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## Uxmal Miscellaneous Text 1

The hieroglyphic inscriptions at the large archaeological site of Uxmal in the Mexican state of Yucatán are of particular importance, because Uxmal probably functioned as the capital of a large political sphere within the archaeological Puuc Zone and its inscriptions pertain to the latest evidence of the Classic Maya script in the Northern Lowlands.

As with most of the Puuc hieroglyphic texts, the Uxmal inscriptions are either published inadequately or not at all. The known texts at Uxmal occur on diverse media and are of different size; major textual images are to be found on limestone stelae, columnar altars, wall panels and ball-court markers and painted texts are on interior walls and on central vault capstones (cf. Thompson 1962: 411; Morley 1970; Pollock 1980: 208–275; Riese and Mayer 1984; Kowalski 1985a, b; Paxton 1986, Pls. 247–251, 254–257; Mayer 1987). Minor texts are mainly associated with ceramics (cf. Ruz Lhuillier 1954, Pl. XII; Jones 1963) and with a pedestal vessel of stone, the latter designated as “Uxmal Miscellaneous Text 1” and which will be described and discussed in the following.

In the course of archaeological exploration and restoration from December 1951 until March 1952 at Uxmal by the Mexican Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Alberto Ruz Lhuillier (1955) discovered in the platform of the bicephalic jaguar, in front of the House of the Governor, at a depth of 50 cm, an offering of 913 items. The rich cache included a large variety of minor objects, encompassing pendants, effigies and earplugs of green stone and jade, parts of weapons, pieces of limestone,

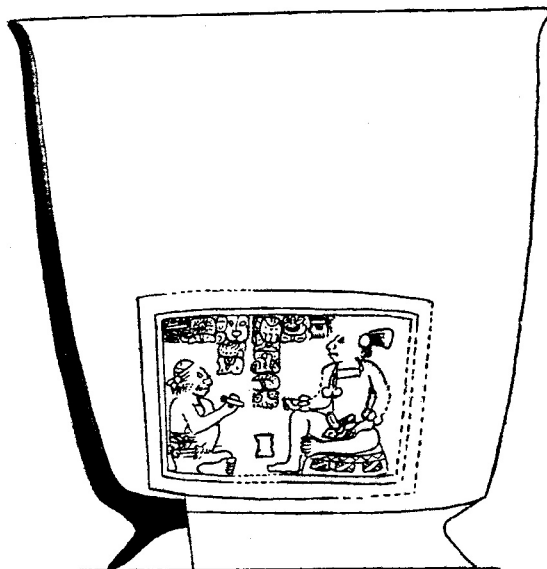


Fig. 1 The carved stone vessel from Uxmal. (Drawing from Ruz Lhuillier 1954: 63, Fig. 6)

conch shell, flint, obsidian, etc. Among the specimens excavated were remains of six stone vases; the best preserved vessel bears a carved panel, portraying an offering scene and a hieroglyphic text (Figs. 1–3). Christopher Jones, in a register and study of Maya miscellaneous texts on minor and portable objects, designated this vase as “Uxmal MT–1” (Jones 1963: 77), MT being the abbreviation for “Miscellaneous Text” (for this corpus see also Mayer 1983, 1985).

As the photograph and line drawing of Uxmal MT–1 published by Ruz Lhuillier (1954, Pl. XXIV, Fig. 6) are insufficient for adequate epigraphical and iconographical investigations, I took new photographs of the vessel in 1984 and based on these photographs, Nikolai Grube created a preliminary drawing of the carved panel; one photograph and the drawing can be presented here and should provide an improved visual record of this important and unique artifact from Uxmal (Figs. 2, 3).

Uxmal MT–1 is presently stored in the study collection of the Museo Regional de Antropología, Palacio Canton, in Mérida. The material of the vase is tecali, a translucent stone which is also variously termed aragonite, cave onyx, onyx marble, Mexican onyx, but the general term for this mineral is calcite ( $\text{CaCO}_3$ ) (Kubler 1977: 5). In the Maya area comparable tecali pedestal vessels are report-



Fig. 2 Uxmal MT–1. (Photograph by Karl H. Mayer, 1984)

ed from Chichén Itzá (Coggins and Shane 1984: 33), but the majority of such vessels occur in Veracruz and in the Mexican Highlands, and therefore it has been suggested that the Chichén Itzá and Uxmal objects may have been imported from Oaxaca.

Uxmal MT—1 has a flaring pedestal base, is 25.5 cm high, the diameter of the base is 15.5 cm, the diameter of the top is 24 cm, and the wall thickness is ca. 6 mm. The object was found in a fragmentary state and has been partially restored, but many broken pieces are missing.

