NOTES ON THE KEKCHÍ LANGUAGE

By Robert Burkitt

I. THE ALPHABET

The Kekchi vowels are the same as in Spanish; they are distinctly uttered, whether accented or not.

b at the end of words is pronounced surd; e.g., rib, 'himself,' sounds much like the English 'reap,' ending in p. b never resembles v, as it may in Spanish.

h aspirates the vowel following, as in English.

In terminating a vowel sound Kekchi sometimes applies a catch produced by closing the vocal cords. This catch should rightly be represented by a letter—a silent consonant written after the vowel. Failing a suitable letter I write a dieresis over the vowel: lē, 'there'; sē, 'firewood'; hā, 'water'; kāib, 'two.' The vowel itself is in no way altered; it may be indefinitely prolonged, as in crying 'Haa... a,' 'Waa.....ter,' but the end is sudden.

The catch is a mark of certain inflections; it also distinguishes some words from others, as nā, 'mother,' from na, 'perhaps'; pō, 'rot,' from po, 'moon.' In tracing the kinship of words it has the perpetuity of a consonant: kē, 'grind,' is allied to kā, 'grinding-stone,' 'molar tooth.' The vowel may vary, but the catch remains. The catch, when possible, ends its own syllable: kē-leb, 'mill'; kā-bej, 'two days hence.' Otherwise it is obscured.

j is pronounced as in Spanish: the guttural ch as in the Scotch loch.

g as in Spanish agua, English go.

k as in English.

q, a velar k: gwang at, 'be thou present,' is distinct from gwank at, 'thou art present.'
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/ is employed to express the fortis of k (somewhat as in English click), p, q, r (as in Spanish burro), and t. The character determines the difference between such words as kam, 'die,' k!am, 'take'; pan, 'toucan,' p!an, 'drug'; ge, 'ours,' q/e, 'time'; j!t, 'accuse,' j!t/, 'tighten'; paq, 'drown,' paq!, 'splash.'

n before a palatal becomes nazalized as in English bank, Spanish sanja: Kekchi k!anjeZ, 'work'; k!enq/, 'bean.' Before b or p, n is often changed to m: lan, 'wrap'; lambal, 'wrapper.'

w as in English.

x as sh in English; thus, tx is pronounced as tch in English match.

y as y in English yet, usually with a vowel on one side or the other. In CarchA it slips into something like x; but Cabán turns it more to the semivowel y (or i) of English toy, Spanish rey, etc.

II. EXAMPLES OF WRITTEN INDIAN

The following is a prayer to the Earth, before sowing. The translation is as literal as English grammar allows:

At loq! laj Tsul, loq! laj Taq!a, nak ul in q!et gwib rubel a gwoq, rubel a gwoq!, txi ru li loq! laj kutan loq! laj saqain, li n' in t!sama gwí sailal xt!xol jun mul áq kâ mul áq l' in gwa li gwuk!ä, txi ru l' a t!xot!xel a sululil.

At loq! laj Tsul-taq!a, xxënil xtonal li rutx-i-t!xot!x, n' in t!sama ma jun ta-xaq l' a gwalq! txi t!xeoq re jun mul áq l' in gwa li gwuk!ä txi ru l' a t!xot!xel l' a sululel.

At l' in nã l' in yugwï, n' in t!sama gwí txik út tx' a gwu, naq tx' a gwosôbtesi tã li gawim in gwa gwuk!ä; naq s' a gwoq s' a gwoq! ta txalq sailal-t!xol li rilbal in kutan.

Thou holy Hill, holy Valley, I come and bow myself beneath thy feet, beneath thy hands, in eye of the holy day and holy light, in the which I beg health for one or two plants of my food and drink, on the face of thy earth and mud.

Thou holy 'Hill-valley,' root and trunk of the world, I beg that none of thy creatures may touch a single plant of my food and drink on the face of thy earth and mud.

Thou, my mother my father, I beg furthermore of thee, that thou mayest bless what I sow for my food and drink; as from thy feet and hands shall come health for seeing out my days.
Notes

**loq!**, ‘holy’: costly, dear, worthy, goodly, highly-esteemed, holy. The root is the same in the word *loq!*, ‘buy.’

*a t!xot!xel a sululil;* the endings *-el* and *-il* imply ‘thy constituent earth and mud.’ So elsewhere.

*Tsul-taq!a*; this compound is also used as a common noun, in the sense of ‘landscape,’ the complex of hill and valley.

*gwalq!, ‘creatures’; properly ‘cattle’; pigs, turkeys, etc., kept by man. The wild animals are represented as ‘cattle’ of the Tsul-taq!a.*

*At l’ in nä l’ in yugwà;* a common address to any superior.

*osöbesi, ‘bless’; the primary meaning is ‘bring to completion’; like that of our verb ‘perfect.’

*s’a gwoq s’ a gwug!; ‘from thy feet and hands’; an example of archaic circumlocution. In common language it would simply be a gwik!in, ‘from thee.’

There is no set form for such prayers. The following is a longer variant, from another Indian:

At loq! laj Tsul-taq!a; gwank in rubel a gwoq a gwuq!; xin txal sä l’ a tsulul a taq!aal txi xt!samankil tx’ a gwe tx’ a gwu, ä aj ban li ximal a gwlinik, naq tx’ a banu tá l’ a gwisilal a putunil säd in been; tx’ a banu gwe l’a klial, jü gwí l’ a txabilal a klial gwe. Tx’ in a gwuxtana tá, tx’ in a temq!a tá, rik!in li bar! gwan na yola säd in t!xol.

Ma tá ra, ma tá t!xäaj tx’ a gwek!a, rik!in li t’ in banu säd a been.

Tx’ a klé tá jun àq in naaj, rik!in naq t’ in turluba; rik!-in x yokbal xk!alenkil lì loq! laj

Thou holy ‘Hill-valley’; I am beneath thy feet and hands; I have betaken myself to thy heights and hollows to beg of thee, because of the greatness of thy condition, that thou mayest do thy favor and kindness upon me; perform for me thy might, also thy goodness and sweetness for me. Do thou be merciful to me and aid me, respecting whatever arises in my mind.

May no pain, no annoyance be felt by thee, from what I shall do upon thee.

