

# *Florentine Codex*

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*Florentine Codex*  
*Vol. 1*

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*Book 4 – The Soothsayers*  
*and*  
*Book 5 – The Omens*

Translated from the Aztec into English, with notes and illustrations

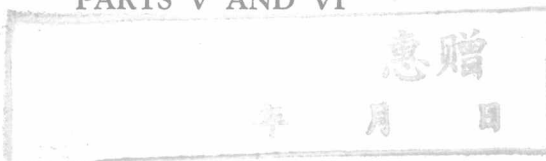
By

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IN THIRTEEN PARTS

PARTS V AND VI



*Chapter heading designs are from the Codex  
except a few in Book IV taken from the Real Palacio MS*

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Published by

The School of American Research and The University of Utah

Monographs of The School of American Research and Museum of New Mexico  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Number 14, Parts V and VI

1957



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F1219  
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75-65-741

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# De la Arte Adivinatoria

FOURTH BOOK, WHICH TELLETH OF THE BOOK OF DAYS WHICH THE MEXICANS HANDED DOWN. THIS WAS IN ORDER THAT THE READERS OF THE DAY SIGNS<sup>1</sup> MIGHT STUDY THE GOOD AND EVIL DAYS. IN IT WERE SET FORTH THE DAY SIGNS HERE RECOUNTED, AND HOW THOSE WOULD FARE WHO WERE BORN ON THEM. AND THIS BOOK OF DAYS IS MORE CORRECTLY CALLED SORCERY, FOR IT BELONGED TO THE SORCERERS.

INJC NAVI AMUXTLI: YTECHPA TLATOA, IN TONALAMATL, IN QUJTITLANJA MEXICA: IEHOATL INJC QUJTITAIA TONALPOUHQUE, IN QUALLI CEMJLHUJTL, IOAN AMO QUALLI: YN JPAN MONEZCAIOTI TIUH TONALLI, IN NJCAN MOTENEOA: AUH IN QUENAMJQUE IEZQUE IN JPAN TLACATIA. AUH IN, Y, TONALAMATL OC CENCA IE MELAOAC, IC MOTOCAIOTIZ, NAOALLOTTL, CA NAOALTI INTECH POVIA.



First Chapter, which telleth of the first sign, which was named One Crocodile, and of the good fortune which they merited who were born then — men or women. These same destroyed and ruined it because of their negligence.<sup>2</sup>

Injc ce capitulo, itechpa tlatoa, injc centetl machiotl: in jtoca ce cipactli, ioan in qualli tonalli in qujmâceoia, in vncan tlacatia, in toqujchti, in cioa: çan ichoantin qujpoloaia, qujmotlactalhujaia, yn jpampa in jntlatziviliz.

Here beginneth the count of each day. Just as each week was reckoned, so each of the thirteen-day periods went taking its place until one year had passed. Once more at its start began the count of each day.

Nican peoa in cecemjlhujtlapoalli in iuhquj cecentetl semana ic mopoaia, matlatlaqujlhujtl omeey motlalituih, injc otlatocatiuh ce xivitl: Oc ceppa itzintlan oalpeoa in cecemjlhujtl tlapoalli.

The first day count was named One Crocodile.<sup>3</sup> It was the very beginning and precise starting point of all the day counts, whereby began, continued, and came to an end the year [of 260 days].<sup>4</sup>

Achto tonalpoalli ytoca ce cipactli: vel ipeuhca, vel itzin in cemjlhujtlapoalli, ynic vmpeuhtuih, ôtlatocatiuh: ioan injc ontlantuih ce xivitl.

