

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF B'ALAH CHAN K'AWIL OF MUTAL (DOS PILAS), ACCORDING TO DOS PILAS HIEROGLYPHIC STAIRWAY 2

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October 12, 2002
Rijswijk, the Netherlands

Introduction

As was known through previous archaeological research, Structure L5-49 at Dos Pilas had a hieroglyphic stairway of which four steps of the west and four steps of the east section had been uncovered (cf. Houston 1993; Schele and Grube 1994). In August 2001, a new section of this stairway, in the literature known as Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, was found and subsequently excavated. Further research in September 2001 and January 2002 provided additional steps. Now, Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 is seemingly complete and contains three sections, each consisting of six steps and each with 12 collocations. Fahsen (2002) has provided the first, and excellent, archaeological and epigraphic study of the contents of these new, as well as old, steps.

In this essay I present a full glyph-by-glyph analysis of all the steps of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2. As the chronological information on these steps indicates, first the central section has to be read, then the east section, followed by the west section. Each section is to be read from the top to the bottom (cf. Fahsen 2002). In this essay I follow the recent designation and numeration as proposed by Fahsen, but with one correction. While the Hieroglyphic Stairway is known as “2” (an Arabic numeral), the steps themselves are numbered here with Roman numerals VI (top) to I (bottom). This new numeration is consistent with the designations as used in referring to other Hieroglyphic Stairways at for example Dos Pilas (HS 1, 3, and 4), Naranjo, and Yaxchilán (HS 1-4). Each step, as can be seen below, contains an independent clause, and as such the twelve collocations on each step are referred to as A1 to F2.

All Classic Maya dates are converted to Christian dates (Julian calendar) using the correlation constant 584,285 (Lounsbury 1982: 166). In this essay no provisional complex vowels or /h-j/ distinction are indicated. Month and day names follow Landa's 1566 list, although it is clear that during the Classic period most months had another name (e.g. Pop was known as either K'anhalab' or K'anhalaw), which may also be the case with the majority of the day names (e.g. the 15th day, Men in the Yucatec calendar vs. Tz'ikin in the Classic Maya calendar). Classic Maya numerals are written alphabetically following my current provisional reconstructions (some of which I share with other researchers).

Abbreviations and Symbols used

CR	Calendar Round
DN	Distance Number
HS	Hieroglyphic Stairway
hv	head-variant
LC	Long Count
*	reconstruction

Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 and the Use of Distance Numbers

None of the steps of HS 2 provides a LC date; only CR dates are provided. The specific use of the half-period or *tanlam* expression, 3rd and 7th *tun*-endings, as well as the 10th and 11th *k'atun*-endings, combined with CR dates, provide sufficient calendrical information to place all events in the 9th, 10th, and 11th *k'atun* of *b'aktun* 9. Cross-checking the events of HS 2 with the events of HS 4, which contains two LC dates (full analysis in Boot 2002a), indicates that these chronological placements are correct.

Of the 18 steps, a total of 14 open with a DN, generally followed by a *utiy* “since came to pass” CR expression and the new *i-ut* “then came to pass” CR expression. The ideal DN should record the amount of time elapsed, or to elapse, between the two CR dates, but in HS 2 it rarely does. In many cases the DNs are too eroded and the original numerals associated with the different time periods of the DN have to be reconstructed. Other DNs provide numerals which can not be correct if these have to connect the two recorded CR dates and again have to be reconstructed. Unfortunately, in only three clear cases the DN is correctly recorded and provides a perfect match of the time elapsed between the two CR dates (HS 2, Central, Step II, East, Step II & HS 2, West, Step III). It is on these matching DNs that I base my reconstructions as well as on the similar construction used on HS 4, Step II and I (formerly Step IV and V, cf. Boot 2002a).

An additional problem arises in the recorded coefficients for the day names and the month names. For instance, HS 2, East, Step IV, records the CR 3 Hix 16 Muwan. This CR has to be *2 Hix *17 Muwan, as the actual recorded CR is a calendrical impossibility, both from the perspective of the DN recorded (which is a match) as well as from the perspective of the internal workings of the Classic Maya calendrical system. It also has to be noted that in two cases the recorded day name is in error and also has to be reconstructed (Central, Step V: “Lamat” recorded, has to be “B'en”; Central, Step IV: apparently “Ahaw” recorded, has to be “Kab'an”). In one case (Central, Step VI), the recorded month “Ch'en” (Classic Maya *ik' sihom*) has to be “Keh” (Classic Maya *chak sihom*).

The use of the DN connecting the two CR dates on 14 of the 18 steps indicates that each step was considered to record an independent clause providing a date, event, (location), and protagonists. HS 2 thus consists of 18 single episodes which, as the dates themselves indicate, contains events inside a 3 *k'atun* (in Classic Maya: 3.0.0) period of the life of B'alah Chan K'awil of Mutal “Place of Abundance of *mut*” (Dos Pilas).

Deciphering Hieroglyphic Stairway 2

In this essay each surviving collocation on every step is transcribed and transliterated using multiple columns in which the location of the glyph blocks can be found, the actual transcriptions, and the transliterations, including calendrical reconstructions. After the transcription and translation there follow separate sections containing the calculation of DN and the two CR dates (with reconstructed LC placements) and a free translation of the

reconstructed Classic Maya transliteration. A short section containing comments on the information recorded on each particular step follows the translation.

After the complete transcription, transliteration, and translation of HS 2 there follows a chronological overview of all the calendrical dates and their associated events. These dates and events indeed reflect the life and times of B'alah Chan K'awil of Mutal (Dos Pilas).

Central Section

Central, Step VI (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 5)

A1	2-'e-wa-10+-PERIOD.WINAL	<i>cha' e'ew *b'uluch winal</i>
B1	2-PERIOD.TUN-ya	<i>cha' hab'-h-iy</i>
A2	'u-ti-ya	<i>ut-iy</i>
B2	TAN-na-LAM	<i>tanlam</i>
C1	2-DAY.'AHAW	<i>cha' ahaw</i>
D1	13-MONTH.POP	<i>huxlahun pop</i>
C2	'a-LAY?-ya	<i>a-lay</i>
D2	8-DAY.'IK'	<i>waxak ik'</i>
E1	5-MONTH.KEH?	<i>hob' *keh</i>
F1	SIY-ya-ha	<i>siy-ah</i>
E2	B'ALAH-[SKY-na]K'AWIL	<i>b'alah chan k'awil</i>
F2	K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.02.11.02 +			
CR	<u>09.09.10.00.00</u>	2 Ahaw 13 Pop	March 18	A.D. 623
new CR	09.09.12.11.02	8 Ik' 5 *Keh	October 15	A.D. 625

Translation

“2 days, *11 months, and 2 years since came to pass the half-period (on) *9.9.10.0.0, 2 Ahaw 13 Pop; here (was) *9.9.12.11.2, 8 Ik' 5 *Keh, born was B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

The DN provides a match between the first and second mentioned CR date. This first step of the central section then provides the birth date of B'alah Chan K'awil, ruler of Mutal (Dos Pilas). The Classic Maya month name is incorrectly recorded as Ch'en; it has to be Keh, due to the regularity of the Classic Maya calendar.

