

THE SONGS OF DZITBALCHE: A LITERARY COMMENTARY

Munro S. Edmonson

In 1965 Dr. Alfredo Barrera Vásquez published the text and translation of a remarkable Mayan document, *El Libro de los Cantares de Dzitbalche* (Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 9, Mexico). It was and is an important contribution to Mayan literature, for without it we should be hard pressed to document Mayan lyric poetry. It is the purpose of this paper to present each of the songs in poetic translation in English (Barrera's is, as he says, severely literal and in Spanish) with a brief, specifically literary commentary (Barrera's is mainly general, historical and linguistic).

The manuscript was discovered in 1942. Barrera finds reason to believe that it was copied in present form after 1742. As with other Mayan documents, this does not preclude an earlier date for the composition of at least some of the texts, and I believe that the two dealing with arrow sacrifice (xv and xvi) probably do go back to the fifteenth century, before the fall of Mayapan, as the text claims, probably in oral form. I would guess-date ten more as being perhaps sixteenth century, while others may be as late as the nineteenth century.

I have regrouped the poems in order to juxtapose those with a similar structure and content, renumbering them in Roman numerals. (Arabic numerals refer to Barrera's ordering; he has 15 and I have xvi because I have subdivided his Song 1.) The collection thus begins with a hymn to the sun:

I. Dawn (14)

There are then four love songs of increasing eroticism, the last two depicting an orgiastic ritual:

- II. *Serenade* (15)
- III. *The Kiss* (1b)
- IV. *Let Us Go and Take the Flower* (4)
- V. *Flower Song* (7)

Then follow two prayers:

- VI. *The Orphan* (8)
- VII. *To the Great Lord of Dzitbalche* (2)

The next is a myth:

- VIII. *Rattlesnake and Feathered Serpent* (10)

The remainder are ritual poems relating to the various cycles of the Mayan calendar: the *uinal*:

- IX. *Prayer of the Uinal Priest* (9)

The *tun*:

- X. *Prayer of the Tun Priest* (6)

The *hab*:

- XI. *The Specters of Uayeb* (3)
- XII. *The Singer* (11)
- XIII. *Quenching the Fire* (12)

And the *katun*:

- XIV. *Raisers of Ridgepoles and Mounds* (5)
- XV. *Little Arrow* (1)
- XVI. *Dance of the Archer* (13)

A notable feature of the poems is that they all have introductory "titles", usually couplets (9 of them), but sometimes double (5) or triple couplets (1). Sometimes these

appear to be more in the nature of a dedication than a title, and they may thus have little to do with the content of the poem. I have not found introductions of this sort elsewhere in Mayan poetry.

All of the poems are composed in Mayan couplets. The shortest is made up of 22 couplets; the longest has 43. (Song xv has 47, but 12 of these represent an additional "introduction" to the poem itself; Song iii is a single quatrain that appears to be interpolated irrelevantly into Song xv.) All of them make extensive use of metaphor, including the characteristic couplet kennings (*disfracismos*) of Nahuatl and Mayan poetry, and many attain a lyricism of imagery not commonly found in Mayan poetry.

Some of the texts appear to be divided into stanzas in the original manuscript, but these tend to be inconsistent and haphazard. Sometimes they even violate the syntax. I believe, however, that they all have natural subdivisions that can be more or less clearly identified by content. The stanzas are thematically unified and coherent and they are clearly intentional, to judge from the structural and thematic correspondence of Songs iv and v or Songs xv and xvi. Eleven of the songs are distinguishable from the other five by the clarity and regularity of their stanza structure, being composed of 3 (3 cases), 5 (4 cases) or 6 (4 cases) stanzas. (Nearly two thirds of the stanzas of these songs contain 4, 5, or 6 couplets.) These are the songs that I believe exemplify Mayan lyric poetry.

The five exceptions (Songs iii, vii, viii, ix and xiv) are not only structurally different: they are also different in theme, quality and perhaps date as well. They include a late love song of a single quatrain (iii), a late prayer to the Christian God (vii), a post-Conquest myth (viii), a late and acculturated Mayan prayer (ix), and a didactic text (xiv).

Like many products of Mayan culture, the lyric poems are extraordinarily sophisticated and subtle; but unlike many of the surviving fragments of Mayan literature, they are unusually full of expressions of sentiment and emotion. They deal with love,

abandonment, the beauty of nature, sex, fear, and of course time and death.

I. DAWN (14)

Let us begin at the beginning: at dawn. The poem begins characteristically with a dedicatory "title", and consists of three stanzas. The first deals with the birds of the Father; the second with the birds of the Mother; and the third addresses itself to the rest of us, urging us to enjoy the dawning day as the birds do. I know of nothing of comparable lyricism in Maya. The stanzaic structure gives it the elegance of an ode.

I

H ti
T u belil
Ua u taal kin
Uay

*

Tiic a kay, chan zac pacal
T u kablail yaax che
Tii yan xan x ciip chohil
Chan x chuuleeb
Bey xan x kukunlail
Zac chich
T u lalac ciimac y ool
U y alaakoob
Yum
Ku

*

He bix xan h colebil
Y an y aalak
H'e ... ix chan x muukuy
Chan x tz'itz'iibil
Y etel chan x chinchin baclal
Lail xan x tz'unuun
Lail
La lix

For the traveller (?)
Who is on the road
If the sun should come
Here.

*

Spread your song, little dove,
In the branches of the ceiba.
There too are the flycatcher,
The little yellowbird,
And also the cuckoo;
And there is the mockingbird.
They all delight the heart,
The creatures
Of the Father,
God.

*

So likewise the Mother
Has her creatures,
Such as the little turtle dove,
The little cardinal,
And also the little canary.
And there is the hummingbird.
These
Are they —

U y aalak
 Chiich
 X ciichpan xunan
 Colebil

*

Lail ua yan cimaac (olil)
 Ichil lay bal cheob
 Baax ten ma u cimaactal
 Ol ton
 Ua beilooob
 Lai ti ob
 Tac t u zaztal
 Pencech hatz'utzoob
 Chen kay
 Chen Baxaal
 C u man
 T u tuculoob

The pets,
 The birds
 Of the blessed Mother,
 (Our) Lady.

*

If this delights the hearts
 Among these animals,
 Why should it not delight
 Our hearts?
 If they act
 Among themselves
 Thus at dawn
 From lust for beauty!
 Only songs
 And play
 Pass
 Through their thoughts.

II. SERENADE (15)

A love song, again with a prefatory dedication and again in three stanzas, which dress the maiden, declare love, and admit she is universally beloved. The trope at the end of stanza two is particularly effective and lyrical, and the tone is elegant and formal despite the explicitness of the preface. Barrera sees the preceding poem as an introduction to this one, but this does not seem to me a necessary assumption, despite their structural similarity.

