

# THE CRISIS OF THE CALENDAR

THE GNOSIS INTERVIEW  
WITH  
**José y Lloydine Argüelles**



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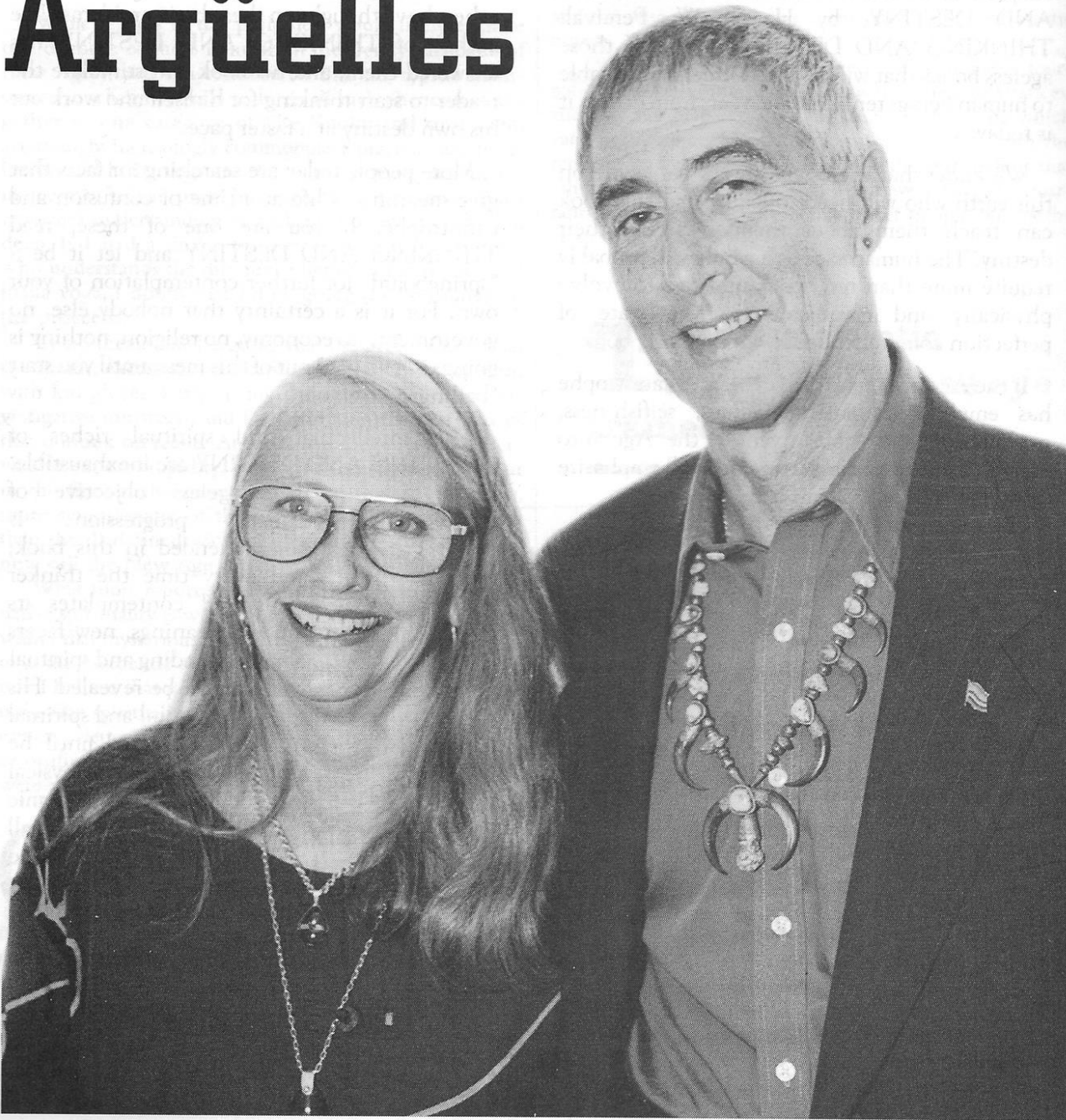
Dreamspell Kin 190 (Pacal Votan) - Kin 191 (White Wedding) - Telektonon 23 Lovers ReUnion

