

A Mayan Version of the Adam and Eve Story

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Author 1 collected this story during her first visit to Tulum, Quintana Roo, Mexico, during the summer of 1990. She was conducting a pre-dissertation field study in Tulum Pueblo, located just a few miles from the Mayan site of Tulum. Tulum—hereafter referring to the town, unless otherwise specified—had grown from about 200 people in 1970 to 2000 in 1990. Both the town and the archeological site have been important for descendants of the Caste War of Yucatan (1847-1902). Due to events related to the Caste War, the culture and history of these Mayas differs from other Yucatec-Mayas, especially with respect to religion. Their religious organization (Mayan church) falls outside of the Roman Catholic Church and has often been characterized by conflict with it. Religious beliefs and ideology are and have been central to their political movement and social organization and continue to be significant today, especially as they encounter non-Catholic evangelical missionaries.

When I, Author I, first arrived in Tulum, it was difficult to meet Mayan descendants of the Caste War because they had mixed feelings about foreigners and were only about ten per cent of the population. One day I met a man whose wife, Doña Paulina Balam Catzín, was the daughter of the most important woman in the local Mayan church. Doña Paulina took me to meet her mother, Doña Docia Catzín Chan, a monolingual Maya-speaker who understands some Spanish and, like most Yucatec-Maya-speakers, uses some Spanish words. After I sat down, Doña Docia immediately asked what religion I belonged to. I replied, "Catholic," and she challenged me to recite the Hail Mary prayer. When I successfully recited it in Spanish, she asked me to recite the Our Father. This task was a little harder because, as a Chicana, I grew up in mostly English-speaking churches. My family usually prayed rosaries in Spanish, so I learned the Hail Mary very well but was less proficient with the Our Father. With a bit of quick translating for some parts, I got through it and then Doña Docia opened up. She shared how Mayas make the sign of the cross, how they say other prayers in Yucatec-

Maya, and then told a few Bible-based stories. Among these stories was her version of the Adam and Eve story. After a few hours of visiting with her and members of her extended family, I asked her if I could come back the following day to interview her and record the stories she told. She agreed, and after a discussion of courtship and marital practices, I asked if men and women were equal. She replied, "equal, equal, equal," which I now understand as meaning equally capable and equally bad. I reminded her of the Adam and Eve story that she had recited the previous day, when she had described how women and men had become different, and then she began the account on the following page.

The story is complex and was difficult to translate and transcribe. The initial transcription, funded by a grant from Southwest Texas State University's Research Program (REP 1997), was done by Miguel Güemez Pineda, a Mayan scholar from Merida. We have kept Güemez Pineda's orthography, except when we found errors or omissions in the initial transcription. Barbara Macleod, a Mayan linguist, then did a literal sketch of some words and phrases. My colleague, Author 2, assisted in verifying and completing the transcription and composing a readable, grammatically correct translation that accurately conveyed the meaning of the story. I used the written transcription and translation to assist with the process. Information in Maya dictionaries helped to corroborate the translations and identify areas that still needed work. I later read and discussed ambiguous sections of the text with Doña Flora Balam Catzín, another daughter of Doña Docia, and Paco Camara Balam, Doña Flora's son, in order to confirm and/or complete most of the story. During this process, I tried to verify root words. In one or two instances, my friends told me what a questionable phrase meant, based on their familiarity with the story, but if they were not able to identify a root word, we underlined the Maya word and its English translation.

Mayan storytelling is recognizably different from everyday conversation. The events in the Adam and Eve story from Genesis II are mayanized but the actions recounted in the myth are believed to be historical and explain the character of men and women today. The story is set in an undetermined area, but there is a link in the text to the great post-classic Mayan site of Chichén Itzá.

When reading this story, it is important to remember that in its original form this was not a text written to be read but an oral recitation that was performed in front of an audience. Consequently, there are features of Mayan storytelling, in addition to the story's content, that are

important to an adequate understanding of the myth. Some fundamental features of Mayan story performance are that chronological arrangement of the story elements often are not important, and the story's narrator takes the roles of the characters in the story and typically speaks in the present tense. Additionally, the narrator frequently speaks in couplets or triplets, an ancient convention of Mayan ritual speaking and writing, making the story seem repetitive in places to a reader. Because of these factors, the stories are often awkward to read because the flow of events and tense structure of the story performance does not follow western conventions of writing.