II

Tz'utz'
 A chi
 T u caap cool
 Hok che

*

Tz'a ex a hatz'uutz nok eex
 Tz'ooc u kuchul kin h cimax olil
 Xeech u tzou

Oh to kiss
 Your mouth
 At the loose railing
 Of the picket fence!

*

Put on your beautiful clothes.
 The day of happiness has arrived.
 Comb the tangles

Tzotzel a pol
Tz'a u lemc ech ciichcelmil a
nok

Tz'a hatz'utz xanaab
Ch'uuicinzah a nuucuuch tuup
T u tupil a xicin
Tz'a malob ooch'

Tz'a u keexiloob a x ciichpan
caal

Tz'a uu baakaal
Hop men hop t u nak a kab

T kailbelt caa i laac ciichpam
eech

He biix (ma ix) maac e
Uay tu t cahil
H Tz'iitbalchee

*

Cah in yacuma ech
X cichpan coelbiil
Lai beiltic
In kaat ca i(labe) ech
Haach zem pe ech
Cii(chpam) ech
T u men c u y an ca chiicpaac
ech ti x buutz' ek

T u men ca u tz'iboolt ech

Tac

Lail

U

Y etel u x lol nichte kaax

*

Chen zacan
Zacan
Nok
H x zuhuy
Xen a tz'a u cimac olil a chee

Tz'a utz t a puczikal

T u men helae

From the hair of your head.
Put on and show off your beautiful
clothes.

Put on beautiful sandals.
Have your large earrings hung
From the lobes of your ears.
Wear a good cape.

Put necklaces on your beautiful
neck.

Put on armbands
To shine and flash on the breadth
of your arm.

It is necessary that you look
beautiful

As noone else
Here in the town,
The town of Dzitbalche.

*

I love you,
Beautiful lady.
That is why
I want you to look
Glorious
And beautiful,
So that you appear like the
smoking star.

So that you will be loved

Even as

Existence,

The moon,

And wildflowers are.

*

Only white,
White
Are your clothes,
Oh virgin spirit.
Go distribute the happiness of
your laugh —

Distribute the goodness in your
heart,

For today

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| U zutucil cimac olil | Is the moment of happiness |
| T u lacial uinic | For all men |
| Lail | Who |
| C u tz'ailc | Are surrendering |
| U y utzil ti t eech | In goodness to you. |

III. THE KISS (1b)

I agree with Barrera that the following quatrain is probably a late interpolation in Song xv (1). It is closely similar to the prefacing quatrain of the preceding poem.

III

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Bin in tz'uutz' a chi | I am going to kiss your mouth |
| Tut yam x cohl | There among the little reeds. |
| X ciichpam zac | Oh beautiful shining lady, |
| Y an y an a u ahal | You must, you must wake up. |

IV. LET US GO AND TAKE THE FLOWER (4)

Here the introductory couplet has the character of a title. There are five stanzas: the first announces a flower ceremony; the second identifies this with defloration; the third relates this in turn to a poet warrior; the fourth dedicates the ceremony to the moon and the multifaceted Virgin; and the fifth urges surrender. The Dionysiac tone of the poem and the female identification of the singer are alike unique in Maya, and the whole poem appears to preface the following one, which has the same structure.

IV

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| C oo x | Let us go |
| H c kam nictc | And take the flower. |
| | * |
| Cimaac olailil | Happiness |
| T an c kayiic | Is what we sing |

T u men bin
 Cah
 C kam
 C nictē
 T u lacailil x chuup
 X loob bayen

*

Chen chehlah
 Chehlameec u y iich
 Tut ziiit u puucziikalil
 Tut tz'uu u tzem
 Bail x t u men
 T u men
 Y oheel
 T y olal u tz'iic
 U zuhuyil colelil
 Ti u yaa(cunah)

*

Kay eex nictēil
 C yant c eex
 Naacon
 Y etel noh yum
 Ah kulel
 Ah tan caan chee
 Ah culel
 H kay

*

C on eex
 C on eex
 C tz'a
 C olaalil
 T u taan zuhuz
 X ciichpan zuhuy
 Colelbil u
 Lolil
 Loobayen
 Tut can caan che
 (U) colebil XM ...
 Zuhuy kaak u
 Bey x(a)n x ci(c)h(p) an x kam le
 ooch

Because we are going
 To begin
 Taking
 Our flowers,
 All the women together,
 Redeemers.

*

Only laugh,
 Let your eyes laugh,
 Before the leap of a heartbeat,
 Before the core of a breast.
 What for then?
 Because
 You know
 It is for the surrender
 Of your feminine virginity
 To him who loves.

*

Sing ye the flowers
 And be calling
 The Captain
 And great father,
 The Lieutenant
 Half Tall Tree,
 The Lieutenant
 Who is the singer.

*

Let's go,
 Let's go!
 Let us give
 Our hearts
 Before the Virgin,
 The beautiful Virgin,
 The ladyship of the moon
 And blossoms,
 Intercessor
 There on her highest throne,
 The lady Christ Mary,
 Virgin Fire of the Moon,
 And likewise the beautiful Corn
 Lady,

X ciichpan x ah zoot
Y ete(l) x ciichpam colel
X zuhuy x ttoot much
Lai ti e tz'iic utzil
Cuxtalil
Uay y o(k) peet(n) e
Uay y o(k) chak me
T u zuut lumil
Uay uitzil

*

C oo x
C oo x
C on eex
Palal eex
Beey c tz'aic cici
Cimac olil
Uay tz'itil piich
Tz'itil balche

The beautiful Cane Rattle,
 The beautiful lady,
 And virgin Rain Frog.
 For it is she who gives good
 And life
 Here over the forests,
 Here over the henequen fields
 In the land around,
 And here in the mountains.

*

Come,
 Come!
 Let's go,
 You children!
 Thus let us give happiness
 Great, great happiness
 Here in Split Fruit,
 Split Bark (Dzitbalche).

V. FLOWER SONG (7)

The title couplet is the Nahuatl kenning of "Poem", and the text is closely linked and sequential with respect to the preceding one. The first stanza invokes moonrise; the second brings the moon overhead; the third suggests a secret orgy in the middle of the forest; the fourth lists the paraphernalia for the flower ceremony; the fifth undresses the virgin maidens of the changing moon. A sixth stanza is discreetly omitted, leaving the poem structurally identical to the one before.

V

Kay
Nicte

*

X ciih
X ciichpan u
Tz' u likil
Y ook kaax

Flower,
 Song.