Ancient Maya RealTime **1 K'an** (1 Corn, 1 Seed, Kin **144**)

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# José and Lloydine Argüelles



PHOTOS BY DAVID A. GILMORE

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## BY RICHARD SMOLEY

**A**s I write this, it's five days away from the kick-off of Red Rhythmic Moon Year, Kin 149, the Sixth Year of Prophecy. This linchpin date is what most people call July 26, 1998. But, according to New Age visionary José Argüelles, most people are wrong. Living under a crooked yardstick of time known as the Gregorian calendar, we have cut ourselves off from natural cycles, producing modern civilization and all its woes.

Our only hope, says Argüelles, is to turn to the more harmonious Thirteen-Moon Calendar as used by the Mayans. As its name suggests, it consists of thirteen months of 28 days each to coincide with lunar cycles. Adding an intercalary day to total 365, the calendar thus integrates solar and lunar cycles. It's based on what the Argüelleses call "the 13:20 timing frequency" — a natural cycle — rather than the familiar, unbalanced "12:60 timing frequency." If we don't make this transition by the year 2012, civilization will perish. This year — when the Mayan calendar synchronizes with the familiar one — is the time to make the switch.

José Argüelles and his wife Lloydine reached the apex of their fame in 1987, when they issued a call for the Harmonic Convergence — a time when, according to Argüelles's complex calendrical calculations, humanity would be able to undo its own bondage to materiality. If enough people (144,000 to be exact) heard the call, it would help usher in a new era that will begin in 2012 A.D., the end of a 5200-year Mayan cycle.

And people did hear the call. Although the event was dubbed "the Moronic Convergence" by *The New Republic*, the Argüelles's own literature says "millions of people stopped their ordinary lives for two days to receive the galactic energies which entered the Earth" on those two days.

The Harmonic Convergence marked, not the birth of the New Age, but rather its debut as a mass phenomenon. This event, along with the writings of Shirley MacLaine, helped the New Age gain its

current prominence as a butt of jokes for late-night comedians and for sitcoms like "Dharma & Greg."

Argüelles, a former professor of art history, seems contemptuous of this notoriety; for him it's yet another symptom of the mass insanity that is destroying civilization. Today he and Lloydine live, like nomads or royalty, above the limitations of mundane identity. "I have no credit card, bank account, or driver's license," he told a San Francisco audience during a lecture tour in May 1998. "I had to release from those forms of identity."

Although they distance themselves from other current prophets, the Argüelleses' themes are common on the New Age scene. Living out of kilter with nature has put humanity on the brink of destruction; we can go no further in our present course; but if we mend our ways, we can attain a higher "galactic consciousness" and surpass the mystics and yogis of old. Moreover, although both sides would no doubt be loath to admit it, these themes are echoed in the dispensational wing of fundamentalist Protestantism, where the crisis of civilization is called the "tribulation" and the equivalent of "galactic consciousness" is known as the "rapture."

It's hard for me to make sense of the Argüelleses' claims. Their books, like *The Mayan Factor* and *Earth Ascending*, offer charts, glyphs, and calculations that I find convoluted and often incomprehensible. Conventional archaeologists are of course skeptical of their views. Only other New Age figures like Terence McKenna (whose equally convoluted findings also point to 2012 as a crisis point) and, even more peculiarly, Minister Louis Farrakhan seem to be on the same wavelength.

Despite these oddities, at the heart of it there's also something appealing in the Argüelleses' call. They understand that modern civilization has given short shrift to beauty and harmony, and that our souls are wasting away for want of these things. I'm not sure that the Thirteen-Moon Calendar would end our woes. But it's just as well to be reminded that there are more tranquil and integrated ways to live.

