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Allen J. Christenson

The Use of Chiasmus in Ancient Mesoamerica

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Summary:

In recent years there has been much attention given to the use of chiasmus as a literary device in ancient Old World prose and poetry. This report evaluates the use of chiasmus in a number of ancient writings composed by the Maya Indians of Mesoamerica. Those texts that contain chiasms are compared with each other to determine how they differ from other Maya writings that do not use the device.

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THE USE OF CHIASMUS IN ANCIENT MESOAMERICA

In recent years much attention has been focused on the use of chiasmus as a literary device in ancient Old World prose and poetry. This paper will evaluate the use of chiasmus in a number of ancient writings composed by the Maya Indians of Mesoamerica. Those texts which contain chiasms will be compared with each other to determine how they differ from other Maya writings which do not use the device.

A chiasm is created when in a given text the first element or concept directly parallels the last element, the second element parallels the next to last element, etc. Such chiasms may be simple, or they may be very long and complex, even comprising entire chapters or books. Biblical and Greek chiasms have been known and studied for decades. While various poetic devices, particularly parallelism in couplets, have been recognized in early post-Columbian Mayan texts (Edmonson, 1971:xi-xii), the presence of chiasmus has not been documented.

To understand the use of chiasmus in Mayan literature, a brief history of the available sources is necessary. Very few of the ancient New World cultures used a true writing system. Only in the limited area of Mesoamerica was the technique of writing known and practiced. A wealth of pre-Columbian hieroglyphic inscriptions have been preserved from the area occupied by the ancient Maya, comprising the extreme southern portion of Mexico, Guatemala, and portions of Honduras and El Salvador. These texts include inscriptions on stone stelae and architectural elements, as well as a number of painted bark-paper codices and ceramic "codex" vessels. Great

strides have been made recently in interpreting these ancient texts, however, much more remains to be understood. As a result, the definitive study of complex literary devices and constructions from pre-Columbian inscriptions is nearly impossible.

Fortunately, a large body of ancient literature was transcribed by the Maya soon after the arrival of the Spanish using the European script. Following the Spanish Conquest of the native Maya kingdoms in the early sixteenth century, attempts were made to "Christianize" the Indians. The first European priests and monks to work among the Maya were appalled by their "barbaric" practices, particularly human sacrifice and idolatry. They were determined to eradicate them by any means necessary. The zeal with which they carried out this program resulted in many of the unfortunate excesses of the Colonial period, including the torture or execution of numerous accused idolators. Native rulers and priests were compelled to send their sons to schools founded by Franciscan monks where they were taught Christian ethics. Particular emphasis was also placed on teaching young representatives of the indigenous nobility to read and write their native languages using European letters in place of the hieroglyphic script (Landa 1978:29). No general policy existed to impose the Spanish language on the populace of the New World, only the script. Old hieroglyphic manuscripts were permeated with perceived symbols of paganism and were much revered by the native priests. As a result they were singled out as hindrances to the conversion of the natives to Christianity. The Spanish monks believed that if the ancient hieroglyphic codices were destroyed and knowledge of the Maya script were eradicated in favor of the European system of writing, the Indians could more easily be indoctrinated in the Christian faith.

A famous example of this effort occurred in 1562, when Fray Diego de Landa ordered the destruction of 5000 idols and 27 hieroglyphic codices at the town of Mani in the Yucatan Peninsula:

These people also used certain characters or letters, with which they wrote in their books about the antiquities and their sciences..... We found a great number of books in these letters, and since they contained nothing but superstitions and falsehoods of the devil we burned them all, which they took most grievously, and which gave them great pain (Landa 1978:82).

Other religious leaders of the Colonial period followed Landa's example. As a result of the extraordinary efforts of the Spanish clergy in destroying these manuscripts in the centuries following the Conquest, portions of only three or four Maya hieroglyphic codices are known to have survived. Despite the success of this program, however, many native priests continued to practice idolatry in secret. Sacred hieroglyphic books were kept as relics, and knowledge of their contents was passed from generation to generation. Alonso de Zorita wrote that while visiting the province of Utatlán in Guatemala from 1553-1557, he was able to learn the political system of the Quiche-Maya Indians there "from paintings they had of their ancient times, of more than 800 years and from accounts of very old people" (Goetz and Morley 1950:12). Sanchez de Aguilar wrote at the close of the sixteenth century that the Indians of Yucatan still recorded the passage of the years, wars, epidemics, hurricanes, famines, and other events in painted bark paper codices (Roys 1967:5). A century later, Father Avendaño y Loyola wrote that he was familiar with contemporary Maya "books of barks of trees, polished and covered with lime, in which by painted figures and characters they have foretold their future events" (Roys 1967:5). In a recent article published in the Newsletter and Proceedings of the Society for Early Historic Archaeology (Christenson 1984:3), I cited a possible example of modern usage of the pre-Columbian highland Maya

script in the mountains above Nahuala, Guatemala. If knowledge of the ancient hieroglyphs still survives in contemporary Quiche-Maya society, it further testifies to the extreme reverence held by the people for such texts.

The convenient European script was soon adapted to record native texts based on pre-Columbian writings. While the older codices were lost over time, the transcriptions were not as severely condemned by the clergy and many survived. Aguilar wrote that such transcriptions were read at gatherings, despite the fact that the people had been baptized Christians. He confiscated one such book that contained native legends of the creation of the world from a choir-master in the chapel of Zucop in Yucatán (Goetz and Morley 1950:13).

Father Francisco Ximénez, priest of the convent of Chichicastenango, Guatemala early in the eighteenth century, wrote that such transcriptions were carefully preserved among the Indians of his parish:

I determined to transcribe, word for word, all of their tales and translated them into our Spanish language from the Quiché language in which I found they had been written, from the time of the Conquest, when (as they say there) they changed their way of writing to ours; but it was with great reserve that these manuscripts were kept among them, with such secrecy, that neither the ancient ministers knew of it, and investigating this point, while I was in the parish of Santo Tomás Chichicastenango, I found that it was the doctrine which they first imbibed with their mother's milk, and that all of them knew it almost by heart, and I found that they had many of these books among them (Goetz and Morley 1950:6).

In the centuries following the Conquest, a number of texts were written by native Maya Indians in their own respective languages, utilizing the European script taught to them by early Spanish missionaries. Although few pre-Columbian codices are available for study, a considerable body of post-Conquest native literature has therefore survived, which was based in varying degrees on the contents of ancient hieroglyphic texts. These early writings often

betray few Western influences and may represent the closest thing we have to a record of native Maya traditions using ancient literary forms. It is therefore significant that these writings are often rich in chiasmus.

The remainder of this paper will be devoted to describing a number of post-Conquest Maya documents which contain chiasms, and comparing them to similar documents which apparently do not. I have arranged these writings into three groups-- Quiché-Maya texts, non-Quiché highland Maya texts, and lowland Maya texts. Where possible, both the original Maya text and appropriate Spanish and English translations will be provided for comparison. In some cases I have altered slightly published translations of these documents to more closely agree with the form or intent of the Maya original. When this has been done, a footnote will be provided to explain the corrections.

I. QUICHE-MAYA TEXTS:

The Quichés were the most powerful of the highland Maya tribes at the time of the Spanish Conquest, dominating most of western Guatemala. Their political and religious capital at Utatlán was the seat of a dynasty of kings that kept detailed records of their genealogy and mythological beliefs. Because of their widespread influence over much of highland Maya territory, and because of the great number of important Quiché documents which have survived from the post-Conquest period, I have chosen to consider this body of texts separately.

A. Popol Vuh:

The Popol Vuh is by far the most important of the highland Maya

documents to have survived from the early Spanish Colonial period. It was written by anonymous representatives of the royal Cawek Quiché line from Utatlán, and discovered many years later in the nearby town of Chichicastenango. Although no date was given for its composition, it was probably written between 1554 and 1558, when many of the Quiché lords moved from Utatlán to Chichicastenango after the Conquest (Carmack 1973:25).

The Popol Vuh is written in elegant Quiché utilizing the European script. Although it represents in part a claim to supremacy by the royal Quiché families, it also contains extensive passages on ancient mythology, history and ritual. The repeated references to human sacrifice, idolatry, and polytheism in the text would have offended the Spanish conquerors of the sixteenth century. The document was therefore probably not intended for their benefit.

Carmack believes that the original manuscript, particularly the initial portions, may have been based on aboriginal codices. The middle sections were more probably a compilation of ancient songs and sagalike tales based on oral tradition (Carmack 1973:27). The book is rich in dialogue, a characteristic of many of the earliest texts based on ancient sources (Carmack 1973:40). The authors of the Popol Vuh declared that they were transcribing ancient traditions:

This is the beginning of the old traditions of this place called Quiché. Here we shall write and we shall begin the old stories, the beginning and the origin of all that was done in the town of the Quiché, by the tribes of the Quiché nation (Goetz and Morley 1950:77).

Later in the same section, the source of these traditions was identified as a written work:

We shall bring it to light because now the Popol Vuh, as it is called, cannot be seen any more, in which was clearly seen the coming from the other side of the sea and the narration of our obscurity, and our life was clearly seen. The original book, written long ago, existed, but its sight is hidden to the searcher and to the thinker (Goetz and Morley 1950:79-80).

The ancient source was referred to as a "vuh", a word which means "book", or "paper" (Edmonson 1965). It is equivalent to the Maya word "huun" or "uum" which is translatable as both "book" and the tree from which bark is taken to make the pre-Columbian codices (Goetz and Morley 1950:80, note 6).

The Popol Vuh was kept by the ancient Quiché kings and frequently consulted as both a record of history and as an oracle of the future:

They knew if there would be war, and everything was clear before their eyes; they saw if there would be death and hunger, if there would be strife. They well knew that there was a place where it could be seen, that there was a book which they called the Popol Vuh (Goetz and Morley 1950:225).

Although the Precolumbian source of the Popol Vuh was certainly a hieroglyphic codex, it is impossible to determine to what degree the author of the extant text depended on its original poetic constructions. In the reference just cited, the ancient source was described as "unseen." Later in the text, the original Popol Vuh is definitely stated to be "lost" ("zachinak") (Edmonson 1971:255). The version of the Popol Vuh that has survived was therefore most probably based on recollections of an ancient document which was not available to the author.

The old and tattered transcription of the Popol Vuh was discovered in the early eighteenth century by Father Francisco Ximénez in the town of Chichicastenango, Guatemala. Father Ximénez later copied the original Quiché text and translated it into Spanish. Although the original authors of the Popol Vuh were converts to Christianity, the text itself contains virtually no intrusive Spanish words or European cultural material.

All of the chiasms that I was able to find in the text belong to the initial section, which deals with the creation of the world. I found that those passages which include dialogue often contained the

best examples of chiasmus. The chiasms appear in this portion of the text at regular intervals, separated by extended series of parallelistic couplets.

The poetic nature of the Popol Vuh was recognized by Munro Edmonson, who arranged his translation of the work accordingly:

It is my conviction that the Popol Vuh is primarily a work of literature, and that it cannot be properly read apart from the literary form in which it is expressed.... The Popol Vuh is in poetry, and cannot be accurately understood in prose. It is entirely composed in parallelistic (i.e., semantic) couplets.

When I had read enough Quiché texts to begin to comprehend the fundamental importance of this feature in them, it seemed to me that a poetic translation of the Popol Vuh might be very helpful in clarifying its ambiguities.

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, p. xi)

In light of Edmonson's assertion that the Popol Vuh is entirely poetic in nature I am surprised that the many examples of chiasmus evident in the text escaped his attention. It is certainly untrue that the only poetic form used in the document was parallelistically arranged couplets. The following examples of chiasmus attest to the prevalence of this poetic device in the work. I have chosen to use Edmonson's English translation because of its relative fidelity to the original Quiche text.

1. Ma vi q'alah u vach ulev.
Xa, u tukel r emanik
palo, u pam kah, r onohel.
Ma ha bi naki la ka molobik,
ka kotz'obik.
Hun ta ka tz'inibik,
Hun ta ka zilobik, ka mal ka banatah
ka kotz' ka banatah pa kah
X ma q'o vi naki la q'oolik yakalik
Xa r emanik ha, xa liyanik palo,
Xa, u tukel r emanik
X ma q'o vi naki la lo q'oolik.

The face of the earth was not yet visible.

All by itself lay dammed

the sea, and the womb of heaven, everything.

There was nothing whatever, (all was)² silenced,
or at rest.

Each thing was made silent,

Each thing was made calm, was made invisible,

Was made to rest in heaven.

There was not, then, anything in fact that was standing there.

Only the pooled water, only the flat sea.

All by itself it lay dammed.

There was not, then, anything in fact that might have existed.

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, III, lines 118-134)

2. Ta x pe q'ut u tzih varal.

X ul k uq ri Tepev, Q'ug' Kumatz,

Varal chi q'equmal,

Chi 'aqabal.

X ch'av r uq ri Tepev, Q'ug' Kumatz,

X e ch'a q'ut.

So then came his word here.

It reached to Majesty and Quetzal Serpent,

There in the darkness,

In the nighttime.

It spoke to Majesty and Quetzal Serpent,
and they spoke.

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, IV, lines 157-164)

3. "At, u K'ux Kah,..."

Nabe q'ut x vinaqir

Ulev,

Huyub, tak'ah,

X ch'oboch'ox u be ha

X biniheyik k'olehe r aqan xol tak huyub.

Xa ch'obol chik x e q'ohe vi ha

Ta x k'utuniheyik nimaq huyub.

Kehe q'ut u vinaqirik ulev

Ri ta x vinaqirik k umal ri

U K'ux Kah,

"Oh Heart of Heaven,..."⁴

And once it had been created⁵,
the earth,

the mountains and valleys,

the paths of the waters were divided⁶

and they proceeded to twist along among the hills.

So the rivers then became more divided

As the great mountains were appearing.

And thus was the creation of the earth

When it was created by him

Who is the Heart of Heaven,

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, IV, lines 235-252)

4. "K oh i q'aharizah,
oh i chuch, Oh i qahav. K i ch'a va na q'ut:
Hu r Aqan, Ch'ipi Ka Kulaha, Raxa Ka Kulaha,
U K'ux Kah, U K'ux Ulev, Tzakol, Bitol,
Alom, Q'a holom. Ch ix ch'a'ok k oh i zik'ih.
K oh i q'ihila,"

"Worship us,
your Mother and your Father. Now then, say this:
1 Leg, Dwarf Lightning, Green Lightning,
The Heart of Heaven, the Heat of Earth, Former, Shaper,
Mother and Father. Talk then, and call to us.
Worship us,"

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, VI, lines 347-361)

5. Ta x ki ta ri Tzakol, Bitol,
"Ma vi mi x utzinik mi x e ch'avik,"
X e ch'a chik
chi k ibil kib,
"Ma vi x utzin u biixik qa bi
r umal oh k Ah Tzak, oh pu k Ah Bit."