*

The sweet,
 The beautiful moon
 Has risen
 Over the forest,

T u bin
U hopbal
T u chumuc c(a)n
(C)aan tux
C u ch'uuytal
U zazicunz
Y ookol cab
T u lalac kaax
 *
Chen cici u tal iik

U utz'ben booc
U tz' u kuchul
Chumuc caan
Chen zacttin cab
U zazilil
Y ook t u lalac baal y an cimac
olil
Ti t u lalac malob uinic
 *
Tz'ooc cohol t u ichil
U naak kaax
Tuux maixi mac men max

Hel u y ilconeil
Leil
Baax
(C) taal
C beet
 *
T tazah lol nicté
U lol chucum
U lol u tz'ul
U lol x ...milah
T tazah pom
H ziiit
Bey xan x coc box
Bey xan tumben hiib took
Y ete tumben kuch
Tumben luch
Bolom yaax took

And begun
 Its start
 To the middle of the sky —
 The sky where
 It will suspend
 Its radiance
 Over the earth
 And all the forest.
 *
 Only fragrant is the passing
 breeze
 And its sweet perfumed smell.
 Its center comes
 To the middle of the sky,
 Just lighting the earth
 With its glow.
 Over everything there is
 happiness
 For all good men.
 *
 One has arrived inside
 The womb of the forest,
 Where there is not even anyone
 stirring
 Who can counterspy
 On anything
 Whatever
 We may come
 To do.
 *
 One has brought rose blossoms,
 First flower blossoms,
 Dog jasmine blossoms,
 Tangleflower blossoms (?);
 One has brought copal
 And cane vine;
 Likewise black tortoise shell:
 Likewise new quartz and flint
 And new cotton,
 New spinning sockets,
 Great green flints;

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Tumben peetz'ilil | New weights, |
| Tumben xoot | Fresh conch (?); |
| Bey xan u can x ulum | Likewise a quantity of turkeys, |
| Tumben xanab | And new sandals: |
| T u lacial tumben lail xam u | Everything is new, even the ties |
| kaxil c hool | for our heads, |
| U tial c pooc niicte ha | So that we can gather nectar, |
| Bey xan c hoop za(h)ub | And thus we can skim the flowers. |
| * | * |
| Bey u x killiz tz'oc i | Thus is ancestry ended; |
| Tz'oc i | It is done. |
| T y an on t u tz'u kaa(x) | We are here then in the heart of |
| | the forest |
| T u chi noh hal tun | At the edge of the stone pool |
| U tial c paat u hokol | To await the appearance |
| X ciichpan buutz' ek y ookol | Of the beautiful smoking star over |
| kaax | the forest. |
| Pitah nook eex | Shed your clothes! |
| Luuz u kaxil a hol ex | Remove your hair stays! |
| Ba ten eex | 'Til you are |
| Hee cohic eex | As you arrived |
| Uay | Here |
| Y okol cabil e | On this earth, |
| U zuhuy ex | Oh virgins, |
| X chupalel ex hel u | Maidens of the changing moon. |

VI. THE ORPHAN (8)

The following lament and prayer is also identified in the title couplet as a dance. It is in six stanzas of poignant lyrical quality. The first identifies the singer as an orphan; the second recalls his first abandonment and fears others; the third implies an evil foster parent and continuous sorrow and loneliness; in the fourth he begs for death; the fifth expresses his hunger for love; the sixth asks for the strength to go on. It is a poem of compelling elegance and beauty.

VI

U yayah kay h otzil

The lamentation song of the poor,

X ma na x pom okoot che

*

**Hach chiichan en
Caa cim in na
Caa cim in yum
Ay ay in yum en
Caa t ppat en t u kab
T y icnal in laak
Miix maac y an t en uay y okol
cab
Ay ay in yumil en**

*

**C u man ca ppel kin
C u cimil t en in laak
T in ttuluch c ppatc en
T in ttuluch hum ay ay
Tz' u man lail kin
T in hun ppatc en
Caa t u han
Ch'ah en
U biz en t nin u ppel tz'ul t u
kab
Ay ay in yumil en**

*

**H loobil hach yaab
Yayab loob
T in manziic
Uay y okol ca(b)
Miix ua bi kin
Bin hauc in u okol
Miix in u onel y an
Hach chen t in hum
Chen bey in man uay
T in lum
H kin
Y etel akab
Chen okol
Okol
Xuupzic in u ich
Lail xuupzic ool**

The motherless, a drumbeat
dance.

*

I was very little
When my mother died
And my father died:
Oh alas, I am my father!
I was just left in the hands
And company of my fellows.
I have nobody here on earth:

Oh alas, I am my parents!

*

Two days pass
And my fellows may die.
I shall be left groping,
Groping and alone, oh alas!
That time passed
When I was left alone,
When I was wet
And dripping,
And taken in fright by a stranger
in his arms:

Oh alas, I am my parents!

*

A man of evil, too much so;
Enormous evil
Have I been subjected to
Here on earth.
Perhaps never
Will my weeping end.
I have no relatives:
I am just very much alone.
Just so do I pass here
In my land
Day
And night.
Just weeping,
Weeping
Consumes my eyes,
And that consumes my soul.

Yam loob hach chich
Ay in yum
Ch'a t en otzilil
Tz'a u tibitil
Leil yah
Muuk yah
Tz'a t en u tz'oc cimilil
Ua tz'a t en toh olal in
ciichcelem yumil
Otzil otzil co...
Baai t u hun y ook lum

*

Ua y an ca u kaat
T u ttuluch hum
Kaat
Men kaat
T u hol nah
Nahil
T u lacal maac
Ilic
He leil i
U tz'iic yacunail

*

Inan y otoch
Inam u nok
Inan kaak
Ay in yum
Cha t en otzilil
Tz'a t e(n) toh olal
U tial caa paatac
In muuk yahtic

So hard a period of evil,
 Oh my father!
 Take me poor.
 Give me an outlet
 For this pain
 And hard suffering.
 Give me the ending of death,
 Or give me truth of soul, my
 blessed father.
 Poor, poor and abandoned (?)
 And alone on earth.

*

If it is that one begs,
 Groping and alone,
 Begs
 And begs
 At the doors
 Of houses
 Of everyone
 He sees,
 Surely
 He will be given love.

*

He has no home;
 He has no clothes;
 He has no fire,
 Oh my father!
 Take me poor.
 Grant me a true spirit,
 So that it will be possible
 For me to suffer the pain.

VII. TO THE GREAT LORD OF DZITBALCHE (2)

The present text is subtly related to the preceding one by its third stanza. It is, however, a later text, dedicated (and titled?) in the first three couplets, but addressed as a prayer to the Christian God. It is in four stanzas. The first addresses the deity from the foot of the cross and asks for blessing; the second asks for understanding; the third asks for safety in a fearsome oath; the

fourth is a paean of praise of God and a reminder of the identity of the man doing the praying. It is a prayer of great formality and restraint.

VII

T nohhoch yum
Ah culel
T cahil Tz'itbalche
Ahhau Can pe(c)h

*

Tal en
Tal en
Tut
T aan a caan che i
In nahmaat t eech
A cici olal
H ciichcelem
In yum
Tut ment ech
Ca tz'ic
U malobil
Utzil baal y anal a ka(b)

Y an a u utzil
Lohil than t en

*

C in u ilic baax uutz
Y et baxil kaaz
Uay
T tee lumail
Tz'a t en a zazil
In hahal yum
Tz'aat en yaab naatil
T in ih tucul
Y eettel ti in naat
U tial caa in chinchin hool t eech
Zamat
Zamat kin

*

To the Great Lord,
 The Captain
 In the town of Dzitbalche,
 The Lord of Campeche.