Do thou give me a place, with a view to my laying it bare; with chopping and clearing the
kliťxë jë gwî li loq! laj pim; ä aj ban re l’ in ketbal txi ruxtx a t’ixot’x ëìin.

Ta gwaj út xyobtesînkal rawbal, sä l’ a t’ixot’x a sululel, l’ in gwa gwuklë. Txi elq txi txabîl. Txi gwanq tá loq! laj alab, loq! laj agwimq. Inkâ tá txi xmausila ëb li xxulel ëb l’ a tsulul a taq’alal. Tx’ in molk’la ta-gwî, txi ma ra, txi ma loq!, li gwagwimq, sä tá l’ a klabâ.

Gwank ìn út; t’ìn qlet gwib tx’ a gwû; gwaë út l’ in mayej, li gwut!sîuj l’ in pom, t’ìn xaqab sä xbeen l’ a t’ixot’xel a sululel; re-tali1 xsunulkil li usilal tx’ a banu gwe, aj ban naq a loq’ël a yuamîl.

Ma klë tá tx’ in klûl sä l’ a mu-hebal a klî-txëbal. T’ìn t’sama ìt tx’ a gwû, txi antxal in t’ixal, naq tx’ a kële tá li kawîlal gwoq gwuq! ; jë gwî l’ in musiq! . Xin a gwîl tá, xin a kaya tá, sä l’ in rail tîqob ; xa k’le tá xîmîal in t’ixol, t’ìn t’sama tx’ a gwû, at in nà in yugwâ.

Notes

txi xt’samankîl tx’ a gwe tx’ a gwî, ‘to beg of thee’; literally, ‘to beg to thy mouth to thy face.’ Ordinary speech would omit tx’ a gwû.

a gwuñîlâl, ‘thy favor,’ or ‘goodness.’ us is good, to some end, or toward somebody; txâbîl, good intrinsically.

k’îal, ‘might,’ or ‘grandeur.’ k’îal is the “appertaining” form of k’îî, grown, great, enlarged, ‘heaps,’ etc. Appertaining forms are frequently translatable by an English abstract; as here, ‘might.’

worshipful forest and the worshipful bush; to the end of my maintenance on the face of this earth.

And I desire the production and sowing, in thy earth and mud, of my food and drink. Let it turn out good. May there be goodly buds, goodly plants. May they not be injured by the animals of thy heights and hollows. And may I gather, without pain or cost, my crop, in thy name.

And here I am; I bow myself before thee; and lo, here my offering, my candle, my incense, that I set up and leave upon thy earth and mud; its fragrance a sign of the favor thou shalt do me, by reason of thy virtue and life.

May nothing befall me in thy shady places and forest places. And I beg of thee, with all my heart, that thou mayest give me vigor of foot and hand; also my breath. Mightest thou see me, mightest thou regard me, in my sore sweat; mightest thou give me stoutness of heart, I beg of thee, thou my mother, my father.
yola, 'arises'; or 'starts into existence,' 'is born.' yola, middle voice of yoob, 'set going,' etc.; from the root yo.

rik'in, 'respecting'; sometimes, 'with a view to'; generally, 'with' or 'at.' The fundamental sense of /ik'in is best rendered by the French chez.

in ketbal, 'my maintenance': ket, 'strike'; idiomatically, 'maintain.'

rutz, 'face of.' /utx, obsolescent form of /u.

a(g)wing, 'plants,' 'crops,' that which is planted. From the root aw, sow, plant.

xulel, 'animals of'; the "appertaining" form implies 'animal denizens of,' 'fauna.'

The following are the words of a curse:

Sä xklabä l' aj oxlaju xukub, oxlaju tsul-taq'la, jö gi li K lax-tok! :  
Txì xjunil eb li xul gwank eb xmay ; k!antì, ik!xux, txakbolay, hom, kaqgwal, k!lambolay, raxk!laj, q!an-ixiij ; multajenaq tå, tx' eb xmolob rib txì xjunil li xmay eb. Aq li k!opopö, kaq-tuhuy, teken, txì xjunil xtepaili eb li sank ; tx' eb xmoloban tå rib, txì xjunil l' aj may, txì xbeen a t!seqbetal gwinq aj —— ; sä tå li xbeenik ; li xgwa ruk!ä ; txì xotk!loq tå ; sä út xgwar!linik xk!ame tå ban l' Aj-tsa : 
T' in tiw a t!xotlix äin. Txì yaloq tå li t' in banu sä xbeen ; txì kehöq txì osöq sä xbeen ; at!samirq tå txì xjunil k!a gwank re ; ä tå li K!axtok! tå iiloq re. Kaaj äan t' in ye. Txì txupq txì osöq li xyuam.

In the name of him of thirteen horns, of thirteen hills and valleys, and of the Devil:

All the animals that have poison; snakes, (as) ik!xux, txakbolay hom, kaqgwal, k!lambolay, raxk!aj, q!an-ixiij; be they assembled, let all their poisons collect themselves. Also the toad, kaq-tuhuy, teken, the whole category of ants; may they collect themselves, all that have poison, upon that hateful man —— ; be it in his walks; in his food and drink; may he be choked; and in his slumbers might he be taken by the enemy: (For that) I bite this earth. What I am doing upon him may it come true; be it past and finished upon him; may everything that is his turn salt; may the Devil see to it. Only that shall I say. Let his life be quenched and ended.
Notes

*ik*ixux...*q*lan-ixiij*; certain snakes, for which I have no English names.

*kaq-tuhuy, teken*; certain ants, for which I have no English names.

*tepali*, ‘category,’ or ‘inclusion,’ from *tep*, ‘field,’ ‘precinct,’ ‘area.’ *Txi xjunil xtepali* is just the translation of Milton’s ‘total kind of’:

“. . . as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,” etc.

*(Parad. Lost, Bk. vi.*)

*t!seqbetal*, ‘hateful,’ or ‘despicable’; ultimately from *t!seq*, ‘cast away,’ ‘pitch out.’ A place where filth and refuse were thrown would be a *t!seqbetal.*

*aj* — — — ; here the victim’s name is to be mentioned.

*xotkloq*, ‘be choked’; by something in the throat, not round the neck.

*xk!ame td*, ‘might he be taken.’ The perfect (*x*), with *td*, is equivalent to the Spanish “imperfect subjunctive”; ‘¡Ojalá que fuera cojido!’