As Fahsen (2002) indicates, this birth date can be matched with references that state that B'alah Chan K'awil was a 3 *k'atun* lord (Dos Pilas, HS 4, Step V & Step I; HS 2, West, Step I) and even a 4 *k'atun* lord (Aguateca Stela 5). K'inich Waw (a.k.a. “Animal Skull”: Guenter, personal communication, November 17, 2002), the 22nd ruler of Mutal (Tikal) is the father of B'alah Chan K'awil (Dos Pilas, Panel 6; cf. Houston 1993: Fig. 4-7), while he may also be the father of Nun Uhol Chak, the later (25th?) ruler of Mutal (Tikal) and possibly older brother to B'alah Chan K'awil (cf. Fahsen 2002; Guenter, personal communication, 2001; Martin and Grube 2000). As suggested by Fahsen (2002), the birth of B'alah Chan K'awil may have taken place at Mutal (Tikal).

Central, Step V (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 6)

A1	12 -PERIOD.K'IN	<i>*huk k'in</i>
B1	[eroded]-PERIOD.WINAL	<i>[*b'uluch] winal</i>
A2	[eroded]	<i>[*hux hab']</i>
B2	1 -DAY.'AHAW	<i>hun ahaw</i>
C1	8 -MONTH.K'AYAB	<i>waxak k'ayab'</i>
D1	10 -PERIOD.K'ATUN	<i>lahun winikhab'</i>
C2	7 -DAY.BEN?	<i>huk *b'en</i>
D2	16 -MONTH.XUL	<i>waklahun xul</i>
E1	hu-li	<i>hul(-i)</i>
F1	B'ALAH	<i>b'alah</i>
E2	SKY-K'AWIL	<i>chan k'awil</i>
F2	K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*3.*11.*7 -			
CR	<u>09.10.00.00.00</u>	1 Ahaw 8 K'ayab'	January 24	A.D. 633
new CR	09.09.16.06.13	7 *B'en 16 Xul	June 27	A.D. 629

Translation

“*7 days, (*11) months, and (*3) years, (to) *9.10.0.0.0, 1 Ahaw 8 K'ayab', the 10th *k'atun*, (from) *9.9.16.6.13, 7 *B'en 16 Xul, (when) arrived B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

The DN needs a fair bit of reconstruction if a match is to be provided between the first and second CR. The clearly recorded numeral 12 for the amount of elapsed days should be *7. The day name of the second CR seems to have been recorded as 7 Lamat, which would be erroneous. The regularity of Classic Maya calendar directs to the day name B'en. The second, reconstructed, CR on this step is followed by an event which informs us that at the tender age of nearly 4 years B'alah Chan K'awil probably arrived at “Dragon Water” (Dos Pilas), although the text does not actually record this.

Central, Step IV (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 7)

A1	12 -PERIOD.K'IN	<i>lahcha' k'in</i>
B1	7 -PERIOD.WINAL	<i>huk winal</i>
A2	'u-ti-ya	<i>ut-iy</i>
B2	2 -DAY.'AHAW	<i>cha' ahaw</i>
C1	13 -MONTH.PAX	<i>huxlahun pax</i>
D1	PERIOD.3TUN (YAX-tzi-pi)	<i>yax tzip</i>
C2	ti-7 -DAY.KAB'AN?	<i>ti huk *kab'an</i>
D2	10 -MONTH.XUL	<i>lahun xul</i>
E1	YAX-K'AL-[HUN?]-ha	<i>yax k'al-ah hun</i>
F1	?-?-NAL	<i>[?] nal</i>
E2	B'ALAH-[SKY]K'AWIL	<i>b'alah chan k'awil</i>
F2	'UHT-ya-MUT	<i>ut-iy-Ø mutal</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.07.12	(no match)		
CR	09.10.03.00.00	2 Ahaw 13 Pax	January 9	A.D. 636
new CR	09.10.02.07.17	7 *Kab'an 10 Xul	June 20	A.D. 635

Translation

“12 days and 7 months, came to pass *9.10.3.0.0, 2 Ahaw 13 Pax, the 3rd *tun*; on *9.10.2.7.17, 7 *Kab'an 10 Xul, first time wrapped was (the headband) (by) [?] Nal B'alah Chan K'awil, it happened at Mutal”

Comments

The DN does not provide a connection between the two CRs, unless the calculation was in error and the DN may have read 07.*17. If correct, the one who made the calculation wanted to add the DN to the first CR, which would be erroneous (note difference in *tun* coefficients). The correct DN between the two CR dates would have been 10 (*winal*) and 3 (*k'in*). The day 7 *Kab'an seems to have been recorded erroneously as 7 Ahaw, as the carving seems to show. Again, the regularity of the Classic Maya calendar directs to the correct day name, in this case it has to be Kab'an.

The second CR informs us of the *yax k'al-hun* “first wrapping of the headband” ceremony of B'alah Chan K'awil at the age of 10 years. This ceremony took place at Mutal (Tikal). This reference is a further indication that the two Mutal polities were at peace at this time. It has to be noted that all steps of HS 2 contain chronological and historical information which was recorded retrospectively. Interestingly, the Tikal main toponym is recorded as Mutal, while at Tikal itself it is referred to as Yax Mutal (Martin and Grube 2000: 30). This step may thus inform us of the fact that Mutal (Dos Pilas) did not recognize Mutal (Tikal) as Yax Mutal or “First Mutal” at the time this HS was manufactured and dedicated.

Central, Step III (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 8)

A1	19 -PERIOD.K'IN	<i>b'alunlahun k'in</i>
B1	2 -PERIOD.WINAL	<i>*hux winal</i>
A2	2 -PERIOD.TUN	<i>*hun hab'</i>
B2	'u-ti-ya	<i>ut-iy</i>
C1	1 -DAY.'AHAW	<i>hun ahaw</i>
D1	8 -MONTH.K'AYAB	<i>waxak k'ayab'</i>
C2	10 _h v-PERIOD.K'ATUN	<i>lahun winikhab'</i>
D2	11 -DAY-KAWAK	<i>b'uluch kawak</i>
E1	17 -MONTH.WOH	<i>huklahun woh</i>
F1	LOK'-yi-ti-[pa?]-TUN-ni	<i>lok'-oy ti paptun</i>
E2	B'ALAH-SKY-na-K'AWIL	<i>b'alah chan k'awil</i>
F2	K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*1.*3.19 +			
CR	<u>09.10.00.00.00</u>	1 Ahaw 8 K'ayab'	January 24	A.D. 633
new CR	09.10.01.03.19	11 Kawak 17 Woh	April 8	A.D. 634

Translation

“19 days, *3 months, and *1 year since came to pass *9.10.0.0, 1 Ahaw 8 K’ayab’, the 10th *k’atun*-period, (on) *9.10.1.3.19, 11 Kawak 17 Woh, escaped to [?] B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

With some reconstruction (why the carver made these strange mistakes in the numerals, I do not know) the DN provides a match between the two CR dates. An unknown event (it simply is not recorded) leads to the escape (*lok’-*) of B’alah Chan K’awil to (note *ti*, a locative preposition) the site of Paptun. I interpret the vestiges of the name of the site as Paptun, based on its similarities with other recordings of Paptun on HS 2 (East, Step VI & West, Step IV). At this time B’alah Chan K’awil is not even 9 years old. In Classic Maya texts the *lok’-* event normally follows acts of war, and this “escape” possibly may have been due to a first skirmish between Kanal “Place of Abundance of Serpents” (Calakmul) and Mutal (Dos Pilas). But in this case we will never be sure, as the actual event or occasion is unknown (not recorded).