*

I have come.
 I have come
 To where
 Thy tall tree stands.
 I beseech thee
 For thy joy,
 Who art blessed,
 My father.
 Here then create
 And bestow
 The goodness
 Of the good things lying in thy
 hand.
 Let thy goodness
 And saving word be upon me.

*

I see what is good
 And things of evil
 Here
 Where the lands are.
 Give me thy light,
 My true father.
 Give me great understanding
 In my thought
 And in my knowledge
 So that I may honor thee
 Forever
 And ever.

*

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Likiic u puul yahil | Raise the curse of pain |
| T u uey cizin ti u okol | From the witch devil over me |
| Ua ma hah | If it is not true |
| Baax c in tzeectic t ech i | What I here swear to you. |
| Cimic in na | Let my mother die; |
| Cimic in yum | Let my father die; |
| Cimic in co(lal) | Let my wife die; |
| Cimic in u alaak | Let my livestock die, |
| Ua bax c in tzolic in yum | If what I tell my father |
| C in ba... haah | Be (not) true. |
| * | * |
| T en | As for me, |
| C in ka(tic i t) eech | I love thee, |
| Ciichcelem yumil can | Blessed father of heaven, |
| Nohocch eech | Who art great |
| T a cuchil | Upon thy seat |
| T caanil | On high. |
| Ley | Hence then |
| C in ttziic eech | Do I honor thee, |
| Ciic(c)efem) | Oh blessed |
| T humnaab ku... | And sole god. |
| T eech ca tz'iic uu(tzil) | Thou, who givest the good |
| Beyilil kazil b(aal) | And likewise the evil things |
| Uay | Here |
| Y okol cab e | On earth, |
| T en | It is I |
| Ttanilc ee(ch) | Calling upon thee, |
| T nohhoch yum | Who art the great father |
| Ah culel... | And governor. |

VIII. RATTLESNAKE AND FEATHERED SERPENT

(10)

Although its structure resembles that of the other songs, this text is a brief myth, rather than a prayer or lyric. It still could have been intended as part of a ritual. It begins by dedicating (or titling?) the work in a single couplet. Three stanzas follow. The first addresses the sermon to all mankind; the second invokes the authority of the ancient gods to identify the coming of the Centipede with seven necklaces (the Spaniards of the 7-day

week); the third is an oblique description of life under Spanish rule, expressed with typically Mayan indirection.

VIII

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Ah tzaab can | Rattlesnake |
| H kuukul kuul can | And Feathered Serpent. |
| * | * |
| Ti t eech uinic | For you, mankind, |
| Tal in u illic baax t en | I come to see what I do |
| Uay | Here |
| Peten | In the forest, |
| Uay | Here |
| Nouakan | On the plain, |
| Uay | Here |
| Te lum | In the land. |
| * | * |
| C u (uc)hben h ua paach | As was told by the giants |
| uincoob | |
| He biix xan h ppuuz | And also the hunchbacks, |
| Ma liicil coh octeil | Before there came to arrive |
| Lumoob ma ix | In these lands anyone |
| Maic x uinic | Who was a man |
| Bay an on | As we are, |
| Tz'ooc u y antaal lemc eech | You had been introduced |
| Yaab kin uay | For a long time here |
| C u ximbance u ba | When there marched himself by |
| X ah chaapaat | The Lord Centipede — |
| Hum uuc u tiichil u pol | The one with seven necklaces |
| | which were on his head — |
| Yaab chen | Exactly just he. |
| * | * |
| Laiti ca u illic | So you saw |
| U kaatal t a beel | He was crossing your path |
| U tial u hant eech | To eat you |
| Y etel u tial u tz'a t eech loobil t | Or to give you trouble in your |
| ah cuxtal | life. |
| Ua ma t a naatiic | If you did not understand |
| Baax c u kaatic t eich | What he asked of you, |
| Ma tun hel | And so did not answer |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ca kuuch u kinil | When the time arrived, |
| U y antah ma maix | Then there was noone |
| L u ailic ti e | Who spoke to him. |
| Ca t u y uub | When he heard that, |
| He caah tz'iicinah i | He really began to have a fit |
| T u men laitiel | Because of the fact that |
| Ma ix u ...chahal u tz'iic | No reply (?) was given him. |
| Leil u nuctah ti el | That made sense |
| Ah x chapaat | To Lord Centipede, |
| Lai | And that was what |
| Ti nuce tii | It meant to him. |
| Lai betiic | This fact |
| Haach t u chah lobil | Embittered him with great evil |
| Le baax c utz'iic u y aal | Which came to be spoken |
| Nuca tiel | And understood by him, |
| T u men h tabz(a)biel | Because he was the one who was |
| | deceived |
| T u men | Thereby. |

IX. PRAYER OF THE UINAL PRIEST (9)

Like the other texts in this collection, this prayer begins with a title couplet. In two subsequent breathless "stanzas" it escapes from the formalism of the other poems, and it is my impression that it is a late ritual text, but it is not too late to refer directly to the 20 day cycle, the *uinal*, and the 360 day cycle, the *tun*. Otherwise, it appears to refer in the fragmentary second stanza to the Christian Creator... and there it breaks off, incomplete...

IX

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Paay chi h ziih h bolom t(u)m | Opening speech of the great <i>tun</i> priest, |
| Uinal te h miatz | Sage of the twenty days. |
| * | * |
| Uinat te paay chi | The twenty day opening speech |
| H miatz tz'ac yah | Of the sage and curer of illness |
| Ti u y an pomol chi kaax | Who has wild bubble sap, |
| Beec kaaxin | Wild oak (resin) |

Ti kal
 Ti kal o hom
 Ch'iic lum
 Paak
 Bacal che
 H bohóm
 Bey (li)kin bey xaman
 Bey (chi)kin bey nohhol
 Ti c u taal t u cam ppel
 Xaay beil can
 Tuux y an u popil
 Nahil bel
 H miatz
 Hunnaab ku i
 Laail c u kaazic
 Ti uinic
 Tahl han
 Cuuxtal
 Uay
 Y okol (ca)b
 Ti maax ac u kaat u tz'a u baa
 Y ol h cambal
 U uay
 T lumil
 (Y) an u tz'iic t u toh y olal
 H t u men u yumil

Kaak
 Ha
 Iik
 Lum
 Yumil uay
 Y okol cab
 Tut t u lahc bail
 Mentahan
 T u men yum
 Hunnaab ku
 Lai t
 Li ti
 Tz'iic utz
 Y eet kaaz