**Richard Smoley:** Maybe you could begin by talking about how you became interested in the Mayan calendar.

**José Argüelles:** My interest in the Mayan calendar is age-old. In terms of what I remember from my life this time around, I lived my first five years in Mexico — that was between 1939 and 1944 — and then my family ended up moving to the States. When I was fourteen, my father took me back to Mexico for the first time since I'd been a young child. He took me to Teotihuacán, the great pyramid center outside Mexico City. When I climbed up to the top of the Pyramid of the Sun, I had a type of mystical experience in which I could feel what was there. It was like a memory and a reawakening. It also gave me a need to learn more about what had constructed this place, with its geometry and cosmic sense of proportions, which was so totally different from anything in modern civilization.

After that visit, I was working in the public library in my home town in Minnesota, and I came across books on the Mayan calendar and immediately began reading and studying everything I could find about it from that time on. It's been with me for a long time. I got my Ph.D. in art history at the University of Chicago because there were no Ph.D.'s in Mayan calendars!

That's how it began, so it could combine with many interests, including Buddhist meditation, to evolve into the level it evolved into by the 1980s. My book *Earth Ascending* in 1984 incorporated my knowledge of the mathematics of the calendar with the mathematics of DNA and the *I Ching*.

**Smoley:** What is the difference between the Mayan calendar and the Gregorian calendar, and why is it important?

**José:** We expect a calendar to be a standard of measure. The Gregorian calendar is not a standard of measure in that all of the units of that calendar — the months — are irregular. This is a fundamental root error in the Gregorian calendar. It has deeply loaded sentimental associations — "April in Paris," "September Song," and all that — but you're basically dealing with an illogical and irrational phenomenon. In the Gregorian calendar, for instance, September, which means "seventh month," is the ninth month.

As we say, space is physical, but time is of the mind. So if you apply a crooked measure to the mind, what kind of mind do you get? The Mayan Thirteen-Moon Calendar, like all Mayan calendars, has equal units of measure.

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**Smoley:** Is your calendar an exact replica of what the Mayans themselves used?

**José:** The ancient Mayans used at least seventeen calendars. All the calendars were unified by the fact that they operated with the 260-unit standard called the *tzolkin*, which is the sacred calendar. This takes many different forms, but the base form that we worked with is the 13 x 20 matrix, which is in *The Mayan Factor* as the harmonic module.

Insofar as the Mayan calendar is followed today by indigenous Maya, they're following the 260-day sacred calendar. That's the basis of what we later distinguished as the 13:20 timing frequency, since 13 x 20 is 260. The Thirteen-Moon Calendar is one of the seventeen calendars that the Maya used. It was the calendar of 28 days.

found the same things in the Mayan calendar you have. How would you respond to them?

**José:** It depends what you're looking for. Right now there are indigenous Maya who continue to follow the sacred calendar of 260 days. They're all tuned into the fact that the cycle ends on winter solstice 2012. Then there are the Mayan archaeologists. For them the existing indigenous Maya are kind of an anthropological anomaly, and the mathematics and the calendar of the classic Maya are an archaeological phenomenon and have no value for present-day life and civilization. And then there's the work that I have done, which has spawned a school of what I call "neo-Mayanists," who, starting with my work, then go back to the indigenous Maya.

I daresay that most Mayan archaeolo-

we had deviated from the biosphere time.

**Smoley:** Do you also plan to change clock time?

**José:** If you change the calendar to just get the whole biological frequency back into a normative 28-day cycle, a very even standard, we will soon realize that with a couple of other simultaneous changes that may occur, we don't actually need the clock.

