center of the territory and, then there are seven hills, to the north, and in the part of above, is the mountain range that goes to Huayacocotla, *matidi*, (place of giant pines) to Tutotepec. Here it is where the known notion is lacking: the lack of the Mountain range in relation to the Valley, from which by lack of disposition to the ritual the ancestors fled to the lower huastecas, it is to say the fertile huasteca was transferred downwards. I have often heard this. But in what sense would be the lack, a lack of above in relation to down, the yearning of fertility to those of above on the part of the huasteca and the huastecos of the lower region longed for the knowledge of the ones above; those of above say that they live in territory where the medicinal plants are better than the lower part, that their products are the better ones destined for ceremonies.

On the other hand, we will see in the otomíes of the huasteca that the mountains have animal names (male or females) for example the Cerro del Toro (Hill of the Bull) and the Cerro de la Vaca (Hill of the Cow).

Galinier also agrees in which "Perceived as globally the hill can be considered " male or female ". So is the case of two leading figures near Ixtololoya. One of pyramidal form whose summit is very pronounced named *n'yohu* (man), the other of smooth and rounded form, is called *sumpo* (woman), nevertheless as much as one as the other they are considered hermaphrodite"(Galinier, 1990:558). The translation of man is *nyehe* and of woman *weme* or *behña*, this does not correspond to the previous translations.

There were otomíes conquered and others free of these translations. "All the otomíes were under the power of the triple alliance with exception of the refugees in Michoacán and Tlaxcala, and those of the independent nobility dominions of Metztlán, Uayacocotla and Tototepec" (Carrasco Pizana, 1986:273). At the same time that the otomíes, according to the author, were greatly influenced by the huastecos "(...) the otomíes assimilated cultural characteristics of the huasteca, via Valle del Mezquital, or the totonaca" (Carrasco Pizana, 1986:295).

Lugo procured, an inhabitant near the cave El Espejo and a follower of tradition narrates: "when a witch-doctor goes, not one or two go, three or four go. When he sets the table, look there, they put food, set flowers, put beers, odorous smoke, candles; also they toss something similar to rice, as if it were a saint, people put out their hat to catch it. Later they take each ones of us to sow the seeds, then take each one of us to our house and from our home back to the sowed field. The witch-doctor says, take this and take it to the vegetable garden and when one leaves from a cave also take a posy of flowers and a small candle and tell them; look if you do not have a vegetable garden take this to your corral.

He is in the cave about three days, one takes his beast and their rope and sets the rope on the altar, you hang it there and you put a bill of a 20 and when one is leaving, all the women say "chin, chin, chin, chicken, chicken, chicken" and we the men with our ropes say, "hi ya cows" and "git y-up cows" and "tie a yearling calf over there" and "move-it cows" or "move-on-out cows" and "ready to mount" or "afoot", it seems you truly have cattle. And you take them and thus you go, if it is three-fourths (of the participants of the ceremony) take the same path so when one arrives to his corral the others help him to put its cattle away with shouts and the rest go to their corrals and thus they go away until all are finished. The ladies do the same by urging their animals on to their house. Each one doing their thing, within their theme.

The table is a stone, it is long, has the form of table, the tablecloth is placed, the offering is placed on it, at daybreak one goes away, be it on one side or the other, for there are three caves. One cave is the first and the largest one, it is for requesting and (the second) is a granary located above, you walk about 300 meters, it is there where they say there is a pot, the treasure was uncovered, then a large stone slab was put on top of it; it is unknown who put it there; it is very large about a ton. Then on the other side is the smallest one (the third cave) and it is for giving thanks. The Granary is where one goes to attract, in spiritual form – right? -, one puts their request, they already know are going with luck. In that cave that is a large crag, within (an individual) one is covered by the slab, all of it or part of the cave and it is a rite for harvesting pure chili peppers, one must be dressed in the color red.

