

The Inscriptions on Two Lintels of Ikil and the Realm of Ek' B'ahlam

Peter Biro
Mesoamerican Studies, UNAM, Mexico

At the last Maya Hieroglyphic Forum at Texas, various leading epigraphers dealt with the inscriptions of the Northern Maya Lowlands and especially the recently found texts of Ek' B'ahlam (Grube, Lacadena and Martin 2003). In treating the inscriptions of this once-important Classic Maya center, they have discovered that the emblem glyph of Ek' B'ahlam — *k'uhul talo[l] ajaw* or *k'uhul talo['] ajaw* — occurred in the inscriptions of Ichmul and Halakal (*op.cit.*:II-21, 30, 43), and one of the kings of Ek' B'ahlam, Juun Pik Tok', is mentioned in the texts of the Casa Colorada of Chichén Itzá (Voss and Kremer 2000:157).

However, there is one more mention of the emblem glyph of Ek' B'ahlam in a context presently unidentified by fellow epigraphers from the inscriptions of two lintels of Ikil, a site west of Chichén Itzá. Moreover I have found a new Ek' B'ahlam king not recognized before by other researchers.

Ikil and the Two Lintels: the Archaeological Data

Ikil was first described in 1951 by Alberto García Maldonado, who discovered the two lintels. Later, in 1956 and in 1966, E. Wyllys Andrews IV and George Stuart made a preliminary investigation of the site and drew and photographed the lintels (Andrews IV and Stuart 1968). From the archaeological survey of Stuart and Andrews IV, it was determined that the two lintels were from the pre-Florescent period or from somewhere between AD 650 and 750 (Andrews 1994). Because of the absence of any date on the inscriptions, this time frame is very important to place the event mentioned in the text.

According to the general survey, Ikil was abandoned in the tenth century, and there is very little evidence about its coexistence with Chichén Itzá, a site just 26 kilometers to the east. With this general data in mind I will turn to the inscriptions themselves.

The Transcription, Transliteration and Translation of Lintels 1 and 2 of Ikil

Lintels 1 and 2 have 10 glyphs each and clearly form part of the same text. Glyphs 10 and 13 are totally or partially erased while the others are in a very good state. I will transcribe the text beginning with glyph 1 and ending with glyph 20 on the second lintel (figures 1 and 2). After the transliteration and literal translation I will make a short comment about the text, especially the mention of an Ek' B'ahlam lord and his relation with Ikil.



Figure 1, Lintel 1 of Ikil (after Andrews IV and Stuart 1968, figure 1b).

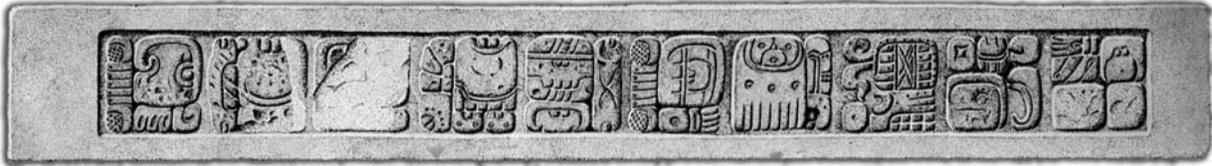


Figure 2, Lintel 2 of Ikil (after Andrews IV and Stuart 1968, figure 1d).

(1) a-LAY?-ya (2) ta?-b'a-yi (3) u-?-?-b'i-li (4) K'UHUL-IX (5) IX-B'ULUCH (6) ?-[ku]-AJAW-wa (7) IX-chi-b'i-TUUN-la (8) ya-YAL-CHAN-o (9) ya-AJAW-wa-TE' (10) ? (11) u-KAB'-ji-ya (12) CHAK-? (13) ? (14) pi-tsi-la (15) CHAN-na-TOK' (16) u-ki-ti (17) ma-pi (18) K'AHK'/B'UUTS'-OOCH? (19) ?-[ku]-AJAW-wa (20) ?-ta-lo-AJAW?-wa?.

alay? tab'aay? u-?-b'il K'uhul Ix Ix-B'uluch ?-[ku]-ajaw Ix-Chib'-Tuuniil yal-chan-o yajawte' ? ukab'jiiy Chak-? pitsiil Chan-Tok' Ukit Maap Ooch? B'uuts-? ?-[ku]-ajaw ?-Talo[l]-ajaw?.

This is, it gets raised, her ? of, K'uhul Ix, Ix B'uluch, ?-ajaw, she from Chib'-Tuuniil, the daughter of the sky?, the yajawte' of ?, it is the doing of, Chak-?, ?, the ballplayer, Chan-Tok', Ukit Maap Ooch? B'uuts-?, ?-ajaw, ?-ajaw of Talo[l].