Haroun al-Rashid, the great Caliph of Baghdad, had a clock made by his court wizards as a toy, which he gave to Charlemagne. And Charlemagne gave it to some monks and they puzzled over it for a long time, and they wanted to know how to

**IF WE ARE TO RETURN TO LIVING IN THE CYCLES OF NATURE, WE WILL BRING HEAVEN ON EARTH, BUT IF WE CANNOT RETURN TO LIVING IN THE CYCLES OF NATURE, WE WILL CREATE HELL ON EARTH."**

**Smoley:** And its chief advantage is that the moons are equal in length and that it coordinates the lunar and the solar cycles.

**José:** Yes. Exactly. And it's easy to break it up into thirteen-week quarters. Most businesses now operate with evenly divided thirteen-week quarters. This standardizes all of that.

**Smoley:** I understand where the thirteen comes in, with the thirteen moons in the year. I don't quite understand where the twenty comes in.

**José:** Biologically, we have twenty fingers and toes. We are dealing with time as biology rather than as an externalized metric division. And also we're dealing with the fourth dimension. Time is actually the fourth dimension, and we are dealing with what we have not known before: fourth-dimensional standards of measure. And the twenty is also a solar frequency. Twenty refers to a twenty-day cycle as well. So as I said, in taking the Thirteen-Moon Calendar, we're taking the simplest one, and the one that corresponds most biologically to our biorhythm. But there are many more complex levels in the fourth-dimensional mathematics of time.

**Smoley:** Other scholars say they haven't

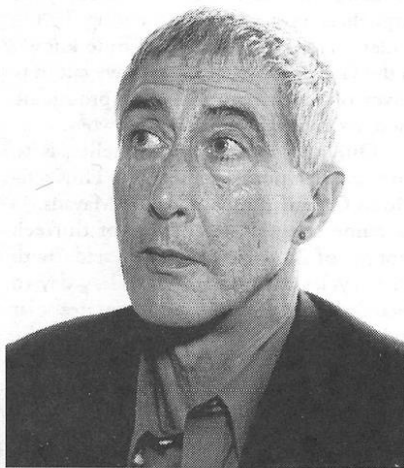
gists have not gone through and considered the whole body of work that we've produced, particularly in the last ten years, to make an informed evaluation.

The main point is that a big historical mistake occurred when the Mayan knowledge was destroyed. The vigesimal mathematics of the Maya was actually a mathematics of the fourth dimension.

There was only one modern scientist who had close to a clue about this, and that was Vladimir Vernadsky, who was the man who developed the concept of the biosphere. He died in 1945. In 1926 he published a book called *The Biosphere*. All the laws and principles of the biosphere as we know it were established and elaborated by him. He was a Soviet scientist, so of course very few people in this country during the Cold War knew of him or his work. He actually developed the concept of the noosphere independent of Teilhard de Chardin.

Vernadsky stated very clearly that all the concepts of time that we now work with are based on measurements of space, which actually have nothing to do with time. He said that we don't yet understand the mathematics of time.

We found this to be a very, very valuable clue for the work that we developed, particularly in the analysis of the timing frequencies, and showing the way in which



recreate it. By around 1500 the West pretty well perfected how to reproduce and standardize the time. We were in the Museum of Time in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 1989, and that's when it became clear to us that what most of the world today thinks of as time is very much based on the clock and on the division of a circle, a two-dimensional plane in space, into twelve parts. Which is the basis of both the twelve-month calendar and the clock.

**Smoley:** Probably the most famous application of your work with the Mayan calendar is the Harmonic Convergence. What's your perspective on the Harmonic Convergence eleven years later?

**José:** Well, it was a major opening. For myself I knew it was a completion of a particular prophecy in a prophecy cycle, what was called the thirteen heavens and nine hells. This is a period of time between 843 A.D. and 1987 A.D. From that point, the prophecy said, if we can get 144,000

people to observe this, then we'll know that we have the potential of awakening by the 2012 closeout of the cycle date. This is the closing of a cycle, not the end of time or the end of the world necessarily. And though most people did not understand at all what the Harmonic Convergence was, many gathered. There was kind of an instinct; they knew they were all supposed to gather.