Central, Step II (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 9)

A1	2-PERIOD.K’IN	<i>cha’ k’in</i>
B1	17-PERIOD.WINAL	<i>huklahun winal</i>
A2	’u-ti-ya	<i>ut-iy</i>
B2	13-DAY.’AHAW	<i>huxlahun ahaw</i>
C1	18-MONTH.K’ANK’IN	<i>waxaklahun k’ank’in</i>
D1	[TAN]LAM	<i>tanlam</i>
C2	3-DAY.’IK’	<i>*chan ik’</i>
D2	[eroded]-MONTH.MAK	<i>[hob’ lahun] mak</i>
E1	K’AM-wi-K’AWIL-la	<i>k’am-w-i k’awil</i>
F1	b’a-TE’-pi-tzi	<i>b’a(h)te’ pitzal</i>
E2	B’ALAH-[SKY]K’AWIL	<i>b’alah chan k’awil</i>
F2	K’UH-MUT-’AHAW	<i>k’uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.17.02 +	
CR	<u>09.10.10.00.00</u>	13 Ahaw 18 K’ank’in December 3 A.D. 642
new CR	09.10.10.17.02	*4 Ik’ 15 Mak November 10 A.D. 643

Translation

“2 days and 17 months since came to pass *9.10.10.0.0, 13 Ahaw 18 K’ank’in, at the half-period, (then on) *9.10.10.17.2, *4 Ik’ 15 Mak, received was *k’awil* (by) B’a(h)te’ Pitzal B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

The DN provides a perfect match between the two CR dates. The second CR informs us of the date when B’alah Chan K’awil received *k’awil*, a ceremony intrinsically associated with accession. At this ceremony B’alah Chan K’awil is just 18 years old. Interestingly, there are more than 8 years between the “headband” wrapping ceremony on Central, Step IV, and receiving *k’awil* on this step; normally these ceremonies are on the same day or quite close in time.

Central, Step I (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 10)

A1	[5?]-'e-wa-7-PERIOD.WINAL					<i>*hob' e'ew *hux winal</i>
B1	'u-ti-ya					<i>ut-iy</i>
A2	6-DAY.'AHAW					<i>wak *ahaw</i>
B2	13-MONTH.MAK					<i>huxlahun *mak</i>
C1	WIL-5-TUN-ni					<i>wil hob' tun</i>
D1	'i?-'u-ti-6-DAY.CHIKCHAN					<i>i-ut wak chikchan</i>
C2	18-MONTH.PAX?					<i>waxaklahun *pax</i>
D2	ho?-[eroded]					[?]
E1	[eroded]					[?]
F1	[eroded]					[?]
E2	[eroded]					[?]
F2	[eroded]					[?]

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.*3.*5 +					
CR	<u>09.10.15.00.00</u>	6 Ahaw 13 Mak	November 7	A.D. 647		
new CR	09.10.15.03.05	6 Chikchan 18 Pax	January 11	A.D. 648		

Translation

“*5 days and *3 months since came to pass *9.10.15.0.0, 6 Ahaw 13 Mak, last five-*tun* period, then came to pass *9.10.15.3.5, 6 Chikchan 18 Pax, [...]”

Comments

The DN needs some clear reconstruction if it has to fit between the two CR dates. Note that while in bar-and-dot notation there is a big difference between 7 and *3, but not that big a difference between Classic Maya *huk* and **hux*. Unfortunately, the last four blocks are broken off. Too little detail survives of the event at D2 to provide any sensible reading. Fahsen suggested the collocation opened with the syllable *yo* (cf. Fahsen 2002), a sign I would compare to the syllable *ho* (note *yo* and *ho* [as *jo*] contained as in the Classic Maya syllabaries at URL <www.famsi.org/mayawriting>). No reading will be offered here.

East Section

East, Step VI (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 11)

A1	8?-[eroded]-PERIOD.WINAL					<i>[*b'alun k'in], [*chan] winal</i>
B1	6-DAY.'AHAW-13-MONTH.MAK					<i>wak ahaw huxlahun mak</i>
A2	WIL-5-TUN-ni					<i>wil hob' tun</i>
B2	'i-'u-ti					<i>i-ut</i>
C1	4-DAY.MULUK'-2-MONTH.KUMK'UH					<i>chan muluk cha' kumk'uh</i>
D1	DEATH-mi?-NAH					<i>cham-(i) [?] nah</i>
C2	K'AWIL-MUT-la?-'AHAW					<i>k'awil mutal ahaw</i>
D2	'u-ti-ya-SAK-HA'-la?					<i>ut-iy-Ø sakha'al</i>
E1	ta-b'a-chu[ku]					<i>tab' chuk(ah)</i>
F1	'a-[pa]-TUN-ni-'u-EARTH-hi-ya					<i>ah paptun, u-chab'-h-iy-Ø</i>
E2	B'ALAH-la?-SKY-na					<i>b'alah chan</i>
F2	K'AWIL-K'UH-MUT-'AHAW					<i>k'awil k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.*4.*9 +			
CR	<u>09.10.15.00.00</u>	6 Ahaw 13 Mak	November 7	A.D. 647
new CR	09.10.15.04.09	4 Muluk' 2 Kumk'uh	February 4	A.D. 648

Translation

“*9 days and *4 months (since came to pass) *9.10.15.0.0, 6 Ahaw 13 Mak, last five-*tun* period, then came to pass *9.10.15.4.9, 4 Muluk' 2 Kumk'uh, (when) died [?] Nah K'awil, Mutal Ahaw, it happened at Sakha'al, [...] captured was Ah Paptun, he supervised it, B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like Lord of Mutal”

Comments

The reconstructed DN fits between the two CR dates. The second CR is connected with the death of a lord named [?] Nah K'awil from Mutal (probably Tikal), an event which seems to have happened at Sakha'al “Place of Abundance of Clear Water.” Dos Pilas HS 4, Step II: G1-G2 records a person named **la-ma-na-hi?-K'AWIL-la** or Lam Nah K'awil, whose *tok' pakal* is brought down on the very same date. This spelling may provide a complete substitution of the name on HS 2, Step VI. If correct, the unknown main sign may thus be logographic **LAM** (but a different sign from the “half-period” sign, which is definitely **LAM**) and the person on this step may also be named Lam Nah K'awil.

At present I do not know what to do with the expression **ta-b'a**. It may be part of the toponym, but also it might be part of the next event spelled **chu[ku]**. In the tentative identification of the capture event I follow Fahsen (2002). The capture, possibly by “rope” (*tab'* “rope, cord”), involved an unnamed person from Paptun; only a title of origin is given, not a personal name. At this time B'alah Chan K'awil is just over 22 years of age.

