

Excerpt from:

The Book of the Jaguar Priest -- a translation of the Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, with commentary.

By Maud Worcester Makemson, Vassar College. Published by Henry Schuman, New York, 1951.

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This excerpt includes references to the end of the 13-*Baktun* long-count calendar and related dates as found on Pages 1-2, Pages 15-20, and Pages 33-38 of the original manuscript of *Chilam Balam of Tizimin*.

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**The Book
of the Jaguar
Priest**



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NEW YORK

a translation of
the Book of Chilam
Balam of Tizimin,
with commentary

34259

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page one

Thirteen Kan on the first of Pop. Katun 5 Ahau follows along its path,¹ the year being 1593, save that one year still remains to be checked off before the bearer of the future arrives.

Now in those days when Mayapan was captured in battle, they confronted the katun of affliction. During the migration of the remnant of descendants, the remnant of the descendants of Yaxum,² good fortune should have come to generation after generation of his sons; but instead there came all at once castigation,³ oppression, vigilance in the night. That was a long time ago.

Three earthen walls were wholly demolished. Three symbols of the fatness of the Tree of Life failed. Could there come a time when the magic drawing of the days should cease? The sacred Long Count⁴ shall be kept in order by magic enduring to the end! With rivers of tears we mourned our sacred writings amid the delicate flowers of sorrow in the days of the katun. Vale.⁵

We poured ourselves out in supplication. We entreated Ah Chaante the Wonderful, Kinich Chaan who dwells in the heavens, that he be kind. . . . Thirteen Kan passes. Then 1 Muluc comes on his day, with his prophecies in our behalf. Above the twisted earth

¹ Read as *chaoc u be katun*. It is partly effaced. Since *Ziic* may be a numeral classifier for counting on the fingers and toes, I have taken *yalkaba* as *yalkab a*, "the fingers of the hand." The meaning seems to be clearly that of checking off the count on the fingers.

² *Yaxum*, "the Ancestor." I derive it from *yax yum*, "first father."

³ *tzek*, "skull or stony ground," I have taken to be meant for *tzec*, "castigation." The first part of the Chronicle seems to have been dictated.

⁴ *kin tzul can chacil uaan*, "sacred day-count of great length," is probably the technical term for what we call the *Long Count*.

⁵ *vale*, "next, later, it passes," is used to emphasize the completion of a sentence or paragraph.

we invoke Ah Vuc Chapat the Seven-headed Serpent,⁶ asking him to carry his seven bundles as an extra burden during the next two *tuns*; also for the same period, the vestments.⁷ For our sons still remember the calamities, the burning of men, the burning, the shattering, the destruction of those days.

Although after the days of shooting down the multitudes⁸ we pleaded for mercy, they then kindled fires over the whole province. The heavens were sealed against us. When they had succeeded in reducing the population, the compassion of heaven set a price upon our lives. Should we not lament in our suffering, grieving for the loss of our maize and the destruction of our teachings concerning the universe of the earth and the universe of the heavens?

We are agitated by these sharp blows. We are moved to sorrow, sending up our pleas to Ah Bolon Yocte of the Nine Paths, and to Ah Bolon Kanan, of the Nine Precious Gifts. . . .

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Has this generation forgotten the emptying of the towns the entire length of the land? Then the sons of Ah Vuc, the Seven, availed themselves of the eleven penances.

During this period three katuns succeeded one another;⁹ three great heaps of *cayman* meat; three great counts of the years and casting of lots concerning the days.¹⁰ There was an excess of water,

⁶ Pio Perez gives "A-hac-chapat, a fabulous serpent having seven heads." It is reasonable to infer that *Ah vuc chapat* is an earlier, more correct form of the name, as *vuc* means "seven." *Chapat* may also signify "centipede."

⁷ The god of the katun is asked to defer his visit until time has mitigated the memory of recent suffering during the migration from Mayapan. Two *tuns* is just under two years.

⁸ *Zon* was "to shoot with a blow-gun," before European firearms were introduced into Central America.

⁹ Three katuns is an interval of nearly 60 years.

¹⁰ *amob baxax*: Landa mentions "some small stones called *am* [amob is the plural form], of the kind which they used for the casting of lots." Tozzer 1941: 154.

too much dripping water. In this manner, three folds of katuns passed by, until the rigorous government of Katun 1 Ahau arrived.

Afterwards comes 3 Cauac, the day of activity at the wells throughout the land. The people will travel by good roads asking alms. They will travel in safety, even when going by night. They ask alms, sending out a clamor everywhere. In the *seven mouths* at that time, there was abundance of bread. They took heart because Ah Vuc, Lord Seven, is powerful, Ah Vuc Chapat, the Seven-headed Serpent.

Later, when the day of the katun has passed, they feed upon trees; they feed upon stones, mourning for that which took place at the Well of the Cavern. Dishonorable were the omens; dishonorable the lives of their rulers; yes, even their own lives in the days when they carried burdens; during the three *tuns*. . . . In this manner, furthermore, the Lord 13 Ahau arrives. . . . 11 Ahau, 9 Ahau. . . . These set them free from their burdens, fulfilling their days here on earth. Our leaders grieve for those who have departed from the kingdom. This is the day of 3 Cauac.

Next comes 4 Kan on his day, at the side of Katun 5 Ahau. In the days of this katun, there are three major afflictions. A multitude of intruders¹¹ make a loud clamor when they arrive. There are heaps of them. Then we pray that they may be lifted.

We complain in great sorrow, in loud voices . . . and death. Our grief is torment. We are pierced with a great longing to read the books of wood and the writings on stone, now in ruins. They contain the seven well-springs of life! They were burned before our eyes at the well. At noon-day we lament our perpetual burdens.

On 4 Kan when the year is interpreted, they plead for a judgment against the intruders; for a judgment against the white fangs and against the red fangs, and against the pestilence which they brought, which lasted five *tuns* Ahau. The people perform the eleven penances all the days of their prayers. They pray that the eyes of their children may read the writings (page 3) on the stone tablets.¹²

¹¹ *yaxcach*, here translated "intruder," is literally a "fly" or "pest."

¹² I have taken *maitun* to be a form of *mayactun*, for which Pio Perez gives "stone tables."

lots in houses of straw! Thus death will come to your people by reason of it.⁸⁸ Here on this earth, we will keep the festival at Uchmal, in the midst of the Maya land. When Mayapan was named, the heavens were filled with omens of good luck, as they have appeared in other skies and in other katuns.