1. Cf. Bernardino de Sahagún: *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* (Angel María Garibay K., ed.; México: Editorial Porrúa, S. A., 1956; hereafter referred to as Garibay ed.), Vol. IV, p. 359 (*Tonalpouhqui*); also Horacio Carochi: *Arte de la lengua mexicana* (México: Imprenta del Museo Nacional, 1892), pp. 423 ff., where in conjugation of the verb *poa*, the preferred meaning is "to read." Alonso de Molina: *Vocabulario de la lengua mexicana* (Julio Platzmann, ed.; Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1880), and Rémi Siméon: *Dictionnaire de la langue nahuatl ou mexicaine* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1885), give the meanings "to read," "to relate," etc., besides "to count." See also Miguel León Portilla: *La filosofía náhuatl estudiada en sus fuentes* (México: Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1956), p. 205; on pp. 204 ff. there is a discussion of the readers and reading of day signs.

2. In Bernardino de Sahagún: *Historia de las cosas de Nueva España* (Francisco del Paso y Troncoso, ed.; Madrid: Hauser y Menet, 1906), Vol. VII (hereafter referred to as *Real Palacio MS*), pp. 280 ff., the text has been divided into the chapters which appear in the *Florentine Codex*, and each one given a descriptive heading, in Spanish and in Sahagún's handwriting. The Aztec heading appears to be a rendition in Nahuatl of Sahagún's Spanish. It will be noted that some of the chapter divisions to be found below appear to be arbitrary.

3. In the "Primeros Memoriales" of the *Real Palacio MS* (Vol. VI of the Paso y Troncoso ed.), pp. 73-74, 107, Sahagún begins the day count with One Dog (*ce itzcuintli*).

4. *Xiuil*. Though the term means a year of 365 days, a 260-day ceremonial year is meant.

It became as the leader of this group of thirteen days which belonged with it: Two [Wind],<sup>5</sup> Three House, Four Lizard, Five Serpent, Six Death, Seven Deer, Eight Rabbit, Nine Water, Ten Dog, Eleven Monkey, Twelve Grass, and Thirteen Reed.

These various days, as it was said, all were good. He who was then born a nobleman, it was stated, would be a lord, a ruler; he would prosper; he would be rich and wealthy. And if a commoner were then born, he would be a brave warrior—a valiant chief, esteemed, honored, and great. He would always eat. And if a woman were then born, she would also prosper and be rich. She would have drink and food available. She would have food for others to eat; she would invite others to feast. She would be respectful. She would be visited by others; she would await them with drink and food, with which to revive and refresh the spirits and bodies of those who lived in misery on earth, who, as they slept so they awoke—the destitute old men and women, and orphans; the forsaken; and all would be realized and come to pass that was undertaken; nothing would fail; of her fatigue and effort, nothing would be in vain. Successful would be her dealings around the market place, in the place of business; it was as if it would sprinkle, shower, and rain her wares upon her.

And furthermore they said that even though favorable was the day sign on which he had been born, if he did not strictly perform his penances, if he took not good thought, if he did not accept the reprimands and punishment meted out to him, the punishment with which he was punished and the correction with which he was corrected, the exhortations of the old men and the old women; if he became bad and perverse and followed not the way of righteousness, succeeded in nothing, and entirely by his own acts brought himself to ruin, despised himself, brought harm to himself, failed, lost through his own neglect, gave up, and endangered that which might be his good fortune,—his reward, and his lot: then he tarnished, polluted, and ruined with debauchery his birthright. Thus he found and merited affliction. As was the sleep, so was the awakening.<sup>6</sup> Nowhere was he content, nowhere

Injn matlactetl vmei in tonalli, in iuhquj itlavlanoan muchioa, yn jtech povi: ichoatl in vme acatl, ey calli, navi cuetzpali, macujlli coatl, chiquacen mjqujztli, chicome maçatl, chicuei tochtli, chicunavi atl, matlactli itzcujntli, matlactli oce oçomatli, matlactli vmome malinalli, matlactli omej acatl.

