

Muluk

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Muluk

Ninth of the twenty. Yucatec **Muluk**; K'iche' **Toj**. The Classic main sign is a rounded form with a central element, described in the epigraphic literature variously as a water drop, a jade bead, or a fish head — the identification has never fully settled, and the honest position is that the sign belongs to the water-and-jade complex without a single agreed picture behind it. The site's tooltip gives it as **water and offering**. Direction east, colour red.

The two readings in the tooltip come from two different languages. Yucatec *Muluk* sits with water and jade; K'iche' *Toj* means *payment*.

Religion and daykeeping

In **living highland practice**, Toj is the day of paying. Ethnographic accounts and Guatemalan Maya organisations describe it as the day for the fire ceremony and for offering — for settling what is owed, whether to the ancestors, to the earth, or to a neighbour, and for the understanding that a debt left standing will come back as trouble. Illness and misfortune are commonly read on this day as an account falling due rather than as a punishment, which changes what the response is: you pay it. It is also spoken of as a day of gratitude, and one of the strongest days for the fire. An *ajq'ij* born on Toj is spoken of as someone who settles accounts, and who may find life exacting them frequently. What is offered, where, and in what order is taught inside the apprenticeship and is not set down here.

Muluk is one of the four **year bearers** in Landa's Yucatec set — K'an, Muluk, Ix, Kawak — holding the east and the colour red, which is what the four-direction rotation through the twenty independently predicts. It is that set that governs the **Dresden Codex** new-year pages, 25 to 28, where each bearer is drawn with its direction, its patron and the rites attached to the year it opens. Those pages are the single best surviving picture of how a year-bearer ceremony was organised, and they are Postclassic, not Classic — a different source layer again from the stelae and from present-day practice.

The **Madrid Codex**, overwhelmingly a collection of 260-day working almanacs, carries offering scenes throughout: figures presenting bowls, incense and food at day stations. The colonial **Books of Chilam Balam** preserve day lists with short auguries and occupations attached, in a European almanac format holding Maya content.

The Aztec cognate is **Atl**, water, whose patron is Xiuhtecuhtli, the fire lord — an inversion worth noticing. The Zapotec *piyè* and the Mixtec codices hold the same position, conventionally glossed Water.

Key dates

Date	Event
c. 600–500 BCE (<i>contested</i>)	Earliest 260-day count glyphs, Oaxaca — San José Mogote and Monte Albán. Zapotec, not Maya.
36 / 32 BCE	Chiapa de Corzo Stela 2 and Tres Zapotes Stela C, the earliest dated Long Counts. Both partly reconstructed.
c. 250–900 CE	Classic period: day signs in cartouches with bar-and-dot coefficients across the lowlands.
11th–12th c. CE (<i>debated</i>)	The Dresden Codex copy, including new-year pages 25–28 with the K'an / Muluk / Ix / Kawak bearers.
1562 / 1566	Landa burns the books at Maní, then records the twenty day names and the Yucatec year bearers.
1905–1935	The Goodman–Martínez–Thompson correlation, constant 584283. Mainstream, not unanimous.
11 Aug 3114 BCE	Long Count zero under GMT 584283 (6 Sep 3114 BCE Julian); the 584285 variant gives 13 August.
21 Dec 2012	13.0.0.0.0, 4 Ajaw 3 K'ank'in — the anchor this site counts from.
1995 / 1996	Guatemala's Peace Accords recognise Maya spirituality and access to sacred places.

In the count

Muluk returns **every twenty days**. Twenty leaves seven on division by thirteen, so each return carries a coefficient seven higher: 7, 1, 8, 2, 9, 3, 10, 4, 11, 5, 12, 6, 13. Thirteen appearances use every number once and take **260 days**.

Upcoming in 2026, on the site's GMT anchor: **19 August (1 Muluk)**, **8 September (8 Muluk)**, **28 September (2 Muluk)**.

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