THE STRUCTURE OF THE CIVIL HIERARCHY IN TEKANTO, YUCATAN: 1785-1820

Philip C. THOMPSON
New Orleans, Louisiana

The contemporary *municipios* of Yucatan do not contain the 'Indian' governments, often called 'civil-religious hierarchies', typical of their Chiapan and Guatemalan counterparts. Indian governments, known as *cabildos* or *repúblicas de indígenas*, were abolished by the Yucatecan government in 1868¹ and failed to reappear with the re-establishment of the *municipio libre* under the Constitution of 1917. Before 1868, however, and particularly before Independence, the Indian *cabildo* was the primary institution of government in rural Yucatan.

By necessity our knowledge of the organization and operation of these Indian *cabildos* has had to be reconstructed from documentary sources. These are of two types: (1) instructions regarding the correct administration of the *cabildo*² and (2) actual *cabildo* records. Of the two, the *cabildo* records have provided the greatest detail about long-term trends and internal workings. The most informative of these are the *cabildo* documents from Ebtun, translated and interpreted by Ralph Roys (1939), the foremost ethnohistorian of the Yucatec Maya. Dating from the sixteenth through the nineteenth

¹ Ancona, Eligio, *Colección de leyes, decretos y órdenes*, vol. III, p. 301. Decreto del 12 de Septiembre; Suprime las llamadas "Repúblicas de Indígenas".

² (a) *Ordenanzas* de Tomás López Medel (1552) in Diego Lopez de Cogolludo, *Los Tres Siglos de la Dominación Española en Yucatán*, Libro 5, Capítulo XVI, Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz-Austria, 1971, pp. 390-405.

(b) *Ordenanzas* de Luis Céspedes de Oviedo (1567), AGI, México, Leg. 359.

(c) *Ordenanzas* de Doctor Palacios (1584), AGI, Ind. Gen., Leg. 2987.

centuries, and written in Yucatec Maya, these documents include the legal record of a persistent land dispute between Ebtun and adjacent towns, various wills and bills of sale and a variety of miscellaneous items such as proclamations, edicts and tax notices. Roys presents a transcription and translation of the entire series and in his 'Introduction' analyzes their content and places them within the wider historical context.

Of particular importance for the present paper is the fact that all such documents were signed by the senior members of the Indian *cabildo*, thus providing a means of identifying the hierarchy of offices and a record of the individual office-holders for each year that a document exists. Unfortunately, among the Ebtun materials the sequence is incomplete and full of gaps. As a result, while Roys could easily identify the hierarchy of offices, he was unable to reconstruct an uninterrupted sequence of office-holder names. The list of names he presents suggests certain patterns, but it is too incomplete to draw any conclusions (1939:48-49).

Recently a similar series of *cabildo* records were rediscovered in Merida, in the *Archivo Notarial del Estado (Yucatán)*.² They come from Tekanto, a town of two to three thousand inhabitants north of Izamal, in what was the colonial *Partido* or *Subdelegación de la Costa*. Written in Yucatec Maya, they are composed almost entirely of wills and bills of sale for the period falling between 1720 and 1820, with the heaviest concentration between 1780 and 1820. For convenience I have called them the *Documentos de Tekanto*. In their form and content these documents are identical to the wills and bills of sale found in the Ebtun collection. What is different about them, and what makes them important, is that they are sufficiently concentrated to provide a continuous and uninterrupted sequence of office-holder names for the period from 1784 to 1820. From this information the careers of individuals can be traced as they move up through the hierarchy over the course of their lives. The patterns of these careers is the topic of this paper.

The Tekanto Hierarchy

The hierarchy of offices in Tekanto, reconstructed from the position and order of signatures in the *Documentos de Tekanto*, is summarized in Table One. It is essentially the same as the hierarchy

² Archivo Notarial del Estado (Yucatán), Izamal, Libros 1-4.

revealed in the Ebtun collection (Roys 1939: 43-46). The *batab*, called *cacique* or *gobernador* (governor) by the Spanish in eighteenth century Yucatan, was the highest ranked. As will be demonstrated in a later section, this office was supposed to be held for a twenty-year period. Next in rank was the *teniente de cacique* (lieutenant governor). This office was occupied infrequently and, though an individual occasionally held it for more than one year, the exact term of office remains unknown. Beneath the *teniente* were the *alcaldesob* (judges). There were usually two in Tekanto, through occasionally a third was listed. They were internally ranked (*alcalde 1º*, *alcalde 2º* and *alcalde 3º*, from the highest to the lowest) with the rank order explicitly marked by numbers or implied by the order of listing. They were 'elected' annually by the "elders" and served one-year terms. Directly beneath the *alcaldesob* were four (sometimes three) *regidoresob* (councilmen), also internally ranked (*regidor 1º*, *regidor 2º*, *regidor 3º* and *regidor 4º*, from the highest to the lowest). They, too, were 'elected' annually and served one-year term. Finally, through the *escribano* (scribe) was always listed on *cabildo* documents, he was not technically part of the hierarchy since, unlike the other members, he received a salary and apparently served as an employee of the *cabildo* for as long as its members desired his services.

Career Patterns

The patterns indicated by the movement of individuals through the ranked offices of Table One are complex. Because of the limitations of space in this format, I will present a summary of the most important features of the career patterns in the Tekanto hierarchy and the interpretations they suggest, emphasizing the lower ranked *regidoresob* and the higher ranked *batab* (for a more complete description see Thompson 1978: 257-366).

Regidoresob: Table Two lists the names of the occupants of the four *regidor* positions from 1785 through 1820. Time progresses 'down' the table. The rank order of offices moves from right to left such that the lowest ranking *regidor* is on the right and the highest ranking *regidor* is on the left. Arrows connect identical the model for the movement of public officials implied in the Uayeb four-level hierarchy. If a man served only once in the hierarchy, he is of no use in locating a pattern.

In analyzing the basic pattern of movement of individuals in Table Two I will develop a four-step argument. I will (1) describe the pattern of movement through the offices over time, (2) construct an abstract model, built on a number of carefully stated assumptions, to explain this movement, (3) present possible explanations of anomalous data and (4) conclude that the derived model matches the model for the movement of public officials implied in the Uayeb rites described by Landa (Tozzer 1941: 135-148) and analyzed by Michael Coe (1965).