The carved panel on the vertical side of the vessel is enframed by a rectangular, plain band. The relief scene depicts two human figures and is accompanied by a short glyphic text. The right figure is a Maya dignitary seated on a low throne. The figure's right leg is resting on the ground, the left leg is horizontally placed on the seat. The hands are resting on the legs. The body is depicted in a quasi-

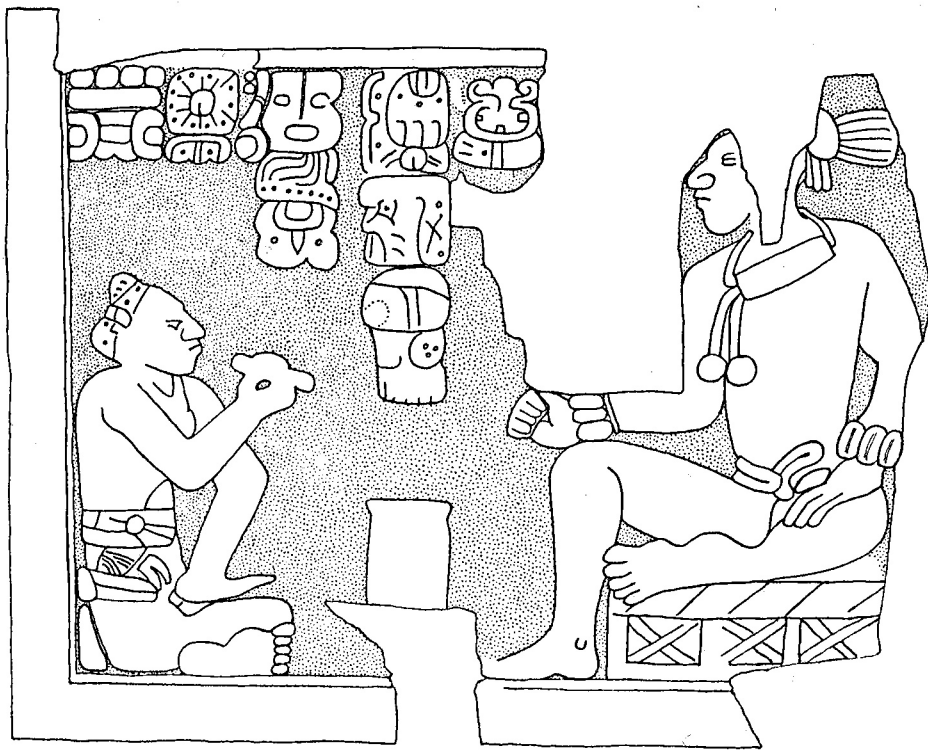


Fig. 3 The carved panel. (Drawing by Nikolai Grube)

three-quarters view, the head is in profile and facing left. The figure wears a simple hip cloth and is embellished with wristlets and a large collar consisting of a wide tubular ornament from which hang two balls. The second figure is much smaller, is seated on the floor, portrayed in side view and facing the enthroned dignitary. This subsidiary figure holds an unidentifiable object in his right hand and wears a complex hip cloth. Between the two figures is a tall vessel-like object. The distinctive pose of the enthroned lord and the associated vessel in front recurs in an almost identical form and program on two architectural relief monuments from Chichen Itza, namely on the lintel of the Akab Dzib complex (Fig. 5) and the so-called "Water Trough" Lintel found at the Hacienda Chichen Itza (Fig. 4) see also Beyer 1937, Pl. 6). Iconographically, no comparable scenes are known from Uxmal.