When Former heard it and Shaper,
"It is not yet arranged so they can talk,"
They repeated
they said to each other⁸
"It is not yet arranged so they can pronounce our names,⁹
Although we are their Former and we are their Shaper."
 (Edmonson, Popol Vuh, VI, lines 369-378)

6. "Xa k ix halatahik
R umal ma vi mi x utzinik
Ma vi mi x ix ch'avik.
Mi q'u x qa hal,"

"Just change yourselves
Because it is not yet successful
Since you do not speak.
We shall therefore change."
 (Edmonson, Popol Vuh, VI, lines 383-387)

7. Ah Tzak, Ah Bit.
Ta x ki bih q'ut chi r e
Xpiacoc, Xmucane.
Kate q'ut u biixic chi k ech
ri e nik' vachinel,
R atit q'ih, r atit zaq.
K e' uch'axik k umal
ri Tzakol, Bitol.

The Former and Shaper.

And so they spoke
to Xpiacoc and Xmucane.
And indeed it was proposed to them,
the far seers,
the Grandmother of Day, the Grandmother of Light.¹⁰
They were addressed
by the Former and Shaper.

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, VI, lines 493-502)

8. Iyom,
Mamom,
Xpiacoc,
Xmucane, u bi.

As the Woman with Grandchildren,
and Man with Grandchildren,
Xpiacoc,
and Xmucane by name.¹¹

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, I, lines 31-34)

9. Longer chiasms are also evident in the text. The initial section of the Popol Vuh, dealing with the creation of the world, is arranged as a single, large chiasm. Each phase of the creation is outlined in detail from primordial darkness to the formation of the mountains. The final portion of this section then recapitulates the events of the creation in reverse order:

The sky is in suspense and the earth is submerged (lines 117-145).

The Heart of Heaven participates in the creation (lines 146-188).

The earth is created (lines 189-222).

The mountains and valleys are created (lines 223-244).

The waters are divided (lines 245-246).

"So the rivers then became more divided (line 247)

as the great mountains were appearing (line 248).

And thus was the creation of the earth (line 249).

When it was created by him who is the Heart of Heaven, the Heart of Earth, as they are called. And they were the first to think of it (lines 250-254).

The sky was rounded out there and the earth was rounded out in the water" (lines 255-256).

(Edmonson, Popol Vuh, pp. 9-13)

When I first read this chapter, I was confused by the first line in the recapitulation-- "so the rivers then became more divided"-- since this was the last act of creation mentioned in the text which

immediately preceded it. When I recognized that the chapter is organized as a chiasm, however, the difficulty was resolved.

B. Título C'oyoi:

This important but little known document was written at the Quiché capital of Utatlán by members of the C'oyoi Sakcorowäch, a lineage of the Quejñay branch of the Quichés. The principal author was Juan de Penonias de Putanza, who claimed to be related to one of the C'oyoi military lords killed in the Spanish Conquest. The document dates to approximately the years between 1550-1570.

At least portions of the account were apparently taken from an "official" version of Quiché history and officials of the Quiché state at Utatlán aided in its composition. At several points in the text, the authors record that it is taken from the "words of the forefathers" (Carmack 1973:40,287,292,293). Like the Popol Vuh, passages of dialogue are included, many of which are arranged as chiasms.

It is relatively free of direct European influences although three Spanish words are included. There are no Biblical elements, the few religious matters mentioned being wholly indigenous in nature.

It contains mostly historical narratives from the legendary arrival of the Quiché forefathers from the East to the period of the Spanish Conquest. Its intent was primarily to serve as a land title and claim to caciqueship by members of the C'oyoi Quiché (Carmack 1973:40).

All of the chiasms that I was able to find in the Título C'oyoi occur in the same brief portion of the text which is devoted to the campaigns of Q'uikab, a Cawek Quiché king who reigned in the latter

half of the fifteenth century. The presence of chiasms abruptly ceases in the following sections which consist of a topographic description of the Quetzaltenango area and more recent historical material. Carmack believes that unlike the early portions of the text this latter section was not based on prehispanic sources (Carmack 1973:40).

The following selections from the Título C'oyoi are taken from the excellent English translation by Robert M. Carmack which is faithful, in general, to the original Quiché version:

1. "jic alak oyew achi
alak kasay
rech tinamit
alak yik'oy ulew
chibe alak alak lak'abey rech ulew
chwach wukamak' tecpan rech mawi queul chic chiri.
Ch...ik' alak,
ch'acom alak."

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 279)

- "you valiant warriors,
you conquerors
of the fortified centers,
you treaders of the lands;
go and be inhabitants of the lands
at the fortified centers of the subject peoples so that they
do not arrive there again.
Conquer,
you warriors."

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 298)

2. "chibam nimak xojuc'ulbatil ulew alak chujutak tzobajil siwan
tinamit," xeuchixic;
"utz queje lal ajaw" xecha "conojel ruc' al alak c'ajol alak
chibe alak koyowal kachajilal...."
Kelic ulok chupam q'uiche juyub tak'aj ta xojul
waral chupam ka juyubal xelaju
xawi mawi kitziij ta waral xela
xojul wi c'o chi na
u suc'uliquil xchikabij e nimak ajtzolaj tz'ununche
e rij siwan tinamit,

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, pp. 279-280)

"make many land boundaries for us at each milpa in the canyons of the fortified center," it was said to them.

"Good," they said to the lord; "Go with your sons, you, our valiant warriors....

Then indeed we left the Quiche mountain and plains and arrived here in the mountains of Xelaju;
in truth, not far from Xela(ju)
 we arrived¹¹;

truly we tell about (them), the great warriors and lancers,
 the old ones of the canyons of the fortified centers,"

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 298)

3. Are c'o ri ka mam kakajaw oj ajxelaju yacalic xekaj ula
chirij c'oxturn
chiri xecanaj wi ajxtoca
xec'oxturn

are c'u ka mam kakajaw yacal chic xekaj ulok

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 280)

These then are the grandfathers and fathers of the Quiche people;
from on high they dropped down

behind the fortress,

(and) there they left the people of (Pa)xtoca;

below the fortress

are our grandfathers and fathers; from up there they went down.

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 299)

4. ri ajaw uk'alechij c'oyoi belejeb aj cuchaxic ruc' nima ajpop
achij c'oyoi yacalic xec ubic pa baca, ruc' junam quiwach
ruc'ajaw k'ali c'amja looquin,...

oj c'oyoi sakcorowach cuchax

kak'ajaw nima labal xuban... ka mam kajaw

chuwach ronojel amak' wukamak' tecpan

coon buxija, tzuja, ruc' bama nima amak' ruc' yoc k'anchebe

tzizol chele...n queuchaxic ruc' ajalo xemache balam colob...

ri kakamam kakajaw

oj c'oyoi s[...]rowäch

uk'alechij belejeb aj c'oyoi cuchaxic ruc' rajpop achij c'oyoi
ruc' nima c'aamja looquin

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, pp. 280-281)

the lord K'alechij C'oyoi, Nine Aj, as they say, with the great
Ajpop Achij C'oyoi; they went up and entered Baca, with the lord
 of equal (rank), K'ali C'(a)amja Looquin,...

we the C'oyoi Sakcorowach, as they say;

the great and famous warriors, our grandfathers and fathers
did this in the presence of all¹² the settlements of the
palace of the captive peoples,

the Coon Buxija, the Tzuja, with the Bama, Nima Amak', and

the Yoc K'anchebex, the Tzizol, Chele... as they say, with

those of Alotemache, Balam Colob;...

then our grandfathers and fathers,

we the C'oyoi S[ako]rowäch¹³

we the K'alechij C'oyoi, Nine Aj, as they say, and the rajpop
Achij C'oyoi, and the great C'aamja Looquin.

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, pp. 299-300)

C. Título Tamub (Quiché History of Don Juan de Torres):

This document was written in 1580 by Don Juan de Torres and Don Diego Ramirez, members of the Ekoamak' line of the Tamub Quiché.

This branch of the Quichés apparently lived between the towns of Totonicapán and Utatlán (Carmack 1973:31). It includes a claim to land and tribute by the Tamub, as well as genealogical information and a description of pre-Columbian Tamub society. It is comparatively free of direct Spanish influence, other than a claim that the Tamub ancestors came from Babylon (Recinos 1957:25, 63). There are brief passages of dialogue but these are relatively rare.

The document contains a long section on the legendary origins of the Quichés. The authors wrote that these things were told to them by their "grandfathers and fathers" (Recinos 1957:25). Carmack believes that it may have been based on a genealogical codex (Carmack 1973:32). On the whole, pre-Columbian historical details included in the text agree with the account in the Popol Vuh, until intrusive Tamub genealogical data is inserted. When this occurs, official Cawek genealogy is given in a fragmented and erroneous manner, indicating that the authors were basing these portions on another source. The text concludes with an enumeration of lands pertaining to the Tamub and Ilocab Quichés, probably based on current boundaries known to the authors. I was unable to find any chiasms in the Tamub genealogical or geographic material.

I have taken the following selections from the Spanish translation by Adrián Recinos. I have included English versions based on the original Quiché text for comparative purposes:

1. ta culic chiriy Tikah; nah x-qui ban chiriy chi nima conohel ri Kakohib ruc Ekoamakib;
 hunam qui vach rumal xahun qui coheic,
 xa pu hunam quiche qui vach
 x-e cohe Tikah.

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 40)

llegaron a Tikah, donde moraron largo tiempo todos los grandes, los Kakohib y los Ekoamakib.

Tenían el mismo aspecto, pues eran de igual condición, y tenían igual apariencia de quichés cuando se encontraban en Tikah.

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 41)

they arrived at Tikah, there all the great ones stayed for much time, the Kakohib and the Ekoamakib;

they had the same appearance, they were of equal station, they had the same appearance as Quichés when they were in Tikah.

2. x-e ul chi cu chiri Chalib.

Nah x-qui ban chiriy,
 x-e yaluhic, x-e bayatah
chiri Chalib.

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 40)

llegaron a Chalib,

donde se quedaron mucho tiempo.

Se establecieron y permanecieron en Chalib.

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 41)

they came there to Chalib.

There they stayed for much time, they established themselves, they remained there in Chalib.

3. E qu co chiriy ta x-e tzalih

ri e kahib ahauab

[Co]kabib ruc Cokaib ruc Beleheb Kih ruc Ah Valikom
qui biy,

chi cu cahib

x-tzalihic, x-e be chi relebal kih

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 42)

Allí estaban cuando regresaron

los cuatro señores

[Co]kabib y Cokaib, Beleheb Kij y Ah Valikom,
que así se llamaban,

los cuatro

que volvieron después de haber ido al Oriente

(Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 43)

There they were when they returned,
the four lords
[Co]kabib, Cokaib, Beleheb Kij, and Ah Valikom.
These were their names,
the four
 that returned from the East

4. Tu u ticaric cu ri kakal, tep[e]ual,
kā x-e ul na,
x-e pe chi relebal kih, ri e cahib chi ahavab.
Ta x-ticar kakal
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 44)

Entonces comenzó la grandeza y el poderío,
cuando vinieron,
cuando llegaron del Oriente los cuatro Señores.
Entonces comenzó la grandeza.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 45)

Then was the beginning of greatness, of power,
when they arrived,
when they returned from the East, the four lords.
Then began greatness

5. Vae nim haa
rech Nim Chicoh Techu;
tzak r'ochoch nim Chicoh Techuu
nim haa.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 50)

He aquí la casa grande
de Nim Chicoh Techu
la casa de Nim Chicoh Techu,
la casa grande.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 51)

This great house
of Nim Chicoh Techu;
the fortified house of Nim Chicoh Techu,
the great house.

6. Ri pa mama muh, kalival x-ya puiy Galel Ahpop,....
Ta x-oc rahual, x-cha rahaua kam nim chich x-ch'il viy,
nim chi puch x-chi ta viy rumal ri al, kahol.
Corab co chi r'uxlab u Galel, ri Ahpop x-uxic.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 62)

Los abuelos dieron el dosel y el trono al Galel y al Ahpop,....
Cuando entraron los Señores, dijeron los Señores: Se les tendrá
por grandes
y se les acatará como grandes por los hijos y vasallos.
El Galel y el Ahpop tuvieron [grandes] honores y majestád.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 63)

The grandfathers gave the canopy and the throne to the Galel, and the Ahpop,....

When the lords arrived, they said: you will be seen as great you will be respected as great by the children, the sons.
Honored and powerful you will become, the Galel and the Ahpop.

D. Título Nijaib II (Royal Title of Don Francisco Izquin Nehaib):

This brief document was written by Quiché lords from the capital city of Utatlán on behalf of the leaders of Momostenango in 1558. It consists of a description of the post-Conquest entitlement of Don Francisco Izquin and his brother Juan at Momostenango with a justification of their offices. Their claim was based on the conquests of their ancestor, Captain Izquin, whose activities prior to the arrival of the Spaniards are described. It contains brief passages of dialogue. Unlike those documents already mentioned, the text contains many Spanish words. There are no significant references to ancient mythology or ritual. I was only able to find one chiasm in the text, that being the introduction. I have used the Recinos Spanish translation and included an English version based on the original Quiché text:

Vacamic x chi ka yao titulo, probanza, ziquotrio fiel, ziquitorio.
Vacamic qut ca qanauinakih chi nima conohel oh rahauai chun
zahcab,

oh pu rahauai Quiche Santa Cruz Utatan.

Vacamic qut x chi ka yao titulo, probanza, ziquitorio

(Recinos, *Cronicas Indigenas de Guatemala*, p. 96)

Aquí daremos el título, probanza y ejecutoria fiel.

Aquí damos testimonio todos los grandes, nosotros los Señores de la ciudad,

los Señores del Quiché, Santa Cruz Utatlán.

Ahora daremos el título, probanza y ejecutoria

(Recinos, *Cronicas Indigenas de Guatemala*, p. 97)

Now we give the title, proof and faithful executory,

Now we give testimony, we the great ones, the lords of the city, the lords of El Quiché, Santa Cruz Utatlán.