On the surface there is no immediately discernible pattern to the arrows in Table Two, other than the fact that men served in progressively higher ranked offices. In other words, it was a hierarchy of sorts. But, close inspection reveals two significant patterns. First, *no individual served more than three times as regidor*, despite the existence of four *regidor* offices. The reason for this will become clear when I discuss the *alcaldesob*. Close inspection of the years between 1797 and 1806 reveals a second and even more unique pattern. For example, in 1797 Ygnacio Canche occupied the *regidor* 3^o position. Three years later he served in the next highest position, *regidor* 2^o. Exactly three years after that he occupied the highest *regidor* office, *regidor* 1^o. The same pattern holds true for others of the same time period—Juan Ake, Francisco Couoh, Pedro Chan, Bernardo Hau and Manuel Hau. The pattern is clear: *They moved up one rank every three years.*

A number of linked assumptions can be made to generalize this limited observable pattern. First, it can be assumed that individuals in the table represented a category or group of individuals. The nature of these groups remains undefined. They could have been descent groups, wards, factions or whatever. Second, it can be assumed that these groups had responsibility for, or controlled, the offices. Third, it can be assumed that, since there were four offices, there were four groups. I have labelled them *a*, *b*, *c* and *d*. Fourth, it can be further assumed that control of the four offices (*regidoresob* 1^o, 2^o, 3^o and 4^o) rotated such that, over time, no one group dominated a higher office more than another. Finally, the double assumption can be made that ideally an individual should have served in an office only when it was controlled by his group and should have moved up the hierarchy one office at a time. Given these assumptions, the relevant question becomes the following: What pattern of rotation or cycling of groups (*a*, *b*, *c* and *d*) through four offices (*regidoresob* 1^o, 2^o, 3^o and 4^o) fits the requirements laid down by

the empirical facts of Table Two? That is, what rotation results in a pattern whereby the representative of a group moves up one office every three years?

The answer to this puzzle appears in Table Three. According to this model, the groups cycle their control of the offices in a *reverse order*. That is, rather than moving *up* the hierarchy such that a group controls position 4^o, then 3^o, then 2^o, then 1^o and then back to 4^o, the groups control position 1^o, then 2^o, then 3^o, then 4^o, and then position 1^o again. Group *a* controlled *regidor* 1^o in 1794, *regidor* 2^o in 1795, *regidor* 3^o in 1796 and *regidor* 4^o in 1797. Then, in 1798, group *a* again controlled the *regidor* 1^o position. This is precisely the kind of cycling which allowed an individual to move up one office every three years. For example, as Table Three illustrates, Ygnacio Canche was *regidor* 3^o in 1797. In 1798 he was *regidor* 2^o and in 1800 he advanced to *regidor* 1^o. In each case he occupied a position controlled by group *d*.

In Table Two this pattern of office control by groups *a*, *b*, *c* and *d* has been 'mapped' over the years 1784 through 1820. As can be seen, a number of the individuals who appear more than once in the table do not always appear in an office dominated by the same group, thereby violating the assumption that an individual should always occupy an office controlled by the same (his) group. In Table Two these anomalous cases have been marked with an asterisk.

There are two general approaches to handling anomalies in the pattern. On the one hand, they can be regarded as the result of errors in recording the order of *regidores* and the occasional death of an individual *regidor* while in office. Though many of the anomalies can be plausibly accounted for in this manner (Thompson 1978: 271-278), it is more likely that most were the result of political deal-making. Once a system such as this was set up, it was probably inevitable that the players (groups, *a*, *b*, *c* and *d*) would make deals between each other based on future rewards. That is, the system was not unlike politics anywhere, though the analogy with the professional football institution of trading future 'draft choices' comes to mind. In effect, what was probably occurring was a process of 'position trading' in order to advance an individual up the hierarchy more rapidly than one position every three years.

For example, in 1807, the highest ranking *d*, Tomas Chan, had already completed his three terms in the *regidor* system. This created the possibility for a special deal. Raymundo Pot, struck a

bargain with the *d* group. In 1807 he gave his *regidor* 2^o position to Lucio Canul, a *d*, in exchange for the *regidor* 1^o position, which should have belonged to a member of group *d*.⁴ Thus, both groups had something to gain. Raymundo Pot got the more prestigious *regidor* 1^o position, one position higher than where he should have been, while Lucio Canul advanced to the *regidor* 2^o position in only one year (illegally serving on the *cabildo* for two consecutive years) when normally he would have had to wait three years just to move to the *regidor* 3^o spot. In effect, group *d* traded a *regidor* 1^o position to the *a* group in exchange for a quick advance of their man (Lucio Canul) to *regidor* 2^o.

In the same year, 1807, Tiburcio Canul, a number of group *b*, also made a deal with the *d* group. He gave his spot to Antonio Hau, who was probably a member of group *d*, in exchange for a more advanced position in 1808. This may have been a two-position deal, since Antonio Hau went on to occupy the *b* spot three years later. Moreover, the deal included Simon Bacab, whose position Tiburcio Canul took in 1808. In exchange, Simon Bacab went to the *regidor* 1^o position in 1809, a position which belonged to group *b*. Similarly, Francisco Camal, a member of group *a*, was probably using the same tactic with the *c* group. In exchange for a better position in 1809, he gave up his *regidor* 3^o spot in 1808 to Felipe Jacobo Yam (by implication a member of group *c*) and, in return, Juan Poot (a member of group *c* also) got the *regidor* 1^o position in 1810, which belonged to group *a*.

The preceding examples illustrate a line of reasoning which provide an adequate explanation of the anomalous cases based on political maneuvering among the four groups (*a*, *b*, *c* and *d*). But, there is another pattern in these anomalies which suggests a further complexity involving social class among the Indians of Tekanto. Most of the individuals who, between 1797 and 1806, followed the regular cycle described above (Ygnacio Canche, Juan Ake, Francisco Couoh, Pedro Chan and Bernardo Hau) do not appear to have been *almehenob*, or nobles, and by implication were probably *masehualob*, or commoners (Thompson 1978: 281 and 332-345). On the other hand, many of the individuals in the preceding and succeeding years are identifiable as *almehenob*. It was in the preceding and succeeding years that most of the anomalies arose. Thus, it

⁴ The original discussion of this exchange (Thompson 1978: 279, line 3) contains a typographical effort. It states, incorrectly, that position one should belong to a member of group *b*.

can be hypothesized that the pattern of cycling of four groups through four offices, as described above, was supported primarily by the *masehualob*, the commoners. The *almehenob* often worked against it, invoking their superior class position in attempts to rise more rapidly through the hierarchy. It was they who usually promoted the deals which resulted in the anomalies.

