Hieroglyphic Decipherment Guide

compiled & revised by Inga E. Calvin
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Persons using this guide should be aware that the field of Maya hieroglyphic studies is ongoing and decipherments are subject to revision and intense debate regarding spelling, grammar, tense aspect or meaning. Any mistakes are the responsibility of the compiler, Inga E. Calvin.

ANY USE OF THIS GUIDE FOR SALE OR PROFIT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

Verbs - Inflectional Endings

Transitive Completive

(CVC) root word

action is completed
(with both subject & object)

'u ...-wa

'u ...-wi

Intransitive Completive

(CVC) root word

action is completed
(with only a subject, no object)

-ji-ya

-ji-ya

-yi

Intransitive Future

-ma

Positional

relates to subject's position
(read *-laj* or *-wan*)

-la-ja

[la]-ja

[la]-ja

-la-ji

-wa-ni

-ya-ni

Passive

an action done to the subject
(read *-aj*)

-ja
present tense

-ja
present tense

-ya-ja
past tense

Verbs - Accession I

CHUM

"to sit"
(to assume the throne)

CHUM[mu]
"to sit"

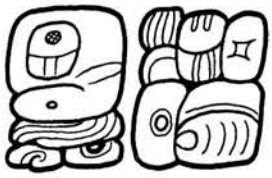
CHUM[mu]-wa-ni
"he sat"

CHUM[mu]-la-ja
"he sat"

CHUM[mu]-li
"he was seated"

CHUM[mu]-la-ji-ya
"he was seated"

CHUM[mu]-wa-ni ti-AJAW-le
"he sat in the Lordship"



CHUM[mu]-ni-wa ti-AJAW-le
"he sat in the Lordship"

CHUM(?) AJAW
"Seated Lord"

K'AL SAK HUUN TU' BAAH

"to have bound or tied the white headband of rulership on oneself"

SAK-HUUN-K'AL tu-'u-BAAH

HUUN-K'AL tu-'u-BAAH

K'AL MAYIJ

"to have bound or tied the offering"
(to be designated heir)

'u-K'AL-MAY
"his tied or bound offering"

K'AL-ja MAY-ji
"the offering is tied or bound"

??

"to be pyramided" or
"to be designated heir"

le-ma (PYRAMID?)-ja?

AJAWAAN

"to become king"

AJAW-ya-ni
"he became king"

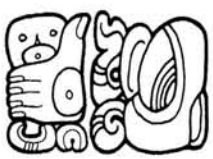
Verbs - Accession II

AK'OT
"to dance"

AK'-ta-ja
"is danced"

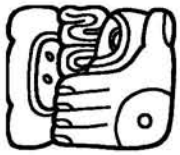
ti-ak'-ta
"it is danced"

CH'AM/K'AM K'AWIIL
"to grasp or seize
the royal scelpter"



CH'AM-wa K'AWIIL
"K'awiil was grasped"

'u-CH'AM K'AWIIL
"he grasps K'awiil"



YAX CH'AM K'AWIIL
"first grasping of K'awiil"

JOY
"to encircle"
(to engage in bundle
ritual at accession)

JOY-ja
"is encircled"

JOY-ja
"is encircled"

JOY-ja ti-AJAW-le-le
"is encircled in lordship"

PITZIIJ
"to play ball"

pi-tsi-ja
"is ball played"

TZAK
"to seize" or
"to conjure"

TZAK[JA]
"is seized"

Verbs - Birth & Death

SIHYAJ
"is born"

SIH-ji-ya-ja
"is/was born"

SIH-ya-ja
"is/was born"

'U ?-KAB
"is born"
(often for deities)

'u-?-KAB

'u-?-ka-ba

K'AY U SAK IK'IL
"to die" or
"to diminish,
his white breath"

K'A-ya-yi SAK-IK'-li

K'A-ya-yi 'u-SAK-IK'-li

K'A-ya-yi 'u-SAK-IK'-li

K'A-ya 'u-SAK-IK' 'u-ti-si
"is finished, his white flower breath, his flatulence"

CHAMI
"to die"