Now then we give the title, proof and executory

E. Título Nijaib III:

Like the previous document, Nijaib III was composed on behalf of the leaders of Momostenango by Quiché lords from Utatlán. It was written in 1542, making it one of the earliest texts to have survived from the post-Conquest period. It consists of a land claim based on recollections of conquests made by Don Francisco Izquin Nijaib and Don Juan Gomez Ilocab of the Nijaib branch of the Quichés. Unlike other Nijaib titles, Nijaib III does not include falsified Christian dates referring to the period before the Spanish Conquest. The authors wrote that it was based on the words "of our fathers" (Carmack 1973:352). There is no Biblical intrusive material, although there are a few Spanish words in the text. Despite its brevity, it contains dialogue and numerous references to pre-Conquest events and society. I have used Carmack's Spanish translation in the following selections, and included an English transliteration of the Quiché text:

1. Wacamic cakatiquiba retal wae ulew
rech ajaw don franco Itzquin Nejaib
yic' u yic' ayaw Itzquin;
 queje cubij impormacion kitzij rech ri ulew
 (Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 349)

Hoy comenzaron a señalar esta tierra
del señor Don Francisco Izquin Nijaib,
poderoso señor Izquin;
 ciertamente así dice el informe de tierra
 (Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 351)

Now we begin the marking of the land
of the lord Don Francisco Izquin Nijaib,
powerful lord Izquin;
 surely thus says the word of the land

2. are xcuchu utinamit ri Don Franco Itzquin Nejaib
cuchul tinamit,
ruc'ajaw Don Juo Basquez Roxche Ilocab cuchul tinamit,
 are c'u rumal xchikachiquiba retaxic wae ulew rech ajaw Don Franco
Itzquin;
 (Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 350)

Don Francisco Izquin Nijaib juntó al pueblo,
pone en orden(?) al pueblo;
 con el señor Don Juan Vasquez Rok'che Ilocab pone en orden(?)
al pueblo.

Por el fijaremos un tiempo para medir esta tierra del señor Don Franco Itzquin;

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 351)

Don Francisco Izquin Nijaib united the town,
he caused the town to be orderly;
 together with lord Don Juan Vasquez Rok'che Ilocab he caused the
town to be orderly,
 Because of him, we set down the measure of this land of lord Don Francisco Izquin.

F. Título de los Señores de Sacapulas:

The Título Sacapulas was composed in 1551 by Canil and Toltecat Quiché lords residing at Sacapulas. The title itself is rather lengthy and provides abundant information on pre-Conquest society and history. Unfortunately, much of the text is available only in a poor Spanish translation made in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, and copied in 1758. Brasseur de Bourbourg transcribed a brief portion of the Quiché version in 1859, and a postscript written in Quiché has survived. In addition, a circular map of the Sacapulas area which accompanied the ancient Quiché title is available for study. The latter may have been copied from an ancient codex. Carmack believes this Precolumbian codex may have served as a mnemonic device to recall certain traditional stories (Carmack 1973:38-39). Many places represented on the map are associated with tales recounted in the body of the text. Although the authors confess their belief in Christianity, the material found in the title itself is wholly native in origin and includes several references to pagan idol worship. The authors wrote that they were writing "what was painted when we made procession to the Hill-Valley after they (the ancestors of the Quichés) came.... We therefore painted it (the title) anciently, upon arriving in this land" (Acuña 1968:11). The title is unusually rich in dialogue. Relatively few Spanish intrusive words exist in the Quiché portions. The following selections are taken from Brasseur's transcription of the Quiché text, as well as the anonymous Spanish translation of the remainder of the text. Both of these sources were published by Acuña in 1968. The postscript and a modern Spanish translation are taken from Carmack. I have included an English translation of each selection for comparison:

1. Ri tz ibax ka tzibah

mi-x-ka ban peresasion chirech Huyub-Tagah x-e bin-vi.

Ta x-qui yacuh Huyub-Tagah, mi-xoq titilo.

Mi ba x-ka tzibah nabe x-oq-vi uloc uleu.

(Brasseur, Título de los Señores de Sacapulas; in Acuña 1968:11)

Escribimos lo que estaba pintado

cuando hacíamos procesión al Cerro-Valle, después que ellos vinieron.

Cuando ellos cargaban al Cerro-Valle, era explicado el título. Nosotros, pues, lo pintamos antiguamente, al llegar a la tierra.

(Brasseur, Título de los Señores de Sacapulas; in Acuña 1968:11)

We write that which was written

when we made procession to Hill-Valley, after they had come.

When they took possession of Hill-Valley, this title was expressed.

We therefore wrote it anciently, upon arriving in this land.

2. C'achbilam ta x-e petic mana cate x-qui tzukuh varal.

Ma-habi ca chila

Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha, u bi huyub,

ta x-e petic ca chila cut x-e pe-vi chaka cho,
chaka palo.

Xa x-e qohe na chiri Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha.

Xa x-e qohe na chirí

la x-e petic X-Umul Gag.

(Brasseur, Título de los Señores de Sacapulas; in Acuña 1968:12)

Los companeros de ellos vinieron entonces, no antes de establecerse ellos aquí.

Nadie estaba allá

en Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha, nombres del cerro,

cuando ellos llegaron, cuando ellos vinieron del otro lado
del lago,
del otro lado del mar.

Solo ellos estaban en Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha.

Solo ellos estaban allí

al venir con X-Umul Gag.

(Brasseur, Título de los Señores de Sacapulas; in Acuña 1968:12)

Those which accompanied them arrived then, not before they were settled here.

No one was there

in Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha, as the hill was called,

when they arrived, when they came from the other side of the
lake,

from the other side of the sea.

Only they were in Omuch Ynup, Omuch Cakha.

Only they were there

when they came with X-Umul Gag.

3. Este era el nahuatl de nuestro padre, [él] que llama[mos] Canil
nosotros los sacapultecos, [a los] que llaman hombre[s].

Le decían al Cabro:--

"Nahuatl eres de los tultecos éstos."

Era su antepasado él que llamaban El-Principal-más-Fuerte
por nombre,

con el nahuatl de los primeros.

Como es éste que intitulan el Principal Canil por primero,
le dijo al principal intitulado El-más-Fuerte:--"Este, pues,
nombrado Fuerte

es el nahuatl de tu persona,"

le dijo

al que llaman Principal Canil.

(Acuña, Título de los Señores de Sacapulas, pp. 15-16)

This was the nahuatl of our father, he who we call Canil, we the
people of Sacapulas, to those called men.

They said to the He-Goat:--

"Nahuatl art thou of these Tultec people."

He was their ancestor, he they called

The-Chief-most-Powerful by name,

with the nahuatl of those who were first.

Like this one who is entitled the Chief Canil by the
first,

he said to the chief entitled The-most-Powerful:--"This one,
then, named Powerful

is the nahuatl of your person,"

he said

to him who is called Chief Canil.

4. ta xepetic ruc' jun can saketzal ajaw ubi chuchaxic; cachbilam ta
xepetic; mana c'o ta xquitzucuj waral;

ma jabi c'a chila omuch inop omuch cakja

ubi juyub ta xepetic c'a chila; c'ut xepe wi chak'acho
chak'apalo

xa xecojena chiri oomuch inop oomuch cakja

xecojena chiri ta xepetic chumal k'ak' e kakajaw;

(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 358)

Cuando vinieron con un señor llamado Can Saketzal se dice que
juntos vinieron; no buscaban este lugar;

no había aquí las 400 ceibas, y las 400 casas rojas,

que así se llamaban los montes cuando vinieron aquí; vinieron
del otro lado del mar,

del otro lado del agua;

vinieron allí en las 400 ceibas, las 400 casas rojas;

vivieron allí cuando vinieron Chumul K'ak', los poderosos señores;
(Carmack, Quichean Civilization, p. 359)

When they came with a lord named Can Saketzal, it is said that
they came together; they did not seek this place;

there were not here the 400 ceiba trees, and the 400 red houses,
as the mountains were called when they came here; they came

from the other side of the sea,
from the other side of the water;

they came here in the 400 ceiba trees, the 400 red houses;
they lived there when they came, Chumul K'ak', the powerful lords;

G. Title of the Lords of Totonicapán:

This valuable document was composed ca. 1554 by anonymous Cawek Quiché Indians from the town of Chimek'enha' (Totonicapán). Although not written at the Quiché capital it was probably authorized by the royal court since it was signed by kings and nobles from Utatlán. The text is in part a title of land possession, possibly meant as proof of the right of the Totonicapán nobility to cacique privileges (Carmack 1973:29). The major part of the text, however, is devoted to pre-Columbian historical reminiscences down to the reign of the pre-Columbian king Quik'ab. Like the Popol Vuh, it includes an unusual amount of pagan mythology, including references to human sacrifice, idolatry and polytheism. Also, like early portions of the Popol Vuh, the Totonicapán text frequently uses dialogue. This indicates that it may be based on ancient codices or a series of dramatic tales tied together to form a coherent succession of events (Carmack 1973:30).

In similar documents described previously, direct European influences are rare. The Title of Totonicapán, however, contains a number of intrusive Biblical details. In 1834, the Indians of Totonicapán commissioned Dionisio José Chonay, priest of Sacapulas, to translate the Quiché text into Spanish. He neglected to translate the initial pages of the manuscript because their contents were similar to Biblical scripture:

This said manuscript consists of thirty-one quarto pages; but translation of the first pages is omitted because they are on the creation of the world, of Adam, the Earthly Paradise in which Eve was deceived not by a serpent but by Lucifer himself, as an Angel of Light. It deals with the posterity of Adam, following in every respect the same order as in Genesis and the sacred books as far as the captivity of Babylonia. The manuscript assumes that the three great Quiche nations with which it particulaly deals are descendants of the Ten Tribes of the Kingdom of Israel, whom

Shalmaneser reduced to perpetual captivity and who, finding themselves on the border of Assyria, resolved to emigrate (Chonay and Goetz 1953:166-7).

Unfortunately, only Chonay's Spanish version is known to have survived. Without the original Quiché text, it is difficult to determine exactly what the contents of these first pages actually were. Those portions of the text we do have, however, include declarations that the Quichés are descendants of Israel, and sons of Abraham and Jacob (Chonay and Goetz 1953:170). Later in the same text the authors claim that one of their progenitors parted the sea with his staff, and then closed it once again through the power of the "Great God"--an obvious reference to Moses (Chonay and Goetz 1953:170).

Another enigmatic aspect of the Title of Totonicapán is its relative lack of chiasms. Father Chonay wrote that in working on the translation, the "spelling and order of words of the original have been followed as far as possible" (Chonay and Goetz 1953:167). It is of course impossible to determine if the sparsity of chiasms in the text is due to the absence of this poetic device in the original or an attempt by the translator to avoid what he might have interpreted as needless repetition.

The following is a rare example of chiasmus in the Totonicapán document. It consists of an order made by Tohil, the god of the Quichés, instructing them to hide his wooden image in a nearby mountain. It belongs to an early section of the document dealing with the legendary progenitors of the Quichés who lived soon after the creation. I have used the original Spanish translation by Chonay, as well as an English translation by Delia Goetz:

Antes que salga el sol, antes que amanezca,
sacadnos de este lugar y escondednos en otra espesa montaña,
 y si no lo hicieréis, sin duda seréis perdidos.
 Hasta a donde nos fueráis a esconder y podáis ir a consultarnos.
 Daos prisa, escondednos
antes que alumbre el sol."
 (Chonay, Título de los Señores de Totonicapán, p. 225)

"Before the sun rises, before dawn comes,
take us from this place and hide us in another deep mountain,
 and if you do not do so, without doubt you will be lost.
 There you are going to hide us and you can go to consult us.
 Hasten, hide us
before the sun shines."
 (Chonay and Goetz, Title of the Lords of Totonicapán, p. 178)

H. Rabinal Achi:

This document differs from those already studied in being a native drama performed by Quiché Indians in the centuries after the Spanish Conquest. The text of the drama was written from memory in 1850 by Bartolo Sis, a native of San Pablo Rabinal "to leave a remembrance to my descendants" (Carmack 1973:45). It was performed six years later for Brasseur de Bourbourg, the priest of Rabinal. With the aid of his native informants, Brasseur copied the Sis version and subsequently translated into French. Only Brasseur's copy has survived.

The Rabinal Achi is wholly aboriginal in subject matter, and was almost certainly based on an authentic preconquest dance-drama. As such, Carmack believes it to be as important as the Popol Vuh in preserving native cultural material:

The Rabinal Achi should be placed along side the Popol Vuh in terms of its authentic expression of native culture. Presumably, it is a fairly accurate transcription of some of the dialogue and scenario accompanying one of the important ceremonial dramas presented in prehispanic times by the Rabinal Quiche (Carmack 1973:46).

The Quiché text is written in an obscure and archaic form. This contrasts with the brief introductory paragraph written by Sis who uses contemporary Quiché language and a number of Spanish words. The

drama itself, on the other hand, contains no intrusive Spanish words. The text is markedly repetitious in style, a characteristic of this native drama which Mace felt marred its "austere beauty" (Mace 1966:34).

The text concerns the history of a young Quiché prince who was captured by the Lord of Rabinal and was subsequently executed by the Eagle and Jaguar Warriors. The setting of the drama takes place long before the arrival of the Spaniards. It contains an abundance of information on pre-Columbian culture, including references to idol worship and human sacrifice. Because of its purpose as a dance-drama, it is wholly composed of extended passages of dialogue. The dance is still occasionally performed at Rabinal under the name "Aj Tun" (Mace 1967:4). Mace has described the modern version of the dance as being performed under the direction of Esteban Xolop, an illiterate native of Rabinal. Don Xolop knows the entire drama and teaches it by oral repetition to those members of the cast who cannot read. Those that can read use copies of the Brasseur text when rehearsing. Rehearsals are conducted at night for weeks prior to the performance, and are preceded by several visits to nearby mountains for prayer, led by a native priest named Meregildo Tun. Those who perform the dance consider it a religious obligation and believe that the characters described in the dance live as spirits in a nearby mountain (Mace 1967:7). One of the cast, Vicente Zuyen, said to Mace, "It was beautiful, and I liked it because it was really old...my body was happy to dance. It is the most sacred, from long ago" (Mace 1967:16). An aged first edition copy of Brasseur's published version of the text was used for 90 years as a source for night rehearsals, and it is heavily stained with candle drippings. This book is itself treated with great reverence. Before he was

allowed to touch it, Mace had to "make the sign of the cross, offer guaro to the four directions and to the book itself" (Mace 1967:15). It is said that one man who touched it without asking its permission became paralyzed in his arm (Mace 1967:15).