The preceding discussion have focused on the cycling of groups through offices. Conversely, it is useful to consider the cycling of offices through groups, and specifically the rotation of one office (*regidor 1*, for example) through the four groups. This can be represented in two-by-two tables as illustrated below.

8

There are six possible tables of this type, labelled A through F. For reasons which will become obvious Table A is preferable.

In Table A, the *regidor 1*^o moves through the four groups, spatially represented as four contiguous squares, in a counter clockwise direction over a four-year period. For example, if, in 1794 the *regidor 1*^o position belongs to groups *a*, then in 1795, the following year, group *d* will control it, and so on through groups *c* and *b*, returning to group *a* in 1798. In a given year the rank order of the groups (the positions they control in the hierarchy) can be read by moving 'backwards', or clockwise, from the group which controls the *regidor 1*^o spot. Thus, if group *b* holds the *regidor 1*^o position, group *c* controls *regidor 2*^o, group *d* controls *regidor 3*^o and group *a* controls *regidor 4*^o. The following year group *a* will control the *regidor 1*^o position, group *b* *regidor 2*^o, group *c* *regidor 3*^o and group *d* *regidor 4*^o.

This pattern, as I have derived it from the movement of certain individual through the hierarchy of *regidor* offices and visually

represented it in Table A, matches preconquest cycle of Uayeb rites as described by Landa (Tozzer 1941: 135-148) and analyzed by Michael Coe (1965). The basic elements of the Uayeb rites, as they relate to the pattern of *regidor* rotation are the following:

- (1) Town were divided into four subdivisions or wards.
- (2) Each town had at least four roads entering it, with shrines located at the entrances.
- (3) These roads and wards were arranged in some specific manner to the cardinal points.
- (4) Certain ritual, and probably political, power rotated in a counter clockwise direction from ward to ward.
- (5) This four-year cycle was linked directly to the four-year cycle of the year-bearers (*Kan*, *Muluc*, *Ix* and *Cauac*).
- (6) Once every four years a ward was responsible for the ceremony marking the passage from the rule of the previous year-bearer (spatially the year-bearer of the adjacent ward in a clockwise direction) to the rule of its own year-bearer.
- (7) The responsibility for the ceremony was personified in the *principal* (principal man) chosen to sponsor the ceremony, and in whose house the image and the statue were housed during the Uayeb days.
- (8) The center and the periphery of each town were identified with, and probably occupied by, elite and commoners, respectively.
- (9) The elite and the commoners apparently had responsibility over the deities associated with their respective areas. The elite controlled the gods of the temple, such as *Bolon Dz'acab*, *Kinich Ahau*, *Itzamna* and *Uac Mitun Ahau*, and the commoners controlled the gods of the periphery (field, forest and sky), such as the year-bearer image, the *bacabob* and the *chacob*.

The preceding elements make it clear that the principles underlying the Uayeb rites were probably the same as those I have reconstructed from the *regidor* rotation of the late colonial period. By implication, the system of rotation or *regidor* offices was calendrically based such that *Kan* should be substituted for *b*, *Muluc* for *a*, *Ix* for *d* and *Cauac* for *c*, in Table A. Furthermore, it would appear that the four groups rotating control of the four offices were probably four wards of the town of Tekanto, though this conclusion remains to be tested in reconstructed residence data. It is also possible, and necessarily contradictory, that they were kin-based, but this, too, awaits further testing with the Tekanto materials.

There are a number of ideas about preconquest terminology and ideology that can be developed from the previous conclusions (Thompson 1978: 299-366), the most interesting of which relates to the Mayan *tzolkin*, or 260 day ritual calendar (Satterthwaite 1965). If the *tzolkin* is mapped over the quadripartite or four-ward model, as thought it were a 'circle' of 260 degrees with right angles at 65 degrees, then the following rule holds. If the year-bearer (and, by implication, the *regidor 1º*) is 5 *Kan*, counting back 65 days/degrees (or spatially one ward counter clockwise) one lands on 5 *Cauac* (*regidor 2º*). Counting back 65 more days/degrees, one lands on 5 *Ix* (*regidor 3º*), and 65 more produces 5 *Muluc* (*regidor 4º*). Thus, rotation one quarter 'backwards' in the *tzolkin* produces the predicted year-bearer and consistently the same number. Moreover, if one counts 'foreward' (clockwise) one year, or 365 days/degrees, one lands on 6 *Muluc*, the predicted year-bearer (*regidor 1º*) and exactly one integer higher. Moving 'Backwards' 65 days/degrees produces 6 *Kan*, and so on. In short, the system appears to produce a coherent interlocking of time and space by association the quadripartite properties of the *tzolkin* with the quadripartite geography of a town.

Alcaldesob: The colonial office or *regidor* had a clear preconquest counterpart, the *ah cuch cab* (Thompson 1978: 303-323). It is not surprising, therefore, to find evidence of preconquest ideology governing their recruitment. In contrast, the colonial office of *alcalde* had no preconquest counterpart. It was a new, Spanish addition to the indigenous system of local government. Accordingly, there was no *independent* pattern to the movement of individuals through the two (sometimes three) *alcalde* offices, other than the fact that some of the *alcaldesob* served as *regidoresob* prior to becoming *alcaldesob*, a fact which corroborates the assumption that the office was higher ranked than *regidor* (Thompson 1978: 323-345).

As new offices in local government, the *alcaldesob* had to be integrated in to the system. It appears that the method of achieving this integration in Tekanto was to make service in the *alcalde* positions the fourth step in a four-step hierarchy involving both *regidoresob* and *alcaldesob*. As previously pointed out, no individual occupied all four *regidor* positions; the maximum was three. Whenever an individual went on to serve a fourth (or more) term, it was always as an *alcalde*.

Finally, the offices of *alcalde 1º* and *alcalde 2º* tended to be dominated by *almehenob*. This strongly suggest that, while the *mase-*

hualob predominant in the *regidor* offices, the higher ranked *alcalde* positions were considered the prerogative of the *almehenob*.