When one goes to illuminate the cave one goes about 50 meters inside, upon entering he takes two or three ignited candles. Soon my friend says to me, “look my friend go there and there you can request the things you want.” You state, “you can say all the things you want to there, you can request everything, take into account you are speaking to me.” There ask why it has lived here for such a long time. Many people come, since I have known I have heard this and now I come because many come this way. Those that go take half a kilo of wax to, a carton of beer, takes refreshment and a chicken and add it to the list. My friend is like secretary taking note. After writing the list, we take it to the center of the cave, all groups arriving take note of where the items are from, for the arrangement of the cost of the money.

Then, someone is offered to take their child to the gospel. A gentleman said to me, “May I request a favor?” “Yes,” I said. “Would you take my child to the gospel?” I remained quiet, then I asked my friend for he is wise. “How should I go about doing the gospel?” “A-ah,” he says, “look, you take into account you are in the church. Then here you take your godchild and kneel them in front of the table by the edge of table cloth, you raise the edge of table cloth and put it on their head. Then you set your hand upon the table cloth on his head. “I will help you, I will do the ceremony for you. As godfather you will only put a hand on his head.” “Well,” I say to him. “What am I going to do then?” “You must have a little candle.” “A-a-ah I do not have one”, I said to him. “From here I will get it,” he said to me. “Oh good, if you would do me the favor, get the ones that are there (of the ones used in the ceremony), of those I will use,” I said to him. Each one of them, must have a little candle, a posy of flowers. The moment arrived, and because we are friends I said to him, “I have what is needed.” Then, I went and I brought the children, and I knelt them in front of the table of the altar, I

raise the edge of the table cloth putting it on their heads and I put a hand on each one, the other gentleman took hold of the small bells and the incense burner. He then puts the incense burner on the head and then he rings and rings the little bells, for each godchild. Well it is finished, it is fixed, on that day I was called on to take five to six, or some at your age (more than 30 years old) the youngest about six years of age, (...) they speak the old dialect. All of the aforementioned narrates the existence of the great scepter of power congregating the Eastern otomíes it is impressively evident the conservation of the traditions.

The otomíes of the *Valle de Toluca* also appreciate their territory in a peculiar form: From an immense distance the majestic mountain of the **Gumidi** can be seen, it means body or flesh, **mi**, seated and **di**, in front; that is to say, the one that is seated facing. It is a mountain in the center of the valley. To people at the moment of referring to her, their eyes shine, the prophecy comes to life, immediately they feel how the narrator is possessed by his own mythical story, now with eyes crazed, absorbed by the heart of the mountain.

At the foot of the mount **Gumidi** an old woman, Claudia Sabina, relates this mountain is a woman, its mate is Nevado de Toluca. One day they fought, for that reason the mountain came, at seeing this their children came to put a stop to and it remained where it is now. Their children are the hills on the North side, in the town of Santiago Acutzilapa.

The **Gumidi** mountain, hill of Jocotitlán, is an ancient capital of the otomí of the state of Mexico, they says it continues to be, as it was in the past, the territorial center, the center is **gumidi**, related to fire, today **ñatho** is also a descendant of the pine, as narrated by the myth.

The hill of Joco has trousers and in rainy weather the hill of Joco turns black when the clouds are above it water surely comes to it. **Ngue' midi** is the name given to the hill, when the clouds settle on top of the hill then it has put on its hat. It is said then "praise God it is going to rain because the hill has put on its hat" this hill is otomí, assured the elder.

## The human



## The human and the cosmos

An otomí of San Pablo Autopan, State of Mexico traveled across in a sacred pilgrimage all the otomí regions and found *ñu*, like an essential element for the otomí definition in all the otomí regions, the same story in relation to the creation of the human states the otomíes come from *mahua* – the ancestor great foot -, another informant from Temoaya, State of Mexico, relates it to the legendary hero *botzanga*, and *ñuhua* (three feet) subsequently came another generation, of diminished humans; thus finally, the actual generation was left, "like us - said the informant with finality". Therefore, *ñu*, walking and the path, are essential for the otomíes. It is confirmed, as it was aforementioned at the beginning of the section, that *ñuhu*, the otomí, '*nyuhu* as is designated by Galinier, has the prefix *ñu*, path, that it means path, related to *nyei*, the stone of the furnace or also understood as rain: Path, stone of the fire or rain, are important elements that conform to the otomí.