A lot of people said, "This is the beginning of the New Age," and it wasn't. It was the beginning of the New Age as commercial marketing, which was anything but our intention. We ended up going totally in the opposite direction. We ended up giving up all commercial interest, giving up all operating within what we call the



money system. The Harmonic Convergence prophecy said that it could be the beginning of the age of peace, and it at first it seemed that way because of the ending of the Cold War. In fact there were many newspaper editorials in this country that asked, did the Harmonic Convergence actually bring us closer to peace? It had something to do with the ending of the Cold War. Even CBS News, when Gorbachev was here in San Francisco in June 1990, began to segue into showing everybody meditating at the Harmonic Convergence. But after the Cold War ended, communism was dismissed as an erroneous belief —

**Lloydine Argüelles:** And the dollar won!

**José:** The dollar won. And so we feel that in this time if we are to return to living in the cycles of nature, we will bring heaven on earth, but if we cannot return to living in the cycles of nature, we will create hell on earth. And that's what in 1993

opened me up to receive the prophecy cycle of Pacal Votan, which is called the Telektonon, which means "earth-spirit speaking tube." This comes from the fact that Pacal Votan's tomb was discovered only because the archaeologist who discovered it found a little tube going from the top of the temple down to the tomb. That tube is the Telektonon, "the earth-spirit speaking tube," and the prophecy of Pacal Votan says, "If you want to return to the cycles of nature, you have to return to the right calendar." The right calendar is the Thirteen-Moon Calendar.

We have been completing our part of the Harmonic Convergence mission by going out and finding the instrument and the means to return to the natural cycles. That's our part of it. In this sense the Harmonic Convergence prophecy has been very successful, because we have been able

which has to do with the correction of DNA. By telepathically entraining the DNA codons according to the correct timing frequency, we can begin to correct our own genetic coding. So all of these are aspects of the fourth-dimensional technology of time that we've been able to bring through. We feel that if we can get more and more human beings into this knowledge base, we do have a very good chance of creating the whole next cycle of evolution, not just of human culture, but of evolution on this planet, which will be what we call "galactic culture." And that will fully take root after that 2012 point.

That's why we're so focused — almost obsessively in some people's minds — on the calendar change, because that's the first step. We have all these tools, but they don't mean anything unless you're actually operating on the new calendar.

## **WHAT WE SAW AFTER THE HARMONIC CONVERGENCE WAS THE COOPTING OF SPIRITUALITY BY MATERIALISM AND THE PHENOMENAL SELLING OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE MARKETPLACE."**

to discover the means by which to help humanity return to the cycles of nature. Ten years ago we didn't know this; we do now. So that's a very important point. Insofar as even a small amount of humanity every day can begin to get back into these cycles, we feel that this will assure that we do not have complete devastation of the biosphere, that we will have some continuity of human life.

**Smoley:** What do you foresee happening after 2012?

**José:** If things don't go well, it will be because the human race was not able to return to the natural cycles of nature. We will continue to destroy the biosphere at the rate we are destroying it now, and we will see the destruction of all civilization as we now know it, without any continuity of any considerable sort. If more and more people do get onto the natural cycles, then by the time we reach 2012, we will be seeing the beginning of a whole new level of earth culture, of human earth culture, which we will be operating with fourth-dimensional, telepathic science and technology. Which will be radically different from the materialistic science and technology with which we are operating today.

There is another level of the work — the Twenty Tablets of the Law of Time,

**Smoley:** How would you use this material to recondition your DNA?

**José:** We already have meditation and visualization practices. We also have another project, which is called the Rinri Project, which is now being practiced by groups all over the world, through daily telepathic exercises that are also based on the Telektonon, where everyone every day is tuning into the same synchronometric pattern. Since there are a number of people in that same pattern, you are building a telepathic field based on that pattern.

**Lloydine:** Rinri came out of our work in Japan.

**José:** Rinri is a Japanese word; it means moral or ethical enlightenment.

**Lloydine:** Until we change the calendar and get into our natural frequency, we are being so bombarded with the incorrect frequency that we can't even begin to practice the telepathic circuits. The calendar change is the first step.