East, Step V (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 12)

A1	[eroded]- K'IN -[eroded]-PERIOD.WINAL- hi-ya	<i>*b'alunlahun k'in</i> <i>*chan winal-h-iy</i>
B1	[eroded]-PERIOD.TUN- b'a?-[u]-to-ma	<i>*wak hab', ut-om</i>
A2	12-DAY.' AHAW- 8-MONTH .KEH	<i>lahcha' ahaw waxak keh</i>
B2	'u-11 -PERIOD.K'ATUN	<i>u-b'uluch-winikhab'</i>
C1	'i-'u-ti-[9] -DAY.KAWAK	<i>i-ut b'alun kawak</i>
D1	17-MONTH -MUWAN	<i>huklahun muwan</i>
C2	WAR- yi -DRAGON- HA'	<i>[?]-Vy “dragon” ha'</i>
D2	'u-EARTH-hi-ya-yu-ku-CAVE-na	<i>u-chab'-h-iy yuknom ch'en</i>
E1	[eroded]- ka -SERPENT-' AHAW-LOK' - yi-ya	<i>[k'uhul] kanal ahaw, lok'-oy-iy</i>
F1	B'ALAH-SKY-K'AWIL	<i>b'alah chan k'awil</i>
E2	K'UH-MUT.' AHAW- T'AB' - yi	<i>k'uhul mutal ahaw, t'ab'-ay-Ø</i>
F2	K'INICH-pa?-'a-WITZ	<i>k'inich pa' witz</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*6.*4.*19 +			
CR	<u>09.11.00.00.00</u>	12 Ahaw 8 Keh	October 11	A.D. 652
new CR	09.11.06.04.19	9 Kawak 17 Muwan	December 18	A.D. 658

Translation

“(19) day, (4) months, and (6) years it will come to pass *9.11.0.0.0, 12 Ahaw 8 Keh, the 11th *katun*, (from) *9.11.9.15.19, 9 Kawak 17 Muwan, (when) war descended upon Dragon Water, he supervised it, Yuknom Ch’en, God-like lord of Kanal. Escaped B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal, he went down to K’inich Pa’ Witz”

Comments

The DN is severely eroded and only through reconstruction can the DN be made to fit between the two CR dates. It has to be noted that the expression *utom* “it will come to pass” does not seem to be correct in this place, as the DN brings the new CR beyond the first CR. The first CR is a period ending (11th *k’atun*), but the second CR provides information on a previously unknown episode. On that particular date in A.D. 658 a war descended upon “Dragon Water,” the main toponymic reference to Mutal (Dos Pilas). This war event (a reading for the war event “Star-over-shell” main sign is still unknown), however, was supervised by Kanal (Calakmul) and its contemporary ruler Yuknom Ch’en. B’alah Chan K’awil, now 33 years of age, escaped and went down to a toponym which I transcribe and transliterate as **K’INICH-pa’-’a-WITZ** or K’inich Pa’ Witz (“Sun-Eye or Face Split Mountain”), which may be a syllabic spelling of the main toponym for Aguateca (as suggested by Grube, cf. Fahsen 2002), normally found as **K’INICH-SPLIT.MOUNTAIN** (cf. Houston 1993: Fig. 4-2a). In Yucatecan languages *pa’* means “to break, split, or smash.” The “split” sign would thus read **PA’** (compare to the main sign of the month Pax). The site of Aguateca is situated upon a natural cliff or escarpment, while an enormous chasm or gorge runs through the site (Inomata 1997: 337, Figs. 3 & 5). Aguateca indeed is situated at a “split (or broken) mountain.”

The recorded war event which descended upon Dos Pilas, supervised by the Calakmul ruler Yuknom Ch’en, was previously unknown and provides a rare window into Classic Maya political organization and manipulation.

East, Step IV (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20843.html>)

A1	14?-PERIOD.K’IN-5-PERIOD.WINAL	<i>chanlahun k’in hob’ winal</i>
B1	[eroded]	<i>[*chan hab’, lahcha’ ahaw waxak keh]</i>
A2	[11th <i>k’atun</i> period]	<i>[*u-b’uluch-winikhab’]</i>
B2	’i-’u-ti	<i>i-ut</i>
C1	6-DAY.HIX-2-MONTH.K’AYAB’	<i>wak hix cha’ k’ayab’</i>
D1	WAR-yi-MUT-la	<i>[?]-Vy mutal</i>
C2	’u-EARTH-hi-ya-[eroded]-no[CAVE]-na	<i>u-chab’-h-iy-Ø yuknom ch’en</i>
D2	K’UH-ka-SERPENT-’AHAW-LOK’-yi	<i>k’uhul kanal ahaw, lok’-oy</i>
E1	NUN[’u]HOL[CHAK]-T’AB’-yi	<i>nun uhol chak, t’ab’-ay-Ø</i>
F1	tu-pa-[eroded]	<i>tu pa-[?]</i>
E2	nu-?-ha	<i>nu[?]-ah</i>
F2	MUT-’AHAW-TAK	<i>mutal ahaw-tak</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*4.05.14 +			
CR	<u>09.11.00.00.00</u>	12 Ahaw 8 Keh	October 11	A.D. 652
new CR	09.11.04.05.14	6 Hix 2 K’ayab’	January 12	A.D. 657

Translation

“14 days, 5 months, and (*4 years) since (*9.11.0.0.0, 12 Ahaw 8 Keh), the 11th *k’atun*, then came to pass *9.11.4.5.14, 6 Hix 2 K’ayab’, war descended upon Mutal, he supervised it, Yuknom Ch’en [?], God-like lord of Kanal. Escaped Nun Uhol Chak, he came to [...], [...] were the Mutal lords”

Comments

The DN seems to provide a match between the two CR dates, with only a reconstruction necessary in the amount of years (eroded). The second CR provides a war event, now involving Nun Uhol Chak of Mutal (Tikal). This war, nearly two years before the Dos Pilas war recorded on Step V, is also supervised by Yuknom Ch’en of Kanal (Calakmul). Nun Uhol Chak escaped, and an unknown event happened to the Mutal (Tikal) lords. One may surmise that this cannot have been a positive event. Within a period of four-and-a-half years Calakmul thus supervised two wars involving both Mutal polities.

East, Step III (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20844.html>)

A1	[eroded]	
B1	[eroded]	
A2	[eroded]	
B2	[eroded]	
C1	[eroded]	
D1	[eroded]- ti-B’AH-hi-ha	<i>ti b’ah-ah-Ø</i>
C2	[eroded]	
D2	yu[ku]-no[yi-’ICH’AK’]-K’AK’- [eroded]- KAN-’AHAW	<i>yuknom yich’ak’ k’ak’</i> <i>[*k’uhul] kanal ahaw</i>
E1	yi?-[eroded]-NUN[’u]HOL[CHAK]	<i>y-i[...] nun uhol chak</i>
F1	B’ALAH-SKY-K’AWIL-la	<i>b’alah chan k’awil</i>
E2	[eroded]- MUT-’AHAW-wa	<i>k’uhul mutal ahaw</i>
F2	’u-ti-ya-YAX-’a	<i>ut-iy yaxa’</i>

Calculation

DN	[eroded]
CR	[eroded]
new CR	[eroded]

Translation

“[...] for (his)self [...] Yuknom Yich’ak K’ak’, (God-like) lord of Kanal, [...] Nun Uhol Chak, B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal, it happened at Yaxa’ ”

Comments

Erosion and possible destruction has led to the unfortunate loss of the DN and the two CR dates probably originally recorded on this step. Also the main event is unclear, but it seems to involve three characters, Yuknom Yich’ak K’ak’ of Kanal (Calakmul), Nun Uhol Chak of Mutal (Tikal), and B’alah Chan K’awil of Mutal (Dos Pilas). As some researchers have suggested this may have been a kind of submission of both Nun Uhol Chak and B’alah Chan K’awil (Guenter and Grube, as cited in Fahsen 2002). The vestiges of the **yi** sign, especially clear in the 1970 Merle Green Robertson photograph (attached to the Mesoweb report on the

new Dos Pilas finds at URL <<http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20844.html>>), may actually have introduced the collocation **yi-ta-hi** for *y-it-ah-Ø* “they accompanied him.” Whatever the actual event or the occasion, the fact that Yuknom Yich’ak K’ak’ is mentioned means that this particular episode has to take place in or after A.D. 649, the year Yuknom Yich’ak K’ak’ was born (cf. Martin and Grube 2000). The place name Yaxa’ occurs quite frequently in toponymic references in Classic Maya inscriptions. In this particular case it may refer to a site named Yaxa’ close to Calakmul.