Teniente de cacique: Like the office of *alcalde*, the position of *teniente de cacique* or *teniente* had no preconquest counterpart and there are no Yucatec Mayan terms for it. The Spanish translation ('lieutenant governor') implies an office intended to assist the *batab*. In fact, this is the most logical interpretation of the office as it occurs in the Tekanto materials.

In the *Documentos de Tekanto* the *teniente* is listed infrequently and it probably was not a regularly filled office. On the other hand, it was occupied on occasion by the same individual for more than one consecutive year, unlike the offices of *regidor* and *alcalde*. Thus, it was not an annually 'elected' office. Nevertheless, the individual who held the office always did so after having served in lower offices and on no occasion did a former *teniente* subsequently occupy a lower ranked office, a pattern which corroborates the placement of the office above the *alcalde* and below the *batab* in the Tekanto hierarchy. Taken together, all of these bits of evidence suggest the hypothesis that the office of *teniente de cacique* was appointed by the *batab* from among the most able and experienced men of the town (Thompson 1978: 345-348).

Batab: The position of *gobernador* in the colonial *cabildo* was indisputably equated with the preconquest office of *batab* (called *cacique* by the Spanish). The continuity of this office from the preconquest period into the late colonial period was so strong that the Yucatec term, *batab*, rather than *gobernador* or *cacique* was employed in the *cabildo* records. It was the only Yucatec Mayan term for local governmental officials to survive into the eighteenth century in Tekanto.

The sequence of *batabob* for the period between 1683 and 1821 was easily reconstructed from the *Documentos de Tekanto* and a series of seventeenth century election documents,⁵ as illustrated in Table Four. In this table the known tenure in office of each *batab* is shown with a black arrow. Beneath the *batab's* name is the date of his death or any other information indicating that he lived for a time after leaving office.

When the sequence of *batabob* is placed against the European calendar arranged according to the four year cycle of year-bearers, patterns emerge for the years following 1725. First, the *batabob*

⁵ Archivo General del Estado (Yucatán), Colonial, Ayuntamiento, vol. 1, exp. 1.

entered office in *Kan* years. Second, the *año* (or perhaps the *haab*), rather than the *tun*, was probably the basic unit by which their tenure was measured. And third, the term of office was twenty *años* (or, perhaps, *haab*). Each of these conclusions will be considered in detail.

Close scrutiny of Table Four indicates that there are only six instances where the *precise* year in which the office of *batab* changed hand can be determined (1737/1738, 1744/1745, 1766/1767, 1773/1774, 1792/1793 and 1804/1805). Of these, four are known to be the result of the death of the incumbent. Don Marcos Manche died in 1738 while in office. Don Marcos Couoh died in office in 1766. Don Feliciano Canul died in office in 1773. And Don Felipe Batun died in office in 1793. In the remaining two cases, the *batabob* must have vacated the office as the result of retirement or ouster, since both were alive for some time after terminating their service. Don Lorenzo Camal left office in 1744/1745, though he lived until 1757. Don Juan Ppel left office in 1804/1805, though he survived until 1811.

These latter two successions are the only clear-cut cases in which the change was *intentional*. It is significant, therefore, that both fell on the transition from the end of one four-year cycle to the beginning of a new four-year cycle. That is, *by choice*, the succeeding *batab* was placed in office on a *Kan* year. In fact, none of the available data on the sequence of *batabob* after 1725 contradicts this pattern. After that date, all of the anomalous cases are accounted for by the death of the incumbent.

Table four strongly implies an even larger cycle, a twenty *año* cycle, as the term of office of the *batab*. The two intentional successions (1744/1745 and 1804/1805) fall exactly sixty years apart, a multiple of twenty. And the two intervening twenty-year transitions (1764/1765 and 1784/1785) appear to fit the pattern of a twenty-year term of office. In each case, preceding incumbent is known to have been living after the transition date, yet he was removed from office. Furthermore, the available information about these transitions, though incomplete, does not contradict the notion of a twenty-year term of office. In 1781 Don Martin Camal was *batab*. While it is not known for sure that he was in office through 1784, it is known that Don Felipe Batun succeeded him exactly on schedule in 1785. Furthermore, Don Martin Camal did not die until 1802, indicating that he was not removed from office by death. Likewise, Don Andrés Bacab is known to have been in office in

1759 and, while it is not certain that he remained in office until 1764, it is clear that Don Marcos Couoh was in office in 1765 on schedule, despite the fact Don Andrés was alive until at least 1769.

In summary, the twenty-year term of office can be extended back to 1725 and foreword to 1824 without conflicting with the successions, insofar as they are known. Thus, the terms of office ran as follows, 1725-1744, 1745-1764, 1765-1784, 1785-1804, 1805-1824. In only two cases was the term probably filled by only one individual: Don Andrés Bacab (1745-1764) and Don Andrés Chan (1805-1824). In all others death prematurely removed *batabob* before they could complete their twenty-year terms. The only exception was Don Diego Ppol. Though he lived until 1752, he served for only four years, from 1725 through 1728, and then was removed, despite the fact that 1728 was not the end of a twenty-year cycle. There is no apparent explanation for this anomaly.

The twenty-year pattern is quite significant. It implies that a *katun-like* (twenty unit) count was governing the succession of *batabob* in Tekanto in the eighteenth century. Once again, as with the *regidoresob*, the structure of Yucatec Mayan calendrical ideology underlay the outward form of the late colonial *cabildo*. But the pattern deviated from the traditional Mayan scheme in three significant ways, each of which represents an adaptation to Spanish concepts of time.

First, the basic unit of this twenty-year count was either the *año* or the *haab*, rather than the *tun*. If the count were in *tun*, every twenty *tun* period would have been one hundred days (5×20) shorter than twenty *haab* and one hundred and five days (five more days for five leap years in twenty years) shorter than twenty *años*. After a sixty or eighty year period, the twenty *tun* cycle would have regressed more than one year against an *año* or *haab* count. If the tenure of the *batabob* were counted in *tun*, then the length of the term of office would have regressed one year from twenty at least once in the period from 1725 to 1825. It did not. Thus, it can be concluded that the count was based either on the *año* or the *haab*. Since the *haab* count regresses only five days against the *año* count every twenty years, it is impossible from these data to determine whether it was actually the *año* or the *haab* that was being used as the basis of the term of office. The 1725 to 1825 time period is too short.