*l’ Aj-tsa*, ‘the Enemy’; or, loosely, ‘the Devil.’

*T*’ in *tiw*; here the speaker gets down and bites the ground.

*yaloq*, ‘come true,’ or ‘be realized’; from *yal*, ‘true,’ ‘real.’

*li t’ in banu*, ‘what I am doing’; not these imprecations only, but also the accompanying magic; as going three times round the victim’s house; burying a candle head-down in the direction of the door; burying images of beeswax, stuck full of thorns; etc.

*kehöq*, ‘be past,’ literally ‘grow cold,’ i.e., be utterly over and done. *kehö*, Carchá for *keö*, with intrusive *h*. *ke*, cold.

*atlsamirq*, ‘turn salt,’—formed like *memir*, ‘turn dumb’; *yajer*, ‘fall sick’; etc. The inceptive ending in *r* is less usual than that in *ö*, seen in *keö*, just above.
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klaxtok!, 'Devil'; doubtless the name of some once dreaded deity. Curiously, as in other languages, there is a frequent avoidance of the full name; as in the common asseration 'Na xnaw li Klax,' 'The Deuce knows it' (i. e., it is positively true).

'Only that shall I say,' i. e., 'I shall say no more.'

The following is a sample of the quaint language of medicine talk. The doctor speaks to the sickness, or to the evil principle of it:

Gwalal txin li bolay, nim li bolay, gwan in kli, gwan in may; 
äin l' aj nă, äin l' aj gwă, 
naq t' in txup xxamlel a gwe, 
xxamlel a gwu, 
naq t' in satx a kli a may.

Bar! xat siä, bar! xat yola?
Rubel li saq i palaw, rax i palaw.
Bar! pë xa taw kat!xin a kli, kat!xin a may?
Sä xjukub xbalan ke.

Äin l'aj nă, äin l'aj gwă, 
naq t' in tuqub a gwe, t' in tuqub a gwu, 
naq t' in txup xxamlel a gwe, 
xxamlel a gwu, 
naq t' in satx a kli a may.

Jun raxal tsul, jun raxal taq!a!
Kat!xin kli l' a gwe, kat!xin kli l' a gwu, 
t' in töon txaq.
Oxlaju tx' ajgwal roq i hä!

Son of mine is the small bolay and the great bolay, 
I have power, I have poison; 
I am thy mother, I am thy father, [one of authority] to quench thy fires, to extinguish thy fires, to annul thy power and thy poison.

Where wast thou begotten, where wast thou born?
Under the white sea, the blue sea.
Where gottest thou thy little power, thy little poison?
In the canoe of the demon of the cold.
I am thy mother, I am thy father, to still thee, to quiet thee,
to quench the fire that is thine, the fire that is thine, to destroy thy power and thy poison.

A green hill, a green valley [I invoke]! 
a little of thy might, a little of thy power, shall I borrow.
Thirteen potent water courses! [I invoke them]
xtxupbal xxamlel a gwe, xtxupbal xxamlel a gwu, sà loq! laj kutan, sà loq! laj sa-qink, naq t' in tseq a k'î a may.

Oxlahju tsul, oxlahju taqa!a!
Ar'lan xtxal xmay a gwe, xmay a gwu,
txi ru jun tx' ajgwal palaw;
ta gwap a gwe, ta gwap a gwu,
txi oxlahju tsul, txi oxlahju taqa!a,
tx' ajgwal kik!, tx' ajgwal qa'lan-hâ,
t' in txup xxamlel a gwe, xxamlel a gwu,
t' in satx a k'î a may.

to quench the fires of thee,
to quench the fires of thine,
in the holy day, in the holy time-of-light,
that I cast out thy power and thy poison.

Thirteen hills, thirteen valleys!
Thence cometh thy poison, thy poison,
over a mighty sea;
I blow in thy mouth, I blow in thy face,
with thirteen hills, with thirteen valleys,
with potent blood, with potent 'lymph,'
I quench thy fires, I extinguish thy fires,
I annihilate thy power and thy poison.

Notes

'Son of mine,' etc. The doctor gives an alarming account of himself; the most deadly snakes are his children; he has formidable attributes, and warns the sickness that he is more than a match for it.

t!xin li bolay, nim li bolay; modern speech would say 't!xin a bolay, nim la bolay.' T!xin and nim are among the few common adjectives which retain the primitive "predicate-subject" form of words, even when not really predicates, but attributes; most words used attributively have an "attributive inflexion," the débris of the original article or similar word (li, i, la, a, etc.); but with t!xin and nim the form of the article persists, though its meaning is gone. Kekchî shows plainly, in various ways, that the "attributive" relation was not an independent device, but was evolved from the "predicate" relation.

bolay. In the modern language bolay is not found as a defi-
nite word, but only in composition, in the names of half a dozen snakes, of which the largest and most dreaded is the *ik'-bolay*, Sp. *vibora*.

*gwank*, in Cobán, would be ‘*gwan*’; ‘there is my power,’ etc.; French *il-y-a*.

*may*, ‘poison,’ especially the venom of snakes, scorpions, ants, etc.

*āin*, ‘I’; identical in form with *āin*, ‘this.’ *Āin*, *āat*, etc., are “intensive” pronouns, not to be confounded with the usual emphatic pronouns *lain*, *laat*, etc. The former begin with the intensive particle *ā*; the latter with an obsolete form (*la*) of the article.

*l' aij nā* . . . *l' aij gwā*, ‘thy mother, thy father’; i. e., I have authority over thee. Cajabón style, for *l' a nā*, *l' a yugwā*, of Cobán and Carchá.

*xxamərel a gwe, xxamərel a gwu*; literally, ‘fire of thy mouth, fire of thy face.’ In archaic language, ‘face’ and ‘mouth’ are taken to describe the person, and make a sort of double pronoun. As English has no two ways of saying ‘thee,’ etc., I attempt to render the Indian repetition by varying the English verb ‘quench,’ and ‘extinguish,’ and so elsewhere.

*xamərel*, ‘fire proper to’ (thee)—“appertaining” form of *xaməl*, ‘fire.’