In rolls,
 In rolls five deep,
 Herbs of the land
 And plants:
 Borage
 And heliotrope,
 As east and north
 And west and south
 He comes to the four
 Divided paths of heaven,
 Where stand the mat
 And roadway house
 Of the sage,
 The sole god,
 He who judges
 Over men,
 Distributing food
 And life
 Here
 On earth
 To whoever gives himself
 (In) spirit as a student
 Of what is here
 On the earth,
 Surrendering in truth of spirit
 To him who is the source of
 fatherhood,
 Of Fire,
 Water,
 Wind,
 And Earth,
 The Fatherhood of this
 The earth,
 Before everything
 That has been made
 By the Father
 And sole god,
 He who is
 The one who
 Gives good
 And evil

Ichil maloob
Y etel lob
T u men lai t
Ti e
C u tz'iic u zazilil
Y okol cab
T u men
Lai ti u yumil

*

T u lacial baal y an
Y an l u kab
Bey kin
Bey h u
Bey x buutz' ek
Be u lol zaz caan

Bey muyal
Bey chaac
Bey h x lelem
Bey h uz
Bey ch'iich
Bey baal che
Bey ...

To good men
 And bad.
 Because he is
 The one who
 Gives brightness
 To the earth.
 Because he
 Is the Father.

*

Everything there is
 Falls from his hand.
 Hence the sun;
 Hence the moon;
 Hence the smoking star;
 Hence the flower of the bright
 sky;
 Hence the clouds;
 Hence the rain;
 Hence lightning;
 Hence gnats;
 Hence birds;
 Hence animals;
 Hence ...

X. PRAYER OF THE TUN PRIEST (6)

The title quatrain identifies this as a prayer of the priest of the *tuns*. The stanza structure is not clearly marked (as it is not in the preceding prayer). I believe it to be late. With some difficulty, I believe that five stanzas can be recognized beyond the title-introduction. The first is a salutation; the second claims goodwill on grounds of penance and suffering; the third calls God's attention to the suppliant's virtue and cleanliness of body and soul; the fourth disclaims any other supernatural allegiance; and the fifth is given over to praise.

X

Kama than

Prayer of

Tih u yum
Latt kab
Tunoob

*

In yumil eex
C in taal
Cheen chinchin u taaniil
In u ich

*

Tz'ooc kin bolon ma in tunt

Mix ilmail x chupil
Mix in chau cohoh
Ah kaz tuculil
T in nattil
Otzil

*

T u men c in taal y eetel in
tum(b)en u itt
In tumben piixen tzemilil
Y eetal xan y an cah u il e in
yum

T en
Ma ti caaxtiic u kazil
Keban t u tan a u ich
In hahal yum
Humnab k(u)
Lai betic chen t zaac-han

Zaac in pixam
In tal
In u (i)l eech t a cuchil

*

T u men ti t eech c in k(u)bic
T u tuliz in u olal
Y etel in tuc(u)l uay
Y okol lumeil
T cheen t eech
Ci alah u oltic
Uay
Tee y okol babil

*

The father
Who supports
The *tuns*.

*

Oh my fathers,
I come,
Only bowed down is my forehead,
My face.

*

It has been nine days that I have
not tried
Nor yet looked upon a woman,
Nor yet prolonged the occurrence
Of evil-minded thoughts.
I have been pressed
And poor.

*

Wherefore I am come with my
new pants,
With my new tunic,
And just as may be seen, my
father,
As for me
Without befalling evil
Or sin before thy face,
My true father
And sole god.
Thus it is that just in bright
clarity,
With my soul bright,
Am I come
To see thee in thy station.

*

For it is to thee that I entrust
The protection of my will
And my thought here
On earth.
It is only to thee
That my heart speaks
Here
In this world.

*

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| T u men t eech | For it is thou, |
| Nohochil kin | Greatness of the sun, |
| Ca tz'ic u(t)z uay | Who grantest good here |
| Y okol cab | On earth |
| Ti t u lacial baal | To everything |
| Y an u cuuxtal | That lives. |
| T u men teec(h) | For it is thou |
| Tz'ann eech | Who hast granted |
| A laattleil lum | The sustaining land |
| Tuux c u cuxt(al) t u lacial uin(ic) | Where all men live, |
| Y etel t eech u ha lohill | And thou art the true redeemer |
| Ca tz'iic utzilil | Who will grant goodness. |

XI. THE SPECTERS OF UAYEB (3)

The introductory quatrain titles the piece. The three following stanzas are expository — in the manner of a sermon rather than a ritual or prayer. The first identifies the context as that of *Uayeb*: a time of sorrow as the solar year ends; the second equates this period with measurement of the year's sins; the third produces the threat that enough sin will occasion the end of the world. To my knowledge, the ideology of the 365 day *hab* has never been so succinctly nor so elegantly expressed elsewhere, in or out of Maya.

XI

| | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| H uayah | The specters, |
| Yaab | The torturers |
| T kaal | In the month |
| Kin eek | Of black days. |
| * | * |
| U kinil t okol | The time for weeping! |
| U kinil kaziil baal | The time of evil things! |
| Chakaab cizin | Loosed (?) is the devil! |
| Hekaab miitnal | Opened is hell! |
| Innan utzil | There is no good; |
| Chen y an lobil | There is only evil, |
| Ah uat | Groaning, |

Y etel okol
 Tz'ooc u man
 Hun ppel
 Tuliz haab
 Lail habil h kaban

Helae c u taibil xan hun kal kin
 X ma kaba
 U yail kin
 U kinil loob
 H eek kinoob
 Inan x ciichpan zazilil
 T y iich hunaab ku
 U tial u palil
 Uay
 Y ok(ol) cab

*

T u men ti lei kin
 Kinooba
 Tum ppizil u keban y okol cab
 T u lalac uinic
 Xiib
 Y etel x chuup
 Chi(ch)an
 Y etel nohoch
 Otzil
 Y etel ayikal
 Miatz
 Y etel h num
 Ahhau can
 A culel
 Ba tab
 Nacon
 Chacoob
 Chum thanoob
 Tupiloob
 T u lalac uinic
 Hellae c u ppizil u keban t iail
 lail kin
 T u men bin kuuchoc u kinil lai

*

And crying.
 Finished is the passage
 Of one count,
 Of the whole year
 Which is the year of the named
 (gods).

Now there begins a month
 Of the nameless ones.
 The days of sorrow,
 The time of evil.
 The days turn black.
 There is no beautiful brilliance
 From the eye of the sole god
 For his children
 Here
 On earth.

*

Because on these
 The days divine together
 To measure the sins of earth
 In all people:
 Men
 And women,
 Small
 And great,
 Poor
 And rich,
 Wise
 And stupid;
 The Lord Serpent,
 The Captain,
 The Governor,
 The Lieutenant,
 The Rain Priests,
 The Speakers,
 The Constables:
 All men.
 Now is the measuring of sins by
 these days,
 Because the time of these is
 coming. (?)