Now you wander about in restless searching from one place to another, having no fixed settlements. Sunset may find you arriving at an unfortunate situation. In time of pestilence, let them hide themselves in the forest, who have become indifferent to Pop and to the words of Hun Sip, and to the heavens of Hun Sip, and to the katun of Sip and the three divisions of life, and the three-fold flowery katun.

When 13 Pop, the day of life, arrives, we will see the treasures of Chilam on the powerful shoulders, and the casting of lots . . . the passing of divining by lots, now when good things are considered to be the result of evil desire. Vale.

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When that day comes, then with great vigilance we will enjoy the fruits of our heritage; but vigilance here below will gradually relax, the more forceful becomes the heavenly anger directed against the Christians.

Justice must come when our plots of land will be enlarged, when suspicion has dried up and the country has been put in order. There will still be great grief until the fulfillment of the katun of dishonor. Nobody will keep his promise when the foundation itself happens to be blameworthy. And so, great trees which formerly towered to the sky over the whole country are no more. This is the prophecy of the dishonorable katun: "There will be no good purpose served by the Christian bishop when he arrives. He will seek to destroy this generation. Likewise, he will restrict your beliefs. He

⁸⁸ For Landa's account of the burning of the straw-thatched houses in a winter's hurricane and consequent loss of life, see Tozzer 1941: 40-41.

will destroy you. He will eradicate your true knowledge. In the end he demands that we shall accept the Christian teaching, as it is called."

When there are beatings, when finally the rulers shall make an end of good things among you, then shall arise vigilance against lascivious guests who call upon your wives by name.

Little by little you will clamor for me to unfold to you our own stirring teachings as to how these harsh persecutions from dishonorable men may be brought to an end. Now when we would speak of our literature, they entice our youth away.

Little by little you will begin to clamor for the holy things also. May the gods guard your feet from the left-hand path! If any among you would acquire learning, let him heed. The Christians in our midst will expose our most profound teachings. Take warning of this!

Fully four katuns have passed since we ate the herbs of hunger, when the nobles acted as hosts to Sr. Antonio Martinez.⁸⁹ . . . Xaul is his name, as one who aspires to heaven. Little by little we are being degraded.

Little by little, you will observe the women of the nobility openly taking lovers, although they have been taught very serious matters right along, even about death,⁹⁰ and are strictly forbidden to do so. For seven years they have accepted money for that which is an exchange, and they have become aware of the ruin which comes from seeking gifts.

When the original *thirteen baktuns* were created, a war was waged which caused the country to cease to exist. Little by little, however, our enemies came to hear the prophecies of Ahau; but finally even the hope of hearing Ahau is brought to an end, because of the words of opposition.

When the need arises for the high authority at the head of the mat to safeguard our children, then we feel deeply the tragedy of being captives in war; also when we are ordered to obey.

⁸⁹ See the story of Martinez in the Chumayel; Roys, R.L. 1933: 123.

⁹⁰ The penalty of death, perhaps.

Among the great things which those who speak the exact truth have taught us is the covering of our bodies with soot in deep humility and in true knowledge.⁹¹

Presently, at the arrival here below of a cross of iron, I will suddenly come into your presence. I will be a companion to you in prison. Go you to the war-captain. . . . I will protect your trembling backs.

The Nine shall arise in sorrow, alas. . . . And when over the dark sea I shall be lifted up in a chalice of fire, to that generation there will come the day of withered fruit. There will be rain. The face of the sun shall be extinguished because of the great tempest.

Then finally the ornaments shall descend in heaps. There will be good gifts for one and all, as well as lands, from the Great Spirit, wherever they shall settle down.

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Presently Baktun 13 shall come sailing, figuratively speaking,⁹² bringing the ornaments of which I have spoken from your ancestors. Then the god will come to visit his little ones. Perhaps "After Death" will be the subject of his discourse.

What good can it do to wail childishly in loud voices on account of these men who are spreading everywhere? Where is your faith? Daily at noon I press my hands on the head of the well. After sprinkling the sacred objects of our religion and the holy products of the sea, I look upward at the divine face of the heavens. Standing on the stone pavement at the mouth of the well, I look for the guide-posts on the face of the sky, to see whither they navigate.⁹³ No man speaks

⁹¹ Several illustrations in the Dresden Codex depict men or deities with their bodies blackened.

⁹² The completion of a great cycle of thirteen baktuns would indeed be an occasion of the highest expectation. It involves a count of approximately 5000 years from the normal date, 13.0.0.0 4 Ahau 8 Cumhu. See Commentary, the chapter on the Calendar.

⁹³ This is an example of divination by clouds, the time of day being noon.

to me without a grievance. My part is to interpret to you. Your part later, as well as my own, is to be born again.

Although they overturn slowly, nevertheless I shall yet prove my name, that my name is Martinez.⁹⁴

Even if they publish seven sacred books⁹⁵ our priests will read them. The priests Ah Xupan, Ah Kin Chel and Napuctun will make themselves known in three scrolls. Gradually the Priests of the Jaguar, the Chilam Balam, will compose seven holy books for our altars, in which we will explain the manner of offering invocations, so that finally the katun will arrive as in ancient times with no diminution in the power of the prophecies.⁹⁶

As for those who make themselves known to our conquerors in an excess of submissiveness, O my people, forgetting the existence of the other half of their countrymen, then let my people speak of beatings and of reprisals. I tell you the situation shall be reversed!

At this time I speak to you of Justice,⁹⁷ for the purpose of vexing the Christians. Nine souls shall be baptized by the dishonorable men, and shall be asked questions by them which not even the nobles in the pueblo would be able to answer. When they shall appear in this land of trees, in this land of rocks, and shall settle down in the towns, there will be no one to understand these things. Then sorrow and misfortune will follow.

When Katun 9 Ahau shall arrive later on, then they must all profess my teachings, when that day comes . . . without forsaking them, in the final days of misfortune, in the final days of the tying up

⁹⁴ Antonio Martinez was mentioned on Page 15. He does not appear in the writings of the Spanish historians according to R.L. Roys. See Roys 1933: 120-124.

