

Personal Inversion: Damnation or Redemption?

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A brief but wide-ranging illustrated essay on being upside down, a recurring magico-religious motif. Negative in its earliest and most widespread forms, positive interpretations emerged within gnostic and patristic Christian traditions.

Introduction

The concept of the Antipodes – a counter-world where everything is upside down – has been discussed since at least the time of Aristotle in the 4th century BCE.¹ Among many sceptics was Lactantius, who – in the 2nd-3rd centuries CE – asked:²

Is there anyone so senseless as to believe that there are men whose footsteps are higher than their heads? [...] That the crops and trees grow downwards? That the rains, and snow, and hail fall upwards to the earth?

The comic absurdity of the idea has persisted into modern times, where physical inversion has become paired with social inversion for the purpose of political commentary. The best known expressions of the enlarged concept are the 16-19th century European prints titled “The World Upside Down” (Fig. 1).³ Typically a broadsheet collage of 12-48 visual parodies accompanied by captions,⁴ the satirical prints are also known as “The Folly of Man.”⁵

Of course, the simplest way to have one’s physical world turn upside down is to undergo personal inversion, whether voluntary or involuntary. This motif, too, has a long history and is rich in associations. Human reproductive biology means that inversion is the natural order of things at one’s entry into the world. As Jonathan Smith writes, “It was a commonplace in hellenistic scientific literature that birth takes place in an upside down position,” and that accordingly “It is the due order of nature that men should enter the world with the head first and be carried to the tomb in a contrary fashion.”^{6,7,8} Even today, coffins in Western funeral processions are transported feet first.⁹

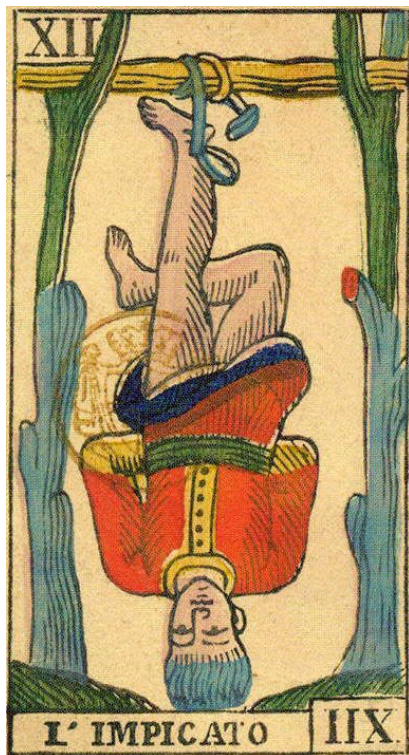
One of the more intriguing interpretations of the mysterious Hanged Man card in the Tarot deck (Fig. 2a) is that it represents a newborn, held aloft by one heel.¹⁰ If so, the image represents the natural order of things at that special moment in time. Thereafter – and especially as an adult – one is expected to stand upon one’s feet; being upside down is the antithesis of normality, as the butchered man from a Russian “World Upside Down” print (Fig. 2b) and the man falling headlong on the Tarot’s Tower card (Fig. 3) would no doubt testify. Personal inversion is therefore likely to represent a state of ignominy, coercion or punishment, and a series of such examples will be considered in the section titled *Damnation*. However, some Christian traditions deriving from New Testament apocrypha and Late Antique writings have given rise to an opposite current of interpretation in which personal inversion is considered redemptive. Instances of this type, along with a few positive treatments from other contexts, will be discussed in the section titled *Redemption*.



Fig. 1. The World Turned Upside Down. Popular print broadsheet; Marseilles, 1850s.

Damnation

Caves at Gilf Kebir in the Western Desert of Egypt, near the modern border with Libya, are decorated with predynastic rock art that has been dated to 4300-3300 BCE.¹¹ Inverted human figures in these scenes depict those vanquished and killed in battle (Fig. 4).¹² The association of personal inversion with destruction and non-being carried forward into Pharaonic times. Hieroglyph A29 in Gardiner's sign-list is an inverted human figure that serves as a determinative to the word *shd*, meaning "be upside down."¹³ Robert Ritner writes that "The fear of 'going upside down' (*shd*, 𓂏𓂐) – entailing the reversal of bodily functions and the forced consumption of excrement and urine – is especially prominent in the Middle



(a)



(b)

Fig. 2a, The Hanged Man. Trump card from the Liguria Piedmont Tarot; Italy, 1860.

Fig. 2b, An Ox [...] Became a Butcher. Central panel from an early/mid-18th century Russian “World Upside Down” broadsheet.¹⁴ State Historical Museum, Moscow.



Fig. 3. The Tower. Trump card from the 19th-century Ancient Italian Tarot.



Fig. 4. Predynastic Egyptian rock art. Gilf Kebir, Western Desert, ca. 4300-3300 BCE. Image by Clemens Schmillen via Wikimedia Commons,¹⁵ reproduced here under licence CC BY-SA 3.0.