*satx*, ‘annul,’ or ‘destroy,’ ‘ruin,’ ‘annihilate,’ ‘cancel.’ The prime meaning of *satx* is ‘lose’; or ‘be lost,’ ‘perish’; ‘*naq t* in *satx,*’ literally ‘*when I shall annul.*’

‘Where wast thou begotten,’ etc. The sickness is further overawed. Its antecedents are shown to be no mystery to the doctor; he disparages its powers and repeats his threats.

*Bar! xat sia*; more literally ‘where hast thou been begotten.’ Kekchi, like French, is partial to the perfect, frequently using it where English prefers the aorist, ‘wast.’ So elsewhere. The form *sia* is middle, as well as active. The active substantive
(answering to our "infinitive") is siانk; regular. It should be said that sia, in precise language, would refer to a female progenitor, and might be rendered 'conceived.'

*palau, 'sea'; or any very large lake. The word curiously resembles the Latin *palus*. 'White sea, blue sea'; not two seas, but two descriptions of it. So Homer speaks of the sea as hoary and also wine-colored.

*pe*. This untranslatable particle gives a very conversational air to the question.

*balam*, 'demon,' 'presiding genius;' Latin *numen*. The principle of the sickness comes from a magic sea in a magical canoe.

*t' in *tuqub a *gwe, t' in tuqub a *gweu*; in ordinary language it would be t' at in *tuqub, 'I shall quiet thee.' See note to *xxamlel a *gwe*, etc., p. 449.

*A green hill, a green valley*, etc. The doctor calls on the deities of the hills and streams; turning again to the sickness, in the last four lines.

*Oxlaju*. Thirteen is a favorite number in medicine-talk.

*ajgwal*, 'potent,' or 'lordly.' The Almighty is also usually described as 'Nim ajgwal'; but otherwise the word is not current.

*loq!, 'holy.' These medical rites are sacred in a way, and give something of that character to the time of their performance. (See note, p. 443.)

*Thirteen hills, thirteen valleys*, etc. Again the doctor calls upon the name of the *Tsul-taq\!a* (represented as a godhead of thirteen), being the prime source of all mysterious powers; from thence, too, the sickness has come, by way of the sea, already mentioned. The thirteen hills enter into the doctor, and with their magical fluids of life he breathes on the sickness and annihilates it.

*txi ru*, 'over,' or 'along the face of.'

*gwap*, apocopated from gwapu, like ban for banu ('do'); *apu, 'blow.'
ta gwap a gwe, ta gwap a gwu; here the doctor actually blows on the patient's body. Sometimes, as here, the literal translation 'mouth' and 'face' may be tolerated, though the expression means simply 'I blow on thee'; in modern phrase, t'at gwapu.

*kik!* . . . *q'an-hä*, 'blood' . . . 'lymph'; *q'an-hä*, literally, 'yellow-water.' These are the two bodily fluids recognized in medicine-talk.

Again, the doctor sometimes feels the patient's pulse, and talks to the vein:

Ratinankil a gwe, ratinankil a gwu,
gwalal t!xin la it!x, nim la it!x, k!ä xa k!ul, k!ä xa töon ?
K!ä xat sumenk ?
Ye ! ajgwal kik!, ajgwal q!an-hä !
Ye txaq !
B' a muq a gwib, b' a balab a gwib, naq na gwatina a gwe, na gwatina a gwu,
sä loq! laj kutan, sä loq! laj sa-qink,
naq t' in satx a k!i a may.

Ink!ä xa naw bar! xin txal,
xin yokbak txaq :
Oxlaju tsul, oxlaju taq!a !
naq na 'n txap a gwe, na 'n txap a gwu,

Speaking unto thee, speaking unto thee,
lesser vein, or greater vein, my son,
what has befallen thee, what (harm)
hast thou borrowed?
How answerest thou?
Tell it! mighty blood, mighty lymph!
Out with it!
Hide not thyself, seek no ambush,
when I speak to thee, when I speak to thy face,
in the holy day, in the holy time-of-light,
that I destroy thy power and thy poison.

Thou knowest not whence I am come,
(nor where) I have passed:
Thirteen hills, thirteen valleys! [I invoke]
as I seize thee, as I seize thee,

Selections like the foregoing may please the antiquary; and no pains have been spared to make the text right. But such
pieces are not samples of the language any more than nursery rhymes, perhaps, would be samples of current English.

For the better observation of Kekchi in continued discourse, the writer caused translations to be made from Spanish books. The following paragraphs are part of a treatise on tobacco-planting; translated by the most competent of Indians, Tiburcio Caal, of Cobán. His language is not a slavish imitation of the Spanish, and not so wordy. But attention to the Indian will show that nothing is lost.

Traspante.
Aunque el tabaco crece en todos los terrenos, sin embargo las tierras mas apropiadas son las húmedas, suaves, y que contengan al propio tiempo una pequeña cantidad de barro.

Las siembras que se hacen en los terrenos secos, por lo regular no producen mas que un solo corte; mientras que en lugares húmedos, por lo común, se logran dos ó tres; siempre que se practiquen las siembras en sus fechas apropiadas.

El terreno que se va á sembrar debe removerse profundamente de antemano; y cuando se le puede majalear, se obtendrá una hoja tan lúcida y desarrollada como la del distinguido tabaco de Tabasco, competidor de las mejores calidades de la isla de Cuba.

La siembra se practica por surcos, de vara y media, ó vara y cuarta de calle, por tres cuartas de espacio entre mata y mata, en los terrenos muy feraces, y de media vara en los menos feraces.

Yalbanaaj.
Us tá na k'li na yú li may txi ru txi xjunil éb li txot!x, kaj án li tsaqal tsaqal xt!xot!xel à li rax tx!xot!x, poq tx!xot!x, jö na gwan gwi kat!xin áq gawkab tx!xot!x.

Li awk na ux sá txaqi tx!xot!x, txoltxo naq jun gwa káj na txotman; ã út li na awman sá rax tx!xot!x, náno naq ká gwa, ox gwa, na tx!xotë, gwi na awman sá li tsaqal xkutankil.

Li naajej bar! ta uxq gwi li awk, junxil áj na txamöbr'esiman ruq'linkil; ut naq na xkle rib xpopqlenkil, na etxaniman li q'axal xninqal kolut rib qleen jö li sik!bil ru may na el sá Tabasco, q'axom ru li numtjenaq txaq!al pay na el sá xyi-há-t!xot!x Cuba.