Comment on the text

It is certain that the inscription begins with the infamous PSS introductory glyph, which has been recently deciphered by Yuriy Polyukhovich and Barbara McLeod as *alay*, a demonstrative "this, that" (personal communication with Yuriy Polyukhovich 2002). Then the second glyph mentions a rare form of *tab'aay*, a dedication verb known from various other contexts where it means "ascend", but here clearly indicates that something was raised up.

The third glyph has several problems, especially the reading of the "two Lamats" glyph. It can be *pakaab'* or *intel*; however this never stands with the **b'i** syllable but with **b'u** or later **b'a** after the loss of complex vowels at the end of the Late Classic (from 770 onward). Another possibility is the transcription as *wayb'il* or "dormitory, sanctuary", but I do not know any suggestion of **WAY** or **wa** as a possible reading of the "two Lamats". Without question the "two Lamats" is a very special collocation of the Northern Lowlands because it occurs in the inscriptions of Chichén Itzá, Sayil, Ikil and the codices (Thompson 1991).

Moreover, the possibility cannot be ruled out of a reading as *pakaab'* because according to the catalogue of Thompson (1991:109) on Stela 18 of Xultun the traditional Lamat glyph stands with a prefix **pa**. Furthermore, the dedication verb *tab'aay* indicates that something was lifted up; a lintel in this context would be a perfect solution, with the spelling **pa-ka-b'i-li** indicating the complex vowel of *pakaab'*. Another possibility is that the whole glyphic collocation is read as **u-PAKAAB'-b'i-li**, but this idea is more tentative than the previous.

The person whose object was dedicated is a woman of Ikil, with her proper emblem glyph which is transcribed by me as **?-[ku]**. The main sign of the emblem glyph is composed of an inverted T503 and an infixed T528. If we read, as a hypothesis, the inverted T503 as **IK'** with the infixed **ku** we receive an *Iik'* or *Ik'[u]*. According to Andrews IV and Stuart (1968:71) the name of the site was spelled as Iki on a map by Blom and Ricketson published by Tulane University in 1940.

If the main sign is really an inverted T503, the reading *Ik'u* could be the ancient name of the site, maintained until the present. The use of the **ku** syllable could be an indicator of the glottal stop, as has been reconstructed by Wichmann and Lacadena (n.d.).

Surely, this woman was very important to have her proper lintels or dormitory, as well as taking various important titles such as *yajawte'* and the enigmatic *yalchano*.

The dedication ceremony all happened under the auspices of a lord named Chak-? ?, the ballplayer, Chan Tok' Ukit Maap Buuts-?, holding the emblem glyph of Ikil and a unique variant of the Ek' B'ahlam emblem glyph (figure 3).

The mention of the **ta-lo** syllables would not have been enough to suggest an origin of this lord as somebody from Ek' B'ahlam. However, the Ukit part of the name with the *ta-lo* collocation seems to me clearly indicate that this lord was indeed from this very important site.

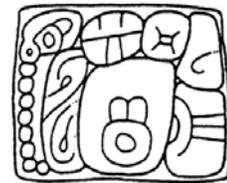


Figure 3, The emblem glyph of Ek' B'ahlam. From the Hieroglyphic Serpent Balustrades (after Grube, Lacadena and Martin 2003:II-20.)



Figure 4, Miscellaneous Text 7 of Ek' B'ahlam, *ooch k'ahk'-b'uuts* collocation (after Grube, Lacadena and Martin 2003:II-25)

All rulers of Ek' B'ahlam used the Ukit collocation, perhaps meaning "his patron", and the occurrence here with the parts of the Ek' B'ahlam emblem glyph is highly suggestive and I think without any doubt indicates the presence of a new ruler from this site previously not identified by fellow epigraphers (Grube, Lacadena and Martin 2003).

Moreover, there is a very similar collocation to glyph 18 on Miscellaneous Text 7 of Ek' B'ahlam as part of the long name of Ukit K'an Le'k Tok' K'awiil, the first known king of the site (figure 4).

The date of the inscription would be crucial to locate this ruler in the sequence of kings of Ek' B'ahlam reconstructed by Alfonso Lacadena (Grube, Lacadena and Martin *op.cit.*). Unfortunately, the two lintels have no date, and I have to accept as a preliminary fact that the inscriptions were made somewhere between 650 and 750, which means that Ukit Maap governed before Ukit K'an Le'k Tok' (770-806?).

If this reconstruction of mine is correct, the city of Ek' B'ahlam was a great power before 770 and controlled a great part of the Yucatán peninsula; at least the distance from Ikil is more than 60 kilometers.

However, until more inscriptions are found in the Early Classic and early Late Classic constructions of Ek' B'ahlam, this unique mention of Ukit Maap remains without further evidence and my ideas are preliminary.

Acknowledgement

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