Kingdom Coffin Texts, and this posture reappears in the royal funerary compositions of the New Kingdom in which it is reserved for depictions of the damned in Hell.”¹⁶ Accordingly, the *Book of Caverns* refers to the “overturned ones, the fettered ones, foremost in the place of destruction,” while the Amduat describes “the corpses of the enemies and the bodies of the dead, the upside down ones who are hindered from moving [...] You cannot come into being, for you are upside down.”¹⁷ The motif of personal inversion also was applied in real life; captives were suspended upside down from the prows of Egyptian ships returning from foreign campaigns,^{18,19} and a Nubian victim of Egyptian conquest was found beheaded and buried upside down at Mirgissa.²⁰

Harut & Marut are two fallen angels who are mentioned in Qur’an 2:102 as teaching magic and sorcery in Babylon,²¹ ostensibly to test men’s fidelity to Allah. Hayat al-Qulub narrates that “They did so for a long time, and when they perfected that teaching they were hung upside down in the air and will remain like that until the day of the Resurrection Day”²² (Fig. 5). The tradition of their inversion is ancient; Kufan scholar Abu Mohammad Solayman b. Mehran A’mash (d. 765 CE) describes “the two angels, massive as two mountains, hanging upside down, their head barely above the ground, and chained from the ankle to the knees.”²³ The Muslim-Persian version in Tabari’s *Tafsir* (10th century CE) has Harut and Marut imprisoned inside a well at Mount Damavand, near which is a site known as Babylon; there they will remain suspended by the feet until the end of the world, and “whoever desires to learn sorcery goes there and learns magic from them.”²⁴ Tales of the two renegade angels subsequently made their way into Western literature.²⁵

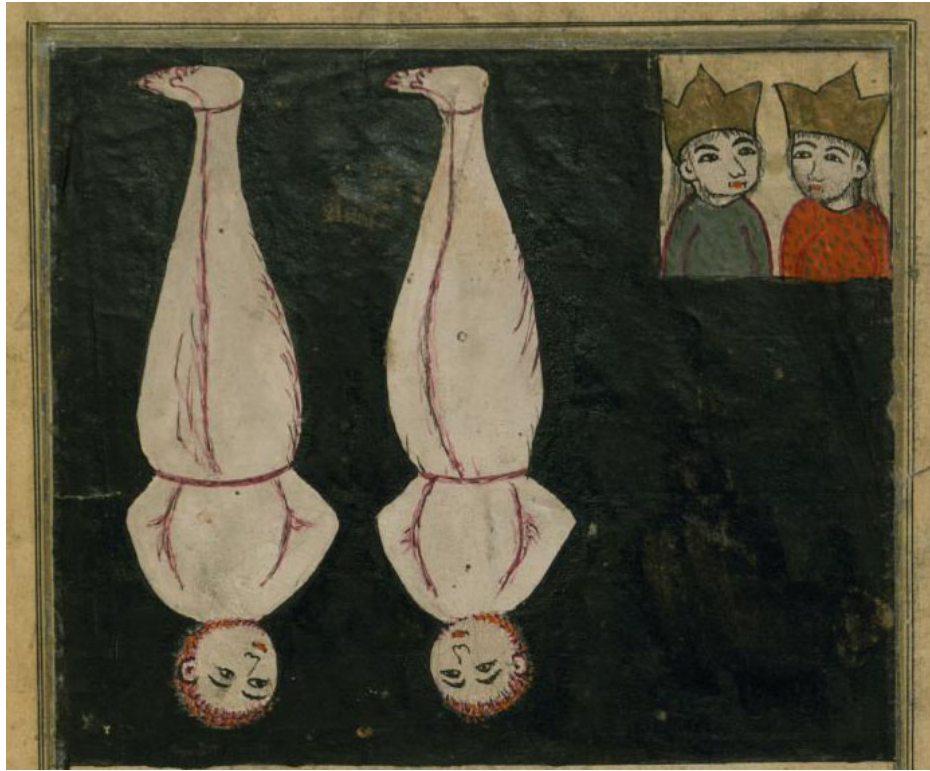


Fig. 5. Harut and Marut. Illustration from a Turkish version of Zakariya ibn Muhammad Qazwini's *Wonders of Creation*, 1717 CE. Walters Art Museum Ms. W.659.52B, available via Wikimedia Commons.²⁶

The motif of personal inversion also found ritual application in oriental and occidental magic, where it was typically used to inflict harm. Spell 124 of the *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (PGM) is a 5th-century CE charm to cause illness; it instructs the ritualist to make a beeswax manikin of the intended victim and – after some unsavoury operations on the effigy – to “hold the figure upside-down on its head and put it into a new pot. Leave the pot in the dark.”²⁷ The *Picatrix*, a 13th century Latin compendium of astral and talismanic image magic derived from an Arabic source of the 10-11th centuries CE titled *Ghayat al-Hakim*,²⁸ includes a binding spell to cause male impotence. The spell, which is attributed to Ptolemy, reads as follows:²⁹

When you wish to bind a man or woman, make an image of a man whose feet are raised to the heavens and whose head is in the ground. This should be made of wax, saying “I have bound N. son of such-and-such a woman, and all his veins, until he does not have a man’s desire.” After that, bury the image in his path, and he will not use a woman for as long as the image lasts. And it is said by some that this image is made under the second decan of Aries.

The motif of personal inversion recurs in the *Picatrix* in connection with another decan, the second decan of Pisces, where – as discussed below – it appears to have positive connotations.

