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APARTADO POSTAL 385
MERIDA
YUCATAN
MEXICO

Dear Laura,

Your letter of Nov. 25 reached me this morning and I am hastening to reply. Thanks for your kind words about THE ANCIENT MAYA. I am honestly proud of it and no end thankful to Been and the Stanford University Press for the magnificently way in which they printed and bound the book. Yes, the first copy of the book air-expressed to me from Stanford University reached me at 5:00 in the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 6 and I left Santa Fe at 9:00 the following morning. A close-call but I saw the book. My nine other personal copies I had had sent to me c/o the Anna Booker in the First National Building at El Paso to gain time (two days) and these were also waiting for me there when I arrived the night of Thursday Nov. 7. The blizzard which hit Denver, Pueblo, Colorado Springs and Santa Fe, did not reach as far south as El Paso and rail and plane service between the San Francisco area and El Paso was not interrupted as it was farther north.

Now as to your query concerning the list of day-names. So long as the sequence remains unbroken, just like the sequence of our week days, it does not matter with which one of the twenty name-days you begin, and as a matter of fact, Maya usage in this respect changed from time to time. Landa says that the sacred year or Tonalamatl, or Tzolkin (a period of 260 days used for casting horoscopes) began with the day 1 Imix, in which case this sacred year had to end with the day 13 Ahau. In my Bulletin 57 and more recently in my "Guide Book to the Ruins of Quirigua" I began my list of the 20 Maya day-names with Imix and ended with Ahau (page 169 of said Guide-book). There is also evidence that in the middle of the Sixteenth Century the Maya were beginning their 20 day-names with one called Can, and there is further evidence that during the Old Empire they began their list of the 20 day-names with one of the four days named: Ik, Manik, Eb or Caban. In THE ANCIENT MAYA (p.267) I began the list of the 20 day-names with Ik, though you will notice on p. 266 Fig. 18, the first sign there listed is Imix. As I noted above so long as you do not change the sequence, it does not matter with which one of the 20 day-names you begin it.

The second part of your query where you say that you have placed 1 Imix opposite 0 Pop, is incorrect. The only days which can ever occupy the position 0 Pop are those in which the day-names Ik, Manik, Eb and Caban appear, i.e., 13 days Ik (1-13 Ik,) 13 days Manik (1-13 Manik), 13 days Eb (1-13 Eb) and 13 days Caban (1-13 Caban). It is wrong, however, and in fact there never was any Maya day 1 Imix 0 Pop. In THE ANCIENT MAYA you will note on page 270, Fig.20, that the engagement of the two wheels takes place at the point where the day 2 Ik fits into the inter-cog space (the New Year's position) 0 Pop. While on page 271, I begin my list of the possible 52 ancient Maya New Year's days with the day 1 Ik.

Hoping the above answers your question and that the book comes out soon, and a beautiful thing it will be, too, I remain, as ever

Cordially yours

Sylvanus G. Morley