Second, the twenty-year term of office that governed the succession of *batabob* between 1725 and 1825 was synchronized with

no known *katun* round for the period. For example, 1697 and 1717 probably marked *katun* boundaries (Morley 1946: 448). Assuming that sometime during this period the count switched from *tun* to *años* or *haab*, subsequent twenty-year boundaries would have fallen on or near 1737, 1757, 1777, 1797 and 1817. Table Four indicates that they did not.

The preceeding problem is related to, and probably explained by, the third deviation from a regular *katun* pattern. Prior to 1725 the twenty-year pattern was not in operation. Extending it back from 1725, the preceeding boundaries should have occurred at 1704/1705 and 1684/1685. But, contrary to the pattern, Don Juan Dzib was in office as early as 1683 and at the 1704/1705 boundary there was no *batab*, since the office was being administered by a Spanish official from Izamal. These anomalies are difficult to explain, but I offer the following speculative solution. Like the explanation of anomalies in the *regidor* pattern, it is based on the supposition that calendrical ideology was the framework in which political disputes and competition were carried out.

Don Juan Dzib is known to have been in office for at least sixteen years, from 1683 through 1698. In 1699 no one was named *batab*. Apparently, the office was *purposefully* left vacant. Then, in 1700, 1701 and 1702 Don Antonio Caamal was seated. But inexplicably, in 1703 through at least 1707 the location in the election documents usually reserved for the signature of the *batab* was filled by a Spanish name—Capitán Don Agustín de Palensuela. There are no surviving records for the period from 1708 through 1713.

The fact that this odd sequence centers around the year 1700 strongly suggests that it should be interpreted as the result of an attempt by the Indians of Tekanto to adjust the termination of a traditional *katun* round and, by implication, the term of office of the *batab*, to the very impressive European calendrical cycle—the century. Don Juan Dzib apparently terminated his tenure in office in 1698, one year short of 1699, a termination date which would have allowed the next *katun* round, and the next *batab*, to begin in 1700. Wanting to synchronize their system with the Spanish calendar, the Indians of Tekanto probably delayed the seating of the next *katun* and *batab* for one year. Furthermore, in order for the new system to stay in harmony with the century count, such that five *katun* rounds would complete a century and a new *katun* would begin in 1800, the Indians of Tekanto probably chose this date to alter the

unit of *katun* measure from the *tun* to either the *año* or the *haab*, as previously discussed.

In 1700, Don Antonio Caamal and the new *katun* were seated. He should have served for twenty years, leaving office in 1719. However, he served for only three years and was removed, either by death or ouster. Either way, the fact that Don Agustín de Palensuela, a Spanish official from Izamal, had to step in as an interim executive implies that the succession was in dispute, a dispute sufficiently important to require the intervention of higher Spanish authority. We can hypothesize that it involved the proponents and opponents of the new system—Hispanicized liberals versus Mayan conservatives. But whatever the faction, it was of sufficient intensity to last at least two years and eventually be referred to Mérida, probably in 1704. That such a dispute occurred is implied by the existence of the election documents, for the period from 1683 through 1704, in the Archivo General del Estado (Yucatán).⁶ It would appear that they were assembled and sent to Mérida as evidence in some kind of adjudication process and eventually, once a decision was reached, they were deposited in the archive. Though isolated election documents turn up elsewhere, such as in the *Documentos de Tekanto*, this is the only surviving uninterrupted series.

Unfortunately, there are no clues in these materials to explain how the twenty-year count was shifted five years off the century count, such that it missed 1800 by five years. It can only be hypothesized that eventually the Spanish authorities made an arbitrary decision between the contesting factions, oblivious to the calendrical implications. But despite the fact that the origins of the twenty-year count of the eighteenth century remain unclear, the speculation that a calendrical reform was afoot in 1700 stands on its own, for there are additional bits of evidence. First, according to one interpretation of the traditional *katun* count, 1697 was the end of a *katun* round (Morley 1946: 448). This is within range of the 1698 and 1699 dates, assuming local variation in the calendar. Second, according to the *tzolkin* the year-bearer for 1700 was 3 *Cauac* (see Table Five). This is exactly the same year-bearer that ruled fifty-two years later when a similar calendar reform was undertaken further to the east. It, too, sought to adjust the traditional calendar to fit the European calendar such that both began a cycle in 1800 (Roys n.d.: 35-35a; see Edmonson 1976 for a discussion of a previous calendar reform).

Finally, though only one of the *batabob* of Tekanto (Don Fe-

⁶ *Ibid.*

lipe Batun) can be directly identified as an *almehen* in the *Documentos de Tekanto*, it can be reasonably assumed that they were all high ranked nobles. Furthermore, they appear to have formed an elite within the larger *almehen* elite. Those individuals who were potential *batabob* were known as such long before they assumed the office. The office of *batab* was *not* the culmination of a step-by-step career through the ranked positions of *regidor*, *alcalde* and *teniente de cacique*. If they participated at all, they bypassed the lower ranks of the *regidoresob* and entered at the *regidor 1º*, *alcalde* or *teniente* levels, for an apprenticeship prior to assuming the *batab* office. In short, the office was primarily ascribed (probably according to rules of descent) (Thompson 1978: 344 and 367-400), though it occasionally was given the appearance of having been achieved.

Don Diego Ppol, Don Marcos Canche, Don Lorenzo Camal, Don Martin Camal, Don Juan Ppol and probably Don Jacinto Canche all assumed the office of *batab* having never served as either *regidor*, *alcalde* or *teniente de cacique*. Even those *batabob* who did serve in lesser offices did so in an irregular fashion, moving quickly to the top. Among the names of the *batabob* only those of Marcos Couoh, Feliciano Canul and Pedro Chan appear among the known *regidoresob*. Among the *alcaldesob* only the names of Antonio Camal, Marcos Couoh, Andrés Bacab and Felipe Batun occur before their appearance as *batabob*. Finally, among the *tenientes* only the names of Marcos Couoh and Pedro Chan precede their occurrence as *batabob*.