In the 14th century CE, Dante’s *Inferno* (Canto 19) portrayed Pope Nicholas III and other clergy guilty of simony as suffering upside down in a hole (Fig. 6), with the soles of their feet permanently on fire. The motif of inversion appears to be part of a “reverse baptism” in

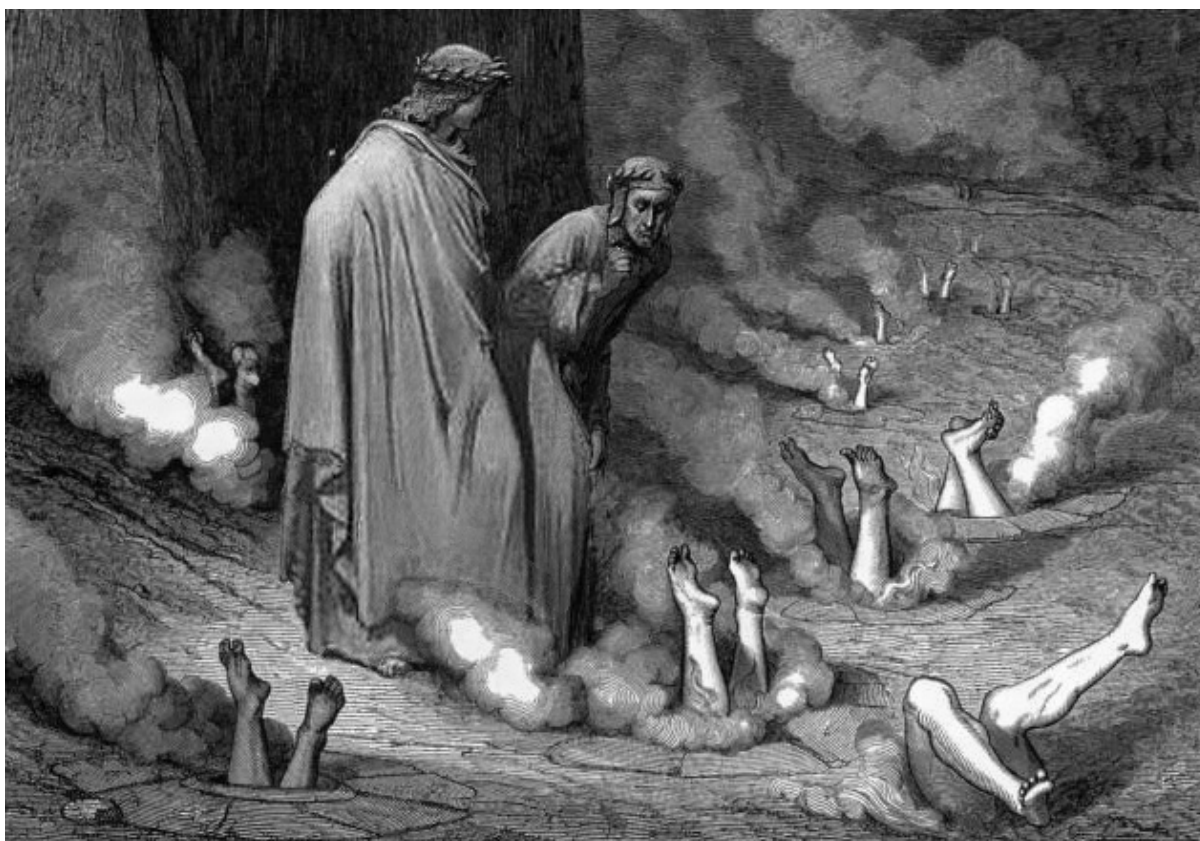


Fig. 6. Dante admonishes Pope Nicholas III. Engraving by Gustave Dore, 1885, to illustrate Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, Canto 19, fourth *bolgia*.

which the hole represents the baptismal font, and – in place of cooling water on his head – the sinner is visited with fire upon his feet.³⁰

Ethnographic studies of traditional societies reveal that personal inversion is still practiced today, or at least was preserved until very recently. In his introduction to Durkheim and Mauss' *Primitive Classification*, Rodney Needham writes:³¹

Another form of symbolic reversal, and an especially important one, is that used to mark a boundary, between peoples, between categories of persons, between life and death. Hostile or suspect neighbours of the Lugbara are inverted; witches among the Kaguru dance upside down; in the Toraja land of the dead everything is the reverse of what it is in this world, to the extent that words even mean the opposite of their everyday connotations or are pronounced backwards.

A person who is upside down clearly has symbolic meaning in traditional societies, and the associations are usually negative: it represents alienation and dehumanization.³²

In the online world, the term “inverseverticalitis” was recently coined to denote an excessive fear of being upside down.³³ It has no medical or scientific basis whatsoever, and even the etymology of the word is unsound.³⁴ If anything, the term should be “invertophobia.” The matter does, however, suggest that a negative perception of personal inversion extends even to the futuristic inter-cultural context of the global blogosphere.

Redemption

Christian traditions

The *Gospel of Thomas* is perhaps the most important of what are collectively known as the Gnostic Gospels because many scholars believe that it is an early work. Conservatively dated to the early 2nd century CE,³⁵ there are grounds for believing that the original edition of *Thomas* predates the canonical gospels,³⁶ perhaps being written as early as 50-70 CE.^{37,38} A redemptive view of inversion may be detected within logion 22 of *Thomas*, in which Jesus says "...when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower ... then you will enter [the kingdom]."³⁹ Clearly "making the upper like the lower" here means something more than the Hermetic dictum "as above, so below," in which the microcosm is said to reflect the macrocosm.⁴⁰

In the *Acts of Peter* (later 2nd century CE) the eponymous apostle asks to be crucified upside down (Fig. 7); it is both an act of rebellion against the accepted order and – in view of the head-down paradigm for newly-delivered babies – a paradoxical (re-)birth through death (Fig. 2a).⁴¹ Peter's logic, which seems to equate the fallen Adam with the gnostic Demiurge, is but an extension of *Thomas* logion 22. In *Acts of Peter* 38, he says:⁴²

You must know the mystery of all nature and the beginning of all things, how it came about. For the first man, whose likeness I bear in my appearance, in falling head downwards displayed a manner of birth that was not once – for it was dead, without motion. He, being drawn down – he who also cast his first beginning down to the earth – established the whole of the cosmic system as an image of his creation. Upside down as he was, he showed what is on the right hand as on the left, and those on the left as on the right, and changed the signs of all their nature so as to consider fair those things which were not beautiful and those things which were really evil to be good. Concerning this the Lord says in a mystery: Unless you make what is on the right hand as what is on the left and what is on the left hand as what is on the right and what is above as what is below and what is behind as what is before – you will not have knowledge of the Kingdom. This thought then I have declared to you; and the form in which you now see me hanging is the representation of that man who first came to birth.