⁹⁵ Here the word for books is the Spanish *libro*, instead of *huun* or *voooh*, indicating that the "they" refers to the friars. The word translated "priests" in the next sentence is the usual *ah kinob*.

⁹⁶ This paragraph explains why the Books of Chilam Balam were written: the younger generation was not permitted to learn the hieroglyphic writing and were trained by the monks in Spanish script only.

⁹⁷ The Latin form *Justitia* is used.

of the bundle of the thirteen katuns on 4 Ahau,⁹⁸ then the end of the world shall come and the katun of our fathers will ascend on high.

Are you not accustomed to raise your voices in song when you fan the katun upon its arrival, when you sound the flutes for your sins as the ancient day approaches?

These valleys of the earth shall come to an end. For those katuns there shall be no priests, and no one who believes in his government without having doubts. They are broken, the omens, because of the katun of dishonor. This is due to the fact that the days foretell events through visions, whether in the daytime or in the night-time. Pay heed to the truth which I present to you in the katun of dishonor. Shall my intercession, my pleading, be in vain?

I speak to you! I, Chilam Balam, the priest of the Jaguar! I recount to you the words of the true gods, when they shall come. . . . Then it will come to pass that afflictions will consume our sons. . . .

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Am I not a priest and a prophet? There will be abundant rains to record during Katun 9 Ahau. Vale. The heavens will shield themselves with darkness, as in the first division of world history.

Nahau Pech, his statement

In former times there was understanding of the Moon, in the time of our fathers. With compassion the government redeemed us. Vale. That was four katuns ago.

I will ask intercession of the Holy Father,⁹⁹ if he will hear me, when you forget the omens and neglect them. When the Itza came to our country as guests of our fathers, they all together sowed discord among you. This saying came from the mouth of Nahau Pech,

⁹⁸ The date would be 13.0.0.0.0 4 Ahau 3 Kankin, falling in 1752, if a Katun 5 Ahau began in 1594.

⁹⁹ *kul yum*.

the priest of the lunar calendar,¹⁰⁰ in Katun 4 Ahau, on the final day of the katun. Vale.

the prophecy of Yabun Chan

In former times, the priests of this country were allowed to speak freely. Yes. Our fathers expected divine manifestations. And the priests were the ones who cut the honey from the hives in olden times. You will grant that they understood the good omens of abundance when they sought for them in the fire.

Your souls shall accept the truth and hold it in high esteem. . . . You Itza are altogether provoking, when you forget the Lord Ahau and sow discord among the holy ones. It will come to pass that you shall adore the divine truth, and the government of our ancestors will stand always in readiness forever.

*the prophecies of the Jaguar priest sung by him at Cabal Chen in Mani*¹⁰¹

Thirteen Ahau is the day of the opening of the sealed katun. Then the Itza shall. . . . There shall be the customary observances in the presence of the fathers of the people. The sign of Hunab Ku the One God is in the heavens. His word shall disclose a gallows to the people, in order that the Ancestors may establish order upon the earth.

Do the humming-birds take unfair advantage of one another? Do the humming-birds envy one another? When the gods of the ancients return, they will give us a sign.

Priests are the fathers of mankind. One cries the invocation to the gods. To another falls the task of playing upon a musical instrument. Let the earth awaken!

One goes forth as ambassador. Another awakens Itzamna Kauil

¹⁰⁰ *ah kin tu kini uil*.

¹⁰¹ "The Chumayel text reads Cauichen, but the Tizimin version calls it Cabalchen, which is still the name of the cenote at Mani. It is in a cave and approached by a path, but there is also an opening like a well in the roof of the cave directly above the pool." R.L. Roys 1933: 167, footnote 4.

in the west. The lions' whelp come, the Itza fathers. The people come. The enchanters work their magic with the precious stones.

The temple receives its guests, the bearded ones from the lands of the Sun. They are bringers of a sign from our Father God: blessings in abundance! This is the word of the god as he enters the temple.

The people came to hear the prophecies on the day of universal life. . . . The Lord and Father of the whole earth, Hunab Ku, inflicts upon you the penalty of stripping the bark from trees for food. . . . Finally . . . the prophecy of the Holy Father.

It is sufficient that the enchanter scan the heavens for a sign. Let the conjurers make a double recompense. Shall the seers deceive the people? . . . the discordant sea. . . . Your recompense shall appear. In the last days, learn about the Tree of Life. . . . Remember your blessings. Lean upon the protection of the Tree. Yes, this sign is your assurance that

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they come from heaven.

These sacramental objects of yours, O Itza, these holy things of yours, derive from Kukulcan.¹⁰² Find your holiness in truth and penitence. Find holiness with the people of god . . . in the words of Hunab Ku, the One Supreme God. He comes to you from heaven in the drops of rain.

It is good, what I say unto you assembled here, O Itza. Let the earth awaken when They tread upon it, and attend, in another katun later on.

Sufficient unto themselves are my words, for I am Chilam Ba-

¹⁰² The spelling here is *ku u kul canale*, "God the holy one of heaven." By this play on the name *Kukulcan*, "Feathered Serpent," the supreme deity of the Itza, the prophet tried to draw the Itza and the Xiu closer to one another in their worship by identifying Kukulcan with Hunab Ku. "Whom . . . ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

lam, the Jaguar Priest. I repeat my words of divine truth: I say that the divisions of the earth shall all be one! This is the ninth year of Katun 1 Ahau.

the interpretation by the priests

The great prophetic words of the priests and the wisdom of the prophets.¹⁰³ Hear ye their commandments! So let it be done! The prophet of the Jaguar, Chilam Balam, shall be Ah Xupan Nauat during Katun 13 Ahau. Ah Xupan is his name. In the eighth year of Katun 13 Ahau, the priests proclaim to their listeners their judgments concerning the arrival of the foreign visitors.

Although you have respect for the Ancestors, although you begin to have faith in the truth, you must follow in your fathers' footsteps. Moreover, the highly valued katun must be earned, and we advise you to put your affairs in order.

This is the ancient interpretation: the priests called Ah Bobat, the Searchers, will make the customary count of our fathers. They will set Pop in its place.¹⁰⁴ They will fill the katun's pouch to overflowing. Our sons and warriors, meanwhile, must have faith in us.

Three years to the day we were accustomed to spend in polishing our words to awaken the gods above, we prophets.¹⁰⁵ Now I am greatly heartened to hear that you are learning the ways of peace, now at the moment of the earth's awakening.