East, Step II (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20845.html>)

A1	1-2-PERIOD.WINAL-hi-ya-’u-to-ma	<i>hun [k’in] cha’ winal-h-iy ut-om</i>
B1	11-DAY-’AHAW-18-MONTH.CH’EN	<i>b’uluch ahaw waxaklahun ch’en</i>
A2	[TAN]LAM-9-DAY.KAWAK	<i>tanlam, b’alun kawak</i>
B2	17-MONTH.YAXK’IN	<i>huklahun yaxk’in</i>
C1	’u-na-ka-wa	<i>u-nak-aw</i>
D1	ta-b’a-DEATH-mi	<i>t’ab’ chami</i>
C2	ko-b’a-na-’AHAW	<i>k’ob’an ahaw</i>
D2	B’ALAH-SKY-K’AWIL-la	<i>b’alah chan k’awil</i>
E1	K’UH-MUT-’AHAW-yi-ta-hi	<i>k’uhul mutal ahaw, y-it-ah-Ø</i>
F1	ya-SKULL-?-li?	[?]
E2	ka-la-wa-JAGUAR-’AHAW	<i>kalaw b’alam ahaw</i>
F2	’u-ti-ya-[eroded]	<i>ut-iy-Ø [?]</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.02.01 -			
CR	<u>09.11.10.00.00</u>	11 Ahaw 18 Ch’en	August 20	A.D. 662
new CR	09.11.09.15.19	9 Kawak 17 Yaxk’in	July 10	A.D. 662

Translation

“1 days and 2 months, will come to pass *9.11.10.0.0, 11 Ahaw 18 Ch’en, (the) half-period; (from) *9.11.9.15.19, 9 Kawak 17 Yaxk’in, (when) he attacked Tab’ Chami Kob’an Ahaw, B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal, he accompanied him, [?] Kalaw B’alam Ahaw, it happened at [?]”

Comments

The DN of 2.1 provides a match between the two recorded CR dates. The second CR provides a war event, first identified by Schele (cf. Schele and Grube 1994), involving Tab’ Chami, a lord from Kob’an. The actual location of the site of Kob’an is unknown; it has been suggested it might be the site of Cobán [Kob’an] in the Verapaz region (cf. Schele and Grube 1994). The war event was waged by B’alah Chan K’awil in the company of Kalaw B’alam Ahaw. Unfortunately, the place where this event happened is lost due to erosion.

East, Step I (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20842.html>)

A1	[eroded]	<i>[*huklahun k’in, *b’alun winal]</i>
B1	[eroded][half-period]	<i>[hun hab’] tanlam</i>
A2	11-DAY-’AHAW-18-MONTH.CH’EN	<i>b’uluch ahaw waxaklahun ch’en</i>
B2	’i-’u-ti	<i>i-ut</i>
C1	9-DAY.KAB’AN-5-MONTH.POP	<i>b’alun kab’an hob’ pop</i>
D1	chu-ka-ha	<i>chuk-ah</i>

C2	TAH-MO’-’o		<i>tahal mo’</i>
D2	’a-SITE.MACHAQUILA-’u-B’AK-ki?		<i>ah [machaquila], u-b’ak</i>
E1	b’a-la-ha		<i>b’alah</i>
F1	SKY-na-K’AWIL-la		<i>chan k’awil</i>
E2	K’UH-MUT-la-’AHAW-wa		<i>k’uhul mutal ahaw</i>
F2	b’a-ka-b’a		<i>b’a(h)kab’</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*1.*9.*17 +			
CR	<u>09.11.10.00.00</u>	11 Ahaw 18 Ch’en	August 20	A.D. 662
new CR	09.11.11.09.17	9 Kab’an 5 Pop	February 28	A.D. 664

Translation

“(*17 days, *9 months, and *11 years since the half-period at) *9.11.10.0.0, 11 Ahaw 18 Ch’en, then came to pass *9.11.11.9.17, 9 Kab’an 5 Pop, (when) captured was Tahal Mo’ of Machaquilá, (he was) the captive of B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal, First or Head of the World”

Comments

Due to erosion, the DN had to be reconstructed to fit between the CR dates. On the second CR a capture takes place. B’alah Chan K’awil captured Tahal Mo’ from Machaquilá (Martin, in Fahsen 2002), his place of origin as provided through the so-called “title of origin” (cf. Stuart and Houston 1994). The reading Tahal Mo’ for the name is based on various spellings for this name at Machaquilá (of later date, and actually referring to a prisoner of the same name) and the Usamacinta drainage (although in that region it refers to a different person of the same name). These spellings are **TAH-MO’-’o**, **TAH-ha-MO’-’o**, and **ta-ha-la-MO’**, and **ta-ha-MO’-’o** leading to the item *tahal mo’* (cf. Boot 2002b). At the time of this particular capture B’alah Chan K’awil is close to 39 years old. As later title phrases at Dos Pilas indicate (see below), Tahal Mo’ was to become his most prestigious captive, and his name was used in B’alah Chan K’awil’s *u-chan* “(he is) the guardian of” expressions. B’alah Chan K’awil is also entitled *b’a(h)kab’* “first of head of the world,” the supreme *b’ah* “first or head” title only associated with the highest of rank (note other, sometimes lower ranked, *b’ah* titles such as *b’ahahaw*, *b’ahcheb’*, *b’ahch’ok*, *b’ahpakal*, *b’ahsahal*, *b’ahte’*, *b’ahtok’*, etc.).

West Section

West, Step VI (Fahsen 2002: Figure 14)

A1	[eroded]-MONTH.MUWAN	<i>[chan ak’b’al b’uluch] muwan</i>
B1	WAR-yi-DRAGON-HA’	<i>[war]-Vy “dragon” ha’</i>
A2	’u-EARTH-hi-ya	<i>u-chab’-h-iy-Ø</i>
B2	NUN-’u-HOL[CHAK]	<i>nun uhol chak</i>
C1	[eroded]-yi-[eroded]-ha	<i>[lok’]-oy [b’ala]h</i>
D1	SKY-na-K’AWIL-la	<i>chan k’awil</i>
C2	K’UH-MUT-’AHAW	<i>k’uhul mutal ahaw</i>
D2	T’AB’-yi-CHAK-NAH	<i>t’ab’-ay-Ø chak nah</i>
E1	[eroded]	
F1	[eroded]	

E2 [eroded]
F2 [eroded]

Calculation

text opens only with CR

09.12.00.08.03 *4 *Ak'b'al *11 Muwan December 8 A.D. 672

Translation

“(on) *9.12.0.8.3, *4 *Ak'b'al *11 Muwan, war descended on Dragon Water, he supervised it, Nun Uhol Chak; escaped to [...] B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal, he went down to Chak Nah”

Comments

This step opens directly with a reconstructed CR (compare to HS 2, West, Step IV). On this CR date war descended upon “Dragon Water,” the main toponym of Mutal (Dos Pilas). This war was supervised by Nun Uhol Chak, brother of B'alah Chan K'awil and ruler of Mutal (Tikal). B'alah Chan K'awil escaped and fled to Chak Nah “Rain God House,” possibly a neighboring community but of unknown location. Before this particular step was found, no mention was ever made of Chak Nah.