*

| | |
|--|---|
| Ti el kina u tz'ooc y okol cab | In fire will be the end of the world. |
| Tum(e)m t u bizic u xocxocil | Hence it is to signal a careful counting |
| T u lacal u kkeban uincoob | Of all the sins of the men |
| U uay | That are here |
| T lum e | On earth. |
| T u men ti u tz'ic hun ppeel x nuc homa | On account of this he puts in a huge jar, |
| Betan y etel u kaat h kamaz | Made with the clay of tree termites, |
| T u lacal u y alil y ich lei | All of the teardrops of those |
| Max c u y ok ti coo lob | Who weep over the mad evils |
| C u mental ti ob | That are being done to them |
| Uay | Here |
| T lum | On earth. |
| Lai can h tulnaac | And when it shall be filled, |
| Lail x nuc homa c u tz'o | This huge jar, it will end. |

XII. THE SINGER (11)

The introductory couplet appears to be a title, perhaps identifying the author, at least in general terms. Five stanzas follow. The first places us at the beginning of a directionally oriented holiday; the second reiterates that we are at the very moment of dawn; the third refers to the disappearance of Venus with the rising sun; the fourth disposes of the moon; the fifth expresses joy at the dawn of a significant day.

XII

| | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| H kay | The singer |
| Baltz'am | And player. |
| * | * |
| Kin kuilancail | The sanctified day |
| Ancail | Begins |
| T cah | In the towns |
| Nahlil | And settlements. |
| U caah h tippil | The exhibitor begins |

T zazilil
Ki.1
Tut haal caan
T c u bin
U bin
Bey no(hol)
Bai t x(aman)
Bey t la(kin)
Bey xan t chi(kin)
Tumtal u zazil
Y okol cabilil
Eh hook
Chen

*

Ti ul
Tz'iic...
X kuuluuch
Y eet maaz
Y eet chiic
H k ...x tz'unun
K y aalcab
T cuchil
X baach
X zac pacal
Tz'uutz'uuz
Bey nom
Chaan beech
Y eet x kook
X zac chich
H zaay c y alcu.....ben
Lail kaxil chiich
C u hoopz c u kay
T u men h eeb
Ziam cen utzilil

*

X ciichpan ek
Hohopnan
Y ook kaax
C u butz'ilan
Ca lamat

In brightness.
 The sun
 Is at the rim of the sky.
 It goes
 And goes,
 So (to) the south,
 And to the north,
 And to the east,
 And to the west,
 Fresh comes its light
 Over the earth.
 Darkness departs
 And divides.

*

He arrives
 To give (light).
 Cockroaches
 And crickets,
 Coatis
 And hummingbirds (?)
 Are running off
 With the appearance
 Of magpies,
 White doves,
 Sapsuckers (?)
 And partridges,
 Little quail,
 Thrushes,
 And white mockingbirds,
 While the red ants run (?) anew.
 These wild birds
 Must begin to sing
 Because he who is rising
 Has originated the need for
 happiness.

*

The beautiful star
 Is flaming
 Over the forest,
 Smoking
 As it sinks,

Lamat

*

U taal u cimil u
Y ook yaxil kaax

*

Cimmaac olilil

Kin kuilail

Uay

Tee t cahalil

T u men tumben kin

C tal zasztal

T t u lacal uinicil t cah

Muul ba

Uay

T cahalil

And sinks.

*

The death of the moon comes
Over the green of the forest.

*

The happiness
Of the holy day

Is here,

Here in the village,
Because the new sun

Comes to light up

All of mankind who live

Assembled together

Here

In the village.

XIII. QUENCHING THE FIRE (12)

The preceding two texts lead logically to the present one. The title couplet identifies the moment as being that of the death and rebirth of fire at the beginning of the year. There are six stanzas. In the first, the sun sets and the musicians assemble; the other participants appear in the second stanza; by the third it is dawn; the fourth stanza meets the new year with rejoicing; the fifth strikes the note of renewal of all the cycles; the sixth specifically emphasizes the *katun*, though still in relation to the passing years.

XIII

Kiiliiz tuup

Y ok uitz

*

Kaman kin

T u haal caan

T chikin

Tunkul

H huub

Quenching the (fire of the)
ancestor

On the mountain.

*

Taken is the sun

At the rim of the sky.

In the west

Is the stone drum,

The trumpet player,

Y etel zacatan
Tii t hhoopz
X kay luuch

Xiix tun t u lalac (pax)
Tut tazahal oc

*

X ppiitum c u bin u kuuchul
T u tanleil popil nah
Yum
Ahau can
Ti an xan h hol poop

Y etel h chaacoob
Bey yum
Ah culel y etel u amtahatz'aob
Tz' u kuchul h pax
Kayoob
H paaltz'amoob
H okotoob
H ualak
Zutzihoob
Bey h ppuuz
Y etel nacyaob
T u lalac u uinicil
Tal t u pach ah ahau can
T u cimac olil
C u beetabil
T u ch(u)muc kiucil
C cahtalil

*

Tz' u hooppol y oocol kin
T u haal na caan
T u tiibit
(Ta)al u hooppol
Lail x pom
Yum caan
Kamiic u buutz'
Kak
U tial u chiil
T cu y iich

And grasseed (?) rattler,
Who begin
The little song of the twisted
calabash
So that everything (resounds?),
So that they assemble.

*

The acrobats will arrive
Before the council house
Of the Father,
Lord Snake,
Where also are the Head
Councillor
And the Rain Priests,
Along with the Father
President and his fellows.
The musicians have arrived,
And singers,
And actors
And dancers,
Contortionists,
Acrobats,
Together with hunchbacks
And spectators.
The whole population
Will be following the Lord Snake,
And will be delighted
At what is to be performed
In the middle of the square
Of this village of ours.

*

The rising of the sun has begun
At the edge house of the sky,
And has shown
That the beginning comes.
There is the incense (burner?)
So that the Father of Heaven
Will receive the smoke
And fire
For the mouth
And holy face

Yum
Kin

*

C on eex
C on t chum yaax che
C oo x tz'aic c keex
U tial tumben haab
Tz'ooc
Tz'oocil u maan yaayaa kinil
C oon eex u muulail tam balil
Cahalil
C on i
Lakin
U tz'ay u xocom cheil

Kiliiz
Kam kak
Y ookol uitz

*

Taalz eeix l t u lacial baal
tumben
Pul eex t u lacial baal h uuchben
Yum
Ku
Tz' u tz'iic cah c manz
U lobil kin
Uay
T cahalil
T u men u cahtal u laik kin
U laik uinal
U laik haab
U laik kaatum

*

U tial u tal uchucpahal un kaal
haab
U tial h katun
C oon eex
C tz'aile
Tumben xuul tum
T u hol cahnalil
C caaxtic h zac tuniich

Of Father
Sun.