Rabinal is unique in Guatemala, because of its preservation of such native dramas. Many are still performed, and new ones are still being written. This is in part due to Rabinal's long history of isolation from Spanish influences. It was also one of the few towns in which the Dominican friars tolerated, and even encouraged the performance of native dance-dramas. This was done in an effort to encourage the Indians to congregate in the newly founded town of Rabinal in 1538 (Mace 1967:8).

The following selections come from Brasseur's transcription of Sis's Quiché text and a Spanish translation by Luís Cárdoza y Aragón. I have included an English version of each.

1. ahau Chacachib, Zamanib, Cauk Rabinal!

Ca cha curi nu tzih chuvach cah, chuvach uleu.

Quehe mavi quia tzih qu'in chau uq La. Cah, uleu chi qohe uq La,
o Galel-Achi Rabinal-Achi!

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 17)

ese jefe de los Chacach, de los Zaman, (ese) Cauk de Rabinal!

Así dice mi palabra a la faz del cielo, a la faz de la tierra.

Por lo cual no te diré muchas palabras. Qué el cielo, que la tierra, sean contigo.

eminente de los Varones, Varon de Rabinal!

(Cárdoza y Aragon, Rabinal Achi, p. 31)

this lord of the Chacach, of the Zaman, Cauk of Rabinal!

Thus says my word to the face of the heavens, to the face of the earth.

For which reason I will not speak many words. May the heavens, may the earth, be with you.

Great Man, Man of Rabinal.

2. Yeha! oyeu achi, canab, teleche vinak!

La ca cha na curi a tzihi chuvach cah, chuvach uleu:

"Lal in go oyeu, la in go achi,
curi ve x-ch'in hiquiba nu huyubal, nu tagahal. Mana calah
in bozinak-vi tzala huyu, tzala tagah,

xa in r'al zutz,
xa in r'al mayul?"

Ma-pa ca cha ri a tzihi? Ve-ba mavi x-ch'a hiquiba u vach ri
a huyubal, u vach ri a tagahal, ta ca-rah cah, ta ca-rah
uleu, xa at vahim, xa at perahim, cat nu v'oqueizah
chuvach v'ahaua, chuvach nu vinakil, chupam nu nimal tzak,
chupam nu nimal goxtun.

Ca cha curi nu tzihi chuvach cah, chuvach uleu. Quehe, cah, uleu
chi qohe avuq, canab, teleche vinak!

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 32)

Eh! Valiente, Varón, Hombre prisionero, cautivo.

Es así que dijo tu palabra a la faz del cielo, a la faz de la
tierra?

"Vamos! Yo sería un Valiente; Vamos! Yo sería un Varon,
yo diría, yo declararía, mis montañas, mis valles! No es
visible que yo nací sobre la vertiente de una montaña, sobre
la

vertiente de un valle,
yo el hijo de las nubes,
el hijo de los nubarrones?"

Tu palabra no dijo así? Si tu no dices, si tu no declaras
la faz de tus montañas, la faz de tus valles, quiera el
cielo, quiera la tierra, que yo te haga entrar, sea atado,
sea despedazado

ante mi Gobernador, ante mi Hombre, a mis grandes muros, a mi
gran fortaleza.

Así dice mi palabra a la faz de cielo, a la faz de la tierra.
Que el cielo, que la tierra.

sean contigo Hombre prisionero, cautivo!

(Cardoza y Aragón, Rabinal Achi, p. 34)

Ah! Valiant One, Man, Prisoner, Captive Man.

Is it thus that spoke your word to the face of the heavens, to
the face of the earth?

"Let us go! I will be a Valient One. Let us go? I will be a
Man,

I will speak, I will declare, my mountains, my valleys! Is
it not apparent that I was born on the slope of a mountain,
on the slope of a valley,

I, child of the clouds,
child of the storm-clouds?

Did not your word speak thus? If you do not speak, if you
do not declare concerning the face of your mountains, the
face of your valleys, be it the heavens, be it the earth
that I enter, be I bound, be I rent in pieces

before my Lord, before my Man,
to my great walls, to my great fortress. Thus speaks my word
to the face of the heavens, to the face of the earth. May the
heavens, may the earth

be with you, Prisoner, Captive Man!

3. Chiri-cut mi-x-e cha uloc e Ah-Uxab, e Ah-Pokomam,

"Yeha, yeha! oyeu achi, Cavek-Queche-Vinak! xerecuri mi-x-oh yutzcupitah uloc chi ka huyubal, chi ka tagahal.

Manare varal koh etar-vi cuq v'al, cuq nu qahol, chila qol han-vi x geka zutz, xe zaki zutz, chi machmal teu, chi machmal horon,

xe u muhibal, xe u muhibal raxon, xe u ganal pek, u ganal cacou, xe gana-puvak, xe zaki-puvak, xe pich, xe qot, cuq v'al, cuq nu qahol.

Are na ri v'al, are nu qahol:

mana qo qaxcoquiric-vi huper chakap tzukubal que; xa e tzulic qo c'uloc huqal pek, hun qui qal cacou. Rumal e ahpich, e ahqot chuxe-gih, chuxe-zak.

Are curi r'al u qahol

u Galel-Achi Rabinal Achi, xacu chi cakrail, chi cakqaxcol ca qui riq-vi huper chakap tzukubal que chuxe-gih, chuxe zak. Xavi xahun r'akan que tzuun, chirih, que tzuun chi qui vach: xa e xechexoh, xa e hetzehoh ri qui u vivih, ri qui u mamah u Galel-Achi Rabinal Achi, chuxe-gih, chuxe zak."

Mi-x-cha uloc qui yebal, qui ziqibal e Ah-Uxab, e Ah-Pokomam

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 50)

Entonces replicó Los de Ux, Los de Pokomam,¹⁴

"Valiente, Varón, Hombre de los Cavek Queché, abandona la lucha en nuestras montañas, en nuestros valles.

No nacimos aquí con nuestros niños, nuestros hijos allí en donde descienden las negras nubes, las blancas nubes, en donde el frío oprime, en donde la helada oprime?

Abajo (están) los ramajes, los verdes ramajes, el amarillo cacao (moneda), el amarillo cacao (fino) el oro, la plata, los bordados, la orfebrería, con mis niños, mis hijos.

He aquí mis niños, he aquí mis hijos; allí no hay para ellos sufrimiento total o parcial, para sostenerse; mientras duermen llega una carga de cacao (moneda), una carga de cacao (fino), porque ellos son bordadores, orfebres del día a la aurora.

Pero mira a los niños, los hijos, del Eminente de los Varones, del Varón de Rabinal; ellos no obtienen sino una gran pena, sino con gran sufrimiento, todo o parte de su subsistencia, del día a la aurora. Ellos tienen una pierna viendo hacia adelante, (una pierna) viendo hacia atrás; no hay sino cojos, mancos los sabrinos, los nietos del Eminente de los Varones, del Varón de Rabinal del día a la aurora."

Así replicó el desafío, el grito, de Los de Ux, de Los de Pokomam (Cardoza y Aragón, Rabinal Achi, p. 42)

Then replied Those of Ux, Those of Pokomam,

"Valiant One, Man, Man of the Cavek Quiché, abandon the fight in our mountains, in our valleys.

Were we not born here with our children, our sons there where descend the black clouds, the white clouds, where the cold oppresses, where the frost oppresses?

Below are the boughs, the green boughs, the yellow cacao (money), the fine yellow cacao, the gold, the silver, the embroidered cloth, the work of the smith
with my children, my sons.

Behold, my children, behold, my sons; there they do not have to endure suffering either total or partial; while they sleep, there comes to them a load of cacao (money), a load of fine cacao, because they are
embroiderers, smiths of the dawning day.

But behold the children, the sons,
of the Powerful Man, of the Man of Rabinal; they receive only great punishment, only great suffering, all or part of their subsistence, of the dawning day. They have one leg turned forward, one turned backward; there are only the lame, maimed are the nephews, the grandchildren of the Powerful Man, of the Man of Rabinal of the dawning day."
Thus replied the challenge, the shout, of Those of Ux, Those of Pokomam

4. Notice that in the above passage, another chiasm exists within the larger chiasm:

"chuxe-gih, chuxe zak.

Are curi r'al u qahol u Galel-Achi Rabinal Achi,
xacu chi cakrail, chi cakqaxcol ca qui riq-vi huper chakap
tzukubal que chuxe-gih, chuxe zak. Xavi xahun r'akan que
tzuun, chirih,
que tzuun chi qui vach:
Xa e xechexoh, xa e hetzehoh ri qui u vivih, ri qui u mamah u
Galel-Achi Rabinal Achi
chuxe-gih, chuxe-zak."

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 50)

"del día a la aurora.

Peró mira a los niños, los hijos, del Eminente de los Varones,
del Varón de Rabinal;
ellos no obtienen sino una gran pena, sino con gran sufrimiento, todo o parte de su subsistencia, del día a la aurora. Ellos tienen una pierna viendo hacia adelante,
(una pierna) viendo hacia atrás
no hay sino cojos, mancos los sobrinos, los nietos del Eminente de los Varones, del varón de Rabinal
del día a la aurora."

(Cardoza y Aragón, Rabinal Achi, p. 42)

of the dawning day.

But behold the children, the sons, of the Powerful Man, of the Man of Rabinal;

they receive only great punishment, only great suffering, all or part of their subsistence, of the dawning day. They have one leg turned forward,
one turned backward;

there are only the lame, maimed are the nephews, the grandchildren of the Powerful Man, of the Man of Rabinal of the dawning day."

5. Ahau Hobtohl!

qui yuxtah-ta La chuvach cah, chuvach uleu!

Ca cha ba ri nu tzih chi ech La: "Areta-ba va nu couil, va v'achihilal yaom La hetezam La chuveh, chi nu chi, chi nu vach.

Ch'in canah-ta na bala varal nu chab, varal nu pocob. Chi quu-ta na La, chi tzapih-ta La chupam u chuyal u pakabal!

Ch'uxlan-ta na,

xavi ta qu'in uxlanic, rumal qo ka varam ma-habi ka yacalem ruq.

Quehe x-ca nu canah canoc chupam u nimal tzak u nimal goxtun.

Ca cha curi nu tzih

chuvach cah, chuvach uleu. Cah, uleu chi qohe uq La,

v'ahanal, nu vinakil, Ahau Hobtohl!

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 80)

Jefe Cinco-Lluvia,

apruébame a la faz del cielo, a la faz de la tierra.

Mi palabra dice así: "He aquí mi fuerza, mi bravura, que Tu habías dado, que Tu habías ajustado a mi boca, a mi faz.

Dejaré, pues, aquí mi flecha, mi escudo. Guárdalos, pues, enciérralos en su envoltorio, en su arsenal;

que allí descansen;

yo descansaré también, porque cuando debíamos dormir no había, a causa de ellos, reposo para nosotros.

Te los dejo, pues, en los grandes muros, en la gran fortaleza."

Así dice mi palabra

a la faz del cielo, a la faz de la tierra. Que el cielo, que la tierra, sean contigo,

mi Gobernador, mi Hombre, jefe Cinco-Lluvia!

(Cardoza y Aragón, Rabinal Achi, p. 58)

Chief Five-Rain,

Recommend me to the face of the heavens, to the face of the earth.

My word speaks thus: "Behold my strength, my courage, that you have given me, that you have affixed on my mouth, on my face.

I will leave, then, here my arrow, my shield. Guard them, then, keep them in your bundle, in your arsenal;

there you shall rest;

I will rest also, because when we should have slept, there was no rest for us because of them.

I leave them with you, then, inside the great walls, in the

great fortress."

Thus speaks my word
to the face of the heavens, to the face of the earth. May the
heavens, may the earth, be with you,
my Lord, my Man, chief Five-Rain!

6. Oyeu achi, Cavek-Queche-Vinak! La ca cha nu curi a tzih chuvach
cah, chuvach uleu?

"Chi ya-ta La chuve ri vaibal la, uqubal La,
ch'in cah-ta chi ech La ch'in tih-ta nape, ca cha ri tzih La,
xa nima r'etalil nu camic,
nu zachic."

Qollic ca nu yao, ca nu hetezah chi ech La.

Achih-mun, ixok-mun, cha qama uloc ri nu vaibal, nu uqubal
cha yaca chire oyeu achi, Cavek-Queche-Vinak, xa nima r'etal u
camic, u zachic varal chuxmut cah, chuxmut uleu.

(Brasseur, Rabinal Achi, p. 100)

Valiente, Varón, Hombre de los Cavek Queché! Es así que dijo Tu
palabra a la faz del cielo, a la faz de la tierra:

"Dame Tu alimento, Tus bebidas.

Yo te las prestaré para probarlas"; así dijo Tu palabra.

"Eso será la señal suprema de mi muerte,
de mi desaparición.

He aquí que yo Te los doy, he aquí que yo te los presto.

Sirviente, sirvienta, traed mi alimento, mis bebidas.

Dadlas a ese Valiente, a ese Varón, Hombre de los Cavek Queché,
como señal suprema de su muerte, de su desaparición, aquí bajo el
cielo, sobre la tierra.

(Cardoza y Aragón, Rabinal Achi, p. 72)

Valliant One, Man, Man of the Cavek Quiché! Thus spoke thy word
to the face of the heavens, to the face of the earth:

"Give to me thy food, thy drink.

I will render them to thee to try them"; thus spoke thy word.

"That shall be the supreme sign of my death,
of my disappearance.

Behold, I give them to thee, behold that I render them to
thee.

Male servant, female servant, bring my food, my drink.

Give them to that Valliant One, to that Man, Man of the Cavek
Quiché, as a supreme sign of his death, of his disappearance, here
beneath the heavens, upon the earth.

J. Baile Patzca:

The Baile Patzca is another native Quiché dance-drama from the town of Rabinal. Like the Rabinal Achi, it is written in an archaic form of Quiché and contains numerous references to pre-Columbian religious and cultural motifs, including the worship of a "Great Father and Great Mother" (Mace 1966:139). It is the only ancient religious drama to have survived in the Guatemalan highlands, others

being principally historical or farcical in nature. It is unusual that a dance-drama based on native religious concepts survived the Colonial period. This is in part due to the unusual history of native dances in Rabinal.