Li awk na k!leman txi tsol; gwan xkäb vara gwi út öob klutub be na kana; ut na k!leman oxib klutub xyank li junq ton, bar! xq!em tx!xot!x; bar! ink!á, käib klutub tsaqal.
Maji áq tiklaaq li awk, na hopman li xjulel txi kok! q'esnal txë, gwan rox min xtxamal, na kéman txi ru li rinrokil kłam k'lutul re li xtsolam.

Na ru xtíkibankil li awk naq na gulak lajeeb gwi käblaju xxaq li muun, jò xjalamutx jun txi nim la tumín peso ru. Àin na ru xbanunkil jò naq yo li háb; gwi út inkłá yo, na ru xkanajik re roibeninkil naq ta kubeeq moqon.

Gwi na kana txi butlabil xton li agwinmq olaju kutan junxil áj txi ru xraqik li háb, na tikla txi klíik txi xhelbal rib sa xgwankil li xtxu-ke na kube txi ru li q'olq'oyin.

Nabal xyalal sá li awk txi klemänq xxë li agwinmq jun tik na ilok taqla; re bì út åan, txi muqmanq raj ton toj txi gulaq jun pak'ál li xbeen käib txi xaq; toj jò náq txi kelomanq kat'xin áq taqeq, txi nat!manq út txi us rikin uq'lej.

Kä-agwinq k. Ka-hib òob áq kutan xnumik li awk na il man jar! ton ná x kam, re xkä-agwinq kil txi tsol raj tsol.

Us tá txan ru na t!xolaniman li muun, inkłá na moq txi jun-taq-et; tento xbanunkil, jò sá li awk, jò sá li kä-agwib, gwi jun ka-xukut, gwi út jun manzana, txi awmanq muun jun áj xtxamal.

Antes de comenzar la siembra, se practican con estaca los agujeros, dándole dos y media pulgada de profundidad, sobre un cordel que designe las lineas de los surcos.

La siembra se puede comenzar desde que el almacigo tiene de diez á doce hojas, cuyo vuelo contiene entonces el diámetro de la moneda de un peso fuerte; procurando hacer esta operación en los días de lluvias, y suspendiéndola en los que no llueva, para proseguirla al volver las aguas.

En quedando calzada la siembra quince días antes que se retiren las lluvias la planta continúa su desarrollo á merced del sereno de las noches.

Es muy interesante en la siembra el que la raíz quede perfectamente recta hacia abajo; para lo cual, se enterrará toda mata un poco mas de las dos primeras hojas, dándole un pequeño jalón en seguidas hacia arriba, y amacizándola fuertemente con las manos.

Resiembra.

Después de los cuatro ó cinco días posteriores á la siembra, se pueden reconocer ya todas las matas que hayan muerto, para practicar la resiembra surco por surco.

Como, á pesar de cualquier esmero, los almacigos nacen dispares, deberá procurarse, tanto en la siembra como en la resiembra, que las cuadras, ó manzanas, se practiquen con almacigo de igual tamaño.
Aq'ink.

Txalen sá li awk tixto sá li sikloki, na ru raqlikal li agwimq, jö txi sá, jö txi xklatq, re naq b'e' tam li motsö; junes li may txi k'lamoq xgwankil li t'xot!x, jö gwi txi xmusiq!a xgwankil li iq!.

Gwan t'xot!x bar! kä gwa káj na ux gwi li aq'ink; ut li t!saqal t'xolt!xo txi xtepap na raj oxib raq'linal, ramro kahib ùt gwi t'xik sá jun tenel.

But!baton.

Txi rix li xbeen aq'lin, sá xk!lebal li xkai-numik, na but!man xton li agwimq, ä yal gwi txi xjunqal, gwi út txi tsol.

Kapunink.

Naq na gulak käblaju gwi kal-ažu xtxabil xaq txi xjuni, sá jumpat na ru xkapuninkil.

Gwi gwan xtonal q!axal lub-k!am-kli eb, kaj gwi rusk!ul gwaq-xaqib xxaq na ru xkanabankil; ut li t!saqal yal-k!am-kli lajeeb áj na kanabaman; käblaju re li num-tajenaq k!am-kli.

Gwi na kanabaman bay-us xxaq li junq ton, jun-taq-et áj gwi na xik elq sá li xplisbal, ä ban ink!ä ning, txi mako txabil.

Isink motsö.

Txi xjar!-payil ru li pepem gwan, ma jun äq us re li may, ban áan nak eb molbek nak eb xk!ula li xt!seqom txi ru éb li xxaq;

Limpia (i.e., Hoeing, etc.).

Desde la siembra hasta la cosecha, debe mantenerse limpia la sementera y sus inmediaciones; para evitar la abundancia del gusano; y que solamente el tabaco aproveche los elementos de la tierra y de la atmósfera.

En algunos terrenos bastan solamente dos limpias; más en la generalidad se requieren tres 'raspados,' y en algunos pocos, cuatro.

Calsa (Earthing up).

Después de la primera limpie, y al practicarse la segunda, debe calzarse la plantación, ya sea á cada mata de por sí, ó bien llevando dola por surcos.

Descogollado (Topping).

Teniendo ya todas las matas de doce á catorce hojas buenas, debe entonces practicarse el descogollado.

A las matas endebles se les dejan ocho hojas solamente; á las medianas diez; y á las mas robustas doce.

Cuando se deja ó las matas mayor numero de hojas, producen el mismo resultado final de peso, pero se tienen hojas de poco desarrollo y lucimiento.

Desgusanado.

Toda clase de mariposa es nociva al tabaco, por cuanto que ella deposita en sus hojas los óvulos de las larvas, que naciendo con
jumpat nak eb moq, nak eb ilok kutan, nak eb tsakan txi ru xxaq li may.

Txan tá ru yo xtxapbal li pepem rajlal kutan, gwan gwi txik kli la t!xol re q!oq!yoin; jök án naq inklä na ru xkanajik jun kutan áq rilbal xmotsoïl, jö rajlal tsol, jö rajlal ton.

Naq na tam li q!oq!yoinil pepem, jö gwi li pompor!i sá li agwimq, us xklebal nabal aq xam txi ru q!oq!yin, txi xjunil sá li awbil, re naq ar!an tx’ ul eb kamq txi xtep-al eb li pepem.