West, Step V (Fahsen 2002: Fig. 13)

A1	11-'e-7-PERIOD.WINAL-ya	<i>b'uluch e'(ew) huk winal-h-iy</i>
B1	WAR-yi-ya- [eroded]	[war]-Vy-iy [...]
A2	'i-'u-ti	<i>i-ut</i>
B2	7-DAY-HIX-17-MONTH.TZEK	<i>huk hix huklahun tzek</i>
C1	PUL[yi]-[DRAGON?]-HA'	<i>pul-uy-Ø “dragon” ha'</i>
D1	[T'AB'?]-yi- [eroded]	<i>t'ab'-ay-Ø [eroded]</i>
C2	7-2-PERIOD.WINAL-ya-9-DAY.'AK'B'AL	<i>huk k'in, cha' winal-h-iy</i>
		<i>b'alun ak'b'al</i>
D2	6-MONTH.YAXK'IN-WAR-yi	<i>wak yaxk'in [war]-Vy</i>
E1	[CHAK?]-NAH-['u]-EARTH-hi	<i>[chak] nah u-chab'-h-iy-Ø</i>
F1	[eroded]- MUT-la- [eroded]	[eroded] <i>mutal</i> [eroded]
E2	LOK'-yi-B'ALAH-[SKY]K'AWIL	<i>lok'-oy-Ø b'alah chan k'awil</i>
F2	T'AB'-yi-HIX-WITZ	<i>t'ab'-ay-Ø hix witz</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.07.11	(no match)		
CR	?			
new CR	09.11.08.13.14	7 Hix 17 Tzek May 31	A.D. 661	
DN	00.00.00.02.07	(no match)		
CR	?			
new CR	09.12.01.00.03	9 Ak'b'al 6 Yaxk'in June 26	A.D. 673	

Translation

“11 days and 7 months (since) war descended upon [...], then came to pass *9.11.8.13.14, 7 Hix 17 Tzek, burnt was Dragon Water, escaped [...]; 7 days and 2 months (until) *9.12.1.0.3,

9 Ak'b'al 6 Yaxk'in, war descended upon [Chak] Nah, he supervised it, [...] Mutal [...], escaped B'alah Chan K'awil, he went down to Hix Witz"

Comments

The DNs do not seem to match with the CR dates. On the first CR the burning of "Dragon Water" takes place, connected through the DN with a war event against an unknown location on a unknown date (possibly 9.11.8.6.3, 12 Ak'b'al 11 Pax). On the second CR, Nun Uhol Chak continues his war campaign against his brother B'alah Chan K'awil. War descended upon Chak Nah, but B'alah Chan K'awil escaped to Hix Witz "Jaguar Mountain." Nun Uhol Chak "chases" his brother around in the Petexbatun area but is unable to capture him.

West, Step IV (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20853.html>)

A1	11-1-PERIOD.WINAL-hi	<i>b'uluch [k'in] hun winal-h-i(y)</i>
B1	5-PERIOD.TUN-ya-WAR-yi-ya	<i>hob' hab'(-h-i)y [war]-Vy</i>
A2	DRAGON-HA'-i-'u-ti	<i>"dragon" ha' i-ut</i>
B2	3-DAY.HIX-16-MONTH.MUWAN	<i>*cha' hix *huklahun muwan</i>
C1	WAR-yi-[PUL]li	<i>[war]-Vy pulil</i>
D1	LOK'-yi-NUN-'u-HOL[CHAK]	<i>lok'-oy nun uhol chak</i>
C2	T'AB'-yi-_pa-TUN-ni	<i>t'ab'-ay-Ø paptun</i>
D2	7-la-ta-9-DAY.'IMIX	<i>huk-lat b'alun imix</i>
E1	4-MONTH.PAX-hu-li	<i>chan pax hul(-i)</i>
F1	DRAGON-HA'-B'ALAH-SKY-na	<i>"dragon" ha' b'alah chan</i>
E2	K'AWIL-la-'u-SERPENT-nu	<i>k'awil u-chan</i>
F2	TAH-MO'-o-K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>tahal mo' k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.05.01.11 +			
CR	<u>09.12.00.08.03</u>	4 Ak'b'al 11 Muwan	December 8	A.D. 672
new CR	09.12.05.09.14	*2 Hix *17 Muwan	December 13	A.D. 677
DN	00.00.00.00.07 +			
CR	<u>*9.12.05.09.14</u>	*2 Hix *17 Muwan	December 13	A.D. 677
new CR	09.12.05.10.01	9 Imix 4 Pax	December 20	A.D. 677

Translation

"11 days, 1 month, and 5 years since war descended on Dragon Water, then came to pass *9.12.5.9.14, *2 Hix *17 Muwan, (when) war descended upon Pulil, escaped Nun Uhol Chak, he went down to Paptun; 7 days later (on) *9.12.5.10.1, 9 Imix 4 Pax, arrived at Dragon Water, B'alah Chan K'awil, the guardian of Tahal Mo', God-like lord of Mutal"

Comments

Now the events have picked up the pace. The DN connects the "Dragon Water" war with a war which descended upon Pulil, a site of unknown location. From there Nun Uhol Chak escaped and went down to Paptun. Only seven days later B'alah Chan K'awil arrived (back) at "Dragon Water," now entitled "Guardian of Tahal Mo' " (title only used after the capture mentioned earlier) and "God-like lord of Mutal (Dos Pilas)".

Step III (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20851.html>)

A1	3-20-hi-ya-8-DAY-'AHAW	<i>hux winik-h-iy waxak ahaw</i>
B1	13-MONTH.TZEK-'u-7-PERIOD.TUN	<i>huxlahun tzek u-huk-hab'</i>
A2	'i-'u-ti-11-DAY.KAB'AN	<i>i-ut b'uluch kab'an</i>
B2	10-MONTH.SOTZ'-hu-b'u-yi	<i>lahun sotz' hub'-uy</i>
C1	'u-TOK'-PAKAL-NUN-'u-HOL[CHAK]	<i>u-tok'-u-pakal nun uhol chak</i>
D1	NAB'-ha-'u-K'IK'?'-le	<i>nab'-ah u-k'ik'-el</i>
C2	WITZ-ha-'u-HOL?'-li	<i>witz-ah u-hol-il</i>
D2	13-tzu-ku	<i>huxlahun tzuk</i>
E1	MUT-la-['AHAW?-TAK?]	<i>[mutal ahawtak]</i>
F1	['u-EARTH-hi-ya]-B'ALAH-SKY-na	<i>[u-chab'-h-iy-Ø] b'alah chan</i>
E2	K'AWIL-la-K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>k'awil k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>
F2	B'AH-ka-b'a	<i>b'ahkab'</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.00.01.03 -			
CR	<u>09.12.07.00.00</u>	8 Ahaw 13 Tzek	May 23	A.D. 679
new CR	09.12.06.16.17	11 Kab'an 10 Sotz'	April 30	A.D. 679

Translation

“3 and 20 (to) *9.12.7.0.0, 8 Ahaw 13 Tzek, the 7th-tun, when came to pass *9.12.6.16.17, 11 Kab'an 10 Sotz', brought down were the flint(s) and shield(s) of Nun Uhol Chak. Made into a pool was the blood, made into a pile like a mountain were the skulls of the Huxlahun Tzuk Mutal lords, he supervised it, B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal, First or Head of the World”