Because the structure of this story is different than the linear form in which westerners record our narratives and because the Mayan story is recited in front of an audience who is already familiar with it, it is a daunting task to sort our changes of scene and characters within a story. These are often not directly stated by the storyteller. The difficulty of following action sequences in this type of narrative is illustrated by the fact that it took the aid of three translators and the daughters of the narrator for us to correctly interpret the events in the story.

The verse numbering generally follows the speaker's phrase structure and is a convenience the authors have inserted to help readers sort events and characters in the text. Occasionally, we were not able to make out small parts of the performance, so we indicated these instances with a blank line in the Mayan text. Mayan words or phrases that we could not translate with certainty are also indicated with a blank line. Finally, we used brackets to insert words and phrases to add context for the reader.

The Adam and Eve Story

Narrator: Doña Docia Catzín Chan (17 August 1990)

1. Ajá, lelo'Evae', ku a'alal ti' bin beya':
Aha, as for that Eve, they say [the story] goes like this:
2. Eva páat'ik.
Eve was created.
3. A ya'aik bix úuch u yaantaj.
They say how it happened a long time ago.

4. Sáansamal e Aadane' tu juun.
Everyday Adam was alone.
5. Solito.
Alone.
6. Tu chan juunal beyo'.
He was just alone.
7. Ka'a bin tu máan mejen mukuy.
They saw a small dove passed him by.
8. Kya'ak bine': "Ay chan mukuy ki bin otsilech, buka'an ki' a wool."
[Adam] said as it went by: "Oh, small dove, poor thing, how happy you are."
9. "Ta kiiman ka'atulech."
"When you pass, there are two of you."
10. Tene' ba'axten túun tin juun."
As for me, why am I by myself?"
11. Sáansama ku taaj tun e jajal Dyos.
Every day true God came.
12. Ku taal bin ilik ti'.
He comes to see Adam.
13. Beyo' tumen leti'e' ku ts'a'ano' ku kanáant le máanzana.
Because it was given, [Adam] takes care of the apple.
14. Ma' u machik.
He didn't pick it.
15. Mix u jaantek.
He didn't eat it.
16. Mixba'aj.
Nothing.
17. Kaj bin ala'ab ti', este, "Ba'an ka meetik Adan?"
Then [God] said: "What are you doing, Adam?"

18. "Ma' a jach weenej," ki bin u yáak'o ti'.
"You're not really asleep," [God] said to him.
19. "Ma'" ki bin, "táant in kin chitaj weenij, ajá."
"No," [Adam] said, "I've just laid down to sleep, aha."
20. "Adán, ba'an ta wa'alaj ho'oleak?" [God asked]
"Adam, what did you say yesterday?"
21. "Ma' mixba'ali'," ki bin.
"Nothing," [Adam] said.
22. "Ba'anten ma' ba'anten ma'," ki bin ya'alaj ti'.
"What do you mean, what do you mean 'nothing'?" [God] said to [Adam].
23. "Chéen beya' ku suut in paach, waye' k'aaskúunt le ba'ax ta wa'alaj."
"Just as soon as I turn my back, here, the things you say turn bad." [said God].
24. "Ba'axten? Si mixba'aj tin wa'alaj, Señor," ki bin.
"Why? I didn't say anything, Señor," [Adam] said.
25. "Yaan," ki bin ya'alaj ti': "jach máans tuláakal a tuukul."
"Yes you did," [God] said to [Adam], "when everybody passes, you're sad."
26. "Mixba'aj kin wa'aik Señor."
"I don't say anything, Señor,"
27. "Ba'ante ma' Adan, bey ta wa'alaj."
"Don't tell me that, Adam, that's what you said."
28. "Ma' ka'a u taal ka'ap'ée mejen mukuye', ka joop' u máan te'ela', ka ta wa'alej: 'Dyos mío, mejen santo ch'íich', ki a wol teche' ka'atulech. Tene' tin juun."
"Didn't two small turtledoves come? When they passed you there, you told them, 'My God, small, holy birds, you are happy; you are a couple. As for me, I'm alone.'"