Li raxjoin rix motsö, ‘primavera’ xk!abä, ãan li q!asal na xkle rib xtxapbal, ban jun elik gwan txi xkutankil, jö txi xsal, jö txi ru li may.

Ut li xkäb motsö, gwan jun xuküb txi xpekem, mako num rax tá rix, ‘cogollero’ xk!abä, jun elik na tawman sá xt!sunt!sunuuj li may, bar! na xkabla na xhop gwi li rotxotx.

Eb li yal saqtuxujin rix motsö, yobtesimbil xban eb li pompor!il pepem, inklä nabal nak eb xk!ut rib txi kutan jö tá txi ru q!oq!yin, ban nak eb xmuq rib sá t!xot!x naq na el li saq!le.

Jun txi gwinq na ru na molk!ank re li pepem jö gwi li motsö, sá xkäpak!al tsol, jun tsol txi xnim uq!, jö gwi jun tsol txi xt!se.
etc.

The vocabulary of Kekchi is abundant. The expression is clear, rapid, and versatile. For dealing with matters of fact, the mucha violencia se alimentan y viven á espensas de las hojas del tabaco.

Mas como á pesar de todo el cuidado que puede tenerse por perseguir las mariposas, las hay nocturnas y de muchas variedades; es indispensable la operación del desgusanado diario, surco por surco y mata por mata.

Cuando la mariposa nocturna abunda, es conveniente distribuir bastantes lumbres por las noches en la plantación, en las cuales vienen á morir cantidades de mariposas.

El gusano llamado ‘primavera,’ de un color verde esmeralda, es más fácil de cojer; pues siempre se encuentra visible por cualquier parte de la planta.

El ‘cogollero,’ de un color verde más claro, con un cuerno en la frente, se encuentra siempre en el propio cogollo de la mata, donde labra su agujero de habitación.

Los gusanos de color gris, procedentes de las mariposas nocturnas, muy pocas veces se les encuentra de día, como por la noche, y se esconden en la tierra á la salida del sol.

Una sola persona puede llevar la collecta de mariposas, y el desgusanado, en dos surcos á la vez, por derecha é izquierda.

etc.
language of the Indians suffers little by European comparison; it is much their most respectable monument.

III. TWO LOST NUMERALS

The words for counting from one to twenty are as follows:

1, jun; 2, käib (originally, kăbib); 3, oxib; 4, käib; 5, öob; 6, gwaqib; 7, gwaqib; 8, gwaqxaqib; 9, beleeb; 10, lajeb; 11, junlaju; 12, kăblaju; 13, oxlaju; 14, kălaju; 15, ölaju; 16, gwaqlaju; 17, gwaqlaju; 18, gwaqxaqlaju; 19, belelaju; 20, jun-may.

The word may means tobacco, which is always made into parcels of twenty leaves. Hence the term jun-may, 'one score.'

Counting goes on by scores; but the name may is replaced by kăl: kä-kăl, second score (40); ox-kăl, third score (60); kä-kăl, fourth score (80); ö-kăl, fifth score (100); belelaju kăl, nineteenth score (380). For twentieth score the name is not jun-may kăl, but jun oglob, 'one 400'; and successive periods of 400 give the series: käib oglob, 2 x 400; oxib oglob, 3 x 400; belelaju oglob, 19 x 400; jun-may oglob, 20 x 400 (8000); and so onward indefinitely in the modern language, the oglob begin the highest unit extant.

But higher units there once were; at least so it appears from a Kekchi manuscript found a few years ago by the present writer in the sequestered village of Cajabón.

The manuscript is a body of sermons, of the missionary sort, with stories from the Old Testament. It comprises seventy folio pages; but the beginning and end are missing, and the date is unknown. The author, whoever he was, preaches against idols of wood and stone, as if they were yet worshipped. The language represents the style of Cajabón, and shows many archaic forms and some words which are quite forgotten—in particular, two numerals, txuy and kalab.

Instead of saying jun-may oglob, as above, the manuscript says jun txuy, 'one 8000 '; and the txuy remains the major unit
up to belelaju txuy, 19 x 8000. And arriving at 20 x 8000, the term shown is jun kalab, 'one 160,000.'

The scheme is obvious. European counting gives simple names to the early powers of ten, as the English 'ten,' 'hundred,' 'thousand,' and the Greek 'myriad' (the fourth power). And twenty being the base of the Indian scale, fresh names come in with fresh powers of 20: kāl (or may), 20; oglob, 20 x 20; txuy, 20 x 20 x 20; kalab, 20 x 20 x 20 x 20.

The words kāl and oglob have no etymology in the language; and neither has txuy. Txuy may have been ttxuy (with the violent t!, and the vowel long or short); chui is the spelling of the manuscript. The word which it spells calab is likewise indefinite; the c might mean k or k!, q or q!. But calling it k allows a very plausible etymology.

Connected with the words al, 'young,' ala, 'bring forth,' etc., there is a word alab, meaning 'birth, product of birth, litter, new growth,' etc.; as in saying Xkā alab āin, 'This (is) her fourth birth.' It is easy to think that the numeral 'calab' is kālab, by contraction for kā alab, 'fourth birth,' 'fourth product' — of 20, understood.

The arithmetical reader, not versed in these languages, would fancy, from what has been seen, that a notation like the Arabic might be adapted to Indian — writing 10 for jun-may, 20 for kā-kāl, 30 for ox-kāl, 100 for jun-oglob, and so on. The attempt fails, owing to the Indian description of intermediate numbers.

To write '66' would answer to saying '3 score and 6'; but in Indian it is '6 of the fourth score.' The score mentioned is not the score behind, but that in which the remnant lies. 21 is called '1 of the second score' (jun xkā kāl); 39 is called '19 of the second score' (belelaju xkā kāl); 41 is called '1 of the third score' (jun rox kāl); 286 is called '6 of the fifteenth score' (gwaqib rōlaju kāl), the fifteenth score (ōlaju kāl) being complete at 300. And so on. The Indian way of
speaking tells where a number lies, but without representing it as a sum of parts, as we do.