Shortly after the peaceful conversion to Christianity of much of the native population in north-central Guatemala, Rabinal was founded by the Dominicans in 1538. Many of the Indians were reluctant to leave their traditional homes to occupy the new town. The Dominicans therefore allowed them to perform native dances there to encourage settlement. To make these dances more acceptable for Christian worship, Catholic poetry was written to be incorporated into the performances, hoping that these would eventually supplant the older material. Such practices were not wholly successful. Francisco Ximénez, who lived in Rabinal from 1704-1714 wrote that the Indians preferred their own traditional songs to the ones composed by the clergy. They would sing the latter only in public, while privately preserving the performance of the ancient poems:

Although the ancient Fathers taught certain histories of the Saints in their tongue, so that they might sing them to the drum in place of those which were sung in their gentility, nevertheless, I know that these they sing in public where the priest can hear them, and that elsewhere in secret they keep precious memories of their gentility.... Even today they are in the same errors and foolishness, and although it seems that there is no more than a spark of that fire, it is a great conflagration that exists among them (Ximénez, *Las historias del origen de los indios de esta provincia de Guatemala*, pp. 93-94).

Even those pagan dance-dramas which were performed in public were cleverly disguised to appear like expressions of Christian worship. As early as the sixteenth century, Father Cervantes de Salazar was aware of such deceptions and condemned the performance of native songs among his parishioners:

They are so devoted to their ancient idolatry that unless one understands very well their language, among their holy prayers which they sing, they mix songs of their gentility; and to hide

better their damned work, they commence and conclude with words of God, interposing the rest of their gentile works lowering their voice so that they might not be understood, and raising it at the beginning and end, when they say God (Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Crónica de Nueva España*, I, 39; in Mace 1966:102).

This description fits well with the construction of the Patzca text. While the beginning and end of the drama are concerned with Catholic subjects, the middle is devoted to indigenous material. The dance was originally part of a rain ceremony, similar to the Aztec *Tepeilhuitl*, and the people of Rabinal still believe that its performance brings rain (Mace 1966:117). Unlike the Rabinal Achi, which is performed infrequently, the Patzca is an integral part of the annual Corpus Christi festival at Rabinal. The dancers actually lead the procession of the Holy Sacrament (Mace 1966:103). The Dominicans of the sixteenth century apparently associated this rain dance with the observance of Corpus Christi because both celebrations fall at the beginning of the rain season. It is the most complex of the Rabinal dance-dramas and most likely the oldest. Mace was told by Esteban Xolop that the Patzca dance was older than the Rabinal Achi, and traditionally recognized as being as old as the drum itself (Mace 1966:130).

The text of the Patzca is rich in dialogue and pre-Columbian cultural material. For the purpose of this study, I have used a Quiché transcription of the dance-drama made in 1958 by Celso Sesam Tecu based on the oral dictation of Mateo Diaz, both Rabinal Quiché Indians.

1. E ri og, xog pe Jerusalem,
 nag juyub,
 nag ta-ag
 xog pe hui;

(Mace 1966: Baile Patzca, p. 135)

Nosotros venimos de Jerusalén,
lejano cerro,
lejano valle,
de donde venimos;

(Mace 1966: Baile Patzca, p. 135)

We came from Jerusalem,
distant was the hill,
distant was the valley,
from whence we came;

2. Hay canabe chuch,
 hay canabe cajau,
e aag uxebal ig,
e aag uxebal sac,
e tataib,
 e chuchu ib;

(Mace 1966: Baile Patzca, p. 138)

Oh nuestra primera madre,
 oh nuestro primer padre;
son del haciento del sol;
son del haciento de la claridad;
son nuestros padres;
 son nuestras madres;

(Mace 1966: Baile Patzca, p. 139)

Oh our first mother,
 oh our first father;
they are the workmanship of the sun;
they are the workmanship of brightness;
they are our fathers;
 they are our mothers;

H. Baile Cortés:

Another important Quiché dance-drama is the Baile Cortés. Like the Rabinal Achi and the Baile Patzca, it is written in an archaic form of Quiché which points to a date of composition in the sixteenth century (Carmack 1973:170). Although the dance is ostensibly concerned with the conquest of Mexico by Hernán Cortés, the primary emphasis is on the intercommunication between the Aztecs and Quichés prior to the arrival of the Spaniards. It is rich in dialogue and pre-Columbian cultural material.

The earliest known copy of the Cortés text dates from 1783. Torquemada wrote, however, that an abundance of similar Cortés texts

and dances were composed soon after the Conquest (Torquemada, Monarquía Indiana I, 432; in Mace 1966:41). It is possible that the Baile Cortés is derived from this cycle of literature. The following selections are taken from a more modern version made in 1957 by Esteban Xolop, who dictated it from memory in an effort to preserve it from being lost (Mace 1967:14). I have also included Mace's Spanish translation and an English version based on the Quiché text:

1. The first chiasm from the Baile Cortés is repeated in identical form in two places within the dance. I have included both references below:

1. at re jun re ala tahcon, at sama gel,
ka-ka coj ta na bala chu pam la unimal tzac,
chu pam la unimal cush-tun,
at ta pala tahc'-on, at ta pala samagel,
 (Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 74, 81)

Eres uno de los hombres mandados; sos criado mandadero.
No lo metamos pues, dentro del inmenso cerro,
dentro del inmenso corazón del cerro.
Eres un mandadero; eres un criado mandadero.
 (Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 74, 81)

You are one of the men who are messengers; you are a servant under orders.
We shall not put it therefore within the immense hill,
within the immense heart of the hill.
You are a messenger; you are a servant under orders.

2. tamishenelic,
chu pam caj,
chu pam uleu,
tamishebelhuilloc,
 (Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 74)

Mejor no hubieran salido
de adentro del cielo,
de adentro de la tierra.
Mejor no hubieran salido.
 (Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 75)

It would have been better if they had not gone
from out of the heavens,
from out of the earth.
It would have been better if they had not left

3. shebel lock rajahual Mexico. Nim kasibin kig, y nim kasibin kihuach.
Koj kohui hakib,
koj-cho-abena kib,
shebel lock rajahual Mexico. Nim kasibin kig y nim kasibin ki huach.

(Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 86)

Salieron esos dueños de México. Como les apesta el cuerpo, y como les apesta la cara!
Ajuntémonos todos.
Llamémonos todos
porque salieron los dueños de México. Como les apesta el cuerpo, y como les apesta la cara!

(Mace 1966: Baile Cortés, p. 87)

Those lords came out of Mexico. What a stench arises from their body, and what a stench arises from their face!
Let us all gather together.
Let us call one another together
because those lords came out of Mexico. What a stench arises from their body, and what a stench arises from their face!

The following is a brief description of those early Quiché texts which I have reviewed that do not apparently contain chiasms:

A. Título Nijaib I (Title of the House of Ixquin-Nehaib, Lady of the Territory of Otzoya:

This interesting document was composed by members of the Nijaib branch of the Quichés at Quetzaltenango. The authors claim to have written it immediately after the Conquest in the presence of the Spanish conqueror Don Pedro de Alvarado and four priests who allegedly accompanied him. If this were true it would be the oldest known Quiché text of the sixteenth century. There is no evidence however that Alvarado ever made territorial concessions as outlined in the document. In addition, Alvarado was never accompanied by more than one priest during his Guatemalan conquests. The names of those Quiché lords listed at the end of the document are known to have signed others composed between 1550 and 1560, so that this is a more likely period of composition (Carmack 1973:33).

It includes an account of the conquest of Mam speakers in the area of Otzoya in prehispanic times, particularly during the reign of Quik'ab. Carmack believes the document may be based in part on a pre-Columbian genealogical source (Carmack 1973:36). Several intrusive Spanish words are evident and the text includes an extended account of the Christianization of the area of Quetzaltenango. These sections are heavily influenced by European elements, stressing the collaboration of the Nijaib Quichés in the Spanish Conquest and their willing acceptance of Christianity. Prehispanic dates are given in European calendric form. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. For purposes of analysis, I used the Quiché copy of the text included by Recinos in his Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala (Recinos 1957:71-94).

B. Título Nijaib IV:

This document also purports to have been written at an impossibly early date, in this case 1505. It was composed originally in both Spanish and Quiché on behalf of certain Cawek and Nijaib rulers at Quetzaltenango. Only the Spanish version has survived. Many of the same authors that signed the Nijaib I document also signed the Nijaib IV text.

According to Carmack it is largely the work of provincial lords without reliance on official "royal" sources (Carmack 1973:36). Those topics covered were of primarily local interest. Because only the Spanish version is available for analysis, it is impossible to determine if Spanish intrusive words were used in the original Quiché version, or if the sentence structure was altered in the translation. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. My analysis was based on a copy of the Spanish text in Carmack's Quichean Civilization.

(Carmack 1973:352-355).

C. Título Zapotitlán (Paper Concerning the Origin of the Lords):

This brief title was attached to the Relación Zapotitlán, written in 1579, and consists of an answer to a question about "who the Indians were in their gentile times" (Estrada 1955, in Carmack 1973:42). The original Quiché document was composed by anonymous authors of the Quejñay Quichés. Only the Spanish translation included in the Relación has survived. The text deals with the relationship of the Quejñays with the ruling Quiché dynasty at Utatlán. On the basis of this relationship, the Quejñay lords claim entitlement to special privileges. Carmack does not believe that Quichés from Utatlán aided in the composition of the document, although he does not rule out the possibility that some form of genealogical codex may have been utilized (Carmack 1973:42-43). The account is relatively free of Spanish cultural influence, since its stated purpose is to describe native pre-Columbian society. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. My analysis of the text was based on the Spanish version included by Recinos as an appendix to his translation of the Popol Vuh (Recinos 1953).

D. Título Santa Clara (Title of the Indians of Santa Clara la Laguna):

This brief document was written in 1583 at Santa Cruz del Quiché by descendants of the royal Cawek line of the Quichés. It consists of a claim to land along the southern shores and lowlands of Lake Atitlán based on the conquest of the area by King Quik'ab. Carmack finds no evidence in the text that it is based on a pre-Columbian codex, being concerned with primarily local matters (Carmack

1973:44). It contains little intrusive European material other than a reference to some towns in the area listed by their Spanish names. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. I based my analysis of this title on the Quiché copy included by Recinos in his Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala (Recinos 1957:172-181).

E. Título Paxtoca:

This document was written in 1558 by anonymous Quiché Indians from the community of Paxtoca, located near to San Miguel Totonicapán. It consists principally of a declaration of territorial rights in the area. There is no evidence of dependence on a native codex or representatives of the ruling dynasty from Utatlán. Although probably composed originally in Quiché, only a Spanish version has survived. There are no passages of dialogue in the text, and there are no references to prehispanic material. My analysis was based on a copy of the Spanish title included by Carmack in his Quichean Civilization (Carmack 1973:359-361).

F. Título Retalulew:

Although the document claims to have been written in 1537, internal evidence points to 1557 as a more likely date of composition (Carmack 1973:58). It was written by representatives of the royal Cawek-Quiché line living at Santa Cruz del Quiché on behalf of Don Francisco Tatzuy of Retalulew. It consists principally of a documentation of Don Tatzuy's right to rule based on a brief account of the conquest of the area by his pre-Columbian ancestor, Tatzuy. No other ancient historical information is included, and there is little evidence that the title was based on a hieroglyphic codex. It is unknown if a Quiché version of the text ever existed. Only a

Spanish translation has survived. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. I have based my analysis on the Spanish version included by Carmack in his Quichean Civilization (Carmack 1973:361-362).

G. Título Chauchituj:

This brief title was written in 1592 by Martín Pérez Quik'ab, a Quiché Lord living at Quetzaltenango. He wrote the document at Santa Cruz del Quiché, having been brought there as a very old man specifically for this purpose. He claims to have been a witness to the Spanish Conquest and the source of his information seems to have been his own memory. The purpose of the document was to legitimize certain land holdings in the area of Chauchituj based on Quik'ab's memory of grants given by a pre-Columbian Quiché king to his vassals in the region. Little information on pre-Columbian history or culture is given, and there are no passages of dialogue. Only a Spanish copy of the text has survived. My analysis is based on a copy of the document in Carmack's Quichean Civilization (Carmack 1973:364-5).

H. Título Chacatz-Tojin:

This is another brief land claim, in this case written by Chacatz and Tojin branches of the Quiché at Santa Cruz del Quiché in 1607. It differs from the official Cawek version of ancient history and contains little pre-Columbian information. The account of geographical information and historical detail seems to have been based on the authors' own knowledge, and not an ancient codex. Only a Spanish copy of the text is known. No passages of dialogue are present. I used the Spanish version included by Carmack in his

Quichean Civilization for analysis (Carmack 1973:366-8).

I. Título Uchabaja:

This brief title was written in 1600 by Francisco Aceituno on behalf of the Uchabaja lineage of the Quichés. It is primarily a land title, based on a brief account of their ancient conquest of the Sacapulas area. There is no evidence of reliance on official Utatlán sources, and there are no passages of dialogue. My analysis of the document is based on the Quiché version of the text (Carmack 1973:370).

J. Testament Catalina Nijay:

This unusual document was recorded in 1569 as the last will and testament of a noble Quiché woman, Catalina Nijay, who apparently wished to ensure that her property pass into the hands of her children by her first husband, rather than those by a later marriage (Carmack 1973:64). Unlike those documents already mentioned, it was written in Nahuatl, the language of central Mexico, which had become a kind of "lingua franca" by this time. It contains no pre-Columbian material and is of only local importance. I based my analysis on the Spanish version of the text which was made in 1586 and included by Carmack in his Quichean Civilization (Carmack 1973:371-2).

K. Quiché Calendar of 1722:

This document consists of three native Quiché calendars grouped into one. It was probably composed at Quetzaltenango. The first calendar is based on the solar cycle, while the other two consist of divinatory calendars based on the sacred 260 day cycle of the ancient Maya. Divinatory passages are given for the days in the Quiché

language. Berendt, who copied the text of the calendars in 1887, believed that they were based on pre-Columbian texts, but Carmack doubts this (Carmack 1973:166). I have based my analysis of the Quiché text on a photonegative of Berendt's unpublished transcription (Berendt 1887).

L. Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán Calendar of 1845:

This Quiché calendar was written by Vicente Hernandez Spina, priest of Santa Catarina Ixtahuacán. It was based on oral information given to him by several native priest-shamans in the area. In addition to the calendar and its associated divinatory explanations, Spina also transcribed in Quiché a lengthy prayer given by one of his shaman-informants. While undoubtedly reflecting ancient cultural recollections, both the calendar and the prayer appear to have been based on oral tradition rather than hieroglyphic codices. I have based my analysis on a typewritten copy of the Quiché text found in the Gates Collection (Gates Collection of Middle American Literature, Brigham Young University Manuscript Library).