**José:** Very little of this is known by the mainstream world or even the New Age world, but the fact of the matter is that thousands and thousands of people around the world are actually doing this right now.

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It's kind of like during the Roman Empire, when no one reported the rise of the Christian cult. We've planted these seeds everywhere around the planet. We went and visited virtually every continent — we did not get to Australia and New Zealand, but virtually everywhere else, Africa, Asia — and planted these seeds. Now we have groups, particularly throughout Latin America, Japan, North America, and Europe that are working seriously with these different telepathic projects and are following this calendar.

In Japan, it's spreading very fast right now as the economic situation declines. We went to Japan three or four times, because we knew that there the veneer was very thin: Japan only got on the Gregorian calendar in 1873. We found that the level of intelligence was very high, that they could understand the intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects of changing the calendar, of the implications of going into a fourth-dimensional, telepathic timing frequency. We found that they were very receptive. So you see that wherever materialism falters, there's definitely an opening for this.

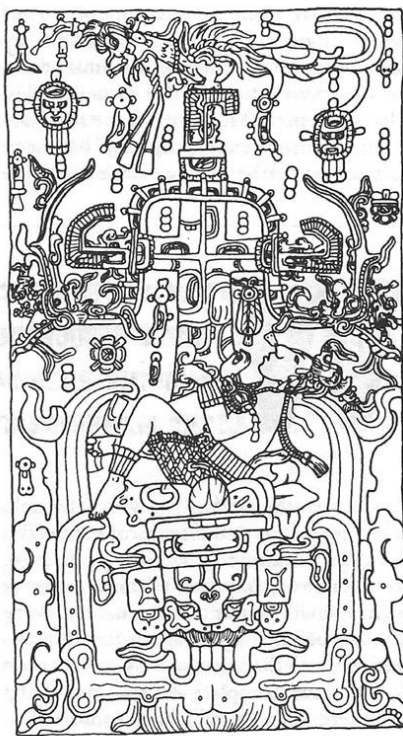
**Smoley:** An observer of the New Age might connect your work with that of Benjamin Creme, who says that Maitreya, the World Teacher, is coming or is already here. Terence McKenna, for reasons that are different from yours, also points to the date 2012. How do you view your own work in regard to people like these?

**José:** I know about Benjamin Creme's work, and we know Terence personally. We haven't seen him in many years, but we had contacts with him in the Ojai Foundation in the 1980s, where we discussed our 2012 commonality. But we see ourselves as being very distinct from the New Age movement. We see ourselves distinctly as messengers of the new time, and we see ourselves very distinctly as laying the foundation of a science of galactic culture. Because we're contemporaneous with these people and these movements, and because it is the end of the century, the end of the millennium, there are very many different cross-currents and streams that come together on this. Certainly people could view us as having a messianic vision.

**Lloydine:** A very pragmatic aspect of this work is our proposal for a return to homeschool education and a complete reintegration of the family structure into this new harmony. This irregular 12:60 timing frequency has us in a completely immoral place, where our children are being shot at and are shooting each other in the school,

and where we have the destruction of our own biosphere and life-support system. We say that every moment the stock market goes up, the biosphere is being destroyed.

We've never liked to have the New Age label placed upon us, because what we saw after the Harmonic Convergence was the coopting of spirituality by materialism and the phenomenal selling of spirituality in the marketplace. We've looked at that and we've said, "I don't think that's going to do it."



*The sarcophagus lid of the Mayan ruler Pacal Votan, from Palenque, Mexico, 683 A.D. According to José Argüelles, Pacal Votan "demonstrated his knowledge of the Mayan time science." In The Mayan Factor, José suggests that the image above may depict the Kuxan Suum, the cosmic axis, emerging from the hero's solar plexus.*

**José:** We're more like Galileo or Kepler or Karl Marx, though we're totally spiritual. We believe that we're on the verge of what we call the Universal Religion on earth, and the Universal Religion we see as the index of the spiritual unification of the species.