The original notion of a number, in Kekchi, is not that of an aggregate, but of a point in the stages of a series. And in fact the simplest numerals of Kekchi are found in serial expressions, answering as near as may be to our ‘2nd,’ ‘3rd,’ ‘4th,’ ‘5th,’ etc.; as may be seen above. In the terms xkä, rox, xka, rö, the numeral forms employed are not kä(b)ib, oxib, etc., but the primitive kä(b), ox, kā, ö. For reasons of grammar they get a certain “possessive” prefix here; r before a vowel, x before a consonant.

Passing 400, a number is said further to lie in such and such an oq?ob: 401 is ‘1 of the second 400’ (jun xkäb oq?ob); 420 is ‘1 score of the second 400’ (jun-may xkäb oq?ob); 425 is ‘5 of the second score, of the second 400’ (oob xkä k!al, xkäb oq?ob); 825 is ‘5 of the second score, of the third 400’ (oob xkä k!al, rox oq?ob).

And the Cajabón manuscript continues the method with the txuy and kalab. The highest number it mentions is kā txuy, rö kalab, ‘fourth 8000 of the fifth 160,000,’ i.e., 672,000 — being the number of sheep taken by the Israelites after a battle (Numbers, xxxi, 32). The authorized version says 675,000. The writer of the manuscript had no care to be exact; here and elsewhere he takes an Indian round number, near enough to the mark. 675,000, exactly, would be lajeeb k!al, xgaqxaq oq?ob, rö txuy, rö kalab, ‘10 score, of the eighth 400, of the fifth 8000, of the fifth 160,000.’

With the kalab the way is plain for nineteen steps, ending with belelaju kalab, 19 x 160,000, or 3,040,000. The next new name we should expect would come with the fifth power of 20, or 3,200,000 — if Indian arithmetic had reached it.

IV. INDIAN SURNAMES

The Kekchi have hereditary surnames, some with a meaning in the language and some without. The latter may have a mean-
ing in some other language. It is easy to think that if lists of Central American surnames could be compared they might furnish a very substantial index to the movements and mixtures of these tribal groups.

I go on to present a collection of the surnames of the people who now speak Kekchi. Surnames, like other words, accent the last vowel. Long vowels are marked.

First, the surnames which have the sound of Kekchi words, or roots, and may be taken to have the meaning of them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Kekchi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Akté, new.</td>
<td>Kej, the large gray deer of the hot lands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akté, Span.</td>
<td>K'ib, the edible part of any sort of palm, the green shoot of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Äqam, Span.</td>
<td>K'il, earthen pan (for baking tortillas), Span. 'comal.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asij, a sort of cicada.</td>
<td>K'ilim, straw; thatch.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ax, a tree, valuable for its hard red wood.</td>
<td>K'oj, mask (of wood, for the face used in various dances).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ba, Span. 'taltuza,' a sort of mole.</td>
<td>Kok, tortoise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bag, bone.</td>
<td>K'oy, chew; (2) chewing-gum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bat's, monkey.—Span. 'mono.'</td>
<td>Kuk, squirrel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwuq, seven.</td>
<td>Kum, root of kumub, stub, cut short, break off short (an extremity). kumku, stubbed, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho, dung, filth, etc. (a word used in speaking to children; not among grown people).</td>
<td>— (Not k'un, a squash.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hol, root of holhe, bulging, sticking out (as the eyes of a frog, etc.).</td>
<td>Kus, root of kusu, round, globose, (of persons) 'potato-headed.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hor!, root of hortob, etc., bore (a hole) through.</td>
<td>Luk, root of lukul, hanging double, hanging over (as a snake on a stick, or a tablecloth)—luk-ub, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik, chile (peppers).</td>
<td>Maqs, pumice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's, root of it'sib, crack (as the sun cracks wood)—it'so, etc.</td>
<td>Max, Span. 'mico,' a species of monkey; (2) a weevil, in corn, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ixim, Indian corn in grain.</td>
<td>May, poison; tobacco.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolom, head.</td>
<td>Mes, wipe, scrub.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuk, root of juku, drag along.</td>
<td>Mú, Span. 'guacamaya,' a large particolored parrot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fukub, canoe.</td>
<td>Kakaw, cacao.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kakaw, cacao.</td>
<td>K'anti; snake.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Klantí, snake. | }
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1. five.

Pan, Span. 'cucharón,' a sort of toucan.

Pap, a green bird of the hot land about the bigness of a pigeon.

Pek, stone.

Pix, knot; wart; tomato.

Pojoj, ' substantive' form of poj, fling, fling away, fling down.

—(Not poj, sew.)

Pók, Span. 'miltomate,' a plant with much small fruit, used as a vegetable, like tomatoes.

Pom, roast; (2) any gum, etc., burnt as incense.

Póp, mat, woven of straw.

Poq, name given to powdery magnesian limestone, or any similar looking deposit; (2) a tree, from which a bluish dye is had.

—(Not poq', disembowel.)

Q'an, yellow.

Q:een, herb, any edible or medicinal leaf, or berry.

Q!ol, bead, necklace; (2) sticky gum (exuding from trees); (3) reap (Indian corn).

Rax, green, blue (the name includes both colors).

Sakil, the seed of plants like melons, squashes, etc.

Sam, snot.

Sèb, clay.—(Not sèb, light).

Sèl, sort of pumpkin, of which the shell is used as a vessel to hold tortillas.

Sì, firewood.

Sís, Span. 'pisote,' a small animal, easily tamed as a pet.

Sot's, bat (the animal).

Sub, a thorn tree, with leaves like the mimosa, but not sensitive.

Toh!, flint.

T'l, slap, pat (a child, a dog, etc.).

T'salam, prison.

T'sí, dog.

T'simadaj, Span. 'yerba de coche,' a grass.

Tsir!, strike (fire, from a flint, etc.).

Ts'ub, suck; kiss.

Ts'uk!, stop at a stand, halt stock-still.

Ts'ul, plait.—(Not tsül, hill.)

T'suy, root of tsuytsu, dried up (as fruits drying up before maturity)—tsuyub, etc.—middle, tsuya.

Tun, a hollow cylindrical wooden instrument of music.

Tux, this is the Cobán form of tuxm, sprout, twig.

T'xalib, there is a tree of this name.

Txe, tree.—(Not tixe, touch).

T'exen, mosquito.