M. Baile Chara mi yesh:

This is a farsical dance-drama from Rabinal which relates the story of an old Indian trying to arrange the wedding of his sons during the Colonial period. He is hindered in his efforts by the rapaciousness of the Spanish officials of the time. It does not have the seriousness of such works as the Rabinal Achi, Baile Patzcá, or the Baile Cortés, and its production does not have the religious overtones of the others. Mace believes that it is of early Colonial origin, due to its subject matter (Mace 1966:147). Nonetheless, the dance shows a great deal of alteration from archaic forms. Gregorio

Manuel, a native of Rabinal said to Mace that this play always changes a little with each performance, as each actor adlibs as the dance progresses (Mace 1966:149). Being a dance-drama, it is rich in dialogue. There are no significant references to pre-Columbian religion or culture, and the dialogue includes a great number of Spanish intrusive words. I have used for the purpose of this study a copy of the dance dictated by Pedro Cuja Capriel and Esteban Xolop (Mace 1966:148-180). There are no ancient copies of the text known.

Modern Shamanistic Prayers from Momostenango:

In 1979, I had the opportunity to record a number of native prayers by Don Vicente de León, an important Quiché shaman residing near the town of Momostenango. Most of these were calendric in nature. Deities addressed in these prayers included both Catholic saints and ancient pre-Columbian Mayan gods. I was unable to find chiasms in any of Don Vicente's prayers. Like the prayer transcribed by Spina, I believe that these magical orations are based on a long history of oral tradition rather than a written codex.

II. NON-QUICHE HIGHLAND MAYA TEXTS:

While the Quichés were the most powerful of the highland Maya families inhabiting Guatemala at the time of the Spanish Conquest, there were many other related ethnic and linguistic groups. The most important of these were the Cakchiquel, Tzutuhil, Mam, Chuj, Ixil, Pokoman, Chol, Chorti, Kekchi and Pokonchi. Each of these tribal groups follows its own native customs, even though they may have lived side by side. The following is a list of non-Quiché highland Maya documents written soon after the Conquest which contain chiasmus:

A. The Annals of the Cakchiquels:

This important document was written in the Cakchiquel language at Sololá by two members of the royal Xahil branch of the Cakchiquels. The Cakchiquel-Maya were second in power only to the Quichés in highland Guatemala at the time of the Conquest, ruling a large independent kingdom from their capital at Iximche. The bulk of this text, including the earlier portions, was written between the years 1573-1582 by Francisco Hernández Araña, a grandson of king Jun Ik', who reigned at Iximche when the Spaniards first arrived (Recinos and Goetz 1953:113). He claims to have been an eyewitness to the Spanish Conquest in 1524 when only fourteen years old (Recinos and Goetz 1953:119). Those portions of the text which describe pre-Conquest events are remarkably detailed and include extensive passages of dialogue. It is completely devoid of direct European influences and Spanish words. A wealth of Cakchiquel cultural material is recorded, including references to human sacrifice and idolatry. It includes an extended account of the creation, as well as the legendary migrations of the Cakchiquel progenitors to their

home in the Guatemalan highlands. Dates referred to prior to the Conquest are given in an annalistic manner and are based on the ancient native calendar, perhaps indicating that the document is derived from a prehispanic historical codex. In his introductory paragraphs, Arana wrote that he was recording stories of his "fathers and ancestors," that were told to his people (Recinos and Goetz 1953:43). The latter portion of the document was written by Francisco Díaz, and consists of a record of important events at the town of Sololá, arranged in chronological order from 1583 to 1604. These include births, deaths, epidemics, natural calamities, etc.

In the following selections, I have used the English translation made by Daniel G. Brinton, because of its literal rendering of the original Cakchiquel text:

1. haqa tan tahauar ri Ychal Amolac.

xaqaxbe boy chi xka ruma qui camahel ahaua Oxlahuh K'ij,
Cablahuh Tihax,

xucheex:

Ti pe tah rachihi lal ahauh vican nu mama,
ka hunamah chic ka gha, ka pocob ruqin,
ha ri qeche vinak mixrah nutih chic labal chirih nu
civan nu tinamit,

mi qa xnuhan richin chi qeche vinak;

ka tiha chi qa labal ruqin

ti qiz pe ul rachihi lal ahauh

xucheex tok

xboy chiix

Yqhal.

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 150)

having for king Ychal Amollac.

Messengers were sent to him with the order that he should come down by the kings Oxlahuh K'ij, Cablahuh Tihax, and they said:

Let the bravery of the king be made manifest to our
ancients,

Let us measure with him our bows and our shields.

The Quichés wished to try their arms against our ravine
and our city,

and we have dealt with the Quichés.

Let us now try this one in war

Let the king come and show his valor.

Thus did they say

and sent this word

to Ychal.

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 151)

2. ok xequulu chi qa qui chuvi huyu Oronic Cakhay, xul chic ronojel vuk amag ahlabal.

Xcha qari Gagavitz, Cactecauh chirichin Qeche vinak:

koh i^{qo} pa huyu konohel, ka qhaca ru gih ronohel vuk amag Tecpan,

ka q'umah chiqui qux

at catahilan can quivach, cat pa e can chuvi Cakay,

yn qa quinoc chupam huyu Cakay;

yn qui chaco quichin, ti q'umah chi qui qux,

chupam huyu ba qo vi ti chacatah,

qaqovi maqui ti chacatah; x cha qa

ok xcam quitzi, xqoh pa Cakhay;

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 92)

Then they went forth to meet those at the place Oronic Cakhay, and all the warriors of the seven villages arrived.

Then spoke Gagavitz and Zactecauh to the Quiché men:

"Let us all go to the place. Let us conquer the glory of all the 7 villages of Tecpan,

Let us weaken their hearts;

do thou count their faces, do thou stand here at the place Cakhay;

I shall enter the place Cakhay;

I shall conquer them; their heart shall be weakened;

there, in the place, they shall be conquered,

where they never before were conquered." Thus they spoke, when they ordered the slaughter, when they were in Cakhay;

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 93)

3. qul chahom,

maqui xiqo chupam huyu. Xcha:

At ahau, xa tin ya queh cab chi vichin,

Yn ahqueh, yn ahcab quinux,

maqui quin i^{qo}, xcha

ri yuquite chahom.

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 92)

The defence with cinders,

they could not enter the place. Then it was said:

"O thou lord, I will give thee the venison and the honey.

I am the lord of the venison, the lord of the honey;

but I have not entered, ¹⁵ it was said. ¹⁶

because of the cinders."

(Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 93)

4. yaic qaperi gavonon, gacital, xogol, gekal, hab, cuq, moyeuh;
ok xoh pixabax pe ree:

kitziⁿ nim xti^{vi}kah; mani quix var vi, quix chacatah vi, mani

quix yegetah vi, yx nu qahol, haquix gagar quix tepevar vi;

hati qohe vi y vux la ree cetecic chee giomah, qha, pecob.

Vuetah mixi vikah ree

xit, puak, guguraxom, bix yegetah,

ruma xavi qa y vichin tux

yxquix i chi nan; quix cao ru vach;

ri xit, puak, guguraxom, qibanic, qotonic,
ronohel ri mix rikah vuk amag,
qa chila qa xticavi ru vach chi huyubal, ti vulaah ronohel,
ti ca qa ru vach
ri y qha y pocob.
hun nabeyal hun qa qhipilal chivichin,
yx oxlahuh chi ahlabal
yx qa oxlahuh chi ahaui
chi yx ahpop ti hunamah
y qha y pocob mixnuyael.
Cani ca tibe y ca ru vach ree
y vikan y qha y pocob;
qo hun labal chila chi relebal gih,
Cuyva rubi;
chi ri qa tibe y tihavi y qha y pocob ree mixnuyael,
vhix qa yxnu qahol;
xohucheex qape okxoh pe pa Tullan,...
kitzih qa ti xibin ok xoh pe kachpetic qa ri gavonon, gacital,
cuq, moyeuh, xogol, gekal, hab;
 (Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, pp. 74, 76)

given (as a defense) against the bugs, the dirt, the boding owls,
the blackness, the rain, the fog, the clouds;
then we were commanded:
 Great shall be your burden; sleep not, sit not, be not cast
down, you my sons, you shall be rich, you shall be powerful;
let your rounded shields be your riches, your bows, your
bucklers.
 If you have given as tribute
jade, silver, leather work, hated songs.
 On that account they shall be given you;
 You shall receive more than others; you shall lift up
 your face;
for jade, silver, painted articles, engraved articles.
 All the seven nations have paid as tribute.
 But there, in those hills you shall lift up your faces,
there you shall lift up your faces,
your bows, your bucklers.
 One shall be your first chief, and one his junior,
of you the thirteen warriors,
you the thirteen princes,
you the thirteen equal chiefs,
to whom I shall give the bows and bucklers.
 Soon you shall lift up your face
and have your burden your bows and bucklers;
there is war there toward the East,
at the place called Zuyva;
there you shall go, there is the place for your bows and
your bucklers
which I shall give you, you indeed my sons.
 So it was spoken to us when we came to Tulan, ...
truly our coming was terrifying, with our accompaniments against
the bugs, the dirt, the clouds, the fogs, the mud, the darkness,
the rain, when we entered Tulan.
 (Brinton, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, pp. 75, 77)

5. This last selection belongs to the latter portion of the

Cakchiquel text which was written in Spanish by Francisco Díaz, also a native Cakchiquel Indian. Because there is no Cakchiquel original, I have here only given the English translation by Recinos and Goetz:

On the 10th day of the 4th month after the day of St. James
came the decree issued by Ramírez,

in accordance with which the principal lords

had to pay tribute as well as the poor people. Control of taxation, which had not been practiced in the old days by the lords, was immediately established.

It was known that the tribute was stolen, but they did not know who was guilty.

They did not deliver the full measure of corn, they sent old hens, they left off working in the corn fields.

In this way they paid only part of the tribute
to the lords.

On the day of St. Francis, a Monday, Ramírez issued the decree,
on the day 7 Camey (October 4, 1557).

(Recinos and Goetz, The Annals of the Cakchiquels, p. 141)

B. Título Xpantzay II (Common Wars of the Quichés and Cakchiquels):

This short document was written in 1554 by representatives of the Tzotzil, Tukuchee and Xpantzay divisions of the Cakchiquels. It was composed at the town of Tecpán, located near the Cakchiquel capital at Iximche. It contains an extremely important description of Cakchiquel contributions to the military conquests of the Quiché kings Kucumatz and Quik'ab. The first section of the document, which deals with prehispanic subjects, includes a great deal of dialogue which Carmack believes may indicate derivation from a native codex (Carmack 1973:51). The later section contains no dialogue, and has several intrusive Spanish words. Those chiasms that I was able to find in the text belong to the initial section. It was written in collaboration with important Cakchiquel lords and may well have been based in part on an official native historical record. I have used Recino's Spanish translation, and included an English transliteration based on the original Cakchiquel text:

1. "Yn ahauh,
 a xi tinamit Cohaa ti be ka kazah ti vaho;
 ha xi ru bakil ru tta tan qoh chila Cohaa.
Tan oquinak ru vinak cac,
ru vi tak ru kaxak an.
Tan qa cha. Mani ru holom
tan oquinak kich bak ru colbal.
Quereqa ti be nu molo vi, x-u bakil nu tta
ti vaho,"
 x-chaa ahauh chique qeche vinak.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 140)

"Yo soy el rey.
Id a conquistar la ciudad de Cohá.
Los huesos de mi padre están allí en Cohá.
Entrad y recoged
su calavera.¹⁸
La calavera,
 cuando la recojáis, no revoláis los huesos.
Juntaos y traed los huesos de mi padre,
 id."¹⁹
 Esto les dijo el rey a los quichés.
 (Recinos, Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala, p. 141)

"I am the king.
 Go and conquer the town of Cohá.
The bones of my father are there in Cohá.
Enter and collect
his skull.
His head,
 when you collect it, don't leave it without the bones.
 Gather together and bring the bones of my father,
 go."
 This the king said to the Quichés.

C. Relación Tzutuhil (Relation of the Caciques and Principals from the Village of Atitlán):

This document was composed in 1571 by seven Tzutujil Indians from the town of Atitlán, led by Don Francisco de Ribera. It was intended as a petition to be sent to the Spanish court to obtain certain privileges based on their royal Tzutujil ancestry. It is unknown whether there was an original document written in Tzutujil, the only copy of the text known being in Spanish. The early portions of the text dealing with ancient Tzutujil political organization, may have been based in part on prehispanic codices. It is known that in

1563, three of the authors of this document presented two pictorial codices as evidence in a dispute at Atitlán, indicating that such ancient texts were available to them (Carmack 1973:54). The remainder of the text however seems to be based on the personal knowledge of the authors. Spanish influence is evident in the claim that the Tzutujil had been of great service to the Christian religious and political leaders since the time of the Conquest.

I was only able to find one rather simple chiasm in the text, that being the introductory sentence. The following selection comes from the Spanish version published in 1952 (Anonymous 1952:435-438). I have included a literal English translation of the passage for convenience:

1. damos a V. M. relación de nuestros pasados,
de los Señores que fueron y los que somos sus hijos,
y quienes fueron antes que los Españoles viniesen a esta tierra a la conquista:

damos relación de los nombres de nuestros pasados
 (Francisco de Ribera et al, Relación de los caciques y principales del pueblo de Atitlán, p. 435)

we give to V. M. a relation of our ancestors,
of the lords who once were, and of which we are their sons,
and who once were before the Spanish came to this land to conquer it:

we give a relation of the names of our ancestors

The following is a brief list of those non-Quiché highland Maya texts which do not have chiasms:

A. Título Xpantzay I (History of the Xpantzay of Tecpán Guatemala):

Like the Título Xpantzay II, already described, this title was written in the 1550's by Cakchiquel lords from Tecpán, a town located near the capital at Iximche. It purports to have been written in 1524, although this date is spurious (Carmack 1973:50-51). It is considered to be of lesser importance than the Xpantzay II document

since it does not contain significant pre-Conquest material. There is no evidence that the document is based on a prehispanic codex and there are no passages of dialogue. The authors specifically state that the source of their information was oral tradition passed from father to son (Recinos 195:152-3). It is basically a land claim, based on pre-Columbian conquest as well as collaboration with the Spaniards. The authors claim to be descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to have lived anciently in the land of Canaan (Recinos 1957:120). They also claim to have been present at the construction of the Tower of Babel, and to have arrived in the New World following the confusion of tongues (Recinos 1957:120-2). The account also includes a history of their Christian baptism and religious indoctrination by the Spanish missionaries (Recinos 1957:124). I have based my analysis on the Cakchiquel version of the text included by Recinos in his Crónicas Indígenas de Guatemala (Recinos 1957:120-129).