The Thirteen gods hear the words of the devils, seven of them.¹⁰⁶ For there are seven devils called Satai, and they are from the foundation of the heavens. Formerly they were the bearers of

¹⁰³ The Spanish *profeta* is used instead of the Maya *chilam*.

¹⁰⁴ This obviously refers to the annual count of days and checking of the calendar, Pop being the first month of the year.

¹⁰⁵ Can this mean that three years were devoted to engraving the stela or katun-marker?

¹⁰⁶ The word translated "devils" is *cisin*. *Satai* suggests *Satan*, and there is a strong Biblical flavor about the whole statement. On the other hand, the Maya root *sat* or *zat* means "to destroy or ruin"; and *dzata* is "to cause discord," according to the Motul. Hence the *satai* may be genuine old Maya in origin. The foreign Itza may have introduced devil worship.

messages. At the time the heavens were established, there were seven inhabitants who created discord. That was because foreigners came in large numbers in ancient times. But the government of the devils came to an end a very long time ago, after we began counting within the folds of the days.¹⁰⁷

Pay attention, all of you! Your sins have become heavy burdens. It is almost time for the Lord 1 Ahau to come down from above: 1 Ahau in the heavens, 1 Ahau in the earth, according to the ancient prophecies.

His communications are the means by which he governs everyone, and there will be the additional burden, the excess weight, of the descendants of the Itza from times past. Sorrowful shall be our vigils! The soul shall dwell in goodness. All the vile qualities within us are washed away by sorrow. These are within every one of us.

Xupan Nauat, as he is called, is he who will explain the order of the world. Ah Kin Chel, Nahau Pech, Napuctun, the war-captain Balam, and the prophet Chilam Balam—these are the priests who know the future, and the order of the world and of the katuns. [Written] in the first tun of Katun 13 Ahau at Mayapan.

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These are the words spoken by the Thirteen gods through their prophet, Ah Kin Chilam, the Priest of the Jaguar, who carries in his pouch the lottery of life. A little more, a little less—and what are your chances? He who impersonates the god casts lots to determine the final outcome of the country's affairs such as: when the needs of the land shall be supplied; when there shall be many ceremonials to gaze upon; the times of abundance all through the mountains; the time when malevolent men in the land shall be apprehended; the time of confused agitation; the times for unrolling the scrolls of the many genealogical trees of our lineage; the times for standing firm; the times for attaching three seals to the Tree of

¹⁰⁷ i.e., after the magic ritual of the calendar was established.

Life; the times for completing the three bundles and distributing the excess; the time when whispering between the teeth shall be brought to an end; the time for delving into the drawing of the days; and the times for scattering underneath the trees and under the branches.¹⁰⁸

Hunger will descend on Chacmitan. They shall interpret the road of the katun.

They came sweeping down from the west; they came from the north.¹⁰⁹ Many of the sons of God lost their lives. There was great dismay under the trees, beneath the branches.

Finally there came the great, the excessive sorrow of the sons of our wretchedness, when the foreigners descended from the sea. That was a long time ago. The war-captain for defense was buried without having committed an offense by the malevolent men, in the beginning of the count of Pop.

Then there was great desire on the part of the Thirteen for their offerings, in return for having produced the sweetness of the honey, the bountifulness of the land, so that all who looked upon it might well wonder.

The state of Chactenel must be abandoned. The forest trees shall be destroyed by fire, even the great roots at their feet. Then they shall come and scatter great quantities of grain, the staff of life, by the handful. They shall destroy the flowers by the handful.

So sudden will be the violence of that day, when it appears in the heavens, revealing the fleeing multitude! They shall grieve for Chactenel in its affliction.

Then the state of Sactenel shall be depopulated. On a day 13 Ahau 9 Chen, the thirteen treasures of the Itza shall be shattered and swept away. Strong trees will be uprooted. A fire will be kindled in the very midst of the pueblo, when the prophecies shall be fulfilled amongst us.

The priests search out the road in the pages of the book of the

¹⁰⁸ As the result of drought and famine, or invasion by an enemy.

¹⁰⁹ A reference to the two "descents" and the permanent occupation of the country by the Itza.

idols where the words are painted in many colors, telling the path which must be followed.

As the priests were unable to tie up the bundles of the years, they placed them in pottery jars and carried them in their arms when they fled into the darkness. And in the morning when they worshiped the rising sun they beat upon the jars with their hands, pretending that they were the drums of the inhabitants of the state of Chactenel.

When the time approached for the katun to arrive, they were determined that the count should not become confused . . . and to put it in order, each one independently of the others.

So when the time came to inquire into the pouch of the thirteenth katun and into the treasure of the country, they sought out a village in the heart of the forest, on an island, where the precious objects descended. When it came time to roll up the mat of the katun, we were wise by reason of our suffering. In adoration we lifted up our voices to the stars.

With abuse and ridicule heaped upon our heads, the migration will arrive at Chacmitan; and at Chacmitan, we will take warning to lead better lives. At that time, the surface of the state of Chacmitan will extend a great distance.

At the time of the great pestilence, they will worship as lord of the sky the Jaguar war-god.¹¹⁰ We will pledge the day of establishing the katun, when it comes, by lifting up our voices at noon, on the day of the lord of the baktun.¹¹¹ . . .

The migration will begin like the last one from Suiva, as they lament for rain. . . . The state of Sactenel will be depopulated . . . the tenth of the moon.

¹¹⁰ The phrase is *sinic balamil*. The Motul Dictionary gives for *sinbalam*, "to struggle; to make war."

¹¹¹ The phrase appears to be *u bak ahau*.

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During the migration from Holtun Suiva and the one from the Five Provinces also, it chanced that there should be no idols of carved wood. In those days, the Lord of the Canul governed the five divisions of the country to our utter misery, to our degradation and to our sorrow. There was Ah Canul in the midst of the country of the Canul, and the number of those who were severely punished by his government at Saclactun was legion.

The pottery jars which were used for the storage of food were kept closed, and the food was sold for high prices, after it had been carried down from the mountains. Seven multitudes of bearers were engaged in this operation.

Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the katun that there should be seven years of drought in all. Seven times, the year of the waxing katun was changed in the usual manner. For seven years there was pestilence. But that which was to affirm the completion of the katun's treasure, they guarded there for seven years as if it were the very life of the Earth. For Saclactun is situated in the heart of the Island of Cuzamil and of them all.

At the expiration of the period of the prophecy, there came the Sun of our life, and whichever one of the four Musencabs¹¹² it was who measured the earth by his paces. And there was the utmost astonishment when the Lords of the Days, 13 Ahau and 1 Ahau, came to the festival, in spite of the fact that the enemy in our midst harrassed us day and night.

When they came down and ranged to and fro over the earth, the Thirteen gods and the Nine gods, they put in order that which they had created, and that which Itzam-cabain, Itzam the Earth-monster, had put in order.

The knife of the Sun protects his people. When the heavens

¹¹² For a discussion of the four Musencabs, who appear to have been associated with the cardinal points, see R.L. Roys 1933: 64.

cease to be, we shall all die and four-footed creatures will destroy the land.

Even when the Thirteen gods once had their beginning in ancient times, when there was rigorous discipline upon the earth and the Earth-monster tore up great trees by the roots, still the prophecies of the katun-folds were fulfilled, even when he once threatened to shake the earth.

The prophecies of the katun shall be fulfilled! And the Nine gods, when they cut the throat of Itzam-cabain and created the island out of his body, had no desire to destroy the works of his hands, or his books. Nevertheless, we do not invoke him by name or burn incense to him, when the lords bind up the face of the tun at the present time.

On 11 Ahau when Ah Musencab arises, they bind the faces of the Thirteen gods and they do not even know the names of the deities.¹¹³ "The holy elder brothers," these are the names which they invoke. Nor do they observe their faces either, when they direct their feet upon the earth. Nor do they know when they themselves are being greatly deceived.

But when the Thirteen gods are rightly called by name and the Nine gods, then corn descends, salt descends, precious stones descend, trees descend. Then come the carvers in wood and stone, and then come the treasures of the Thirteen gods, even with a great crash of drums. And their faces are seen, even when they are covered up.

When Canhel the Serpent destroyed the cornfields and ground them to powder, then they created the new growth from the old,¹¹⁴ lest the divine vigor waste away, lest our gains crumble away. May the gods grant the fulfillment of our prayers!

When the Bolon Tzacab, the first Nine Wisemen in the thirteenth level of the heavens, heap up everything in abundance in-

¹¹³ This must refer to the Itza priests who have assumed the functions of the Maya priesthood, without sufficient knowledge of the rituals.

¹¹⁴ The phrase is *ix kukil ix yaxum*, which might be rendered "both descendants and ancestors."

cluding quantities of jewels, and when the path leads straight to the heart for the sake of the Thirteen gods, there shall be no more pain or suffering. Then their hearts shall be provided with food. So be it.

When they crumble away in death, being without

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the help of the Ancestors, and they suffer affliction, being without teeth, and living their lives without heart, then they will conceal their uncertainties in the midst of their withered fruit as in the midst of the sea.

Once there was truth, which we drew from the Serpent in ancient times, from the clear unclouded heavens to the evil-knotted earth beneath. But when the enemy warriors came, the folds of death became the swaddling clothes of our babies. Similarly, the folds of the katun were made on the day 3 Oc, and on the day 1 Cimi the prophecy of the katun was afterwards fulfilled.

Now it should be said of the four gods, the four Bacabs, that they stretched out the earth.¹¹⁵ And when they had finished stretching out the earth, they planted the red *Imix*-tree.

They receive a handful of offerings as a token of their having stretched out the earth. These Bacabs shake the tree. Perhaps the moon germinates the plants.

And they planted the white *Imix*-tree in the north. Perhaps they will grant us a sign, a symbol of the stretching out of the earth.

Although they place a black *Imix*-tree at the west of our land

¹¹⁵ Following the principle that the simpler and more fundamental meanings of words are the most probable in a document such as the Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, I have translated *hayal cab* as if it came from *hay*, *ah*, "to stretch," and *cab*, "earth." The Motul Dictionary, however, also gives *haycabil* or *haycabal*, "the destruction of the world," and it is thus that Roys has interpreted the phrase (Roys 1933: 100). Pio Perez, on the other hand, gives *haycab*, *tah*, "to destroy," not "to destroy the world." It seems to me that my interpretation above is more consistent with the concept of planting trees.

as a sign of their having stretched out the earth, the black face of this black Imix-tree in our midst will frighten the multitude.

The yellow Imix-tree stands to the south of the land as a sign of the stretching out of the earth. It stands there, yellow, to tell the news.

Finally there is the green Imix-tree in the middle of the country, to commemorate the stretching out of the earth. The people are instructed concerning the origin and existence of the katun. So be it.

Eleven Ahau was the day of the descent of the words of the Bolon Tzacab, the Nine Wisemen, and the prayers which were folded within the bundle of Katun 9, the bundle which descended on the day 4 Kan. Vale.

When the bundle was completed, when it descended, the time arrived in the heart of the heavens for the second birth of the Nine. Searching for resting-places, the Nine descended in a company and were not consumed.

Sweet was the ancient fruit, and succulent on the tongue; sweet to soften the hard heart, to mollify the angry passions! Chac Vayab the Bat,¹¹⁶ he it is who sucks honey from the flowers.

During five days Ix Haunab, Mother Despair, Ix Huznab, Mother Terror, and Ix Kuknab, Mother of Lies,¹¹⁷ eat from the red-painted bowl, from the white-painted bowl, from the black-painted bowl, and from the yellow-painted bowl.

After a while they cease from smelling the *yol*-flowers and from eating them by the handful. Then they perform a rite against steril-

¹¹⁶ *vayab* may derive from *vaay* which the Motul interprets as "the familiar of a sorcerer." The word *vayben* signifies "a sorcerer." For the Chumayel version of this passage see Roys 1933: 104.

¹¹⁷ One of the meanings of *nab* which forms the common base of the three names, is "mother." Ix is the feminine prefix corresponding with the masculine *ah*. Speaking of the tabus of women, Landa says: "Nor did they allow them to go to the temples for the sacrifices, except on a certain festival, at which they admitted certain old women for its celebration. For their child-births they had recourse to the sorceresses, who made them believe their lies, and put under their beds an idol of a goddess called Ix Chel who they said was the goddess of making children." Tozzer 1941: 128-129.

ity, including the penance of blood-letting by cutting, and they sip from the hollow hearts of the *yol*-flowers and from the bellies of the *yol*-flowers.