The same injunction – to make above that which is below, left that which is right and right that which is left – is reiterated in the *Acts of Philip*, a 4-5th century apocryphon in which this apostle too is crucified upside down. Philip concludes his explanation with the command "Imitate me in this, for all the world is turned the wrong way and every soul that is in it."⁴³ In passing, we might note that the church, from the 14th century onward, would come to view the World Upside Down broadsheets (Fig. 1) as encapsulating a world-view along the same lines. They "were tolerated as representations of the perverted way of the world as opposed to the Christian model depicted in the sacred texts and illustrations."⁴⁴ However, from as early as the 4th century, the church eschewed the gnostic logic of the *Acts of Peter* in favour of simplified moralizing. In the revisionist scheme of Jerome and other church fathers, Peter chose to be crucified upside down out of humility, "asserting that he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Lord."⁴⁵ The upside-down crucifixion of the apostle Andrew in Byzantine tradition (Fig. 8) is equally anodyne; supposedly, it was done "so that he saw neither the earth nor his executioners, but only the sky which he glorified as the heaven in which he would meet his Lord."⁴⁶

The reasoning of Peter and Philip in their respective *Acts* reflects the Hellenistic revolution in world-view in which, to quote Jonathan Smith, "Man is no longer defined by the degree to



Fig. 7. Crucifixion of St. Peter. Filippino Lippi, detail from *Disputation with Simon Magus and Crucifixion of St. Peter*, Brancacci Chapel, 1481-2. Brancacci Chapel, available via Wikimedia Commons.⁴⁷



Fig. 8. Crucifixion of St Andrew. Michael Damaskenos, Crete/Venice, 16th century. Byzantine and Christian Virtual Museum BXM 01553, available via Wikimedia Commons.⁴⁸

which he harmonizes himself and his society to the cosmic patterns of order; but rather by the degree to which he can escape the patterns.” Or, indeed, transgress and invert them. Smith continues:⁴⁹

Salvation may be effected by a cosmic reversal enacted by a cosmic savior [...] By turning this perverse cosmos upside down, Jesus, according to this Christian-gnostic understanding, had, in fact, righted it. By his descent from on high (a reversal) when, in the words of the Odes of Solomon, “the head went down to the feet” or by his death on the cross which reversed death, turned it about, and brought forth life from it (1 Cor. 2:8; 15:12-57), Jesus had in birth and death been upside down; but in being thus reversed, he had converted the world and men to being right side up. By violating a false and perverse order, he established (or perhaps reestablished)

a true and upright order where all present relationships will be inverted, where “the last will be first and the first, last” (Matt. 19:30; Matt. 20:16; Luke 13:30).

Contemporaneous with the *Acts of Philip* are some remarkable Christian writings of the 4-6th centuries on exorcism. “Among the more spectacular are those involving the snatching and hanging of possessed human beings upside down in the air,” writes Robert Wiśniewski.⁵⁰ This tradition began with Hilary of Poitiers, who wrote as follows *ca.* 365 CE:⁵¹

The blood of blessed martyrs has been welcomed everywhere and their venerable bones bear the daily testimony, because [...] they perform admirable wonders before our eyes: for bodies are elevated without cords, women are hanged by their feet and yet their garments do not fall down over their faces, [...] and] the tortured ones confess without interrogation.

On subsequent texts of this type, composed in the early 5th century by St. Jerome, Sulpicius Severus and St. Paulinus of Nola, Wiśniewski says:⁵²

In each case we find the same elements involved in Hilary’s description: *energumens* are elevated above the earth, in a holy place (a church or tomb of the martyrs), through the power of saints, and they hang in the air upside down (but in such a way that their bodies remain covered because their clothes do not fall to the ground). This phenomenon is always presented as a mode of torturing the demons who dwell in persons undergoing exorcism.

The Latin term used is *suspensus*, meaning that the possessed person is bound and hung rather than floating freely in the air; his/her demons therefore hang captive,⁵³ like Harut and Marut, and in this subdued form they are subject to interrogation and punishment,⁵⁴ much like the treatment meted out to hostile or suspect neighbours of the Lugbara. For St. Augustine, such inversion was an allegory of the fallen nature of demons, just as for Peter it was symbolized the fallen nature of Adam. Of demons, asks Augustine,⁵⁵

What wickedness, pray, or what punishment suspends these false and fallacious mediators head downwards as it were, so that they share the inferior part of living being, namely the body, with superior beings, but the superior part, namely the mind, with inferior beings? [...] But, as I have said, they are, as it were, bound and suspended upside down, having their subservient bodies like those of the blessed gods and their sovereign minds like those of wretched men, being exalted in the inferior and cast down in their superior part.