29. "Ba'ax k'iin ka'atuulen."
"What day will I be a couple?"
30. "Jach wa tun taak a yaantaj ka'atuulech, Adán?" Ku ya'alal bin.
"Do you really want a helper, to be a couple, Adam?" [God] said to him.
31. "Señor," ki bin, "Péerdonaarten. Hah, tin wa'alaj."
"Señor," [Adam] said, "Forgive me. It is true. I said it."
32. "Aj, pos ma' a tusken. Ja'alibe'."
"Oh, well don't lie to me. That's it."
33. "Sáamale' laas doose k'iine' ka chital wenej."
"Tomorrow at twelve noon you lay down to sleep."
34. "Laas doose k'iin kin taal in wilech."
"At twelve noon I will come to see you."
35. "Ma'alob."
"Good."
36. Pues, ki'ichkelem Dyos, bine'.
Well, beautiful God left.
37. "Ka'a bin chital wenej laas oonse," kya'ak túune'.
"I will go lie down to sleep at eleven," [Adam] said then.
38. "Ta'aytak in bin."
"I am almost going."
39. Jach laas doose ka'a binij, ka u k'uche' tun wenej Adán.
Exactly at twelve [God] came, he arrived where Adam was sleeping.
40. Kya'ak bine', "Ba'an kin in meentej?"
[God] said, "What am I going to do?"
41. "Tu'ux kin in ch'aej?"
"Where am I going to do it?"
42. "Wa kin ts'ik tu táan u k'abe', tu táan u k'ab ken u ts'o'oksej."
If I take it from the palm of his hand, the palm of his hand will finish."

43. “Wa kin ts’ik tu táan u yooke’, tu táan u yook ken u ts’o’oksej.”
 “If I take it from the sole of his foot, the sole of his foot will finish.”
44. “Ma’, mejore’ tu ch’ala’at; ti’ kin in jóo’sej ko’olela’.”
 “No, his rib will be better; this day I will take out this woman.”
45. Pos ka tu bin jóo’sab e ko’olelo’, ka’a too’ ti’ unp’ée suukil nook’.
 Well, then the woman [rib] was taken out, then he wrapped it with new cloth.
46. Ts’o’okl’e ka’a ts’aj ti’ u lóoch beya’.
 When that was finished, he gave her [to Adam] to embrace.
47. Pos ja’alib’e, ka tu béendesiiirtaj tumen jajal dyose’ ka’a bin leti’.
 Well, it’s said that he blessed her because he was the true God, then he went.
48. Pos jach chéen p’elak u chan naj báali te’elo’.
 Well, [God] was just leaving, [the snake’s] small house was hidden there.
49. Ji’i’i! Ka’a máan e kaane’.
 Hiii! Then the snake passed by.
50. U ka’ meentmaj le chan ch’ala’ato’.
 [God] made it again, that little rib.
51. Kaada miin esté, júuruts ka’a ook te’ áaktúune’ ka’ano, ka’a bin tu jajal dyos. “Ba’an kin in beet beora?”
 Every uh...rapidly the snake entered the cave, then true God said, “What am I going to do now?”
52. Pos ja’alibe’ tech táan kbin u koots ku ne ka’ano’.
 Well, when that was over, he cut up the snake’s tail.
53. Ka bin tu toaj tu ka’atene’ ka’a tu bisaj tu tséel Adan.
 They say when he wrapped [the snake’s tail] up again [with the rib/woman], he took it to Adam’s side.
54. Le meentik ku ya’alale’ to’one’ kisko’on.
 This is the reason they say we are devils.

