

Civilization 193

Chapter 193 - Mathematics and Calendar, the Vanished Maya_2

"The great decline took away too many mysteries of the deities! I never had the chance to receive the complete divine knowledge. It is said that during the Golden Age when gods came and went, that was the pinnacle of the corn people's glory!"

The three thousand pyramids of the imperial capital Tikal observed every star in the sky. Thousands of priests calculated the trajectories of each star, mapping out star charts for hundreds and thousands of years. They interpreted the steps of the deities, waiting for the return of the gods!"

Tikalo recited his ancestors' poetry with a sense of melancholy, describing the grand vision of the imagined imperial city, and then decisively shifted the topic.

"Respected Your Highness, actually the Mexica calendar comes from our Maya heritage."

The round-faced Mayan merchant smiled with heartfelt pride. Xiulote listened quietly.

At that moment, a guard came up to report in a whisper. The young man nodded, and the guard departed. Soon after, "Monkey" Kuluka approached with a respectful smile on his face. He walked quickly towards them and knelt down to bow from a distance.

"Respected sovereign, I have taken care of all your commands!"

Xiulote nodded authoritatively and gestured to the seat beside him.

Surprised by the honor, Kuluka gave another large bow before cautiously sitting next to the king, shifting half a body's space away.

"Monkey, there haven't been any battles lately. Originally, I was planning to summon you all after the New Year."

Xiulote smiled faintly.

"But you are skilled in mathematics, come from the common people, and understand practical affairs. Now there is an important task for you. For the next few months, accompany Mayan merchant Tikalo to handle the matters of the caravan. I need as much copper from the Tarasco mines as possible!"

Kuluka nodded seriously. He looked at the tall-headed Mayan across from him, and the Mayan also looked at him, his face pointy like a monkey's. Their gazes collided, and they exchanged polite smiles.

Then, Xiulote gestured for the Mayan merchant to continue.

Noble merchant Tikalo glanced disdainfully at Kuluka. The latter was neither up to Maya aesthetic standards nor a cultured man from the nobility. He began speaking with pride.

"The Maya have two calendars, the Divine Calendar and the Sun Calendar, plus the Long Count which symbolizes the Era."

"The Tzolk'in Divine Calendar has 260 days, which aligns with the Venus cycle and the rainy season, used to guide the planting of corn. The Divine Calendar has 13 months, each month having 20 days, symbolizing different deities.

They are respectively: 1 Crocodile Day, 2 Wind Day, 3 Darkness Day, Land of Death 4 Corn Day, the Corn God, 5 Snake Day, 6 Death Day, 7 Deer Day, God of the Hunt, 8 Rabbit Day, Venus, 9 Water Day, Jade, 10 Dog Day, God of Death, Guardian of the Sun."

At this, Tikalo stole a glance at the youth, then recited loudly.

"11 Monkey Day, the god of arts and knowledge, 12 Herbs Day, rainfall and salvation, 13 Reed Day, growth of corn, 14 Jaguar Day, the nocturnal sun, 15 Eagle Day, Sage, 16 Owl Day, bird of death, 17 Earthquake Day, 18 Knife Day, sacrificial blade, 19 Storm Day, rain, 20 Sun Day, Sun God."

Xiulote nodded in understanding. The Aztec Calendar stemmed from the Mayan Calendar, only changing the symbols, like replacing the owl with the more common highland vulture and adding more warlike significance to the 20 days.

"The first day of the Divine Calendar is 1 Crocodile Month, and the last day is 13 Sun Month. Different deities govern each month. Being born on '7 Rain Month' is an auspicious day, the most favored sacrifices by the deities, while being born on '2 Rabbit Month' is an unlucky day, not meant to stay in this world."

Hearing this, Xiulote shook his head slightly. Whether born on an auspicious or inauspicious day, the result is the same: a dead end. Fortunately, he was neither lucky nor unlucky.

"The Haab' Solar Calendar has 365 days, 18 months, each month also having 20 days. There are also five unlucky days at the end of the year. But there are discrepancies between the Solar Calendar and the steps of the Sun God; every 1,101,600 days the seasons overlap. So, the real number of days per year is actually slightly more than 365, it should be... um... that..."

"365.242 days," Xiulote added with a smile.

"Right, Your Highness is wise!" Finally, Tikalo revealed admiration, considering the ability to match the corn people in mathematics to be the mark of a great 'Divine Revelator'!

"The Divine Calendar and the Sun Calendar coincide once every 52 years, with the first cycle recorded as 1-13, and the second cycle symbolized by Rabbit, Reed, Flint, and House. This year is 3 Rabbit Year, no, it has passed the unlucky days, so it should be 4 Reed Year."

Xiulote nodded his head. The 52-year cycle was similar to the Sexagenary cycle used in Huaxia. The first cycle of 1-13 represented the heavenly stems, and the four symbols of the second cycle the earthly branches. The year 1483 was 4 Reed Year. When the year of 13 House arrives in 1505, the 52-year cycle will conclude, marking the time for grand sacrificial rites and the start of colossal wars dedicated to the deities.

The last 52-year cycle ended in 1453, coinciding with the fall of Constantinople and the collapse of the two-thousand-year Eastern Roman Empire. 1454 marked the beginning of a new cycle, when the great Montezuma I formally ended the Alliance's 13 years of farming and peace. Called by the calendar and the gods, Mexica samurai were feverishly mobilized, treating war and death as part of daily life, consuming an entire generation in battle.

The lengthy conquest continued from 1454 until 1469. Only after the Vastec, Mistec, and Zapotecs surrendered, and the conqueror Montezuma I died in a southern campaign, did the Mexica samurai put down their arms and turned their gaze to the Tarasco in the west.

Xiulote's gaze became profound. The calendar so deeply influenced the beliefs, life, and wars of Central American civilization. An important aspect of the religious reform was to redefine the symbolic meaning of the calendar.

"Beyond the Divine Calendar and the Sun Calendar, the sacred corn people also used the Long Count Calendar granted by the deities!"