Table One

Rank Order of the Major Offices
Of the *Cabildo*
Tekanto

Office	Term of Office
<i>Batab</i>	20 years
(<i>Teniente de Cacique</i>)	?
<i>Alcaldesob</i>	1 year
<i>Alcalde 1°</i>	
<i>Alcalde 2°</i>	
(<i>Alcalde 3°</i>)	
<i>Regidoresob</i>	1 year
<i>Regidor 1°</i>	
<i>Regidor 2°</i>	
<i>Regidor 3°</i>	
(<i>Regidor 4°</i>)	

Note: Parentheses indicate that the office was not always filled. The *escribano* and *maestro*, though technically part of the *cabildo* organization, are not included here because they were not part of the hierarchy of offices. Instead, they served as salaried employees.

Table Two

Regidores of Tekanto
1785-1820

1785	Atenacio Canul	b	Francisco Camal	c	Pablo Chan	d	—	Azcencio Canul	d
1786	Antonio Yx	a	Nicolás Canul	b	Calletano Ake*	c	—	Carlos Dzib*	c
1787	Felis Canul	d	Mateo Poot	a	Pedro Canul	b	—	Diego Canul	b
1788	Marcos Canul	c	Juan-Chi	a	Lucas-Hau	a	—	Marcelo Canul*	a
1789	Calletano Ake	b	Nicolás Canul*	c	Dámaso Chi*	d	—	—	d
1790	Carlos Dzib	b	Pedro Canul	a	Gregorio-Dzib	c	—	—	d
1791	Enrique Camal	d	Diego Camal	a	Pedro Pot*	b	—	—	c
1792	Marcelo Canul	c	Luis Couoh	d	Bentura Che	a	—	Pedro Pool	b
1793	Nicolas Canul	b	Dámaso Chi	c	Domingo Hau	d	—	Manuel Che*	a
1794	Manuel Canche	a	Pedro Canul	b	Pedro Canul	c	—	Diego Bacab	d
1795	Andres Bacab	d	Pablo Chan	a	Casimiro-Canche	b	—	Manuel Hau	c
1796	Luís Couoh	c	Pedro Poot	d	Felipe Couoh	a	—	Martín Chon	b
1797	Pedro Poot	b	Pedro Canul	c	Ygnacio Canche	c	—	Manuel Cruz May*	a
1798	Estevan Yam	a	Manuel Hau	b	Juan Ake	c	—	Tomás Chan	d
1799	Manuel Che	d	Bernardo Hau	a	Pedro Chan*	b	—	Joseph Che	c
1800	Manuel Cruz May*	c	Ygnacio Canches	a	Juan Ku	b	—	Luis Bacab	a
1801	Manuel Hau	b	Juan Ake	c	Tomás Chan*	d	—	Pedro Hau	a
1802	Bernardo Hau	a	Francisco Couoh	b	Joseph Che	c	—	—	d
1803	Ygnacio Canche	d	Pedro Chan	a	Juan Pat (Pot)*	b	—	Juan Camal*	c
1804	Juan Ake	c	Tomás Chan	d	Reymundo Pot*	a	—	Tiburcio Canul	b
1805	Francisco Couoh	b	Pedro Canche	c	Simón Bacab*	d	—	Francisco Camal*	a
1806	Pedro Chan	a	Juan Camal	b	Juan Pot*	c	—	Lucio Canul*	d
1807	Raymundo Pot	d	Lucio Canul	a	Antonio-Hau	b	—	Simon May	c
1808	Leonardo Dzib	c	Tiburcio-Canul*	d	Felipe Jacobo Yam	a	—	Pasqual Hau	b
1809	Simon Bacab	b	Francisco Camal	c	Manuel Canul	d	—	Jasinto Canche	a
1810	Juan Poot	a	Antonio Hau	b	Alexandro Batun	c	—	Martin Ek	d
1811	—	d	—	a	—	b	—	—	c
1812	Pedro Balam	c	Jasinto Canche*	d	Vicente Couoh	a	—	Alexandro Canche	b
1813	Tiburcio Canul	b	Marcelo Bacab	c	Pedro Couoh	d	—	Manuel Hau	a
1814*	Tiburcio Canul	a	Marcelo Bacab	c	Pedro Couoh	d	—	Manuel Hau	a
1815	Jasinto Canche	d	Ylario Chel	b	Manuel Chan*	c	—	Raymundo Ake	d
1816	Estevan Chan	a	Felipe Chulim*	d	Santiago Che	b	—	Man! Franco Canche	c
1817	Pedro Bacab	b	Pedro Couoh	c	Agustin Hau	a	—	Francisco May	b
1818	—	a	—	d	—	c	—	—	a
1819	Manuel Chan	d	Felipe Chulim	b	Man! Franco Canche	c	—	Bernardo Couoh	d
1820	Francisco Canul	a	Casimiro Bacab	a	Felis Balam	b	—	Manuel Canche	c

* News of the Constitución de Cádiz reached Yucatan in 1813. It automatically abolished the Indian governments. However, they were reinstated the following year, when the monarchy war reinstated. In Tekanto, these events resulted in the failure to elect a new *cabildo* in 1814. Thus, the 1813 *cabildo* served again in 1814.

Table Three

Movement of Four Categories
Through Four *Regidor* Offices

<i>Year</i>	<i>Regidor 1°</i>	<i>Regidor 2°</i>	<i>Regidor 3°</i>	<i>Regidor 4°</i>
1794	a	b	c	d
1795	d	a	b	c
1796	c	d	a	b
1797	b	c	d	a
1798	a	b	c	d
1799	d	a	b	c
1800	c	d	a	b
1801	b	c	d	a
1802	a	b	c	d
1803	d	a	b	c
1804	c	d	a	b
1805	b	c	d	a

NOTE: The four categories or groups ('a', 'b', 'c' and 'd') control the four *regidor* offices (*regidor 1°*, *regidor 2°*, *regidor 3°* and *regidor 4°*) according to the pattern indicated. In it, a given category controls a given office once every four years. Thus, for example, category 'a' controls the *regidor 1°* office in 1794, 1798 and 1802. But, for an individual to move up the hierarchy of ranked offices, *one office at a time*, as a representative of a category, he must wait three years. For example, category 'd' controls the *regidor 4°* office in 1794. Not until 1797 is category 'd' in control of the *regidor 3°* office so that a member of category 'd' can move up from the *regidor 4°* position. Then, to move up the next position he has to wait another three years, until 1800, when category 'd' controls the *regidor 2°* spot. Finally, he can attain the *regidor 1°* in 1803, when 'd' controls it. This pattern is exactly the one followed by Diego Bacab in 1794 and Ygnacio Canche in 1797, 1800 and 1803. The reader can check Table 5-1 and Table 5-4 to verify this.