55. Tumen to'one' xch'uup'o'ob, ma' yutsilo'on ba'ali',
Because we are women, we are not good things.
56. Tumen to'one' je'e k ts'áik kuchiiyoe' tu puxsi'ik'al k iicham.
Because we are going to put a knife in the heart of our husbands.
57. Tumen ma' wiinikooni'.
Because we are not men.
58. Ja'alibe'.
That's it.
59. Ki bin jajal Dyos, "Kin béendesiiirikech."
True God said, "I am blessing you [men]."
60. "Pero xch'úupe' ma', este, ma' kristiaano."
"But not women, [women] are not Christians."
61. Soolo xiibe' kristiiano, tumen lelo': Xiibe' junp'éeli u naats'
xch'uupe' syeete laay [m]as.
Only men are Christians because of this: Men have one time's
knowledge, women have seven [times knowledge].
62. Mixba'ali' ku báalale, tumen to'one' chéen k'ak'aas a'al. [pause]
Beyo'.
[Women] have no worth because we are just bad [persons].
- [Interruption from brief quesiton from audience.]
63. Pues ja'alibe'.
Well, it's over.
64. Ka bin sáastaj túune' ka bin bin yuum, ka bin jajal Dyos, ka'atúu tun
Adan.
They say at sunrise then, they say the Lord goes, true God goes to
return to Adam.
65. Pero mina'an u nook'o, chéen kristiiano, chen.
But they didn't have any clothes on, they are just Christians [naked
people], just [Christians].
66. Bueno bey yanik unp'ée muñeeka.
Well, they were just like a doll.

67. Muñeeka mixba'al yaanti'.

A doll doesn't have any [genitalia/sex].

68. Mina'an u xch'uupi', mina'an u xiibi.

There were no females, there were no males.

69. Chéen bey unp'ée muñeeka, yaniko'obe'.

They were just like a doll. They just went around like that.

Audience Voice: Chéen tun máano'ob.

Audience Voice: They just went around like that.

70. "Ma'alob Adan," ku ya'alal bin ti', "beoora ts'u ka ts'íibotik."
"Okay, Adam," God said to him, "now your longing is over."

71. "U yaanta tun a nuup."

"You have your couple."

72. "Pero chéen únuniko ba'ax a meente chéen a kanáant a watan."

"But the only thing you must do, you must just take care of your wife."

73. "U táabakech ka cha xi'ikech u mach le máanzana yaan te' chúumuko'."

She will trick you so you will go grab the apple that is in the center there."

74. "Tumen tu'ux ken a mache'," ki bin u ya'alaj ti'e', "yaan a k'aastale'ex."

"Because where you will grab it," God said to him, "you all will become evil."

75. "Tumen beoora mina'an a tuukul, mina'an a na'ate'ex."

"Because now you have no thoughts, now you all have no knowledge."

76. "Pero tu'ux ken a mache'ex, ts'o'ok beyo'."

"But if you take it, it's all over."

77. Ella, ki bin u t'an ____, [pause] "Ay ni kij."
She, this is what [Eve] said ____, "Oh, it's good."
78. "T'ok máanzane hantah xen."
"I will take the apple and eat it."
79. "Pero le yaan chuumuko' ts'o'ok ta wu'uyaj ba'ax tu ya'alaj
ki'ichkelem jajal Dyose'."
[Adam replied,] "But as for what is in the center, you heard what
[God] said, what beautiful true God said."
80. Ma ku machik.
She can't grab it.
81. "Leti'e je'elo', xen a t'okej ____ libre ____."
"That thing there, go cut that, ____ that's free ____."
82. Pos le k'ak'aas ba'ale' ken k'uchik bine', koomo tu paache
ts'ono'oto', unp'ée ts'ono'ot beya', jats'uts e ts'ono'ote'.
Well, the evil thing [devil], when he arrived, he was in the back
of a cenote, a cenote like this, a nice cenote.
83. Pues tu paach túune' ja'alil tun ki'ichkelem roosas yaane' astaj
duulse.
Well, around the [cenote's] back then, its edge, there were beautiful
pink roses, they even [smelled] sweet.
84. U paatchaj wilik. [pause] Jaaj.
She saw [the devil] in back [of the cenote]. [pause] Yes.
85. Pues ka tu bin a'alab ti': [pause]
And then [the devil] talked to her.
86. Leti u mes septieembreo' ti' ku tal ich le ja'a ma' chika'an.
In the month of September [like when the shadow snake appears in
Chichen Itza], there he comes in the water, not showing.
87. Ku chéen tokubaj.
He just rolled himself up.
88. Chéen tokubaj le ka'ano'.
That snake just rolled himself up.