*

Let's go!
Let's go to the Fort of the Ceiba!
Go make our offering
For the new year!
It is over!
The miserable days have passed!
Let us meet each other
At the village.
Let's go then
To the east
To make offering to the counted
pole
Of the ancestor
Who obtained fire
On top of the mountain.

*

Bring all the things that are new.
Throw away all the things that are
old.
The Father
God
Has granted that we might pass
The evil days
Here
In the village,
Because there begins another day,
Another month,
Another year,
Another *katun*.

*

So it comes to complete another
roll of years
For the lord of the *katun*.
Let us go
And place
A new end stone
At the gate of the village.
Let us find a white stone,

U tial c eeziic
 U laak haab
 U man...

So we can indicate
 That another year
 Has passed.

XIV. RAISERS OF RIDGEPOLES AND MOUNDS (5)

Here we move further in the direction of the *katun*, and by implication the classical mystique. The introductory couplet gives the title, and apostrophizes the ancestral Maya. While this feature relates the text to the others in this collection, the remainder is a didactic text on the antiquity of the *katun* count. It is in two paragraphs, one on the ancient cities and the other on the modern ceremonies. It appears to have the character of a sermon or invocation to the *katun* ceremonies.

XIV

H ua paachoob
 Y etel ppuz(oob)

*

Tz'u lam
 Kaa(bet)
 U ppizil
 U xociil
 Ua hay ppel haab
 Ua katun kin maan(aac)
 Le u kinil uay
 Te cahobaaleil
 H nucuuch
 Chaac uincoob
 Lai tiob liiz u pa(ak)leil
 U uchben cahob
 He lah c ilic
 Uay
 Peten
 H chakan
 T u lacal lail
 Cahoob
 Ttittanoob y ook lum

Raisers of ridgpoles
 And mounds.

*

It is urgently
 Necessary
 To measure
 The count,
 Either of how many years
 Or *katun* days have passed
 Since that time
 Of the settlement there
 Of the great
 And powerful men,
 Those who raised the walls
 Of the ancient cities
 That we see here and there
 Here
 In the forest
 Of the plainsmen.
 All of them
 Are cities
 Scattered over the land

Uay
 He lah
 T aan c ilic
 Ttuuch men
 Ttuuch
 Y okol canal
 Uitzoob

*

Lail c u talziic
 T u uay t cahoob
 C tz'iic
 U thanilbaal (baal)
 Lail c iliic he la
 Baax c ohelma
 T u men zazammal
 Ci ilic
 T c chumuuc caan
 U chiculil
 Bax alan t on
 T u men h uuchben uincoob
 Uay t cahal e
 Uay t lum e
 Ti c tz'iic
 U hahil c ool
 U tial caa paactac
 Xocic u ba
 Y an t y iich
 Lai caan
 Y o(co)l akab by c chum
 T u chumu(c)
 Bey ua tun chimil
 T an canza

Here,
 Here and there,
 As we have seen,
 And made to squat,
 Squatting
 On the heights
 Of the mountains.

*

This is the assemblage
 Into the cities.
 Let us give
 The explanation of it,
 Of what we see here and there,
 What we know.
 For day by day
 We just see
 When we have halved the sky,
 The manifestation
 Of what was handed down to us
 By the ancient people
 Here in these villages,
 Here in this land,
 Which we shall give
 As the truth of our hearts,
 So that it may be possible
 To read
 What is on its face
 There in heaven.
 At nightfall we shall thus divide it
 In the middle,
 And perhaps thus the total
 Will instruct (us).

XV. LITTLE ARROW (1)

This is the introduction to the arrow sacrifice ceremony, presumably for the ending of the old *katun* and the beginning of the new, though the texts do not say so. It begins with what I believe to be a "title" couplet: "small and clefted (thing) /

stick'', which is a kenning for 'arrow'. Then there follows a two stanza introduction, the first declaring the antiquity of the dance, and the second identifying the scribe by lineage and place (Dzitbalche), and dating the dance to 1440. (Unlike Barrera, I accept this date.) Between the two paragraphs is a later interpolation, quoted as Song III (b) above. There follow six stanzas of ritual poetry. The first invites the archers to step forward; the second describes the victim; the third addresses him and tells him he will go to heaven; the fourth urges him to be brave and to take comfort in the beautiful girls provided to him; the fifth assures him that everybody who is anybody will witness the ceremony; and the sixth urges him to be of good cheer, as he is to be a messenger directly to God.

XV

X kolom
Che

*

U hanalteil h okot
H uuchbeen uincoob
Zuuc u beiltahaal
Uay t cahob e
Ma ili c ohoc
H zaac maxoo

*

Laiil hanalteah
Tz'(ib)taab
T un men yum
Hah ba(la)m
U h ca uabiil
Noh ah culeel
Tut cahil
X (tz'it)balche
T tuum
U hum pic
T cahil hum
Tz'iitbalche
T t haabiil
T hum pic

Small clefted
Stick.

*

The feasting of the dancers,
The ancient people,
A custom performed
Here in these towns
Even before the coming
Of the white people.

*

This then is the festival
Written
By the father,
The true jaguar (?),
The great grandson
Of the great captain
There in the town
Of Dzitbalche,
On what was then
The millennium
In the town of the millennium,
Dzitbalche,
In the year
Of the millennium,

Hum baak
Ca kaatun

*

Ah papal
H muukan
Uinic
Ppizan chimalil
C y oocloob
T chumuc c kiuc
U ttial u h ppiz uu muukoob
T x kolom che okoot

*

T u chumuc c kiuc
Y am un ppel xiib
Kaxan t u chum ocom
Tuniich
Cici bonan
Y etel x ciihchpam h ch'oo
Tz'annen yaab lol balche

U bocinte bay tan t u kab

Tut y oc
Tut uinclil xan

*

Cih a u ol
Ciichcelen xiib t ech e
A caa a u ilah u y iich
A yum caan
Maa t u y antaal
...n zuut eech
Uay
Y ook (cab)il
Y anal u kukmeellil
Chan tz'unun
Ua y anal u keulel
U ...el
Ciichcelem ceeh
H chac mool
Chan x kook

Four hundred
And forty.

*

Oh lads!
Stout fellows!
Men!
Shield bearers!
They should step forward
To the center of our plaza
So as to test their strength
In the Little Arrow Dance.

*

In the center of our plaza
There is a man
Tied to the bottom of the column,
A stone
Beautifully painted
With lovely indigo,
And a scattering of many balche
flowers
That should thus perfume his
hands
As well as his feet,
As well as his body too.