Overall, there seem to be two schools of thought on personal inversion: the gnostic concept that to be inverted in a world that is upside down is in fact to be upright, and the later patristic view that personal inversion of a demoniac constituted an exposure of the true nature of his or her resident demons, and thus was useful to humiliate, interrogate and punish them. As both concepts involve the inversion of an inversion, both are ultimately positive and salvific. The redemptive power of double inversions is best demonstrated by turning upside down the Tarot’s Hanged Man card (Fig. 2a); on inversion, the figure morphs from a passive victim into a joyful actor – a man dancing a jig (Fig. 9).⁵⁶

Consistent with the gnostic “inversion of the upright” is the recurring idea that the breath of God impregnated the Virgin Mary through her ear.⁵⁷ The concept of “impregnation by wind” is in fact item T524 in Stith Thompson’s *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*.⁵⁸ Regarding its point of entry into Mary’s body, Francisco Vaz da Silva asks that⁵⁹

we note that a celestial impregnation through the ear both sublimates and inverts regular, down-to-earth copulation. As Lévi-Strauss has shown in another context, the position of the ear in the coordinates of body openings – above, posterior – thoroughly inverts the below, anterior body



Fig. 9. Inversion of Fig. 2a, the Hanged Man.
The man is now a dancer performing a jig.

coordinates of the vagina. In anatomical terms, then, the spiritual conception of Mary is an inverted image of the carnal act.

A psychoanalytical exploration of the wind/ear nexus in Mary's impregnation has led Michael Carroll to conclude that auditory organ is indeed standing in for an orifice of the lower body, although not the one advocated by Vaz da Silva.⁶⁰ Either way, however, it is clear that the female body has undergone a conceptual rotation of 180 degrees.

In the 12th century CE, St. Bernard seems to have achieved a rapprochement between the gnostic and patristic modes of thought, while developing a comedic dimension (reminiscent of the burlesque favoured by early detractors of the Antipodes) that had hitherto been absent or latent. In his words:⁶¹

I rightly apply to myself those words of the Prophet: "Play the mountebank I will ..." A good sort of playing this ... by which we become an object of reproach to the rich and of ridicule to the proud. In fact what else do seculars think we are doing but playing when what they desire most on earth, we fly from; and what they fly from, we desire? [We are] like acrobats and jugglers, who with heads down and feet up, stand or walk on their hands... And we too play this game that we may be ridiculed, discomfited, humbled, until he comes who puts down the mighty from their seats and exalts the humble.

We might note in passing that acrobats performing marvellous feats of inversion were a highlight of lavish imperial receptions in medieval Constantinople, such as the feast provided by Constantine in 949 to welcome Bishop Liutprand of Cremona.⁶² While no doubt intended there as entertainment, such feats can serve a ritual function. As Jonathan Smith observes, "In certain transitional or liminal periods [...] there is a deliberate dehumanizing of the novice [...]" In some societies this includes juggling and other acrobatic stunts featuring, among other

things, an upside-down position.⁶³ Acrobatic feats often centre around an upright pole, which in mythic terms can symbolize the *axis mundi*.⁶⁴

Other contexts

In astrology, the second decan of Pisces is described in the Arabic *Ghayat al-Hakim* as “ascending, an inverted man with skins in his hand. This decan is subject to Jupiter, and it is a decan of the greatness of soul, high aspirations and the company of great and terrible/lofty things.”⁶⁵ Its Latin derivative, the *Picatrix*, says of Pisces that “The image of an upside-down man holding food in his hand appears in its second phase, and this is also a phase of Jupiter. It indicates dignity, inspiration and the capability of dealing with matters of great importance.”^{66,67} Since the *Picatrix* was translated from the *Ghayat al-Hakim* via Spanish in the 13th century, it is likely that the substitution of food for skins is due to an 800-year-old misunderstanding at the Arabic-Spanish or Spanish-Latin stage. Thereafter, the *Picatrix* was subsequently copied countless times in the West. Biblioteka Jagiellońska Rkp. 793, the only manuscript copy of the *Picatrix* known to be illustrated,⁶⁸ contains a drawing of the decan as it was envisaged in Central Europe in 1458-9 (Fig. 10). Consistent with “food” in the Latin text, he holds a bowl in his hand. A popular interpretation of the decan prevalent on astrology websites reads:⁶⁹

The Picatrix for Pisces 2 shows an inverted figure rather like the Tarot’s hanged man, so that “the material and spiritual priorities [...] have been inverted, and [...] the figure is grounded in the invisible, rather than upon the earth. Yet the inverted figure offers sustenance, proving that this strange act is not futile.” Again the theme repeats of self-sacrifice and of martyrdom that come with the Jesus archetype so strong in the decan.

The allusion to self-sacrifice and martyrdom is interesting, although Peter might offer a closer parallel than Jesus, and neither can be the referent in the Arabic original. While it is not mentioned explicitly, the offering of sustenance by the inverted figure is indeed consistent with the orientation of his bowl, which – from our perspective – is right side up. However, the purpose of the original accessory – skins – remains a mystery.

An inverted man also features as a motif in alchemy. One appears in an Italian manuscript of 1606 CE (Fig. 11), under which is the caption “Receive new spirit. Arise, for you are asleep.” Another image associates inversion with distillation, showing a figure in a retort in a pose similar to the Tarot’s Hanged Man and to the falling man in the Tower card (Fig. 12).⁷⁰ Both allusions seem to be positive; the first suggests impending rejuvenation, while the second refers to the standard method of refining and purifying liquids. The inverted, descending pose of the figure in the retort (Fig. 12) probably personifies the vapour condensing within the vessel and the downward course of the resulting droplets of liquid.