CHAM
"dies"

CHAM-mi
"dies"

IK' CHAM(i)-mi
"breath dies"

OCH BIH
"to die" or "to
enter the road"

OCH-bi-[ja] OCH-bi-ja
"enters the road" or "dies"

OCH-bi-ya
"died"

OCH HA
"to die" or
"to enter
the water"

OCH-HA-ja
"water is entered"

Verbs - Dedication

CH'AHB
"to do penance" or
"to fast"
(obsidian blood-letting tool)

CH'AHB
"to do penance"

ti-CH'AHB-il
"in penance"

YAX ch'a-CH'AHB-ni
"his first penance"

CHOK
"to throw" or
"to scatter"

CHOK
"throws"

CHOK-ji
"throws"

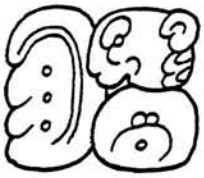
'u-CHOK-ko-wa
"his throwing"

cho-ko-wa-ch'a-ji
"scatters incense"

K'AL TUUN
"to wrap or bind a stone" (stelae dedication & ending of a *tuun*)

K'AL-TUUN-ni
"stone binds"

JOCH'
"to drill (fire)"


jo-ch'o-lo
"drills"

OCH K'AHK'
"fire enters"
(dedication ritual)

OCH K'AHK'
"fire enters"

OCH-chi K'AHK'
"fire enters"

T'AB
"to present" or
"to go up"
(dedication)

T'AB-yi

T'AB-yi

T'AB?-yi

TZ'AHPAJ
"to erect" or
"to drive into the ground"

tz'a-pa-ja
"it iserected"

tz'a-pa-ja
"it is erected"

tz'a-pa-ja TUUN-ni
"is erected, the stone"

'u-tz'a-pa-wa
"he erects (it)"

Verbs - Warfare 1

BAAKWAJ
"is captured"

BAAK-wa-ja
"is captured"

CH'AK
"to chop" or
"to cut"

ch'a-ka-ja
"is chopped"

CH'AK-ka-ja
"is chopped"

CHUHKAJ
"to grab" or
"to capture" or
"to be taken prisoner"

chu-ka-ja
"is grabbed"

chu-ka-ja
"is grabbed"

'u-chu-ku-ya
his grabbing of"

chu-ku-hi-ya
"was grabbed"

JUBUUY
"to fall" or
"to throw down"

ju-bu-yi
"fell"

ju-bu-yi
"falls"

ju-bu-yi 'u-TOK-PAKAL
"his spear & shield fell"
(is defeated)

JATZ'
"to strike"

ja-tz'i-yi
"is struck"

JATZ'
"is struck"

JUL
"to pierce"

JUL
"to pierce"

KOJ
"to go down"

ko-jo-yi
"goes down"

K'A
"to terminate"

K'A-yi
"is ended"

K'UX
"to bite"

k'u-xu-yi-hi
"is biting"

k'u-xu-ja
"is biting"

Verbs - Warfare II

NAWAJ
"to adorn" or
"to display" or
"to publically
humiliate"

na-wa-ja
"is adorned"

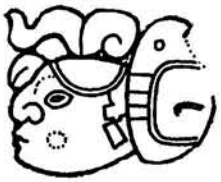
na-wa-ja
"is adorned"

OCH CH'EEN
"to defeat a polity"
literally "to enter
the cave"

OCH 'u-CH'EEN-na
"is defeated"

PULUUY
"to burn"

PUL-[yi]
"is burned"


PUL-yi
"is burned"

pu-lu-yi
"is burned"

SAT
"to lose"

sa-ta-yi
"is lost"

TEHKAJ
"to step on"

te-he-ka-ja
"is stepped on"

TZUTZ
"to end"

TZUTZ-yi
"is ended"

TZUTZ-yi
"is ended"

??
"to be defeated"
(in war)

star-over-shell

star-over-earth

star-over-Naranjo

WE' or WE'EH
"to eat"

'u-we-yi-hi?
"his eating"

Verbs - Motion

BIXNIIY
"went away"

bi-BIX-ni-ya
"went away"