In the Eastern Sierra Madre, *ñuhu*, "the one on the path", with this self-design, walks within all, its world; is what names, which gives him internal power, and takes him on this path to the total realization of an individual with his surroundings (...) *ñuhu*, otomí to it, it feels (*tzedi*, energy), is realized (*nzaki*, to animate) and it is known, *ñunfeni*, in the way (Perez Lugo, L: 2002: 42).

*Ñunfeni*, *tzedi*, *nzaki*, all have a relation because all are born of man. *Nzaki*, comes from light, the knowledge of continuous life, the word *ki* is like the utmost of knowledge. *Ñunfeni* is like making what is in the head come to life, in the mind, of *ni*, how to dance and that will allow *nzaki*, this one comes from the Earth, because "the Earth is a gigantic conscious being subject to the same forces as us" (Castaneda, 2000: 219). The direct knowledge that the Earth "has such a way to give its warriors a tremendous encouragement; that is to say, an originating impulse of the Earth's conscience" (Castaneda, 2000: 221).

Human vision, *Hnu ra ´mui*: the *hnu* vision, and *´mui* life, birth, stomach, heart, custom, to inhabit, to be. Through being - and not of the living - one defines the human, in the measure of itself being able to exist within the world in a harmonic form with all that is earthly, cosmic and human, that realistically be lived. Here we see the difference with the Christians, Don Juan, a Yaqui, synthesizes it thus "What they have come to understand is this mold of man is not a creator, but the mold of all the human attributes that we can conceive, and some that we can not even conceive. The mold is our God, because he coined us as we are but not because he created us out of nothing making us of his own image and similarity. Don Juan said that, in

his opinion, falling to your knees in the presence of the mold of man exudes arrogance and human self-centeredness "(Castañeda, 2000: 279). However with native Americans is observed a universal-center instead of the European anthropocentrism.

Much of the previous judgment is noted immediately: "There (in the old church), God says to us, the Fire says to us, the Earth says to us, the Water says to us, a bad wind is going to come for the month of April. It will be a very strong wind that will destroy the harvests. The rich ones will begin to reflect. No one is scared here. It is said the otomíes are nothing, but are indeed those that are worth more "(Galinier, 1990:292). If it were in the context Don Juan mentions, speaking of the Earth, the fire and the water it would not become present.

## The human within the universe, the fire and the temazcal (sauna)

According to the observations of Galiner with shaman Evaristo Flowers: "the fire is a purifier along with the Earth and the water. A patient puts themselves in contact with the Earth for his re-birth; after the purification with the fire and the water. Galinier citing Hichón, affirms "(...) the double association from the dwelling to the fire and the water (spilled on heated stones and produces the steam) confirming the fact, in otomí cosmology, the atmospheric phenomenas, especially the clouds, have a supposed birth in the caves. Along with the steam-bath next to the outside of the house, the fire of the furnace maintains a complementary relation, being one of them male and other female. The observation of Hichón about the totonaco steam bath seems certain and is probably a rite that marks the return of the infirmed back to the bosom of the Earth and its re-birth after the purification of the fire and the water "(Galinier, 1990: 146-1147).

To a great extent the *temazcal* (sauna) pursues these goals among the otomies; in the bath they meet to collaborate in the solution of familiar problems, recently the vulnerability is the familiar union link and the threat of the familiar breakage. That communion occurs with the family. For that reason the *temazcal's* important place is located in the proximities of the otomíes homes. Thus the temazcal, *tihta*, protective father

- washes the body and the soul and revitalizes the protective shade. When inaugurating one, first it is cured with plants, later it can act for all the functions attributed to it:

1. Cohesion of the group. Each familiar nuclear group has one it serves to give harmony and cohesion to group, when some case appears that threatens to alter the familiar group, temazcal sessions are realized to correct the evil. Regularly within the extensive family someone has more authority, an uncle, or grandfathers; this one is recognized as the indicated one to heal the most difficult cases of the extensive family and the cases are treated regularly in the temazcal.

2. Treatment. Multiple diseases are treated in the temazcal, it would be considered by disease whether physical, spiritual or a psychological one.