Comments

The DN provides perfect match between the CR dates, the first a 7th-tun ending date. On the second CR the *tok' pakal* “flint-shield” of Nun Uhol Chak is brought down. In previous research the *tok' pakal* was interpreted as a war emblem, an object literally consisting of “flint and shield.” More recent research by Simon Martin seems to indicate that *tok' pakal* is the reference par excellence to a Classic Maya “army,” as certain court officials are entitled *b'ahpakal* “first or head shield” while others are entitled *b'ahtok'* “first or head flint” (personal communication, March 2002). If correct, this “army” (bearers of the flints and shields) was brought down and Nun Uhol Chak's warriors were severely defeated. The blood of the slain warriors was made into a pool, while their severed heads were made into a pile like a mountain. This interpretation stems from recent, still largely unpublished, epigraphic research by Stephen Houston and David Stuart. The two inchoative verbs (note *-ah* suffix) used here are derived from the nouns *nab'* “pool” and *witz* “mountain.” The Huxlahun Tzuk Mutal Ahawtak, the “Thirteen Provinces of Mutal (Tikal) lords” underwent this tragic fate. The whole event was supervised by B'alah Chan K'awil, now nearly 54 years of age, and here again entitled “First or Head of the World”.

West, Step II (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20852.html>)

A1	[eroded]-PERIOD.TUN-ya	<i>[*cha' kin, *b'uluch winal, *cha'] hab'(-h-iy)</i>
B1	['u-ti-ya]-[eroded]	<i>ut-iy [b'alun ahaw]</i>
A2	[eroded]-[TAN]LAM	<i>[lahun muwan] tanlam</i>

B2	'AK'T-TAH-ha	<i>ak'-t-ah-Ø</i>
C1	ti -[eroded]	<i>ti [...]</i>
D1	[eroded]- K'UH-ka-SERPENT-'AHAW	<i>[...] k'uhul kanal ahaw</i>
C2	[yi-ta-hi]-B'AH-SKY-K'AWIL-la	<i>[y-it-ah-Ø] b'alah chan k'awil</i>
D2	K'UH-MUT-la-'i-'u-ti	<i>k'uhul mutal ahaw i-ut</i>
E1	2-DAY.'IK'-10-MONTH.MUWAN	<i>cha' ik' lahun muwan</i>
F1	TZUTZ-yi-3-TAL-la	<i>tzutz-uy hux-tal</i>
E2	'u-PERIOD.K'ATUN-b'a-la-ha	<i>u-winikhab' b'alah</i>
F2	[SKY]K'AWIL-la-K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>chan k'awil k'uhul mutal ahaw</i>

Calculation

DN	00.00.*2.*11.*2 +			
CR	<u>09.12.10.00.00</u>	9 Ahaw 18 Sotz'	May 7	A.D. 682
new CR	09.12.12.11.02	2 Ik' 10 Muwan	December 4	A.D. 684

Translation

“(*2 days, *11 months, and *2) years since came to pass *9.12.10.0.0, 9 Ahaw 18 Sotz, the half-period, he danced with [...], [...] God-like lord of Kanal; he accompanied him, B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal, then came to pass *9.12.12.11.2, 2 Ik' 10 Muwan, completed was (the) third ordinal count of the *k'atun* of B'alah Chan K'awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

Due to erosion, the DN needs to be fully reconstructed if a match is to be made between the two CR dates. The first CR is a half-period, associated with a dance ceremony performed by the lord of Kanal (Calakmul), in the company of B'alah Chan K'awil. The second CR is associated with an unknown event, but further states that B'alah Chan K'awil reached his 3rd *k'atun*, meaning he is now a lord between circa 59 and 79 years of age (this date is the exact 3.0.0.0 anniversary of this birth, cf. HS 2, Central, Step VI). This occasion is also recorded on the top step of HS 4 (Step V), providing confirmation both of the event as well as the 3rd *k'atun* lord-ship of B'alah Chan K'awil (cf. Boot 2002a).

West, Step I (photo: <http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/d20857.html>)

A1	[missing]	
B1	[missing]	
A2	[missing]	
B2	[missing]	
C1	[missing]	
D1	[missing]	
C2	'ITZAMNAH-hi-[JAGUAR]-ma	<i>itzamnah b'alam</i>
D2	[child-of-mother?]- 'IXIK -[eroded]- la?	<i>[y-al] ixik [...]</i>
E1	['IXIK-SITE.ITZAN?-'AHAW]	<i>ixik [itzan] ahaw</i>
F1	[child-of-father?]- b'a-la-ha	<i>[u-nichin] b'alah</i>
E2	SKY-na-K'AWIL-la	<i>chan k'awil</i>
F2	K'UH-MUT-'AHAW	<i>k'uhul mut ahaw</i>

Calculation

no DN or CR survives

Translation

“[...] Itzamnah B’alam (is the child of) Lady [...] Lady of Itzan, (he is the child) B’alah Chan K’awil, God-like lord of Mutal”

Comments

The opening six blocks are missing, which is unfortunate as now there is no date associated with this step. The text mentions Itzamnah B’alam, probably his birth as the son of a Lady from Itzan and as a son of B’alah Chan K’awil. This Itzamnah B’alam is apparently the older brother to Itzamnah K’awil, a later ruler of Dos Pilas, often referred to as Ruler 2 (cf. Houston 1993), perhaps incorrectly (cf. Fahsen 2002; Martin and Grube 2000). Itzamnah K’awil’s parentage can be found on Dos Pilas HS 1, Step I (new numeration, previously Step III; cf. Houston 1993: Fig. 4-16), where it is clearly indicated that he is the son of Lady of Itzan and B’alah Chan K’awil.

Itzamnah B’alam must have been born prior to ca. A.D. 673 (birth of his younger brother) as well as ca. A.D. 692 (the last mention of B’alah Chan K’awil, his father). Itzamnah B’alam may have ruled after his father, but if he did, he was succeeded by his younger brother Itzamnah K’awil in A.D. 698. Therefore, his possible reign must have been a short one at a young age of which at this moment no details survive.

A Chronology of Affairs

The discovery of the 10 new steps of Dos Pilas HS 2 has led, and will lead in the future, to many a new interpretation on the relationship between Dos Pilas and Tikal, as well as the relationship between Dos Pilas and Calakmul (cf. Fahsen 2002). In this last section I present a chronological overview of the different dated events on these steps, all close to or from the life time of B’alah Chan K’awil, grouped per so-called *k’atun* Ahaw period:

<i>Date</i>	<i>K’atun period, LC + CR</i>	<i>Event(s)</i>
	<i>K’atun 1 Ahaw (A.D. 613-633)</i>	
March 18, A.D. 623	09.09.10.00.00, 2 Ahaw 13 Pop	half-period
October 15, A.D. 625	09.09.12.11.02, 8 Ik’ 5 Keh	birth of B’alah Chan K’awil
June 27, A.D. 629	09.09.16.06.13, 7 B’en 16 Xul	arrival of B’alah Chan K’awil
January 24, A.D. 633	09.10.00.00.00, 1 Ahaw 8 K’ayab’	10th <i>k’atun</i> ending
	<i>K’atun 12 Ahaw (A.D. 633-652)</i>	
April 8, A.D. 634	09.10.01.03.19, 11 Kawak 17 Woh	escape of B’alah Chan K’awil
June 20, A.D. 635	09.10.02.07.17, 7 Kab’an 10 Xul	first wrapping of royal headband by B’alah Chan K’awil at Mutal (Tikal)
January 9, A.D. 636	09.10.03.00.00, 2 Ahaw 13 Pax	3rd <i>tun</i> ending
December 3, A.D. 642	09.10.10.00.00, 13 Ahaw 18 K’ank’in	half-period
November 10, A.D. 643	09.10.10.17.02, 4 Ik’ 15 Mak	B’alah Chan K’awil received <i>k’awil</i>
November 7, A.D. 647	09.10.15.00.00, 6 Ahaw 13 Mak	last 5- <i>tun</i> period
January 11, A.D. 648	09.10.15.03.05, 6 Chikchan 18 Pax	(unknown)
February 4, A.D. 648	09.10.15.04.09, 4 Muluk 2 Kumk’uh	death of [?] Nah K’awil of Mutal (Tikal?); capture of Ah Paptun supervised by B’alah Chan K’awil

October 11, A.D. 652	09.11.00.00.00, 12 Ahaw 8 Keh	11th <i>k'atun</i> ending
	<i>K'atun</i> 10 Ahaw (A.D. 652-672)	
January 12, A.D. 657	09.11.04.05.14, 6 Hix 2 K'ayab'	war on Mutal (Tikal), supervised by Yuknom Ch'en; Nun Uhol Chak escaped
December 18, A.D. 658	09.11.06.04.19, 9 Kawak 17 Muwan	war on "Dragon Water" supervised by Yuknom Ch'en; B'alah Chan K'awil escaped to K'inich Pa' Witz (Aguateca?)
May 1, A.D. 661	09.11.08.13.14, 7 Hix 17 Tzek	burning of "Dragon Water"
July 10, A.D. 662	09.11.09.15.19, 9 Kawak 17 K'ank'in	attack of Tab' Chami Kob'an Ahaw by B'alah Chan K'awil
August 20, A.D. 662	09.11.10.00.00, 11 Ahaw 18 Ch'en	half-period
February 28, A.D. 664	09.11.11.09.17, 9 Kab'an 5 Pop	capture of Tahal Mo' of Machaquila by B'alah Chan K'awil
	<i>K'atun</i> 8 Ahaw (A.D. 672-692)	
December 8, A.D. 672	09.12.00.08.03, 4 Ak'b'al 11 Muwan	war on "Dragon Water", supervised by Nun Uhol Chak; B'alah Chan K'awil escaped to Chak Nah
June 26, A.D. 673	09.12.01.00.03, 9 Ak'b'al 6 Yaxk'in	war on [Chak] Nah supervised by Mutal (Tikal) lord; escape of B'alah Chan K'awil to Hix Witz
December 13, A.D. 677	09.12.05.09.14, *2 Hix *17 Muwan	war on Pulil, escape of Nun Uhol Chak to Paptun
December 20, A.D. 677	09.12.05.10.01, 9 Imix 4 Pax	arrival at "Dragon Water" by B'alah Chan K'awil
April 30, A.D. 679	09.12.06.16.17, 11 Kab'an 10 Sotz'	bringing down of the army of Nun Uhol Chak. Occurred the pooling of blood, the mountaining of skulls supervised by B'alah Chan K'awil
May 23, A.D. 679	09.12.07.00.00, 8 Ahaw 13 Tzek	7th <i>tun</i> ending
May 7, A.D. 682	09.12.10.00.00, 9 Ahaw 18 Sotz'	half-period
December 4, A.D. 684	09.12.12.11.02, 2 Ik' 10 Muwan	dance ceremony by lord of Calakmul and B'alah Chan K'awil; three <i>k'atun</i> anniversary of birth

In this chronological overview it can be seen how the peaceful events described on the central section of HS 2 are followed by a long sequence of internecine events, involving Mutal (Tikal), Mutal (Dos Pilas), and Kanal (Calakmul). I have ordered the dated events by their respective *k'atun* Ahaw periods, through which it is clear that *k'atun* 10 Ahaw and 8 Ahaw contained the highest level of war events. In the Books of Chilam B'alam from northern Yucatán, describing *k'atun* histories or chronicles for the Itzá Maya, the *k'atun* 8 Ahaw is related to both foundation events as well as termination events. In a *k'atun* 8 Ahaw, the Itzá founded their new city and capital at the mouth of the well of Itzá in northern Yucatán. The migration of the originally Petén-dwelling Itzá population may have been due to the extended internecine period which took place in the central Petén and the Petexbatún area in *k'atun* periods 10 Ahaw and 8 Ahaw (cf. Boot, n.d.).

The most revealing passages can be found on several of the previously unknown steps. It was ruler Yuknom Ch'en of Kanal (Calakmul) who supervised a war which descended upon Mutal (Tikal) in A.D. 657, as was already known. Within a period of less than two years, in A.D. 658, war descended upon "Dragon Water," the Dos Pilas main toponym, again supervised by Yuknom Ch'en. This particular episode was previously unknown. In both cases, the contemporary rulers, B'alah Chan K'awil and Nun Uhol Chak escaped and fled to neighboring communities. The dated event originally recorded on East, Step III, may have been pivotal, as three protagonists are named (Yuknom Yich'ak K'ak', Nun Uhol Chak, B'alah Chan K'awil), but we can never be sure now. What events precisely took place next, the glyphs do not reveal, but in a period of about 12 to 14 years, B'alah Chan K'awil and Nun Uhol Chak turned upon each other, finally resulting in the crushing defeat of Nun Uhol Chak's army, supervised by B'alah Chan K'awil, in A.D. 679. By that time B'alah Chan K'awil was forced (or chose after careful political consideration, we just do not know) to take the side of Kanal (Calakmul). HS 4, Step II (new numeration, formerly Step IV) clearly states that B'alah Chan K'awil considered himself to be a (vassal) lord of Yuknom Ch'en of Kanal (Calakmul) (cf. Boot 2002a; Houston 1993; Martin and Grube 2000; Schele and Grube 1994). The defeat of the Mutal (Tikal) army or *tok' pakal* must have been performed by a formidable army, possibly also consisting of Kanal (Calakmul) warriors or even mercenaries. In this same time period, Yuknom Ch'en not only showed interest in the two Mutal polities, but he also directed his powerful influence farther to the east, namely to Cancuén (cf. Guenter 2002).

While some of the steps reveal some of the most horrific facets of Classic Maya warfare in the seventh century A.D., the inscription on HS 2 opens with the birth of B'alah Chan K'awil in A.D. 625 and more or less closes with the exact three *k'atun* anniversary of this birth in A.D. 684 (the last step probably records the birth of his first son, Itzamnah B'alam). HS 2 indeed describes (most) of the life and times of this first ruler of Mutal (Dos Pilas), it actually "frames" the intercenine events in the Petexbatun and the Petén. The fact that no later date is recorded on this HS may indicate that the actual commission, manufacture, and dedication of the monument took place close to A.D. 684.

More research is needed to fully appreciate the events as recorded on these steps. Future excavations at Dos Pilas may yet reveal more unknown episodes and events. A following essay will describe the internecine events from the perspective of Dos Pilas HS 4 (cf. Boot 2002a).

First version: September 28, 2002

Revised: September 30, 2002

Revised & additions: October 1-5, 2002

Revised & additions: October 12, 2002

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