HIL OOK
"to rest feet"

hi-li ʻo-ki
"to rest feet"

HUL
"arrives"
(action of arrival)

hu-li
"arrived"

HUL-li-ja
"has arrived"

hu-li-ya
"arrived"

HUL
"arrives"

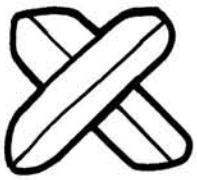
HUL
"arrives"

HUL-li-ja
"has arrived"

'i-HUL-[']-li
"and then arrived"

hu-lu-ya
"arrived"

JAL
"to appear?"



JAL
"to appear?"

PAXAK
"to return"

pa-xa-ka
"to return"

TAL
"to arrive from"
(departure from another place)

ta-li
"to arrive from"

Verbs 1

AL
"to say"

ya-la-ji-ya
"he said it"

BOH
"to hammer" or
"to nail"

bo(h)-aj-bi
"it is hammered"

BUJ'IIY
"it was heard"

u-bu-ji-ye
"his hearing"

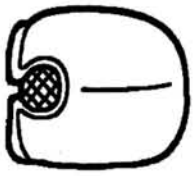
CHEHEN
"to say"

che-he-na
"to say"

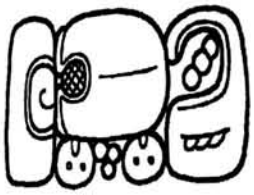
che-he-na
"to say"

che-he-na
"to say"

'IL
"to see" or
"to witness"



'IL-A
"to see"



yi-'IL-la-ja
"he saw it"

yi-la-ji
"he saw it"

K'AL
"to tie" or
"to bind"

K'AL

KOB
"to procreate"

ʻu-ko-bo-wa
"he procreated them"

LOK'
"to emerge"

LOK'-yi
"emerged"

LOK'-yi
"emerged"

Verbs 2

MAK'
"to close"

ma-ka-ja
"was closed"

NAJ
"to fill up"

na-ja-yi
"is filled up"

PAS
"to open",
"to uncover" or
"to come out"

pa-sa
"open"

PAT
"to form" or
"to make" or
"to bring something
to completion"

'i-PAT-[la]-ja
"and then is formed"

PAT-[la]-ja
"is formed"

WOL
"to wrap up"

wo-lo-yi
"is wrapped"

Dates - Temporal Indicators

TZ'AK
"to count" or
"to set in order"

'u-TZ'AK-ka-'a

'u-TZ'AK-'a

'u-TZ'AK-'a
(*literally* 'u-K'IN-AK'AB-'a

'u-TZ'AK-'a
'u-IK'-NAAHB-'a)

'UHTI
"to happen"

'u-ti
"it happened"

'i-'u-ti
"and then occured" or "then it happened"

'UHTIIY
"it happened"

'u-ti-ya
"it happened"

'u-ti-ya
"it happened"

'UTOOM
"it will happen"

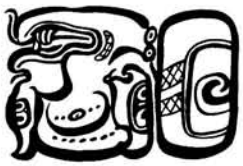
'u-to-ma
"it will happen"

Dates - Distance Numbers

TZUTZ

"is completed" or
"a period is ended"

TZUTZ-yi



TZUTZ?-yi

K'AL TUUN

"the *tun* is bound" or
"360 days are completed"

K'AL TUN-ni

TAN LAMAJ

"1/2 period is completed"

TAN LAM-mi-ja

TAN LAM-mi K'ATUUN

CHUM TUUN

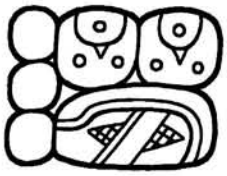
"the *tuun* is seated"
(for example: the date
9.0.**10**.0.0)

CHUM-mu TUN-ni

K'IN-variants

used as Distance Numbers
(as in "x-days later)

'ew
"one day"



UHX-la-ta
"3 days"

'u-HO-la-ta
"5 days"

bi-xi-ya
postfix that only appears
with numbers 5 or 7

JUUN PAS
"1 day"