Sympathetic magic or “persuasive analogy”⁷¹ similar to that in our last example probably underpins the rain-making rituals indigenous to Mexico. One such ritual – the *Danza de los Voladores* – is performed on a high column whose top anchors four long ropes. Five participants climb the column; four of them are then tied to the top and hang with their heads down, slowly rotating as they descend toward the ground.⁷² Presumably the acrobats personify the wished-for raindrops descending to earth.



Fig. 10. Figure at top right: **Second decan of Pisces.** Illustration from *Opera Medica, Astronomica et Astrologica, i.a. Picatrix*, Krakow, 1458-9. Biblioteka Jagiellońska, BJ Rkp. 793, digital page 397. Jagiellonian Digital Library, Jagiellonian University.⁷³

In modern medicine, inversion therapy is a form of traction used to effect spinal decompression. As physician Christina Lasich explains:⁷⁴

Inversion therapy is not hocus-pocus. Placing the feet higher than the head can have many beneficial effects especially for those with spine pain. In 1978, some researchers reported that the use of an inversion table both lengthens the spine and reduces muscle activities. If that is true, then this anti-gravitational effect can help relieve painful muscle spasms and reduce painful compressive forces on the spine. Many physical therapists and doctors recommend inversion therapy because of its ability to provide a traction force that decompresses the spinal discs. With regular use, symptoms from spinal conditions like disc herniations, spinal stenosis, and degeneration can improve.

While potentially therapeutic, the benefits are uncertain and the process is not without risks:⁷⁵

Recent studies have shown spending time upside down can help with relaxation and help patients avoid back surgery. However, the studies are too small to be conclusive, scientists say, adding that inverting may be risky in people who have glaucoma or uncontrolled hypertension since it raises blood and eye pressure.

The adverse effects reflect basic biological principles:⁷⁶

Why it's a bad idea to be upside down is all about evolution. Humans have evolved under the influence of a lifestyle that sees them one way up for the vast majority of every day. As a result it makes sense that the way the blood is pumped around the body naturally relies on gravity to help. Putting yourself the wrong way up means it is harder to get blood to the lower limbs and that blood is not easily returned from the head and upper body, with potentially disastrous effects.

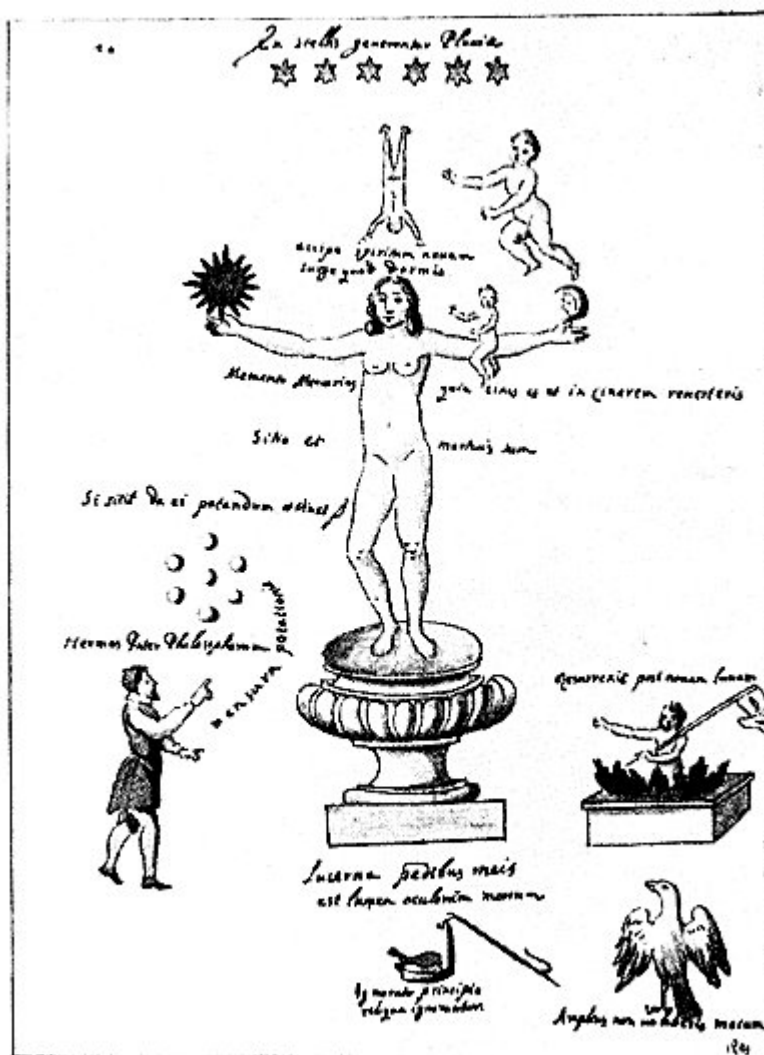


Fig. 11. Alchemical diagram. Illustration from *The Hermetic and Alchemical Figures* of Claudius de Dominico Celentano Vallis Novi, Naples, 1606; leaf 20.⁷⁷ *Captions:* At the top, "Rains are made by six stars." Under the inverted man, "Receive new spirit. Arise, for you are asleep." Around the large figure, "Remember Mercury, for ashes thou art and unto ashes thou shalt return. I thirst and am dead." Above the seven globes at the left, "If he thirst, give him a drink and he shall live." Over the small man, "Hermes, the father of philosophers." Text Hermes points to, "The measure of the drink." Under the central pedestal, "The light of my eyes is a lantern to my feet." Below that, "If the beginning is unknown, the rest is unknown." Above the figure rising from the flames on the right, "He was resurrected after New Moon." Under the eagle, "Thou shalt not fly further with me."