**Smoley:** Going back to what you said about the disharmony engendered by the 12:60 system, in practical terms how would

life change under the new calendar?

**José:** Lloydine touched a little bit on home schooling, and I think that it would very much entail a return to domestic values and to biological values of harmony with cycles of nature. I think you'd be seeing a drastic turning away from industrial civilization. At the same time we're not talking about a return to the past, because that's not possible. But we are seeing that this will promote a mental-spiritual evolution into levels of telepathic functioning which we have not yet known.

We also put our work in the context of what we call the biosphere-noosphere transition. And the theory of the biosphere-noosphere transition is articulated by Vernadsky and also by Teilhard de Chardin: that the noosphere we're in is at a very catalytic point, and has been impacted so strongly by the effects of human thought — every machine is just a projection of a human thought — that we have created a very temporary technosphere. But that will very rapidly transform as we understand the full mathematics and operations of fourth-dimensional time. It will create the noosphere, which is actually the telepathically unified mind or consciousness of the human race in resonance again with life.

All of DNA is one, all of life is a unitary phenomenon on this planet, so that noosphere will not only mean the integration of the human species telepathically in the fourth-dimensional mind, but also the capacity of the human species again to interact with the other species in a harmonic way. We will have an intelligence between ourselves and the other species. That's why we're talking about a whole new evolutionary phase of earth culture, which we call "galactic culture." Vernadsky himself referred to the next phase of evolution as the "Psychozoic Era." If we make it to the 2012 point properly, that's what we'll be kicking into as a whole evolutionary cycle.

**Lloydine:** We've been living in a vibrational system that is so at odds with our natural rhythm. I think anyone knows that in family life, if the woman is happy, the home and the household are functioning beautifully. And if the woman is out of order, everything's off. If woman could be in her natural cycle, we could have a harmony that we haven't even experienced. It's so profoundly different to think of ourselves living in harmony again. The battlefield is so horrendous on all fronts, in the family, in the society, the structures of school and government.

**José:** That's why we said we are at the

apocalyptic point. People have talked about "the end of history" and "posthistory" and all that, but what does that really mean? What we are talking about is a very, very radical shift in human consciousness and the way we operate our life here on earth. We are talking about the absolute end of this cycle of materialism. What comes next? It's Judgment Day for materialism.

**Smoley:** There are a lot of different predictions of shift-points or cataclysmic moments. Why should a person believe yours rather than the others?

**José:** It all depends on that person's common sense. We just go back to saying, Hey, do you know you're not living in the right time? Do you know that you're following a standard of measure that is crooked? Do you ever stop to think that there's only one species that's destroying the planet, and that's the species that's living in the incorrect timing frequency?

We start with this. It's just common sense. And whatever we have to say about the potential for catastrophe comes from that. We don't have to bore you with graphs to show the exponential rate of growth of the human species since the Industrial Revolution and show how that's exactly when the 12:60 timing frequency was put into place and made the engine of materialism.

**Smoley:** I heard recently that you'd converted to Islam.

**José:** Well, "Islam" means "bowing in submission to the will of God." Insofar as that is the meaning of it, that is true.

**Smoley:** Do you feel connected to conventional or orthodox forms of Islam?

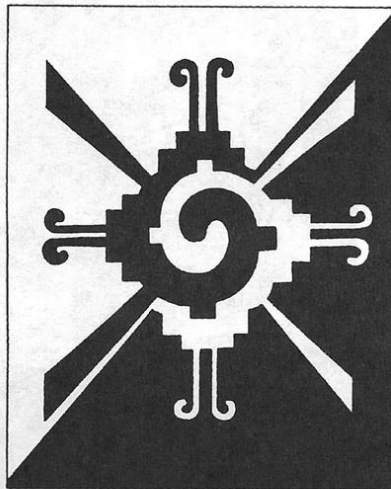
**José:** No. We just practice Islam. But we do have a very strong background in Buddhism. Saying that we have become Muslim does not mean that we have rejected anything. I want that to be very clear. And I also want it to be clear that our entry into Islam is through the widow of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, who founded the Nation of Islam, and that we're very close to the Honorable Minister Louis Farrakhan, who has very much embraced this work and understands it. We are working with Islamic scholars, and we hope to be effecting some radical changes in the Islamic world through this work.