B. Título Xpantzay III (Testament of the Xpantzay):

This title was composed in 1554 by Alonso Pérez, a direct descendant of the ruling line of the Xpantzay Cakchiquels. It contains a history of the Xpantzay lineage including their migrations into the area northeast of Lake Atitlán. Spanish words appear in the body of the text, but only in sections dealing with post-Conquest subjects. It was originally written to prove the Xpantzay right to rule based on lineage. It is basically local in interest and there is no evidence that it was based on pre-Columbian sources. There are no passages of dialogue, other than a quote by the Catholic Bishop authorizing Alonso Pérez to rule (Recinos 1957:165). I have based my analysis on the Cakchiquel text included by Recinos in his Crónicas

Indígenas de Guatemala.

C. Título Chajoma (Title of the Village of San Martín Xilotepeque):

This document was written in 1555 by leaders of the Chajoma branch of the Cakchiquels residing in San Martín Xilotepeque. Although composed originally in Cakchiquel, only a Spanish version of it made in 1689 has survived. It consists of a land title based to some extent on pre-Columbian history. The majority of the text consists of a list of rulers, ethnic groups and boundary markers which would have been well known to Chajoma leaders at the time. The authors state that it is based on those things which they "remember", rather than a written source (Crespo 1956:14). I have based my analysis on the copy of the Spanish text included by Mario Crespo in his Títulos Indígenas de Tierras (Crespo 1956:13-15).

D. Testament Ajpopolajay:

This brief document was composed in 1569 by Gerónimo Mendoza of the Ajpopolajay branch of the Tzutujil. The text is given in the name of the Christian trinity and European intrusive material is common. It consists of a testament and land title. Although it may have originally been written in Tzutujil, only the Spanish version has survived. It is devoid of the historical information found in most land titles of the period. This family was a minor branch of the Tzutujil, and the text consists mostly of a list of houses and small plots of land pertaining to the group. There is no evidence that it was based in any way on written sources, and no passages of dialogue are included. I have based my analysis of the text on the Spanish version included by Carmack in his Quichean Civilization (Carmack 1973:373-4).

E. Título Mam:

This title was written in 1583 by Mam Indians from San Juan Ostuncalco and Concepción Chiquirichiapa. It was written as evidence in a land dispute with the Quichés of nearby Quetzaltenango. It is the only known early Mam document. Although there are brief references to pre-Columbian material, there is little evidence that written codices were utilized in the composition of the document. The bulk of the text deals with post-Conquest events witnessed by the authors themselves. European intrusive influences are evident throughout the document, including an appeal to Spanish officials for legal support. There are no passages of dialogue in the text. I have based my analysis of the document on the Spanish version included in Crespo's Títulos Indígenas de Tierras (Crespo 1956:10-12).

III. LOWLAND MAYA TEXTS:

This final section analyzes those post-Conquest documents composed by the lowland Maya, who lived for the most part in the Yucatan Peninsula:

A. Chilam Balam of Chumayel:

The Chilam Balam texts comprise the most important body of native lowland Maya literature available for study. Like the highland Maya texts already discussed, the books of Chilam Balam were written in native Maya using European letters. Many were originally composed during the early post-Conquest period, presumably as transcriptions of older hieroglyphic manuscripts (Roys 1967:3). While the ancient pre-Columbian codices were destroyed, the transcribed Chilam Balam texts survived the centuries. The major Chilam Books, including the Chumayel text, were given their final form around 1824-1837 (Edmonson 1983:xii). Each contains a wealth of ethnographic material, including ancient prophecies, fragments of pre-Columbian historical annals, rituals, accounts of the creation, native almanacs, and medical treatises. Over time, European intrusive material accumulated in these writings, such as Maya translations of Christian religious tracts, astrological studies, notes on post-Conquest events, and even portions of a Spanish romance tale (Roys 1967:4).

The Chilam Balam texts were all named after a famous native prophet, Balam, who lived during the final decades of the fifteenth century and probably into the early sixteenth century. He had predicted that bearded strangers from the East would come to establish a new religion (Roys 1967:186). The arrival of

Christianity and the Spaniards was seen as the literal fulfilment of this prophecy. As a result, his reputation as the greatest of seers was greatly enhanced and his name became associated with prophecy itself.

Many towns in the Yucatan Peninsula kept their own compilations of Chilam Balam texts. Each contains remarkably similar material, perhaps indicating a common source (Craine and Reindorp 1979:xvi). Those that have survived carry the name of the town in which they were composed to distinguish them from one another. The manuscript of the Chilam Balam of Chumayel dates from the year 1782, when it was transcribed from an older copy by Don Juan Josef Hoil (Roys 1967:7). Its language suggests a composition date in the seventeenth century, although many passages show archaisms which suggest a much earlier date. Compared to other Chilam Balam compilations, there are few examples of European intrusive material in the text.

I was not able to find chiasms in any of the sections dealing with intrusive European material, while passages based on ancient pre-Columbian history and prophecy were comparatively rich in chiasmus. The following examples are taken from the English translation by Ralph Roys:

1. u chun u ui<ni>cil Ah Canule.

Ix zac <uaxim, ix>culun <cha>cah yixmehen pa<zel >
<ek> u pazel y<axum>,
u chu<n> u uinicil <Cauiche>.

(Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 15)

The first man of the Canul family.

The white guaje, the ixculun <and> the gumbo-limbo are his hut
<.....>

The logwood tree²⁰ is the hut of Yaxum,
the first of the men of the Cauich family.

(Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 63)

2. U kaba cah macalob
y u kaba cheenob,
 ca utzac yoheltabal tux manob tan u ximbalticob yilaob ua utz
lay peten, ua u nahma cahtalob uai lae.
Tzol peten u kaba tu thanob ca yumil ti D<io>s.
Lay tzol peten.
 Lay zihez yokolcab tulacal. Laix tzol xan. Heob lae, kabanzah
peten u cahob,
kabanzah cheen u cahob,
kabanzah cacab u cahob.
 (Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 17)

These are the names of whatever towns there were
 and the names of the wells,
 in order that it may be known where they passed in their march
 to see whether this district was good, whether it was suitable
 for settlement here.
 They set in order the names of the district according to the
 command of our Lord God.
 He it was who set the district in order.²¹ He created
 everything on earth. He set it in order also.
 But these were the people who named the district,
 who named the wells,
 who named the villages,
 (Roys, The Book of the Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 72)

3. Ca xicob ti yotoch, catun alabac tiob:
 "He ix ca bin talac ex,
 a uilben exe tu kak chumuc kin uale.
Caput pal ex, huk a cah ex;
ca bin uluc ex
 ti yan a ual pek ta pach exe.
 He ix a ual pek ex loe: u nachma u pixan ca cilich
 colel, ca bin uluc ech yetel."
 He ix caput palil tic
 yalabal tie kak chumuc kin.
Ca bin xic u cum tanma u booy, lay licil yalabal hukil u binel.
Ca bin kuchuc
yicnal halach uinice.
 (Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 26)

Let them go to his house and then they shall be told:
 "When you come,
 you shall be visible at midday.
You shall be children again, you shall creep <again>.
When you arrive
your little dog shall be just behind you.
This little dog of yours carries with its teeth the soul
 of our holy mistress.
When you come with it."
 This is what the second childhood mentioned
 at midday is.²²
He shall go where he casts a shadow, this is what is called
 creeping. Then he shall come
to the house of the head chief.
 (Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 90)

4. This last selection from the Chumayel text is a fascinating deviation from the expected. It was written by an anonymous Maya Indian in 1838, long after the Spanish Conquest. It records a minor business transaction with a Catholic priest, namely the purchase of the Chumayel manuscript. It also includes Spanish words and a Christian date. Although simple and inelegant, it is significant that the device was still known and practiced more than three hundred years after the Conquest:

He u kinil uchi*<i>n* manic lae libro: 1 de Julio de 1838.

He u toholma ti tene hun ppel peso ichil otzilil.

He toholma ti yum padre: peso.

Lay u habil uchi manic lae.

(Roys, the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, pp. 52-3)

This is the day on which I purchased the book: July 1, 1838.

It cost me one peso in <my> poverty.

This was the price <I paid> to the Señor Padre: <one> peso.

This is the year of the purchase.

(Roys, The Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel, p. 145)

B. The Chilam Balam of Tizimin:

The Chilam Balam of Tizimin is very similar to the Chumayel text just mentioned, indicating that much of it may have been derived from a common source. Of the twelve surviving Chilam Balam books, the Tizimin is the most historical. The material contained in the Chilam Balam of Tizimin was collected by Manuel Luciano Pérez, the parish priest of Tizimin. He sent the book to the bishop in Mérida in 1870 along with a note saying that the book had been in his possession for many years (Edmonson 1982:xi). Those sections composed prior to the sixteenth century rarely include Spanish words, whereas those written subsequent to the Conquest have relatively frequent Spanish intrusive words. I have taken the following selected chiasms from the recent English translation by Munro Edmonson:

1. U mumul chitic
u tzotz haa,
u ppuyul
u xelal yala uah,
yala u tzotz,
Bin u mumul chit e

Of the piling up and filling
of tots of water,
of fragments

and crumbs of food,
of remaining tots,
which will all be piled up and filled
 (Edmonson, The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, lines 2370-2376)

2. Ti Ah oxil Kan t u hun te Pop,
u kax cuch katun
he x y ahaulil cabob
kaxan u u ich
ti ualac y ahaulil.
Ma mac bin thanic u baxal katun
t u kinil oxil kan.

That was third Kan on the first of Pop,
 the tying of the burden of the katun
 that was also the lordship of the lands.
 Tied was the face
 of him who was to return the lordship.
 No one will tell of the beating of the katun
 at the time of third Kan,

(Edmonson, The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, lines 2543-2552)

3. U koch bal cah
ti y ulel Hun Pic ti Ax
ti y emel Can Ul
ti chibal i
uuc ppel hab u chibal
Can Ul
uuc ppel hab u chibal Hun Pic ti Ax i
ti tal i y emel u koch chakan i

The taxation of the world.

That will be the coming of Hun Pic from Ax;
That will be the descent of Can Ul
by succession.

Seven years will be the succession
of Can Ul;

Seven years will be the succession of Hun Pic from Ax.

Then came the descent of the tax on fields
 (Edmonson, The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, lines 3902-3909)

4. Cab Coh i
 y etel Ch'amac i.
 Elom y ac tunil.
 Manan tun Ch'amac;
 Manan tun Cab Coh.

of the Earth Lion
 and the Fox.

Burned are the springs.

There are then no Foxes.

There are then no Earth Lions.

(Edmonson, The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, lines 4237-4242)

5. U netzil kuk yaxum
 ti ual y anom u u ich
 ti ual y anom bolon te uitz
 u netzil uil kuk yaxum

Is the abasing of the quetzal and blue bird,

which is the return of his previous face,

which is the return of the previous ninth hill,

The abasing of the sight of the quetzal and blue bird.

(Edmonson, The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin, lines 5207-5212)

C. The Hymns of Dzitbalche:

The hymns of Dzitbalche are a collection of fifteen ancient songs, together with a preface, discovered in Mérida about 1942. It is the only known example of this type of lowland Maya literature to have survived. The preface to the work says that it is "The Book of Dances that the ancients traditionally performed in the towns [of Yucatan] prior to the arrival of the whites" (Barrera Vásquez 1965:22). The hymns may therefore be based on authentic pre-Columbian songs. The book containing these hymns was of great antiquity and in poor condition. The orthography of the document points to the eighteenth century as its date of transcription (Barrera Vásquez 1965:22). According to the text, the songs were compiled by Ah Bam in 1440. This date is probably erroneous, 1740 being a more likely candidate (Barrera Vásquez 1965:22-23). Although compiled long after the Conquest, the hymns are wholly indigenous in nature and devoid of Spanish words. There are numerous references to ancient Maya gods, human sacrifice, and other pre-Columbian cultural

details. Being hymns sung during native dances, the entire text may be considered a form of dialogue, much like the native dance-dramas of Rabinal, Guatemala.

1. DA A VOL TVCVLNEN CHEN TI A VYMIL
MAA A CH[A] ZA[HAC]IL MAA LOOB CVN [BET]BIL TECHIL CIICHPAN X
 CHVPALAL LAKINT CEECH TAA ZUTUCIL A TAL A V[...]
 TAM BIN MAA CHIIC ZAHCIL
DA A VOL TII BAALX CVN MANTECH.

Date ánimo y piensa solamente en tu Padre;

no tomes miedo; no es malo lo que se te hará. Bellas mozas te acompañan en tu paseo de pueblo en pueblo[...]

No tomes miedo;

pon tu ánimo en lo que va a sucederte.

(Barrera Vásquez, Cantares de Dzitbalche, Cantar 1, lines 27-36, p. 26)

Take heart and think only in your Father;

fear not; evil will not happen to you. Beautiful maidens shall accompany you in your journey from town to town[...]

Fear not;

take heart in that which will happen to you.

2. INAN X CIICHPAN ZAZILIL T YIICH H'VNAAB KV
 V TIAL V PALIL VAY YOK[OL] CAB TUMEN
TI LEI KIN KINOOBAA
TUM PPIZIL V KEBAN YOKOL CAB
TV LACAL VINIC XIIB YETEL X CHVVP CHI [CH]AN YETEL NOHOCH
 OTZIL YETEL H'NVM AH'HAVCAN ACVLEL BATAB NACON CHACOOB
 CHUMTHANOOB TVPILOOB
TVLACAL VINIC HEL
 LAE CV PPIZIL V KE BAN
TIAIL LAIL KIN TVMEN BIN KVV CHOC V KINIL LAI TIEL KINA
 V DOOC YOKOL CAB TVM [E]M TV BIZIC V XOC XOCIL TV LACVL V K
 KEBAN VINCOOB V VAY T LVME TVMEN
 TI V DIC HVN[AAB KU] PPEEL X NVC HOMA

No hay ya la bella luz de los ojos de Hunabku
 para sus hijos terrenales

porque durante estos días

se miden los pecados en la tierra

a todos los hombres: varones y mujeres, pequeños y adultos, pobres y ricos, sabios e ignorantes; Ahuacanes, Ah Kuleles, Batabes, Nacomes, Chaques, Chunthanes, Tupiles.