Table Four
Succession of *Batabob*
Arranged by Year-Bearer

Batab	Year	Year-Bearer	Batab	Year	Year-Bearer
	1621	2 <i>Kan</i>		1649	4 <i>Kan</i>
	1622	3 <i>Muluc</i>		1650	5 <i>Muluc</i>
	1623	4 <i>Ix</i>		1651	6 <i>Ix</i>
	1624	5 <i>Cauac</i>		1652	7 <i>Cauac</i>
	1625	6 <i>Kan</i>		1653	8 <i>Kan</i>
	1626	7 <i>Muluc</i>		1654	9 <i>Muluc</i>
	1627	8 <i>Ix</i>		1655	10 <i>Ix</i>
	1628	9 <i>Cauac</i>		1656	11 <i>Cauac</i>
	1629	10 <i>Kan</i>		1657	12 <i>Kan</i>
	1630	11 <i>Muluc</i>		1658	13 <i>Muluc</i>
	1631	12 <i>Ix</i>		1659	1 <i>Ix</i>
	1632	13 <i>Cauac</i>		1660	2 <i>Cauac</i>
	1633	1 <i>Kan</i>		1661	3 <i>Kan</i>
	1634	2 <i>Muluc</i>		1662	4 <i>Muluc</i>
	1635	3 <i>Ix</i>		1663	5 <i>Ix</i>
	1636	4 <i>Cauac</i>		1664	6 <i>Cauac</i>
	1637	5 <i>Kan</i>		1665	7 <i>Kan</i>
	1638	6 <i>Muluc</i>		1666	8 <i>Muluc</i>
	1639	7 <i>Ix</i>		1667	9 <i>Ix</i>
	1640	8 <i>Cauac</i>		1668	10 <i>Cauac</i>
	1641	9 <i>Kan</i>		1669	11 <i>Kan</i>
	1642	10 <i>Muluc</i>	Don Andrés Balam (d.)	↓ 1670	12 <i>Muluc</i>
	1643	11 <i>Ix</i>		1671	13 <i>Ix</i>
	1644	12 <i>Cauac</i>		1672	1 <i>Cauac</i>
	1645	13 <i>Kan</i>		1673	2 <i>Kan</i>
	1646	1 <i>Muluc</i>	Don Gaspar Hau (d. ?)	↓ 1674	3 <i>Muluc</i>
	1647	2 <i>Ix</i>		1675	4 <i>Ix</i>
	1648	3 <i>Cauac</i>		1676	5 <i>Cauac</i>

(Continued on the following page)

Table Four
(Continued)

Batab	Year	Year-Bearer	Batab	Year	Year-Bearer
	1677	6 <i>Kan</i>	(Don Agustin de Palensuela)	1705	8 <i>Kan</i>
	1678	7 <i>Muluc</i>		1706	9 <i>Muluc</i>
	1679	8 <i>Ix</i>		1707	10 <i>Ix</i>
	1680	9 <i>Cauac</i>		1708	11 <i>Cauac</i>
	1681	10 <i>Kan</i>		1709	12 <i>Kan</i>
	1682	11 <i>Muluc</i>		1710	13 <i>Muluc</i>
	1683	12 <i>Ix</i>		1711	1 <i>Ix</i>
	1684	13 <i>Cauac</i>		1712	2 <i>Cauac</i>
	1685	1 <i>Kan</i>		1713	3 <i>Kan</i>
	1686	2 <i>Muluc</i>		1714	4 <i>Muluc</i>
	1687	3 <i>Ix</i>		1715	5 <i>Ix</i>
	1688	4 <i>Cauac</i>		1716	6 <i>Cauac</i>
Don Juan Dzib (d. ?)	1689	5 <i>Kan</i>	Don Alonzo Couch (d. ?)	1717	7 <i>Kan</i>
	1690	6 <i>Muluc</i>		1718	8 <i>Muluc</i>
	1691	7 <i>Ix</i>		1719	9 <i>Ix</i>
	1692	8 <i>Cauac</i>		1720	10 <i>Cauac</i>
	1693	9 <i>Kan</i>		1721	11 <i>Kan</i>
	1694	10 <i>Muluc</i>		1722	12 <i>Muluc</i>
	1695	11 <i>Ix</i>		1723	13 <i>Ix</i>
	1696	12 <i>Cauac</i>		1724	1 <i>Cauac</i>
	1697	13 <i>Kan</i>		1725	2 <i>Kan</i>
(no batab)	1698	1 <i>Muluc</i>	Don Diego Ppol (d. 1752)	1726	3 <i>Muluc</i>
	1699	2 <i>Ix</i>		1727	4 <i>Ix</i>
	1700	3 <i>Cauac</i>		1728	5 <i>Cauac</i>
Don Antonio Caamal (d. ?)	1701	4 <i>Kan</i>		1729	6 <i>Kan</i>
	1702	5 <i>Muluc</i>		1730	7 <i>Muluc</i>
	1703	6 <i>Ix</i>		1731	8 <i>Ix</i>
	1704	7 <i>Cauac</i>		1732	9 <i>Cauac</i>

(Continued on the following page)

Table Four

(Continued)