In jzqujtetl in tonalli: iuh mjtoia, muchi qualli: in aqujn ipan tlatatia pilli; mjtoia tecutiz, tlatocatiz, motlacamatiz, mocujltonoz, motlamachtiz: Auh in tla maceoalli ipan tlatatia, oqujchtiz, tiacauhtiz, maviztiz, panvetziz, motleiotiz, onca qujquanj iez: auh intla çioatl ipan tlatati, no motlacamatiz, mocujltonoz, oniez in qujz, in qujquaz, tetlaqualtiz, tecoano-tzaz, tetlacamatiz, ipan calacoaz, qujtechieltiz in atl, in tlaqualli: ypal ihiiocujoaz, ypal ceviz in jiollo, in jnacao, in tlaihiiovitinemj tlalticpac, in iuhquj cochi, in iuhquj meoa, in jcnoveve, yn jcnolama, in jcnopiltzintli, in tlaçnocaoalli: yoan muchi neltiz, muchi onieoatiz, in tlein maailia, atle nenqujçaz, in jçiaviz, yn jtlapaliviz, atle nenvetziz, vel motitianqujz in tianquiznaoac, in nentlamachioan: iuhqujn pipixaviz, ipan tepeviz, ipan tzetzeliviz in jtiamjc.

Auh no yoã quitoaia: ma nel ivi in qualli itonal ipan otlatat, intlacamo vellamaceoa, intlacamo vel monotza, intlacamo qujcu, intlacamo itech qujpachoa, in atl cecec, in tzitzicaztli, yn inonotzaloca, in izcaliloca, in veuetlatolli, yn jlamatlatolli, in çan tla-ueliloti, tla-velilolati, in çan âie vtli qujtoca, atle onqujça, çan ynevian mopopoloa, motelchioa, mjspxoioimjctia, mjiecoa, conmjxcaoaltia conmocavilia, qujmjtlaçalhujia, yn jmâceal iezquja, yn itonal, yn jnemac, qujteuhiotia, qujtlaçollotia, qujtlaçolmjtia yn itlacatiliz: ic cococ, teupouhquj qujmottitia, qujmomaçevia, in iuhquj cochcaiotl, iuhquj neuhcaiotl, acan avia, acan vellamati, ompa onqujça in qujtzaqua tlalticpac netolinjiztli: ca nel omoneviiavi, yn jpampa yn jtlauelilolaco, inj atle ipan tlattaliz, yn iaquentlattaliz, yn jtlaujlmachiliz, aiac oconcaujli, ca ixcoian ynevian oqujmochichivili in toneviztli, in chichinaqujztli, ic telchioalo, aoc tle ipan itto, aoc ac

5. *Ome acatl* has been corrected to read *ome ecatl* in the *Real Palacio MS*, p. 280.

6. In *iuhquj cochcaiotl, iuhquj neuhcaiotl*: Carochi, *op. cit.*, pp. 451, 456, favors the meaning of a general sustenance (*nocochca noneuhca; cochcayotl, neuhcayotl*), though his examples do not parallel the phrasing here found. Possibly the rendering should be: "As for sustenance, nowhere was he content."

happy. He was destitute; on earth misery engulfed him. For verily he brought it on himself — because of his wickedness, disregard, shamelessness, and neglect. No one bequeathed it to him, for by his own will and of his own fault he brought unto himself injury, torment, and pain. Hence he was despised and disregarded. No one any longer obeyed him; no one became his friend; he stood by himself. No one took account of his personality. Everywhere he was hated; nowhere was he liked; nowhere did he give pleasure. But he was regarded as a thing, and looked at, for now he was a vagabond, proscribed, completely outlawed; he was on the outside, lingering on the outskirts; impudent and shameless. He went about haughty<sup>7</sup> and drunk. For truly he was abandoned to evil and feared. His side was sore; his head ached — it was in pain — so that he was incorrigible, suffering, and dejected. For he was full of evil — so perverse was he.

And of anyone who had gained merit and reward being then born, his fathers and mothers said: "Upon a good day sign hath he been born and created and come forth on earth; he hath arrived upon the earth on [the day sign] One Crocodile. Let him be bathed."<sup>8</sup>

Whereupon they gave him a name. They called him Cipac. Or else, they gave him the name of another one of his grandparents. Etc.

And, on the other hand, if it were the wish [of the parents], perchance they passed over the days; perchance they settled upon still another day for him to be bathed. For One Crocodile bore with it all favorable day signs.