*

Be of good cheer,
Gallant man.
You shall see the face
Of your father in heaven.
It will not be necessary
That you return
Here
To earth
Wearing the feathers
Of the little hummingbird
Or wearing the skin
Of the bluebird (?),
The Handsome Deerman,
The Great Jaguarman,
The Little Nightingale

Ua chan kam buul
 Tz'a a u ol
 Tuculnen
 Chen ti a u yumil
 Maa a ch(a)za(hac)il
 Maaloob cun(bet)bil t echil

Ciichpan x chupalal
 Lakint c eech
 T aa zutucil
 A tal a
 U tam bin maa chiic zahcil
 Tz'a a u ol tii
 Baal x cun man t ech

*

He c u taal noh yum
 Hol pop
 Tun taal
 Y etel u h a culeel
 Bey xan ah ahau
 Can peeche
 Hee c u taal o
 T u xax c u taal
 Nohoch nacon ake
 He c u tal ba tab h...

*

Cheenen
 Cimcimacac a u ol
 T u men t ech ee
 Lail alan t eech
 Ca a biiz u than
 U et cahaloob
 T u tan
 C ciichcelen yum
 Lai ti tz'amnil uay
 T y ookool ca(b)
 Tz'ocilil u man yaacaach
 Ti tun zalam

Or the Little Yellowbean.
 Take heart,
 And keep thinking
 Only of your father.
 Do not be afflicted.
 Not evil is the treatment of your
 kind.

Beautiful are the girls
 Joined with you
 In your appearances
 As you come (along).
 It will not do to show fear.
 Keep your mind upon
 Whatever may happen to you.

*

Indeed the great lord is coming,
 The Head Counsellor;
 He will be coming
 Together with his Captain;
 Likewise the Lord's man
 Of Campeche:
 Indeed he will come there,
 And at his side will come
 The Great Lieutenant of Ake.
 In fact the Governor of (Merida?)
 is coming.

*

Laugh then
 And rejoice your heart,
 Because as for you there,
 As is being told you,
 You are to report the word
 Of (your) fellow men
 Before the face
 Of our blessed father,
 According to the custom here
 On earth,
 That came to pass long, long ago ...
 In written stone ...

XVI. DANCE OF THE ARCHER (13)

This last poem begins with a title quatrain identifying it as the arrow sacrifice. There follow six stanzas of didactic poetry instructing the archers on how to perform it. The first tells them to run three times around the victim; the second instructs them on how to prepare their arrows and anoint themselves; the third tells them to make the first circuit around the victim; the fourth tells them to shoot on the second circuit but to take care that the victim die slowly, as that is the will of God; the fifth tells them to shoot twice on the second circuit without interrupting their dance; the sixth identifies the ceremony with the rising sun. It is striking that the structure of this poem is identical to that of the preceding one, thus underlining their close relationship.

XVI

| | |
|--|--|
| X okoot | The dance |
| Kay | And song |
| H ppum | Of the archer |
| T huul | Who shoots. |
| * | * |
| X pacum | Little scouts, |
| X pacum che | Little scouts of the trees — |
| Ti hum ppel | Once, |
| Ti caa ppel | Twice |
| C oo x zuut | Let's go around |
| Tut hal che | In front of the rim of trees |
| T alca okoot | In running dances — |
| Tac ox ppel | Just three times. |
| Ciiliiz u tan a pol | Just raise your forehead; |
| Malo ppil h a u ich | Blink your eyes well. |
| Maa menttic x ttil eich | Don't make any little mistake |
| Tial caa ch'a u tohol | So you will hit the mark. |
| * | * |
| A ci zuuzma u yee a huul | If the tip of your arrow is just filed; |
| A ci xaab cheiltma u zumil a ppum | If the string of your bow is well smoothed; |

**A tz'amaa maloob yiitz x
caatzim**

Tut kuuk u y iit u chilbil a huul

A ci choimaa u ba

U tzatzel xibil ceh

T u muuk a kab

T u muuk a u oc

T a piix

T a ttoon

T a ch'alatel

T aa tzem

*

Tz'aa ox ppel

Alca zuut

Tut

Pach

Leil ocom tum

Bonan

Lail tuux kaxan

Leil xibil

Pal

H zac

Zuhuy uinic

Tz'aa u yaax

*

Ti ca zutil

Chh'a a ppm

Tz'a u hul ch(ei)l toh

Tan t u tzem

Ma kabeilt

A tz'iic t u lacal a muuk

Tiyal a huul

Lomtc i

Ti olal

Ma u kilic

T u tamil u bakel

U tial ca paatac u muk yaatic

Huhum ppiitil

Ley u yota

Ciliichelem yum

If you have soaked in catsim sap
the face of the feathers

Just on the butt of the shaft (?) of
your arrows;

Then just anoint yourself

With the fat of a buck

On the muscles of your arms,

On the muscles of your legs,

On your knees,

On your balls,

On your ribs,

On your chest.

*

Make three times

A running turn

Before

And behind

That footed stone

That is painted

There where there is tied

That man,

The youth,

The pure

And virgin man:

Make the first (turn).

*

On the second turning

Take your bow;

Place your arrow shaft true,

Straight at his chest.

It is not necessary

To use all your strength,

So that your arrow

Will be jabbed

Right to the heart:

Do not wound him

To the depths of his flesh,

So his strength may suffer

Little by little.

That is the wish

Of the holy Father

Ku

*

T u caa zuut
 Ca tz'aa
 Ti leil ocom tum
 Cho
 Ca zuut
 Ca tz'a e ca hulic
 Ca hulic
 T u caa ten
 Lailo
 Y an a beilic
 X ma ma a paatic
 A u okoot
 T u men bail
 U mentic
 Malo chima(l)
 H batel uinic
 Tut teetal
 U tial u tz'a utz
 T y iich yum
 Ku

*

Lail c u tippil kin
 T y okol kaax
 T lakin
 C u hoppol
 Hul
 Ppum kay
 Leil chimal
 H bateil
 U tz'aicoob
 T u lalac

God.

*

On the second turn
 Shoot at the one
 At that footed stone
 That is indigo.
 When you turn,
 Shoot then;
 Then shoot
 A second time.
 This is what
 You must do
 Without pausing
 In your dance,
 Because these
 Are the deeds
 Of good shieldbearers
 And warriors,
 Before electing
 To delight
 The eyes of the Father
 God.

*

This then is the appearance of the sun
 Over the forest.
 In the east
 Is beginning
 The arrow
 And bow song.
 They the shieldbearers
 And warriors,
 They render it
 Complete.

So we end as we began, with the rising sun. In purely formal terms as well as in terms of content, theme and expressive quality, we have here a collection which fully justifies designation as Mayan lyric poetry. It is a pity that we have so little of it.

Resumen

La Colección de Cantares de Dzitbalche constituye una muestra extraordinaria de la poesía en lengua maya de Yucatán. En 1965 Alfredo Barrera Vásquez publicó una traducción de estos Cantares al castellano. Aquí Munro S. Edmonson ofrece otra traducción, en este caso al inglés. Al publicarla, reconoce expresamente el valor de la aportación original de Barrera Vásquez. En su presentación Edmonson distribuye de manera distinta los poemas, tomando como criterios su contenido y las semejanzas de sus estructuras. Para mayor claridad, señala como referencia el orden adoptado por Barrera Vásquez.