89. "U'ujej señora," kya'alal bin ti', 'Ma' cha'ak a tu'usul."
 "Listen, lady," [the snake] said to her, "Don't take being lied to."
90. "Hante ba'al je'elo'."
 "Eat that thing there."
91. "Ka'a jaant le ba'a je'elo', ku saastal a wich."
 "When you eat that thing there, your eyes will open."
92. "Ku saastal a xikin."
 "Your ears will open."
93. "Ku yaantal a tuukul."
 "You will have thought."
94. "Ku yaantal a na'atal."
 "You will have knowledge."
95. "Peero kon el tiempo ma' a jaantke', bey ku bin tech u k'iinilo'."
 "But, in time, if you don't eat it, the days will pass you by."
96. "Ma' -kin bin."
 [Eve replied,] "No. I'm going."
97. "Ma' u páajtal, tumen tu ya'al to'on jajal Dyose' ma' k ch'i'ik mixba'al jaantej [pause], toone tia kanante."
 "It's not allowed, because the true God told us not to take anything, not to eat anything [pause], because we're the caretakers."
98. "Pero hombre, jaantej."
 "But, hey, eat it." [said the snake].
99. "Pos si ki' book, je'ela'."
 "Well, yes, its odor is sweet here."
100. "U'uye" ki bin le kaane'.
 "Smell it," the snake said.
101. Pos óoxtéen ma' tu kréertik.
 Well, three times she didn't believe [the devil].
102. U ts'o'ok kuaatro ka'a bin tu ya'alaj,
 After the fourth time, she told [Adam],

103. "Pos si Adan," ki bin. "Bixej ma' a jaantik máanzana?"
 "Well, yes, Adam," [Eve] said. "How can you not eat the apple?"
104. "Jach ki' bok."
 "It smells very good."
105. "Je'ela' u'uy a wu'uyej, próobartej."
 "Here, smell it, try it."
106. "Si tene tsoken."
 "Yes, I've finished [tasting it]."
107. "Ay Jesús," ki bin u t'aan,
 "Oh, Jesus," [Adam] said,
108. "Bix a wa ta jaantk le ba'alo' xch'uup?" ki bin.
 "How can you eat that thing, woman?" he said.
109. "Pos tene' ts'o'ok in jaantik."
 "Well, I have already eaten it." [Eve said].
110. Ka'a tya'al lelo' ts'o'ok u jóok'ol, ts'u k'aastk.
 They say that evilness started to come out.
111. "Jaant a wu'uyej," ki bin.
 "Eat it so you sense it," she said.
112. Ka'a tu néet'aj u yíichame'.
 Then her husband nibbled it.
113. "Aj, pos ko'ox k jaantik táanili' ____ ts'ik ik jaantik."
 "Oh, well, let's go eat it first ____ . Let's take it to eat it."
114. Ay Dyos, je' túun yima', je' túun u tso'o'tsel u pool, yaan túun u
 xiibij, yaan túun u xch'uupi.
 Oh, God, here then are her breasts, here then is the hair on her head,
 here exists the male, here exists the female.
115. Le túun e ba'al ka' a wilik yaan te' k'áaxo', mina'an wa beora,
 bey nukuch k'o'och'o'obo'.
 And then the things you see in the forest, they aren't [used] now,
 like big *k'o'och* [leaves from a relative of the fig tree].