Let the flowers spring forth from the bowl!

The Maya people learn about the gateway to the house of flowers. The priests smell the flowers. The lords smell the flowers. The warriors smell them. This is the treasure of the Lord of Flowers which he brought when he descended. Is not life the burden of the flowery katun, and of the precious stones?

The penances dear to the heart of Ku Mitnal, God of the Underworld, did not arrive, either, when the Nine Wisemen, the Bolon Tzacab, descended for the penance of the flowers.

Now the wizards vie with one another in taking the shapes of the blue heron and of the humming-bird. Then flowers descend from the source and from the folds of the Hand, nine flowers. When the hearts of the flowers appear, the priests place four branches of flowers on the burning altar of the Sun.

Then as in ancient times the Thirteen gods appeared. But the sin of the mat¹¹⁸ did not recognize their descent, when their words came down. Excepting the flower of the mat and the flower of the bench, envy shall be enthroned. Envy shall reap. Envy shall be in their hearts.

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Those are words of great mischief when the Lords of the Days complain about the sacred food, when they desire to eat their food according to the time-honored custom. They look at the foot of a bird and speak distastefully of their fare to the god Sip, and

¹¹⁸ The *mat* is used as a symbol of the highest authority as the *throne* is employed in other cultures. The rulers mentioned here were doubtless the Itza overlords. Sanchez de Aguilar remarked that the Maya had been vassals of the Mexicans for 600 years prior to the arrival of the Spanish. Tozzer 1941: 21; footnote 123.

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They shall redeem the standard of the temple, Ah Kan-tenal. They shall redeem the vomit of blood for the fourth time. They shall redeem Kukulcan, carried on the backs of the Itza [priests] in four ceremonies.

Two Ahau¹⁷⁴ is the twelfth katun and it is counted in the district of Mayapan. At the opening of the sealed katun, one-half will hasten to depart; one-half will awaken in Katun 12 Ahau. Vale.

Thirteen Ahau¹⁷⁵ is the thirteenth katun and they shall count it in Cabal. In the assemblage of people they shall open the sealed katun. At dusk they will smell the fragrance of the flowers. Day shall be turned upside down. Their faces shall be disturbed. The genealogical tree shall descend. Stones shall descend and Heaven and Earth shall be universally consumed by fire.

They shall make a divination concerning the living and the dead: "The dead shall live! Dying from old age, they shall immediately ascend into heaven. They shall ascend quickly by good roads. Evil roads descend, spreading out on the earth."

At the end, in the final days of the katun, we will hear the words of the father of heaven and earth regarding the government of Katun 13 Ahau during his days, at the completion of the katun. Vale.



Now, however, Ahau is subservient to the year-bearer of the south, 3 Cauac on the first of Pop, the year being 1552.¹⁷⁶ The god Four is submerged on that very day, 4 Ahau.

Each score of years has its bearers. When each has collected his debt, then there come four years without names. For this reason there are five years of idleness and amusement. When the katun ar-

¹⁷⁴ 1752-1772.

¹⁷⁵ 1772-1791.

¹⁷⁶ An obvious mistake for 1752. It is corrected on page 35.

rives in the future—Kaan—nevertheless, they will call upon it by name. And they will speak of the five deceptive days at the end of each year, although they are without names and thus fall, each year, at the very end of the year.

It is similar with the katun: for five years they amuse themselves by collecting the fragments of the katun. When the time comes to read the auguries of the katun, they explain to the people how it first originated, and they count the years since the birth of the various pueblos.

There is one Jesus Christ, the very most correct count above all counts. Yes, and when they are all in order, He protects their backs from the pressure of the ancient Maya teachings in the land.

And when they count, they are deceived as to the year-bearers of the teaching, like an old wound breaking out afresh, when they teach the three counts of the deceptive katun. At this time the guests of the hewn stone will be recognized in the years of grief. At this time, the pestilence will come upon us. We will speak with emotion of our afflictions. But if no crop is sowed there will be enormous wastefulness from now on for a period. It should be understood that whoever, in the presence of the elders, counts the days which are found in the *uinal*, will find *one score* of days.

There are twelve enchantments, of course, to meet all sorts of needs. Our kindred know the days of "food by the handful." In the cornfields they help themselves to handfuls of corn. They pick beans by the handful and eat them by the handful. They eat the *jicama* root by the handful, and all that they sow is nonsense, however much they may be able to count the days of the *uinal* at a certain time, in our presence.

If they have failed to keep the commandments of God,¹⁷⁷ but increasingly without noise, without agitation, *without writing it down*, our kindred on the road of love desire with all their hearts to change back, in order to satisfy their yearning [for the ancient practices] at the times of the great festivals, may they then be preserved from all evil! They will be offered the heaps of good things

¹⁷⁷ The Maya *ku*, not the Christian *Dios*.

by the gods in the appointment of each katun, when they have confidence in the prophecies of the four score years, in the sixteenth

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and nameless katun. As each of us pauses, those of us who have not forgotten, *they* are suspicious of our being together.

A time will come when the katun-folds will have passed away, when they will be found no longer, because the count of tuns is reunited. And after that there will come years in which there are tuns, either four or three in number.

Eight Ahau, 6 Ahau, 4 Ahau, 2 Ahau: four score and one years to the first tun of Katun 13 Ahau. Thirteen Ahau, 8 Ahau,¹⁷⁸ 6 Ahau, 4 Ahau: there arrived at Chacnabiton the Tutul Xiu Mekat. One year less than five score.

In 8 Ahau a long time ago, Chichen Itza made itself powerful. A long time ago they wrote down the history of the province in a chronicle. So be it.

Four Ahau, 2 Ahau. In 13 Ahau, they counted Pop in its order. Eleven Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau, 5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau: for ten score years they had governed Chichen Itza. Then they abandoned it and settled in Chakanputun where there were houses built by the consecrated men of the Itza.