And if it were a man who was born, when they bathed him they adorned for him a small shield, upon which they put four small arrows. And to it they bound his umbilical cord. They entrusted it to and sent it in the charge of brave chieftains, who left it at the battlefield. Right there where they fought, where there was fierce battle, at the crossing of the waters, they buried it.

And if it were a woman, when they bathed her, they put into the vessel in which she was bathed, the large earthen bathing vessel, her spindle, her cotton,

qujtlacamati, aiac icnjuh qujchioa, yioca quetzalo, aoc ac iiel qujtta, novian tlaelitto, âcan velitolo, âcan tlapaqujltia, ça tlatto, ça itto, ca ie tlaztlacolli, ie tlaîtollî, ie centlaîtollî, ie tetenco câca, ie tetenco pipilcac, ie tepan onoc: injc âquen tlatto, injc moquatlaztinemj, mjevintitinemj, ca nel otlaueicoaloc, otlael-laxiti, otlaixillâquauhtili, otlatzonteconquauhtili, otlatzonquauhtili inic auel monotza, ca iioiaçic, iiel-lelaçic, qujmaxilti, ynjc tlaueililoc.

Auh in aca vel mâceoale, ilhujle, ipan otlatcat: njman qujtoia in jtahoan, in jnaoan, ca qualli tonalli in jpan otlatcat, oiecoc, otlatcipcacqjz, omotlatcipcacqjxti, ce cipactli: ma njman malti,

ic qujtocamacaia, ic qujnotzaia, cipac: anoço itla oc centlamantli, icolhoan intoca in qujmacaia, etc.:

auh tel çan teiollotlama; in açoc conchololtizque, açoc contlalizque oc centetl tonalli, ipan maltiz: ca ie qujcenvica in ce cipactli, ca muchi qualli tonalli.

Auh intla oqujchtli otlatcat: in jquac caltiaia, chimaltontli qujchichiviliaia, ipã temj navi mjtotonti: auh itech qujlpiaia in jxic, intech qujcaoia, intech qujpiloia in tiacaoan, iaopan concaoia: vel oncan in necalioa, in tlaiecolo, yn japaniocan contocaia.

Auh intla çioatl otlatcat: ynjc caltiaia imalac, ich-cauh, itzaocalcax, ioan ipopouh, iochpanoaz ipan contemaia yn jnealticax, in jnealtlapaz: yc qujnextiaia,

7. Cf. Angel María Garibay K.: "Paralipómenos de Sahagún," *Tlalocan*, II, 3 (1947), pp. 239 and 247 (n. 61), where *timocuauhtlaxtinemi* is translated *tiene la cabeza destornillada*.

8. The corresponding Spanish text usually uses "baptize" for *maltia*, etc.; see however, Ch. 37, *infra* (*tlaquaatequia*, etc.).

her spinning bowl, her sweeper, and her broom. Thus they showed that the girl was one who went nowhere; only the house was her abode. Hence, near the grinding stone, at the edge of the hearth, they buried her umbilical cord.

And this count of days — so was it claimed — was an invention of the two called and named Oxomoco and Cipactonal, who gave it to the people. Oxomoco they painted as a woman, and Cipactonal [as] a man. They who were readers of day signs embellished their book of days with their representations, which they placed in the middle when they painted them. For it was so said that there they became lords of all the day count.

in âcampa ianj cioatzintli, çan cali ichan: ic çan metlatitlan, tlecujlnacazco contocaia yn jxic.

Auh inin tonalpoalli, iuh mjtoaia: iehoan intlanextil, iehoan qujtemacaque, in vmentin teneoalo, intoca Oxomoco, ioan cipactonal: in Oxomoco cioatl inic qujcujloaia: auh in Cipactonal oqujchtli: in tonalpouhque catca yn jntonalamauh qujiollotiaia, yn jmjxiptla ynepantla qujntlaliaia, injc qujcujcujloaia: ca iuh mjtoaia: vncan tlatoque muchioa yn jpan ixqujch tonalpoalli.