116. *Le tun nukuch k'o'ochó'.*
The big *k'o'och* [leaves].
117. *Leti'e' tun bin tu ts'ik ta t'ano.*
They say he gave some to put in front [of themselves].
118. *Ti'l ku pixkubáo'ob, sulak.*
So they cover themselves, they're ashamed.
119. *Pos ka'a tun bin tu ya'ala beya' estes, "pos je ku taal jajal dyosa."*
Well, then he said, [Adam] said thus, "Well, here comes the true God."
120. *Ay Dyos chéen táan u máan u táakubao'ob.*
Oh, God, they've just gone to hide themselves.
121. *Tun máan u kaxtibo'ob u pikja'as.*
They're going to look for banana leaf skirts.
- [Brief explanation in Spanish from an audience member.]
122. *Ah pos ka'a ts'o'ok beya', ka'a tun bin tu ya'alaj ti' tun bine',*
Oh, well, it finishes like this, then they say [God] said to them, thus he said,
123. *"Pues desde beoora desokupartech le waye'. Ts'oka'an."*
"Well, from now on you must leave this place here. It's finished."
124. *"Te'exe' man séerbire'ex."*
"You all didn't serve me."
125. *"Chéen ba'ax kin wa'aik teche'." Ki bin ya'alaj ti'.*
"There's just one thing I'll tell you." [God] said to them.
126. *"Páa'tki ___ tech unp'ée liibro," ki bin, "pero yaan u yaantal."*
"You ___ wait for a book," they say, "but it has to happen."
127. *"U k'uchul tu k'iine' a matke'ex tun u np'ée áanjel," ki bin y ya'ala'al ti'.*
"The day will come, you will be given an angel [baby]," he said to them.

128. "Ma'alob." Ts'a'ab túun unp'ée liibro tio'ob, buka'aj, ka tu
kucho'ob, jalaj!
"Good." Then they were given a book, like so, and they carried it.
It's true!
129. Chika'ano'ob,
They were appearing,

u jóoloo'ob,
they were entering

bino'ob,
they went.
130. Pues te' noj bejo', ti' tun bin.
Well, on that great road, there they go.
131. Ka'an ti la'aj bin xch'uupo. Ti la'aj bin xch'uppo.
The woman went with the serpent. The woman went.
132. Tan bin u taal u kuulk'aláantik tun yokol hun pe paal.
They say a child is crying and she's coming to care for him.
133. "Ay, Adán," ki bin Eva. "Ma' je'ele' le chan áanjel ku taalo'."
"Oh, Adam," Eve says, "Isn't that the little angel [baby] coming?"
134. "Leti'e' tu ya'al to'on ki'ichkelem yuumo'."
"That [baby] is what beautiful God told us about."
135. "Leti'e' ku taalo'."
That [child], he comes."
136. "Ay tene' mix tin máan in ch'aahten, mixmáak."
[Adam answered,] "Oh, me, I'm not going to take anyone with me,
no one."
137. Adane puhan.
Adam was mad.
138. Adane puhan. Ku ch'i'ik! [pause]
Adam is mad! He shakes!

139. Tu ya'ota o'och ku tu beet ba'al le xch'uup beyo'.
He was hurt because of the child, the thing that woman did.
140. Tan u ya'ik ti Adan beyo',
Then she said to Adam,
141. "Ay, Adán, páa'jteni', ay, Adán, páa'jteni'."
"Oh, Adam, wait for me. Oh, Adam, wait for me."
142. "Ma'ataan. Wa a k'áat je'elech a ch'a'e, tene' mix in k'aabatan paal."
"No. If you want, you take him. As for me, the child does not have my name," [said Adam].
143. Pos ka'a jóop'ol séeguir u bin.
Well, they continued to travel, to go.
144. Pos le paalo' tun taal.
And the children, they came.
145. Ts'o'ole' ma' paali', kisin.
But they are not children, they are devils.
146. Kisine' ku tal bino'.
Devils were coming along.
147. Je'e tun bine' le...
So they say...
- [Brief interruption]
148. Pues ka'a tun tu kuchaj, pues le liibro tu xokaj.
Well, then [the devil carried it; well, he studied the book.
149. Uuch ku yáantaj puliya, pos leti'e' kishno'.
Long ago he helped sorcery, since he's the devil.
150. Leti'e' bin u xooke le liibro.
They were studying the book.
151. Ka tu jóo'saj túune' k'ak'aas ba'alo'ob.
Then he took out the evil things.

