



Tamoanchan, Tlalocan: Places of Mist (Mesoamerican Worlds)

Alfredo Lopez Austin

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Two mysterious misty places existed in the world vision of the Aztecs-Tamoanchan and Tlalocan. Though they are considered important cosmological places, references to them in Aztec mythology are obscure. Myths about Tamoanchan describe it as the place where all beings in the world originated. Tlalocan, it was said, was a terrestrial paradise located inside a perpetually green and beautiful mountain that was the destination of humans who died by drowning, lightning, or disease.

Historians have attempted to understand and clarify the significance of these two places since the sixteenth century. Today, most students of Aztec religion try to locate them in the cosmic scheme in order to better understand Mesoamerican religious thought, but the written sources on these two places are difficult to understand. In *Tamoanchan, Tlalocan*, Alfredo Lopez Austin presents new interpretations of Aztec mythology based on written historical sources, iconographic sources, and the beliefs of modern Indians.

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