T'xiq, name of a place where the forage plant, aq, grows.

T'xo, mouse.

T'xoy, finish.

T'xub, wasp.

T'xun, lime.

Xal, gap or pass (between hills); fork (of a tree, of a road), etc.

Xaq, leaf; (2) root of xaqab, set upright, xaqxo, standing, etc.

Xe, root.

Xol, flute (musical instrument).

Xoy, there is a weed of this name.

Xuk, corner, angle.

Yät, fly (insect).

Yat'ts, squeeze.

Yoq, root of yoqle, or yojob, etc., rattle, shake together.
Only nine surnames above are identified with mere roots. The number is small, for the reason that most Kekchi roots occur also as definite words. Of course, in the foregoing list, some of the surnames may really have nothing to do with the words they simulate, but the identity is more or less plausible.

We now come to the surnames which cannot so be identified. Some of them contain no suggestion of meaning; again, like many English surnames, they may often be broken into syllables, one or more of them susceptible of meaning. And some of them are like puns. Blind and stumbling as such suggestions may be, yet to let the reader judge, I have thought it worth while to notice all that I could gather:

- Agwaleb.
- Ak’al; k’al, cornfield.
- Ak’al’ha; h’a, water.
- Amaleb.
- Ayu (not ayu! ‘go!’); yu, grow, lengthen.
- Batew, there is a hamlet of this name, but it has no meaning.
- Bin.
- Bô.
- Bol (not bôl, cylinder, etc.).
- Botok (not bot’sok, substantive form of bot’s, extract, pull out).
- Bûts.
- Esem.
- Gwaliib; gwa, food, tortilla.—/alib, daughter-in-law; gwaliib, my daughter-in-law.
- Gwalibat; gwaliib at, thou art my daughter-in-law.
- Gwalna; gwal, my son; na, perhaps.
- Gwegwe; gwe, my mouth.
- Gwits.
- Hub (not jub, fetch a blow at).
- Huk (not juk; see last list).
- Hun (not jun, one).
- Ibaj, the names of some animals begin with i, as inul, rabbit; iboy, armadillo.
- Ik’al; kilal, cornfield.
- Ikö; ik, chile; ö, five; kö, sweet-heart (if used by a man), daughter (if used by a woman).
- Itx (not it!x, vein).
- Itxitx.
- Jalal; jal, change.
- Jolomna; jolom, head; na, perhaps.
- Kabnal; kab, sweet (-meat).
- K’ajhom, this is also the name of the town which the Spanish, corruptly, call ‘Cajabón.’ k’aj, Indian-corn meal.
- Kakinam.
- Klätun, see Tun, last list.
- Kâw (not kâw, hard).
- Kînitx, cf. itx, above.
- Kl’u.
- Kugwâ; gwâ, father, sir.
Kuku'ul; k'ul, receive; kuku'mu, feather.
Maa; mä, 'mister'; /as, elder brother of.
Ma'kin.
Maxen; Max, see last list.
Muk'u; mu, shadow; muk!, root of muk'mu, drooping; etc.; /u, face of.
Oxom; ox, three.
Paa'aw; aw, sow.
Pak'ul; yu', anoint, smear.
Panä; pan, see last list; nā, mother. In compounds, hā, water, is often reduced to ā; nimā for nim-hā.
Paqay (not pākay, a certain fruit).
Pëpt!.
Pōow; pō, rot.
P'ulum.
Q'āal; al, young, boy.
Q'ag.
Sagwi; gwi, where.
Sakba; ba, see last list.
Sakul.
Saqi; saq, white.
Saqij.
Saqrab; /ab, hammock; rab, his hammock.
Tagaj (not Taq'laj, Mazatenango);
  ta qaj, we desire it.
Tëk.
Teni; te, open; ten, hammer.
Teyul, cf. Pak'ul above.
T'ul.
T'lot!.
T'lox.

Tsib (not t'sīb, root of t'sība, write).
T'siboy; boy, genital parts of the female.
Tsok! (not t'sōk, root of t'sōkak, be hungry).
Tsunhā; tsun, root of tsuntsu, quiet, stealthy; hā, water.
Tūt.
Tupil (not connected with tul, break, snap).
Txamam; txa, ashes; txam, deep; /mam, grandchild of.
Txe'n.
Txe'n (not the T!xe'n of last list).
Txikin, begins like the name of a place, with the preposition txi.
Txoj.
T'xok (not t'xøq!, cloud).
T'xok'ojoj.
Txol'm (not t'xol'm, of t'xol, clear, make plain, etc.).
Txor, there is a word txornak, urinate with difficulty.
T'xuhun, or t'uxun (not t'xun, a certain fruit; nor txun, see last list).
Ukum; kum, see last list.—(uk is not uk!, drink.)
Ul.
Xi.
Xo, an exclamation; Xo! means Silence!
Xux, might be identified with xuxb, whistle, by dropping the final b.
Valibat, cf. Gwalibat, above.
Yaxkal; yax, pincers (of crabs, etc.).

The sounds of all these surnames, and the possible meanings, in both lists, have been scrutinized by competent Indians.
list, as it happens, comprises 87 surnames, 174 in all. I believe my collection is nearly, if not quite, complete.

It may be added that most places in the Kekchi country have Kekchi names, frequently taken from some plant or animal about the place. But some principal town-names have no meaning:

*Klajbom*, Cajabón (see *Klajbom*, last list).  
*Koban*, Cobán (see *Ikó*, last list).

*Kartxa*, Carchá (*kar*, fish; *txa*, ashes).


Dr Stoll erroneously gives *Carchá* as meaning 'fish-ashes.' If the word meant anything in Kekchi, it would be the name of some fish, 'ash-fish.' But there is no such fish.

And there is no Kekchi meaning in the names of certain venerable mountains: though spoken of with the Kekchi prefixes *má* (old man, 'mister'), *xáan* (old woman, 'mistress'):

*Xáan itsam*, northwest of Cajabón.  
*Má kojaj*, north of Carchá.  
*Má siyab*, west of Senahú.  
*Má xukanab*, southeast of Cobán.

A few foreign towns are known by names which are neither Kekchi nor the names adopted by the Spanish: Poqom, *Chinautla*; Taqlaj, Mazatenango; Xelajü, Quezaltenango.