3. Bath every three days. The family uses it to maintain the body healthy, of all ages enter.

4. For ceremony. Before undertaking a very important act, pilgrimages, rites of passage to consummate births, transference of force and intelligence, birthdays, marriages.

To recover and increase energy the otomies use chants, if it is fright they tell him to leave. With a scare the body's angel goes away, they then request that it returns, because it has been scared and has gone far away. The chant is done while the patient is rubbed, or water is put on the bricks. To the elderly people that their angel leaves, they experience much fear, for that reason they speak to his angel so it will return. This one is not more than the shadow.

## The human and the territory

In the community, Ricardo Magón Flores, in the municipality of Benito Juárez, Veracruz, Pedro Hernandez maintained "La Sierra Alta de Hidalgo, Veracruz and San Luís Potosí, is from the waist upwards. On the foot of Hidalgo, Veracruz and Tamaulipas, all which is even, are from the waist downwards "(Hernandez, Pedro, 2001:1). That is to say, the territory of the Huasteca has the form of a body. Although this is an otomí story, apparently it has Nahuatl influence, because the surrounding towns where the story was registered are of this language, located in the lower part of the Huasteca, in the higher part where the

otomíes live I did not find similar story. The Cerro del Toro is a mythical mountain geographically delimiting the huastecas to the south, this represents the masculinity in its generic sense; to his side, is the mountain of the cow, this one represents the femininity.

Both mountains represent very important myths separating the Alta Huasteca that includes the oriental Sierra Madre to a large extent; it includes the states of Veracruz, Hidalgo and San Luís Potosí. Their mythical complement are the huasteco valleys until arriving to the Gulf of Mexico. Including the state of Veracruz, a very small portion of San Luís Potosí and the Huasteca Tamaulipeca. The valley generally symbolizes the feminine, the tropical climate, the fertility. The Alta Huasteca represents the masculinity; it would have something to do with planning, those traveling the path, with a cold analysis, with sanity to inhabit the world.

In *Mayonikha*, it is the place where the bull arrived after the myth of fleeing in the Cerro del Toro, mentioned in chapter two, today majestic ceremonies are made there to the cattle and reference is made to the abundance and the fertility of the same. Now in this place it is the seat of the myth narrating where the Cerro del Toro was center of power to the first inhabitants, the giants. The story narrates, that one day when these humans climbed to make a ceremony on this mountain, one of them refused to climb. From that day the mountain became opaque and was transferred more to the east, taking with him the brightness of the sun. Another story mentions on the mountain is inhabited by a stud inseminating the cows of the Sierra (mountain range), one day envy divided them in wanting to take control of the stud, when seeing this, this one fled to the lower Huasteca where today it is fertile and has great quantity of cattle. *Mayonikha* is now the great center of power located to the east, in a cattle zone. Among huasteco otomies the great viper, the eagle and the tiger are the dominating ones in the world, are the leaders of this world and the coyote also has much power. Because having a hair of the coyote you no longer have the bad quivers; equally having the nails of the coyote; the feathers of the eagle, eyetooth or the skin of the great viper, one has protection of the body. They call the great viper *fani* to him because it is a defense for the Earth which "if you (snake) kill that horse no longer will there be maize, the gust of wind knocks down the plants" (Vazquez, Fidencio, 2000:2). Only in case the agriculturist's wife and children arrive at vegetable garden, the viper can be killed so they do not scare, but is necessary to seed a cross of maize where the animal died, in a oriented form. Doing this, the animal will no longer affect anyone because it is no longer poisonous, it is simultaneously the Earth's power.

There are three classes of *fani*: red, ash-gray and white, according to Fidencio Vázquez in the (Huasteca) town.

The festivities of the maize on the 15th of August (in the huasteca and the *Valle de Toluca* ) and on the 29th of September (in the huasteca) demonstrates the physical dressing of the corn as humans since the maize is a simile of the human body and linguistically it is shown also: when referring to 1) the hair of the maize, *xuxta*, is like talking about the human hair, 2) the ear (of corn), *nga*, comes from *ngue*, the flesh or its body (*guemidi* is a mountain that means the body seated facing forward), referring to the blood it transmits, its flesh needs to germinate, this is seen when removing the pollen and tossing it to the corn so that results in a *huitlacoche* (a maize fungus), 3) *huandixo*, is the foot of the cane of the maize, makes a direct reference to the human foot, *hua*.