Six Ahau, in the land of Chakanputun. Four Ahau, 2 Ahau, 13 Ahau, 11 Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau, 5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau, 12 Ahau, 10 Ahau. In 8 Ahau, they abandoned Chakanputun. For thirteen score of years they had governed Chakanputun. They went away because the men of the Itza returned to construct their flimsy houses for the second time. When they lost the road to Chakanputun during the two katuns of evil fortune, the Itza had wandered under the trees and beneath the branches, under the stars of misfortune.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁸ Thirteen Ahau should be followed immediately by 11 Ahau. This appears to be merely a recapitulation of the previous statement.

¹⁷⁹ I have read *ek*, "stars," in place of *ak*, "reeds."

Six Ahau, 4 Ahau. After two score years we returned to build houses, for the second time since we lost the way to Chakanputun.

Two Ahau, 13 Ahau, 11 Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau, 5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau, 12 Ahau, 10 Ahau: they appointed as Elder Brother Ah Suitok, the Tutul Xiu of Uxmal. Ten score years passed after they settled in the land of Uxmal.

Eleven Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau, 5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau, 12 Ahau, 10 Ahau, 8 Ahau: The Xiu, true men, abandoned Chichen Itza to the threatening words of Hunac Ceel.

Ah Sinteyut Chan, Tzumtecum, Taxcal, Pantemit, Xuchuvet, Itzcoat, Kakalcat¹⁸⁰—these are the names of the seven men of evil repute, known for their lives of destruction. And Ulil was the ruler of Itzmal.

Thirteen folds of katuns passed after they had abandoned the city to Hunac Ceel, because of the flayings they had heard about.

Six Ahau, 4 Ahau: two score of years. Two Ahau, in the beautiful citadel of Ichpaa, in Mayapan, because of the men of the Itza, the rulers of the country, on account of the sinful words of Hunac Ceel.

Two Ahau, 13 Ahau, 11 Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau,

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5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau, 12 Ahau, 10 Ahau, 8 Ahau. They succeeded in demolishing the stone buildings of Ichpaa, the walled city of Mayapan, by means of a break in the surrounding walls as the result of the joint government of the state of Mayapan.

Six Ahau, 2 Ahau, 13 Ahau. It was then that the first foreigners made hideous the landscape of the land of Yucatan, four-score and thirteen years ago.

Eleven Ahau, 9 Ahau, 7 Ahau, 5 Ahau, 3 Ahau, 1 Ahau, 12 Ahau, 10 Ahau, 8 Ahau, 6 Ahau, 4 Ahau, 2 Ahau, 13 Ahau, 11 Ahau. In 8 Ahau, the pueblo of Mayapan was abandoned on account of the

¹⁸⁰ For information regarding the seven cruel Mexicans see Roys 1933: 178.

mountains of foreigners. Ten score and four score years had passed.

Six Ahau, 4 Ahau: the pestilence arrived on the thresholds of Ichpaa. Four Ahau, the smallpox¹⁸¹ came.

Thirteen Ahau: at that time they killed Ah Pulha when there were still six years to run before the count of Katun 13 Ahau would be completed.

In former times, it may be, there was a count of years governing from the east. Four Kan, with all his magic rituals, sat at the head of the mat of Kan.

On 15 and 3 Sip, on the day 9 Imix, Ah Pulha died. It was then the year 1536, its government.

In 11 Ahau the foreigners came, the men of God.¹⁸² From the east they came. When they arrived they took possession of the country. In 9 Ahau the Christians began for the second time to convert us, and this continued throughout the katun. Then Toral, the first bishop, arrived, and the year when he came to govern was 1544.

During Katun 7 Ahau Bishop Landa died.

Five Ahau was the year in which the Fathers came from Spain to Mani, and the year in which they came was 1550.

By the time these years had passed—1552 to 1559—they were everywhere.

Then came the Hospital.¹⁸³

1560 this was the year Dr. Quixada arrived, the first man of integrity to come to this country.

1562 the year in which the hangings took place.

1563 the year of the arrival of the Marshal.

1569 the year of the smallpox.

1610 the year in which people were hanged on trees in the forest.

1611 the year in which we wrote letters about the hangings, asking for justice. It is right that the King should ponder these things.

■■■■■■■■■■

Cauac fell on the first of Pop and the earth was renewed once more.

¹⁸¹ *noh kakil*, "the great fire."

¹⁸² *kul uincob*.

¹⁸³ Written *Kispital*.

*the days of the years of the jurisdiction of 4 Ahau,
beginning with 3 Cauac, in Katun 4 Ahau*

1752	3 Cauac	1753	4 Kan	1754	5 Muluc
1755	6 Ix	1756	7 Cauac	1757	8 Kan
1758	9 Muluc	1759	10 Ix	1760	11 Ahau ¹⁸⁴
1761	12 Kan	1762	13 Muluc	1763	1 Ix
1764	2 Cauac	1765	3 Kan	1766	4 Muluc
1767	7 Ix ¹⁸⁵	1768	6 Cauac	1769	7 Kan
1770	8 Muluc	1771	9 Ix		

These years comprise the burden of Katun 4 Ahau. . . . There still remain four years without names at the very end of the katun.

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After that, there will be established 2 Ahau, the "united for a cause" katun.

1772	10 Cauac	1773	11 Kan
1774	12 Muluc	1775	13 Ix

Now 2 Ahau, when it follows immediately upon 1 Cauac, awakens twice the day of 1 Pop. These sayings are there in the bundle and their functions are declared in the pouch of the year at Saciapán. The sealed katun of 2 Ahau is opened in the square of Saclactun.

In former days when Mayapan negotiated the katun, there descended soothing things from heaven. There descended gifts. Now there will descend the sorrow of pestilence and great heaps of rocks and skulls. Yes, the government, yes, the auguries of Katun 2 Ahau with his burden of eleven penances bound upon his back.

The coils of Hun Yapotik¹⁸⁶ restrict the bread of life; they com-

¹⁸⁴ It should read "11 Cauac."

¹⁸⁵ It should read "5 Ix."

¹⁸⁶ The name of this serpent-deity does not appear in the indices of Tozzer 1941 or Roys 1933.

press the bread of life one-half. The burden for the year is "Good conditions for life." But there will be tears. And the rule of the lords for one-half the time will be a condition of great wretchedness. But in the wonder-working of Zam and Pop good will accrue to the community from the lords of the land, when there comes an appraisal of conditions in the land.

In recompensing the white men, the beardless men, throughout their days the people will become united, likewise. So speaks the priest Chilam. The day will come when our elder brothers will themselves smooth away obstacles, likewise.