A todos los hombres

se les miden sus pecados

en estos días; porque llegará el tiempo en que estos días
 será el fin del mundo. Por esto se lleva la cuenta de todos los pecados de los hombres aquí sobre la tierra.

Los pone Hunabku en un grande vaso...

(Barrera Vásquez, Cantares de Dzitbalche, Cantar 3, lines 12-39, p. 34)

There does not exist now the beautiful light from the eyes of Hunabku

for the children of the face of the earth,
because in these days

are measured the sins of the earth

upon all men: male and female, children and adults, poor and rich, wise and foolish; Ahuacans, Ah Kulels, Batabs, Nacoms, Chacs, Chunthans, Tupils.

Upon all men

are measured their sins

in these days; because there will come the time in these days
that the end of the earth will be. For this carries the count
of all the sins of men here upon the face of the earth.
These are placed by Hunabku in a great vessel

The following native lowland Maya texts do not appear to contain chiasms:

A. Relación de Gaspar Antonio Chi:

This fascinating document was written in 1582 by Gaspar Antonio Chi, a Yucatec Maya who often served as an interpreter for the Spanish. It consists of a description of the Maya of Yucatan, including their history, culture, and laws. The document was written by order of Don Guillen de las Casas, Military Governor of Yucatan. It contains a brief history of the city of Mayapán before the Conquest, but the majority of the text is devoted to a description of contemporary Maya society. It was composed in Spanish and does not appear to have been based on native Maya codices. I have based my analysis on the English translation of the manuscript made by Ralph Roys and published as Appendix C in Tozzer's translation of the Relación de las Cosas de Yucatán (Tozzer, 1941:230-232).

B. Crónica de Chac-Xulub-Chen:

This unique document was written in Yucatec Maya by Ah Nakuk Pech, the lord of Chac-Xulub-Chen at the time of the Conquest. The

purpose of the chronicle is to describe the history of his domain from the first arrival of the Spaniards in 1511 down to the year 1553. The style of the text is reminiscent of pre-Columbian codices, each historical detail being set down along with a notation of the year in which it happened. Early events were recorded using pre-Columbian calendrical dates. It was composed under the influence of the Spanish clergy, who taught him to write with the European script. Pech was baptized a Christian and repeatedly refers to his faith and diligence in building a church (Yañez 1939:214-5). There are no references to pre-Columbian history or culture which might have been based on an ancient written source, and there are no passages of dialogue.

C. Letter in Maya to the King, 1567:

I have included a description of this document for comparative purposes only. It purports to have been written by five native Maya lords in February of 1567 in support of the Franciscan friars in Yucatan. It has since been proven to be a forgery, one of a number of such letters written in the Maya language by the Franciscans themselves and sent to King Philip II of Spain to counter accusations made against them that they were mistreating the Indians. As would be expected, it is laden with allusions to Christianity and the Spanish crown. There are no chiasms evident in the text. Later in the same year, Francisco de Mantejo Xiu, the Maya governor of Mani wrote a letter to the Spanish king complaining of cruelty on the part of the Franciscans and contradicted those reports sent by them that the natives were being treated fairly. This letter also contains no evidence of chiasmus. A facsimile of the Maya forgery along with English translations of both the forgery and the letter of Don

Francisco of Mani appear as appendices to Gates' translation of Landa
(Gates 1937:114-117).

Texts w/o Chiasms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
T. Nijaib I	X	X	X				X	X				
T. Nijaib IV	X	X					X	X				
T. Zapotitlán		X					(X)	X	X		X	
T. Santa Clara		X	X	X	X	X		X				
T. Paxtoca	X	(X)										
T. Retalulew	X	(X)		X	X	X		X				
T. Chauchituj		(X)		X				X				
T. Chacatz-Tojin		(X)		X								
T. Uchabaja		X	X					X				
T. Catalina Nijay												
1722 Calendar		X	X						X	X	X	
1865 Calendar		X	X						X		X	
B. Charamiyesh		X	X									
1979 Prayer		X	X									X
T. Xpantzay I	X	X	X								X	
T. Xpantzay III	X	X	X					X				
T. Chajoma	X	X						X				
T. Ajpopolajay	X	(X)						X				
T. Mam		X	X									
Rel. Gaspar Chi								X				
Chac-Xulub-Chen	X	X	X					X	X		X	

CONCLUSION:

The various major branches of the Maya Indians utilized chiasmus as a poetic device in their writings soon after the Spanish Conquest. A number of documents have survived from this period which were written in native Maya languages utilizing the European script taught to them by Franciscan monks. Although chiasms are abundant in some of these texts, they are relatively rare or absent in others. Thirty-seven native Maya documents were evaluated for the presence of chiasmus. Those texts which contained chiasms were compared, based on a number of criteria, to determine how they differed from other Maya writings which do not use the device.

The most important characteristic of those texts which contain chiasms seems to be the presence of dialogue. With only one exception, all of those texts which utilized chiasmus also included passages of dialogue. Frequently the dialogue was itself arranged as a chiasm. The single exception to this rule, the Relación Tzutujil,

contains only one minor example of chiasmus as part of its introductory paragraph. For the most part, those texts which make more frequent use of dialogue-- the Popol Vuh, the Título C'oyoi, the Rabinal Achi, the Annals of the Cakchiquels, and the Chilam Balam texts-- are also those richest in chiasms. With only one exception, those texts which do not contain chiasms also do not contain passages of dialogue. The exception is the Baile Charamiyesh, a modern Quiché dance-drama. Carmack believes that the use of dialogue in post-Conquest Maya texts may indicate derivation from ancient hieroglyphic codices (Carmack 1973:40, 51). Such dependence on pre-Columbian sources seems to also be a major characteristic of texts which contain chiasmus.

Those early Maya documents which contain chiasms characteristically include significant details about pre-Columbian history and/or religion. The Popol Vuh, the Title of the Lords of Totonicapán, the Rabinal Achi and the Annals of the Cakchiquels all contain extensive sections on ancient religious practices, including human sacrifice, the worship of idols, polytheism, etc. Such subjects would have been offensive to the Spanish conquerors, therefore these writings were probably not meant to be read by them. In contrast, of the many documents which do not contain chiasms, only the Título Zapotitlán and the Relación de Gaspar Antonio Chi include descriptions of pre-Columbian religion. Both of these texts were written at the request of late-Colonial Spanish authorities who wished to include a description of ancient native society in their dispatches to the Spanish throne. The fact that the authors were writing these descriptions of pre-Columbian religion for a Spanish audience tended to influence their choice of subject matter. Human sacrifice, idolatry, and other aspects of pagan worship which might

have offended the Christian authorities were scarcely mentioned. Gaspar Antonio Chi even denied that his people ever indulged in human sacrifice or cannibalism (Tozzer 1941:231).

Another major characteristic of many early Maya writings which contain chiasms is their authorship by members of the ruling native dynasty. Anciently, the Maya royal families kept hieroglyphic religious and historical texts at hand for consultation (Goetz and Morley 1950:225). The authors of the *Relación Tzutujil* were rulers of the Tzutujil Maya who are known to have possessed pre-Columbian codices. The authors of the *Popol Vuh*, the *Títulos Nijaib II and III*, and the *Annals of the Cakchiquels* were all members of their respective ruling dynasties. As outlined earlier in this paper, hieroglyphic codices are known to have existed for many years after the Conquest in the possession of descendants of the native lords. They would also have been familiar with the poetic style of these ancient texts and would be expected to use it in their own writings. Only two of the texts which did not contain chiasms were written by members of ruling dynasties, the *Título Santa Clara* and the *Título Retalulew*. Neither of these documents contain passages of "official" pre-Columbian historical or religious material and deal with purely local matters at provincial settlements.

Although not written directly by members of the royal family, several other texts containing chiasms were composed at ancient native capital cities where "official" documents or representatives of the ruling dynasty were available for consultation. The *Título C'oyoi*, the Title of the Lords of Totonicapán, and the *Título Xpantzay II* are known to have been written under the direction of the royal family at their respective capitals. Only two documents that do not contain chiasmus were written by provincial lords at capital

cities, the Título Chauchituj and the Título Chacatz-Tojin. In both cases, the documents were written late in the Colonial period by aged men who were brought to the Quiché capital specifically to relate information based on their own recollection of ancient events. There is no evidence that they relied on pre-Columbian documents.

For the most part, native Maya texts containing chiasms display relatively few intrusive Spanish words. The only exceptions to this rule are the Título Nijaib II, the Relación Tzutujil, and the Rabinal dance-dramas. In the first two cases, I was only able to find a single chiasm apiece, that being the introductory paragraph. With respect to the Rabinal dance-dramas, such as the Baile Patzcá and the Baile Cortés, the presence of Spanish intrusive material may be explained by the early Colonial practice of Christianizing essentially pagan dances. In contrast, the texts which did not contain chiasms were relatively rich in Spanish words. The single exception to this rule is the late Quiché calendar written in 1722.

Documents containing chiasms also tend to be relatively free of intrusive Christian or European cultural material. Exceptions to this rule include the Título Tamub, the Title of the Lords of Totonicapán, the Relación Tzutujil, and the Chilam Balam texts. In each case, chiasms do not appear in those sections displaying Biblical or Spanish influences.

None of the highland Maya documents known to have been composed after 1580 included passages of chiasmus. Several of these late Colonial texts might otherwise be expected to contain ancient poetic forms since they include significant sections on pre-Columbian history and culture, such as the Título Zapotitlán, the Título Santa Clara, the Título Chauchituj, the Título Uchabaja, and the Título Mam. By 1580, however, those who possessed ancient codices and were

familiar with their contents, were for the most part gone. We have already mentioned early in this paper that extraordinary efforts were being made by the Franciscan monks to eliminate knowledge of the native hieroglyphic script and those texts which were written prior to the Conquest. Perhaps by this time the old poetic literary forms were already forgotten or had fallen into disuse.

Because of my lack of knowledge of other native American languages, I have limited this study to those early post-Conquest texts written by representatives of the various Maya linguistic groups. It would be significant if chiasms were also evident in the early writings of other native literate societies in Mexico. I believe that this would be a fruitful area for future research.

FOOTNOTES

¹Edmonson: "All by itself the sea lay dammed." The original wording of the Quiché text was altered by Edmonson, presumably for clarity.

²Edmonson: "There was nothing whatever silenced, or at rest." This is an error in translation which implies that there was activity prior to the creation. This interpretation is contradicted by the remainder of the passage.

³Edmonson: "There in the obscurity." The Quiché noun "q'eq'umal" refers to "blackness" or "darkness." This more literal definition fits well into the context of the passage, where it parallels the term "'aqabal" ("nighttime").

⁴Following the reference to Heart of Heaven, the text explains the composite nature of this god as three beings. The parallel reference to Heart of Heaven at the end of this passage does not include this explanatory passage.

⁵Edmonson: "And once they had created." The Quiché text uses the passive form of the verb and there is therefore no indication that a plural pronoun is indicated.

⁶Edmonson: "the paths of the waters were unravelled." The verb root "ch'oboj" (to divide), is identical in both parallel passages and I have therefore used the same English equivalent verb.

⁷Lines 183-188 explain that Heart of Heaven is the composite name of the trio of deities named in the previous line: "Through him who is the Heart of Heaven, I Leg by name. I Leg Lightning is the first, and the second is Dwarf Lightning. Third then is Green Lightning, so that the three of them are the Heart of Heaven." "Heart of Heaven" in line 353 therefore parallels lines 350-352 which immediately precede it.

⁸Edmonson: "To each other." To avoid the repetitious phrase "they said," Edmonson did not include it in his English translation, although it is present in the Quiché original.

⁹Edmonson: "They do not succeed in pronouncing our names." The intransitive verb root "utzinik" (to organize, or arrange), is used in both parallel passages. I have therefore translated them with the same English verb, "arrange."

¹⁰Lines 503-504 explain that these names are synonymous with Xpiacoc and Xmucane.

¹¹The name of the "Woman with Grandchildren" in line 31 is Xmucane, which appears in line 34. The name of the "Man with Grandchildren" in line 32 is Xpiacoc, which appears in line 33. The descriptions and names of this couple thus appear in a chiasmatic arrangement. Edmonson, who believes that the Popol Vuh is arranged as parallelistic couplets was confused by the order of the names Xpiacoc and Xmucane: "It is odd that this

frequent couplet places the male first, the reverse of the usual Quiché order; indeed, if the reconstructed forms are correct, they would make better sense reversed" (Edmonson 1971:p. 5, note 35).

¹¹Carmack: "in truth we arrived not far from Xela(ju)". I have followed the construction of the original Quiché text which is arranged as a chiasm.

¹²This is a list of captive peoples, thus paralleling the previous passage.

¹³Carmack: "we the C'oyoi Sakorowäch, remained at our center of stone structures at Baca." Carmack placed the passage concerning Baca at this point in his translation. While this would parallel the reference to Baca earlier in the chiasm, in this case the parallelism is erroneous. In the original Quiché version the phrase "remained at our center of stone structures at Baca belongs just before "our grandfathers and fathers." It is interesting, however, that the translator perhaps unconsciously arranged the phrase to more perfectly fit the overall chiasm.

¹⁴Cardoza y Aragón: "Entonces Los de Ux, los de Pokomam, Te respondieron:" I have followed more closely the grammatical construction of the original Quiché text.

¹⁵Brinton: "but I have not passed." The verb root "iqo" (to enter), is identical in the parallel passages and I have therefore translated them as such.

¹⁶The Brinton translation placed "it was said" incorrectly after "because of the cinders" to more smoothly render the passage in English. I have followed the construction of the original Cakchiquel text.

¹⁷Brinton: "there is the place for your bucklers." The translator mistakenly left out "bows" from this sentence.

¹⁸Recinos: "Cuando recojáis la calavera no revolváis los huesos." This translation does not follow the original Quiché construction.

¹⁹Recinos does not include this parallel phrase in his translation although it is present in the Quiché original.

²⁰In both this and the parallel passages, the wood of trees is mentioned which are used to construct the "pazel", or temporary shelter.

²¹Roys: "He it was who set the land in order." The identical Maya word "peten" (district) is used in both parallel passages although Roys translates them differently, perhaps to avoid repetition.

²²Roys: "This is what the second childhood at midday is, which is mentioned to him." The original Maya text follows the construction as seen in the chiasm.

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