## The trinitarian

With respect to the duality for Galinier one of the six axioms that constitutes the representation of the otomí world is "the duality principle extends to the relations of the power groups tying the community with the national society and the State" (Galinier, 1990:682). In the stories there is no absolute interdependence between one part and the another, if at noon God and the devil meet to be in agreement, it is spoken of as cooperation, of reciprocity, not of duality. The same is seen when the deities of rain of above, *m'ye* and the one of below, *minthe* appear, and not much emphasis is made to normal water, that is how two of three entities privilege themselves.

The actual language (*ñuhu*) speaks of three forms through which the breath, *ñu*, that goes and comes through pores of the nose, where the air walks, (where one walks is *ñu*, the path) the voice, for the otomí, exits the nose, at the same time the word *mui* also exits from the stomach, is to say it is necessary to make effort in stomach to pronounce it.

Although at all costs Carrasco Pizana wants to find the duality within otomíes, it appears to be of interesting to him that several cases have three as the ritual number within the otomíes and above all having something that differentiated them from the Mexicans, these were: the 9 high-priests (3 main ones plus another 6) who

made the celebration *Antzyngohmu* in Tlaluacpan. The 3 high-priests who celebrated in 3 huts in Tototepec the celebrations of the months. The 3 Indians who by mandate from 3 principalities fasted in *Azcapotzalco* offering copal (a tree resin used for incense) to Texcatlipoca 3 times a day (once by day and two by night). In the Xocotl Uetzi celebration 3 high-priests appeared in an outstanding form, and on the head of idol of otonteutli they put 3 tamales inserted in 3 poles. Also Carrasco Pizana mentions Seler thinks that the number 3 is related to fire. This can explain the importance to the number 3 within the otomíes because they have fire as a principal deity (Ref. Carrasco Pizana, 1986, 185-220).

In the tales of their own, otomíes actually maintain there is no duality because all we set out and arrive to the same center (*made*) because in duality their are two, we are not two (stories of several informants of the state of Mexico) but as many as three, by the three or more noted things. The word duality does not exist within otomíes, even the couple man-woman *miña* and *ñeje*, *ñe* the one that makes a path but along with the woman, when she is pregnant is *ñu*, of *xiñu*, the one that gives a path, wisdom like a single thing. *Ma* is only the half, the middle, from where we come from *mui*, (of *gomu*) to exist, belly and *do*, the world from where we are born from where we start, is *domui*, the custom of where the eye is informed, the panorama, also sacred.

## Conclusions

While the devil and God watch the world their is not much danger, when it is the moment of the delivery of the responsibilities, then no one is watching, and that is the risky moment. There is an agreement between both, no exclusions. The other moment is not agreement nor discord, no one is there to regulate, is exactly noon.

While the otomies of the state of Mexico make the forms of humans to fit their environment, those of the huasteca relate it to animals, those of the state of Mexico we suppose do it by the Aztec influence.

The otomies of the huasteca are purer like otomies than those of the state of Mexico, determinately of note the first neither have Aztec influence and the intervention of Christianity is much less, in actuality the otomí tradition advances over Christianity in the huasteca, by the celebrations within the Christian churches

directed by otomí tradition, not by Christian priests but by the otomies. The conservation of the language is greater in the otomies of the huasteca and this entails the permanence of the tradition also.

Although it does not become a deliberate comparison with the European and Christian tradition a forceful difference is observed in the face of the otomí world.

The otomies believe in the monotheism in the form of pantheism, that is to say, the only God manifests itself in any living entity, of course there are some where it makes more of a presence or its presence is stronger.

The otomí world vision is guided by the trinitarian notion of existence, as we can state it throughout this article. Under this sense and order of the otomí world, the interpretation (of the proper world by a person) in three interrelated contexts, first is the idea the cosmos is more important than the Earth and the human, in order of importance the Earth follows it and lastly the human, for this reason the world vision is cosmo centered.

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