In sum, then, inversion in the real world may be beneficial and provide relief from the pain arising from spinal disorders and diseases, but – like many therapies – it is inherently dangerous. The potential benefits must therefore be weighed against the likely risks.

Conclusion

This paper has briefly explored the topic of personal inversion, a recurring magico-religious motif. The discussion has ranged from predynastic Egyptian rock art to Tarot trumps and

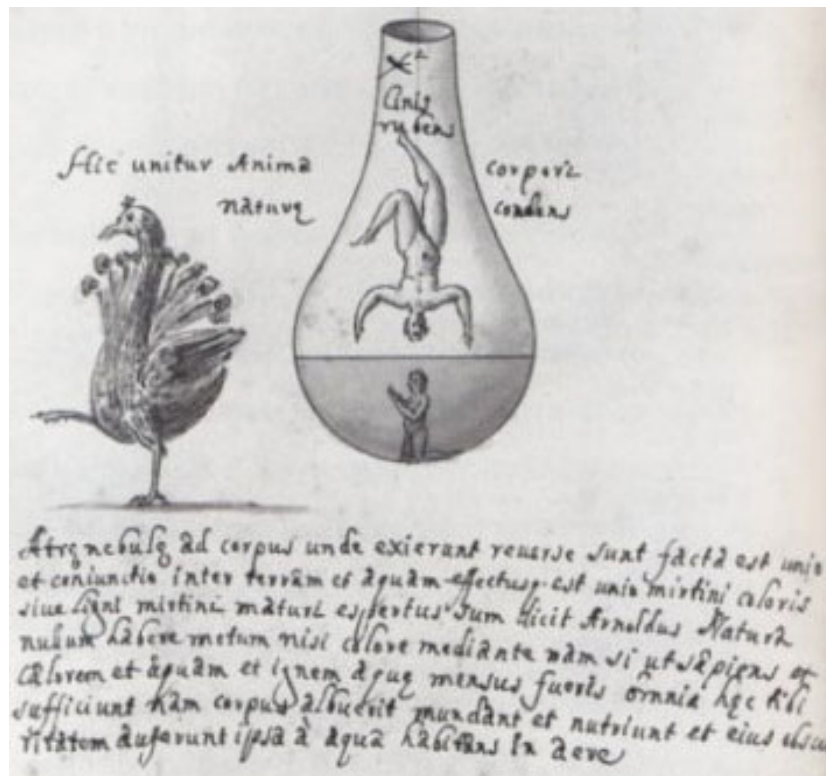


Fig 12. Alchemical distillation. Detail from folio 40, Wellcome Institute Ms. 29, London.
Captions (tentative): Over the peacock, “Here soul is united with nature.” In the retort, “glowing ash.” Right of retort, “body condensing.”

European printed broadsheets; from Late Antique magic to medieval astrology and Renaissance alchemy; from gnostic and patristic Christianity to Qur’anic motifs; and from the acrobatics of Mexican rain-making rituals – via aerial stunts at the imperial Byzantine court – to the modern medical practice of inversion therapy.

Negative in its earliest and most widespread forms, positive interpretations of personal inversion emerged within certain Christian traditions. In gnostic Christianity of the early centuries CE, inversion of the self relative to an inverted/corrupted world was deemed to make one upright. Patristic traditions relating to the inversion of demoniacs – exposing the inverted nature of their resident demons and thereby subjecting them to humiliation and punishment – also allowed the upside-down posture to be viewed favourably as part of a miraculous cure.

Being both negative and positive, the divergent symbolism of the motif appears to recapitulate the real-world effects of personal inversion, which we now know can be either therapeutic or injurious – or, more likely, both at once.