Batab	Year	Year-Bearer	Batab	Year	Year-Bearer
Don Marcos Canche (d. 1738)	1733	10 <i>Kan</i>		1761	12 <i>Kan</i>
	1734	11 <i>Muluc</i>		1762	13 <i>Muluc</i>
	1735	12 <i>Ix</i>		1763	1 <i>Ix</i>
	1736	13 <i>Cauac</i>		* 1764	2 <i>Cauac</i>
	↓				
	1737	1 <i>Kan</i>	Don Marcos Couoh (d. 1766)	1765	3 <i>Kan</i>
	1738	2 <i>Muluc</i>		1766	4 <i>Muluc</i>
	1739	3 <i>Ix</i>		1767	5 <i>Ix</i>
	1740	4 <i>Cauac</i>		1768	6 <i>Cauac</i>
Don Lorenzo Camal (d. 1757)	1741	5 <i>Kan</i>	Don Feliciano Canul (d. 1773)	1769	7 <i>Kan</i>
	1742	6 <i>Muluc</i>		1770	8 <i>Muluc</i>
	1743	7 <i>Ix</i>		1771	9 <i>Ix</i>
	↓			↓	
	1744	8 <i>Cauac</i>		1772	10 <i>Cauac</i>
	1745	9 <i>Kan</i>		1773	11 <i>Kan</i>
	1746	10 <i>Muluc</i>		1774	12 <i>Muluc</i>
	1747	11 <i>Ix</i>		1775	13 <i>Ix</i>
	1748	12 <i>Cauac</i>		1776	1 <i>Cauac</i>
	1749	13 <i>Kan</i>	Don Martin Camal (d.1802)	1777	2 <i>Kan</i>
	1750	1 <i>Muluc</i>		1778	3 <i>Muluc</i>
Don Andrés Bacab (d. ?) (Still alive in 1769)	1751	2 <i>Ix</i>		1779	4 <i>Ix</i>
	1752	3 <i>Cauac</i>		1780	5 <i>Cauac</i>
	1753	4 <i>Kan</i>		↓	
	1754	5 <i>Muluc</i>		1781	6 <i>Kan</i>
	1755	6 <i>Ix</i>		1782	7 <i>Muluc</i>
	1756	7 <i>Cauac</i>		1783	8 <i>Ix</i>
				1784	9 <i>Cauac</i>
	1757	8 <i>Kan</i>		1785	10 <i>Kan</i>
	1758	9 <i>Muluc</i>		1786	11 <i>Muluc</i>
	↓			1787	12 <i>Ix</i>
	1759	10 <i>Ix</i>		1788	13 <i>Cauac</i>
	1760	11 <i>Cauac</i>			

(Continued on the following page)

Table Four
(Continued)

Batab	Year	Year-Bearet	Batab	Year	Year-Bearet
Don Felipe Batun (d. 1793)	1789	1 <i>Kan</i>		1817	3 <i>Kan</i>
	1790	2 <i>Muluc</i>		1818	4 <i>Muluc</i>
	1791	3 <i>Ix</i>		1819	5 <i>Ix</i>
	↓ 1792	4 <i>Cauac</i>		1820	6 <i>Cauac</i>
	1793	5 <i>Kan</i>		↓ 1821	7 <i>Kan</i>
	1794	6 <i>Muluc</i>		1822	8 <i>Muluc</i>
	1795	7 <i>Ix</i>		1823	9 <i>Ix</i>
	1796	8 <i>Cauac</i>		1824	10 <i>Cauac</i>
Don Juan Ppol (d. 1811)	1797	9 <i>Kan</i>		1825	11 <i>Kan</i>
	1798	10 <i>Muluc</i>		1826	12 <i>Muluc</i>
	1799	11 <i>Ix</i>		1827	13 <i>Ix</i>
	1800	12 <i>Cauac</i>		1828	1 <i>Cauac</i>
	1801	13 <i>Kan</i>		1829	2 <i>Kan</i>
	1802	1 <i>Muul</i>	Don Jacinto Canche (d. ?)	↓ 1830	3 <i>Muluc</i>
	1803	2 <i>Ix</i>		1831	4 <i>Ix</i>
	↓ 1804	3 <i>Cauac</i>		1832	5 <i>Cauac</i>
Don Andrés Chan (d. 1825)	1805	4 <i>Kan</i>		1833	6 <i>Kan</i>
	1806	5 <i>Muluc</i>	Don Pedro Chan (d. ?)	↓ 1834	7 <i>Muluc</i>
	1807	6 <i>Ix</i>		1835	8 <i>Ix</i>
	1808	7 <i>Cauac</i>		1836	9 <i>Cauac</i>
	1809	8 <i>Kan</i>		1837	10 <i>Kan</i>
	1810	9 <i>Muluc</i>		1838	11 <i>Muluc</i>
	1811	10 <i>Ix</i>		1839	12 <i>Ix</i>
	1812	11 <i>Cauac</i>		1840	13 <i>Cauac</i>
	1813	12 <i>Kan</i>		1841	1 <i>Kan</i>
	1814	13 <i>Muluc</i>		1842	2 <i>Muluc</i>
	1815	1 <i>Ix</i>	Enrique Camal (d. ?)	↓ 1843	3 <i>Ix</i>
	1816	2 <i>Cauac</i>		1844	4 <i>Cauac</i>

* The will of Antonio Hau (ANE-Y, Izamal, Libre 1, p. 7) lists Don Marcos Couoh as *batab*. The year on the document is difficult to interpret. It appears to be 1764, 1769 or 1765. I have chosen to regard it as 1765, because Don Marcos died in 1766 and the 1764 date does not fit the twenty-year pattern. Another interpretation is possible. The date given is December 17. It may well be that the year was 1764 and that *batab* assumed office immediately following the mid-December election. Unfortunately, there is no other document from 1765 and no documents at all for 1763 with which to settle the matter by comparing *all* the members of the *cabildo*.

REFERENCES

- COE, MICHAEL D.
 1965 "A Model of Ancient Community Structure in the Maya Lowlands", *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 21:97-114.
- EDMONSON, MUNRO S.
 1976 "The Mayan Calendar Reform of 11.16.0.0.0", *Current Anthropology* 17:713-717.
- MORLEY, SYLVANUS G.
 1956 *The Ancient Maya*, 3rd. edition, revised by George W. Brainerd, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- ROYS, RALPH, L.
 1939 *The Titles of Ebtun*, Publication 505, Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution of Washington.
 n.d. *The Book of Chilam Balam of Tizimin*, annotated transcription in typescript. Latin American Library, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana.
- SATTERTHWAITE, LINTON
 1965 "Calendrics of the Maya Lowlands", in *Handbook of Middle American Indians*, Vol. 3, edited by Robert Wauchope and Gordon R. Willey, Austin, University of Texas Press, pp. 603-631.
- THOMPSON PHILIP C.
 1978 *Tekanto in the Eighteenth Century*, Ph.D., dissertation, Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana. Available through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan.
- TOZZER, ALFRED M., ED. AND TRANS.
 1941 *Landa's relación de las cosas de Yucatán*, Papers 18, Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University.