152. Leti' yaan tun k'ak'aas ba'alo'.
There are evil things.

153. Jaaj, beey úuch ku yaantaj. A wojel?
Yes, this happened long ago. Do you know it?

154. Ka wu'uy kya'alal pulyáaj? Ku meentik k'aas. ____
Have you heard them call it sorcery? They do evil. ____

155. Ku ts'o'ok beyo.
It finishes like this.

156. Ku ts'o'oki.
It is finished.

157. Abandonar jalal Dios.
They abandoned true God.

[Brief explanation in Spanish]

158. Aj, pos bey túuno', despuése' ka tun kaajo' tun chéen unp'ée
raancho beya'.
Oh, well then, after ____ there was a farm there.

159. ____ Chéen ka tu yila' Adame' ts'o'ok u páatal k'oja'an Eva tu iijo
____ Just when Adam saw that [Eve] was able to become pregnant,
Eve had a child.

160. Ka'atúú xiib tu tséentaj.
Two boys she nurtured.

161. Junp'ée bix u kaaba Caín, Abel...[discussion of names]
One was Cain, one was Abel.

162. Suku'untsile' Caín, fiitsintsile' Abel.
The older brother was Cain, the younger brother was Abel.

163. Ay Dyos, leti'o'ob káajsej tun le ba'atelo'.
Oh, God, they began the battle.

164. Le ka'as ts'a'aj tumen le k'a'aaas ba'alo'. [pause]
The evil was caused by that bad thing.

165. Le tu beeto yéetel bin yuntún, je'elo yéetel yuntun tun.
What he did with his sling, that was his sling-stone.

166. Wak', tu pool u maamaj.
They burst the head of their mother.

167. Wak' tu pool u taataj.
They burst the head of their father.

168. Leti'o'ob missmo tu kfins u taataj.
Those ones themselves killed their father.

169. Bey bino'. Jaaj, jaaj. Pos k'aas.
Thus they said. Yes, yes. Well, it was evil.

In conclusion, Mayas have created significant differences in meaning, actions, themes, and implications in their reinterpretation of Genesis II. To begin, in the Mayan version Adam is not an innocent man who was seduced by Eve into sinning. Instead of God wanting Adam to have a helper, Adam longed to be a couple like the other animals of the world. Moreover, Adam converses with the birds about his longing and then lies to God about having expressed his desire. Unlike Genesis, God debates which part of the body to use to form the woman and then cuts up the snake, adding its tail to the woman/rib package, thus making women devils who want to “put a knife in the heart” of their husbands. Although God initially blessed women, he only blessed men after he used the snake’s tail to make women. God also acts differently when he warns Adam about his wife tricking him into eating the apple.

Because of women’s unique creation, they have seven times more knowledge/thoughts than men. Mayas translated *naats'* as the Spanish *pensamiento*, suggesting that women are simultaneously smarter and more likely to think about bad things. The Mayan version also details that people were like dolls who had no sexual genitalia prior to eating the apple, later specifying sex/gender characteristics such as breasts and long hair. To the contrary, Genesis mentions only that they began to experience shame about their genitalia. Furthermore, Adam continues to deny God’s wishes by rejecting the angels or innocent children that God promised. Instead of Cain killing Abel, in the Maya version Cain and Abel kill both their mother and father, leading to the final conclusion that all humans are devils.

The Mayan version is localized in various ways. The devil/snake appears in a cenote, or limestone cave/sinkhole, which Mayas have historically considered to be sacred and sexual space. Also, the snake appears in the month of September, which Doña Docia's daughter and grandson associated with the appearance of the shadow snake on the stair case of the Castillo at the post-classic Mayan site of Chichen Itza during the autumn solstice. Finally, they cover themselves with a native fig tree leaf, use banana leaves to make skirts, and are given a book of evil that is purportedly still used by sorcerers today. This reinterpretation of Adam and Eve suggests that Mayas have constructed meaningful differences in cosmology and the understanding of gender and human nature. We hope to continue our research and analysis by collecting other versions of the story and examining the significance these stories play in creating Mayan culture and identity.



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