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- ² Eco, *Legendary Lands*, p.33.
- ³ David Kunzle (1978) "World Upside Down: The Iconography of a European Broadsheet Type." In: *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, ed. Barbara A. Babcock. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, p.39-94.
- ⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith (1970) "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," *History of Religions* 9 (4), 281-303, at 41.
- ⁵ Umberto Eco, *Legendary Lands*, p.288 & 294-295.
- ⁶ Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?"
- ⁷ Francisco Vaz da Silva (2008) *Archeology of Intangible Heritage*. New York: Peter Lang,, p.63.
- ⁸ Note, however, that the ancient Egyptians believed that – like stars – even the righteous dead entered the Netherworld upside-down; once there, however, they were re-oriented correctly. See "Inversion in the Netherworld," Ch. 7 in John C. Darnell (2004) *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian Unity: Cryptographic Compositions in the Tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI and Ramesses IX*, [Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 198]. Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, p.426-448.
- ⁹ A. Handy (2013) [The Other Side of Funerals] "Working Funerals – Why Foot First," online at <http://theothersideoffunerals.blogspot.com.au/2013/02/working-funerals-why-foot-first.html>.
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- ¹¹ Miroslav Barta & Martin Frouz (2010) *Swimmers in the Sand: On the Neolithic Origins of Egyptian Mythology and Symbolism*. Czech Republic: Dryada, p.21.
- ¹² Barta & Frouz, *Swimmers in the Sand*, Figs. 12, 14, 16.1 & 26.
- ¹³ Alan Gardiner (1957) *Egyptian Grammar*. Oxford: Griffith Institute, p.445
- ¹⁴ A similar panel appears in monochrome in Kunzle (1978) "World Upside Down," p.54.
- ¹⁵ Image online at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bestias4.JPG>
- ¹⁶ Robert K. Ritner (1993) *The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*. [Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 54]. Chicago & Illinois: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, p.168.
- ¹⁷ Ritner, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, p.168-169.
- ¹⁸ Miriam Lichtheim (2006) *Ancient Egyptian Literature. II: The New Kingdom*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p.14.
- ¹⁹ Ritner, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, p.171.
- ²⁰ Ritner, *Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice*, p.153-171.
- ²¹ Gustav Davidson (1967) *A Dictionary of Angels, Including the Fallen Angels*. New York: Free Press, p.136.
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- ²⁵ Arthur Chimkovitch (2009) Harut et Marut, ou la Présence de Deux Anges Musulmans dans Nombre de Productions Écrites Occidentales, *TRANS – Revue de Littérature Générale et Comparée* 8, online at <http://trans.revues.org/346#ftn55>.
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- ²⁸ Jean-Patrice Boudet, Anna Caiozzo & Nicolas Weill-Parot (2011) "Picatrix, au Carrefour des Savoirs et Pratiques Magiques." In: *Images et Magie – Picatrix entre Orient et Occident*, eds. Jean-Patrice Boudet, Anna Caiozzo & Nicolas Weill-Parot. Paris: Honoré Champion Éditeur, p.13-24, at p.13.
- ²⁹ Owen Davies (2009) *Grimoires: A History of Magic Books*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.40.
- ³⁰ Richard Kleinhenz (1995) "Iconographic Parody in Inferno XXI." In: *Dante's Inferno: The Indiana Critical Edition*, ed. Mark Musa. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p.325-339 at p.331.
- ³¹ Rodney Needham (1963) "Introduction," In: Emile Durkheim & Marcel Mauss, *Primitive Classification*. London: Cohen & West; Routledge Revivals/Taylor & Francis e-Library 2009, p.viii-xxxii, at p.xxvii.
- ³² Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.290-292.
- ³³ KGB Answers (2012) "What is the proper name for being afraid of being upside down?" online at <http://www.kgbanswers.com/what-is-the-proper-name-for-being-afraid-of-being-upside-down/10857595>.
- ³⁴ Robert Spielman (n.d.) "What is a fear of being upside down called?," online at http://www.answers.com/Q/What_is_a_fear_of_being_upside_down_called.
- ³⁵ Bart D. Ehrman (2003) *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.xii.
- ³⁶ Marvin Meyer (1992) *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus*. San Francisco: Harper, p.10-11.
- ³⁷ Richard Valantasis (1997) *The Gospel of Thomas*. London: Routledge, p.13.
- ³⁸ Robert W. Funk (1996) *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium*, Rydalmere NSW: Hodder & Stoughton, p.125 & 135.
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- ⁴⁰ I have addressed the related topic of sexual inversion, which is hinted at elsewhere in logion 22 (omitted from the quotation) and made explicit in logion 114, in Lloyd Graham (2015) "Gender and Gnosis: Making Mary Male, Making Jesus Female," online at https://www.academia.edu/19327057/Gender_and_gnosis_Making_Mary_male_making_Jesus_female.
- ⁴¹ Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.293.
- ⁴² Text as cited by Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.288. One difficulty with Peter's logic is the question of why he would identify himself (twice!) through his inverted position with the fallen/falling first man, when clearly his aim is to reverse the reversal that the latter brought about.
- ⁴³ "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.290.
- ⁴⁴ Kunzle, "World Upside Down," p.61.
- ⁴⁵ Thomas P. Halton (1999) *The Fathers of the Church: St. Jerome on Illustrious Men*. Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, p.5.
- ⁴⁶ http://www.archons.org/archons/saint_andrew.asp
- ⁴⁷ Image online at https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cruc_pet.jpg
- ⁴⁸ Image online at [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Crucifixion_of_St_Andrew_by_Michael_Damaskenos_\(Byzantine_museum\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Crucifixion_of_St_Andrew_by_Michael_Damaskenos_(Byzantine_museum).jpg).
- ⁴⁹ Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.298-299.
- ⁵⁰ Robert Wiśniewski (2002) "Suspended in the Air: On a Peculiar Case of Exorcism in Late Ancient Christian Literature." In: *Euergerias Charin: Studies Presented to Benedetto Bravo and Ewa Wipszycka by their Disciples*, ed. Tomasz Derida, Jakub Urbanik and Marek Węcowski [*Journal of Juristic Papyrology*, Suppl. 1]. Warsaw: Sumptibus Auctorum, p.363-380, at p.363.
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- ⁵² Wiśniewski, "Suspended in the Air," p.365.
- ⁵³ Wiśniewski, "Suspended in the Air," p.369-372.
- ⁵⁴ Wiśniewski, "Suspended in the Air," p. 373 & 379.
- ⁵⁵ Wiśniewski, "Suspended in the Air," p. 376-377.
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- ⁶² Nikos Chausidis (2012) "The *Axis Mundi* as a Mythological Base of Acrobatics Performed on a Pole," *Histria Antiqua* 21, 321-338, at 322.
- ⁶³ Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?," p.292.
- ⁶⁴ Chausidis, "The *Axis Mundi*."
- ⁶⁵ Hellmut Ritter & Martin Plessner (1962) "*Picatrix*:" *Das Ziel des Weisen von Pseudo-Magriti, Translated into German from the Arabic*. London: Warburg Institute/University of London, p.139, end section 131.
- ⁶⁶ David Pingree (1986) *Picatrix: The Latin version of the Ghāyat Al-Ḥakīm*. London: Warburg Institute, p.78-79.
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