You shall again retain your food in your stomachs. You shall wear your accustomed clothing. The worms. . . . Shall we root up the small palms to make hats for them? You shall talk to me and I will talk to you. Perchance the Lord of the Katun. . . . All this wrangling over the buying and selling of merchandise!

And in the season of the opening of flowers, when we yearn for the flowers and lie down on the flowers, no one of us is allowed to rest, while we weep for 11 Ahau. Vale. The purpose of our uniting for a cause will unfold during Katun 11 Ahau. Vale.

The count of Katun 2 Ahau, when it follows immediately after 1 Cauac, is:

1776	1 Cauac	1777	2 Kan	1778	3 Muluc
1779	4 Ix	1780	5 Cauac	1781	6 Kan
1782	7 Muluc	1783	8 Ix	1784	9 Cauac
1785	10 Kan	1786	11 Muluc	1787	12 Ix
1788	13 Cauac	1789	1 Kan	1790	2 Muluc
1791	3 Ix	1792	4 Cauac	1793	5 Kan
1794	6 Muluc	1795	7 Ix		

These complete the term of office of [Katun] 2 Ahau, except that at the end of the katun there come four years without name, before the arrival of 13 Ahau:

1796	8 Cauac	1797	9 Kan
1798	10 Muluc	1799	11 Ix

When Katun 13 Ahau is current, following upon 12 Cauac, the katun of 13 Ahau will be established at Kinchilcoba, not at Mayapan.

These are the words which must be spoken:

"The prophecies are a solemn trust from ancient times. They are the first news of events, and a valuable warning. There are omens of a famine at Chacmitan, a restriction on bread, a stringency on the bread of life. For five years there will be severe necessity, but there will be the bread of diligence. There will be tears also." Ten Ahau, 8 Ahau. . . .

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1758	1 Kan—from the east	1779	9 Muluc
1759	2 Muluc	1780	10 Ix
1760	3 Ix	1781	11 Cauac
1761	4 Cauac	1782	12 Kan
1762	5 Kan	1783	13 Muluc
1763	6 Muluc	1784	1 Ix—from the west
1764	7 Ix	1785	2 Cauac
1765	8 Cauac	1786	3 Kan
1766	9 Kan	1787	4 Muluc
1767	10 Muluc	1788	5 Ix
1768	11 Ix	1789	6 Cauac
1769	12 Cauac	1790	7 Kan
1770	13 Kan	1791	8 Muluc
1771	1 Muluc—from the north	1792	9 Ix
1772	2 Ix	1793	10 Cauac
1773	3 Cauac	1794	11 Kan
1774	4 Kan	1795	12 Muluc
1775	5 Muluc	1796	13 Ix
1776	6 Ix	1797	1 Cauac—from the south
1777	7 Cauac	1798	2 Kan
1778	8 Kan	1799	3 Muluc

1800	4 Ix	1805	9 Cauac
1801	¹⁸⁷ 5 Cauac	1806	10 Kan
1802	6 Kan	1807	11 Muluc
1803	7 Muluc	1808	12 Ix
1804	8 Ix	1809	13 Cauac

This is the Calendar, the summation of the years or Calendar Round.¹⁸⁸ This array of years is continuous to its expected completion, and when the count begins with 1 Kan it ends with 13 Cauac. Then it repeats over and over forever, protected by the enchantments of the Zam above, ever since the first katun. There are four groups of years. This is the truth.

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the names of the days which continually wander through the Uinal

1 Kan	16 July	Pop ¹⁸⁹
2 Chicchan	5 August	Uo
3 Cimi	25 August	Zotz
4 Manik	11 September	Zip
5 Lamat	2 October	Tzec
6 Muluc	22 October	Xul
7 Oc	13 November	Yaxkin ¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ These years are written 18001, 18002 etc. in the text.

¹⁸⁸ It seems likely that *bubukil* is actually the Maya word corresponding to our "Calendar Round," the period of 18,980 days or 52 vague years during which every possible combination of tzolkin and month-days may be found. Although *bubukil* itself is not in the vocabularies of Pio Perez or the Motul, *bukxoc* appears with the meaning "to sum up." *Xoc*, "to count," may be understood in the present connection. *Bubuk* is the reduplicated form.

¹⁸⁹ Opposite *Pop* is written "One score. The first burden," referring to Column 1 which contains the first 20 days of a year beginning with 1 Kan on the first of Pop. I have adopted the conventional spelling for Zip, Zac, Zotz, Cumhu and Eznab.

¹⁹⁰ Written *Zeyaxkin*, "Little Yaxkin."

8 Chuen	3 December	Mol
9 Eb	23 December	Chen
10 Ben	12 January	Yax
11 Ix	1 February	Zac
12 Men	21 February	Mac
13 Cib	13 March	Ceh
1 Caban	2 April	Kankin
2 Eznab	22 April	Muan
3 Cauac	12 May	Kayab ¹⁹¹
4 Ahau	1 June	Pax
5 Imix	21 June	Cumhu
6 Ik	00 days of misfortune 5	
7 Akbal		

One score of days there is in the Moon's treasure, the *uinal*. These are their names. Now recall the Burners. There are four of them in the uinal.

First, there is 4 Chicchan. On 10 Chicchan he carries the fire, and on 11 Chicchan he extinguishes the fire.¹⁹² He is the uinal-bearer from the east.

Then there is 4 Oc. On 10 Oc he carries the fire, and on 11 Oc he quenches the fire. He is the uinal-bearer from the north.

Then there is 4 Men. On 10 Men he carries the fire and on 11 Men he extinguishes the fire. He is the uinal-bearer from the west.

Finally, there is 4 Ahau. On 10 Ahau he carries the fire, and on 11 Ahau he quenches the fire. He is the uinal-bearer from the south.

Now these Burners, when they set out on the uinal-road in the very beginning, started the count with [1] Kan so as to arrive at 2 Chicchan in the second place of the count. Searching for that which is forgotten, we come to the above 4 Chicchan.

Thus they seek to bring to light the origin of the four Burners in the uinals, [to determine] whether it begins in Pop or in Uo. In

¹⁹¹ *Kayab* and *Pax* should be interchanged.

¹⁹² From 10 Chicchan to 11 Chicchan is an interval of 40 days; and similarly for 10 Oc to 11 Oc and so on.