**Smoley:** How do you feel about Farrakhan's more controversial aspects?

**José:** Well, people don't understand. It's very clear that the American mainstream

media has just made him a scapegoat. When you spend time with a person, and you're actually able to experience that person, and then you evaluate what is said about that person, that's all you can really go by. What most people don't understand is that after the Million Man March in 1995, then in 1996 and 1997, Minister Farrakhan called for two universal Days of Atonement. He atoned for his sins. I was honored to be one of the speakers at both the Days of Atonement that he called for, and the first Day of Atonement we had was in front of the United Nations with 300,000-500,000 people; not even *The New York Times* reported it.

You can read Samuel P. Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations*, and you can see that the State Department and the U.S. government have been doing what



*The glyph above depicts Hunab Ku, the "principle of life beyond the sun." José says that Hunab Ku is the force that animates our galaxy. From The Mayan Factor.*

they can to make Islam the next communism, to perpetuate a type of Cold War, and have fingered Minister Farrakhan as the leading enemy within this country.

Our personal experience is that we have approached many people in this world. The only person who has actually come to a meeting of minds on this matter is Minister Farrakhan. Minister Farrakhan called for a meeting with us privately in Phoenix, Arizona, a little over a year ago, so we gave him a four-hour seminar on the Law of Time.

**Lloydine:** He's an extraordinary man in that he still is open to listen to the truth.

**José:** The prophecy of Pacal Votan refers to

the three messengers of the awakening: Buddha, Christ, and Muhammad. In terms of the Mayan cycle of thirteen *baktuns*, which began 3113 B.C. and ends in 2012 A.D., the birth of the Buddha is at the precise midpoint of the cycle. So he's a marker right there. His mother was named Maya, OK? Then Christ, of course, is between Buddha and Muhammad. Muhammad was born about 570 years after Christ, Buddha was born 570 years before Christ. So there's a mathematical correlation with that also. Islam, which was the final dispensation of the three messengers of awakening, was brought to this planet at the same time that Pacal Votan lived in Central America with the Maya. There's a very interesting synchronic correlation between those two figures.

In our work with Minister Farrakhan last year, it's been very interesting that he has recognized in himself the need to universalize. Particularly in the last Savings Day event, February 26 of this year, you could very much hear that in his address, where he was totally reaching out and embracing all religions.

**Smoley:** Could you talk a little bit about your role in Earth Day back in 1970? Could you give me some perspective on that and on the environmental movement?

**José:** When the Earth Day thing happened in 1970, there were a lot of different things going on. We called it the Whole Earth Festival. I was teaching art history at the University of California at Davis at that time, and I had developed some very unorthodox techniques. I divided my students into classes according to their astrological sun signs, and I told them to work together in different groups. I was reading Alice Bailey's *Education for the New Age* at that time and also Dane Rudhyar's book on the astrological sun signs, and I put those together.

The whole earth had just been seen from space in the previous summer of 1969, and there was a very strong sense of a whole-earth consciousness at that point. We also knew that the environmental movement was beginning, and that Earth Day was going to be held on April 22, 1970. However, we had the first Whole Earth Festival on March 17-21 because we wanted to time it to the equinox. But we had John McConnell and many people from the environmental Earth Day that did come to the Davis Whole Earth Festival, which was seen as the kicker. It was a five-day event, it was a phenomenal event. After that, for a number of years the Whole Earth Festival was timed with the Earth Day event. We were very much involved in that process. ■

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