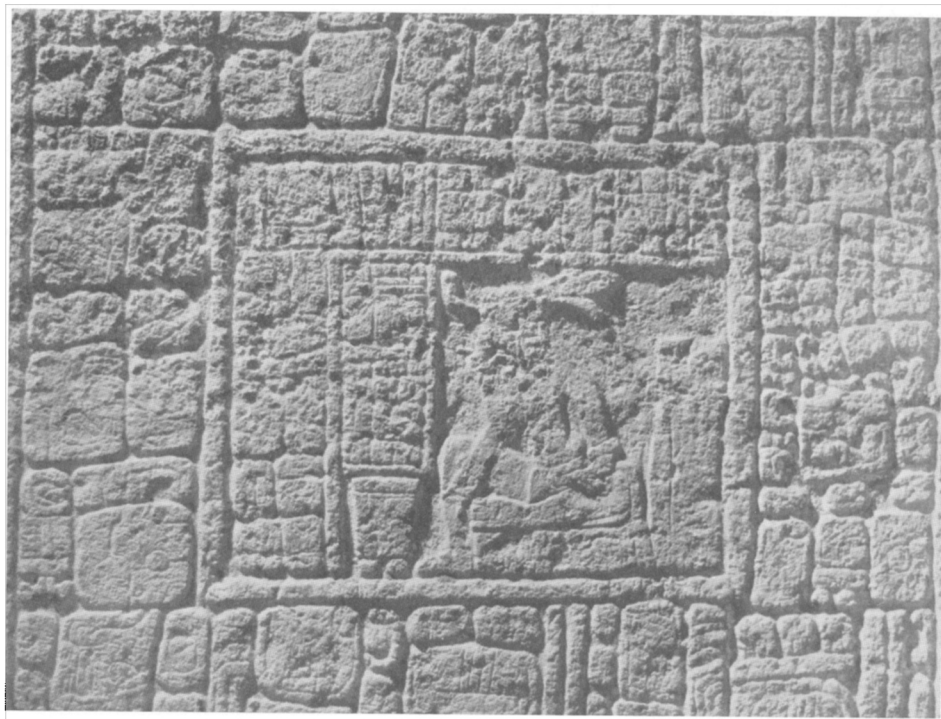


Fig. 4 The Watering Trough Lintel, Chichén Itzá. Museo Regional de Antropología, Mérida; detail. (Photograph by Karl H. Mayer, 1984)

The textual image is composed of two discrete units and these separate captions refer probably to the two personages depicted in the scene. It has been suggested, that the separate clauses identify each person (Kubler 1977 5; Coggins and Shane 1984: 33).

The inscription is composed of a total of nine glyph-blocks (A1—F1), which are contained in a left (A1—C2) and in a right section (D1—F1). The vessel fragment showing the glyph-block at position F1, the last compound in the whole text, is seen in the illustrations published by Ruz Lhuillier (1954); I could not relocate it in 1984, although I checked all loose lying fragments of the shattered vase.

Nikolai Grube (written communication, August 1985) transcribed the hieroglyphic text with Eric Thompson's (1962) numbering system as follows:

<i>Position</i>	<i>Transcription</i>
A1	IX:110
B1	627:1
C1	533:116
C2	534
D1	1.501:60?
D2	759
D3	513?:?
E1	122?:?544
F1	?

The text opens with the number "9", associated with T—110, the "Bone" glyph (Thompson 1962: 51), for which various readings have been proposed (Kurbjuhn 1989: 21). At B1 follows T—627, termed by Thompson (1962, p. 245) as "Fly Wheel", and at C1—2 is a compound rendering an "Ahau" and an "Inverted Ahau" glyph. This left section of the script probably refers to the figure portrayed below and might include his name and titles.

The first glyph-block at the right-hand side of the text at D1 is considered as an introductory glyph and occurs in a similar form and position in other Uxmal texts, for example on Stela 14 and on Altar 10 (cf. Kelley 1982, Fig. 5; Riese and Mayer 1984; Kowalski 1985b). Berthold Riese reads this expression in some cases phonetically as *u bah*, with the meaning of "here is portrayed" in the Yucatec Maya language. At position D2 follows the main sign T—759, named by Thompson (1962: 360) as "Jog with Etz'nab", depicting a rabbit head in profile, and read phonetically by some authors as *t'ul* (see Kurbjuhn 1989: 110). Jeff Karl Kowalski (written communication, January 1986) suspects that the rabbit head is a historical name and refers to the protagonist who is seated on the throne and notes that Michel Davoust (1980) has identified a personage at Chichén Itzá named "Yax T'ul" (Beyer 1937, Figs. 131—137), whose principal name sign is such a rabbit head, but he does not suggest that the name mentioned in Uxmal MT—1 is the same as mentioned in the Chichén Itzá monumental texts.

A preliminary investigation of the text emphasized the supposition that the inscription comments on the engraved imagery, which George Kubler (1977: 5) describes as a portrayal of "a ruler receiving gifts from a visitor". Due to the particular style and briefness of the text, no satisfactory interpretation or reading of the inscription can be offered presently. Although the archaeological context and provenance of the vessel is exactly known, there is iconographic and epigraphic evidence that link this object with monumental inscriptions and images at Chichén Itzá and Kowalski, who observed several such Uxmal-Chichén Itzá contacts, writes: "Given the offertory placement of this vessel in front of the House of the Governor, I would imagine that it was brought to Uxmal from Chichén Itzá. Uxmal was in close contact with Chichén Itzá during the period from A.D. 860—910".

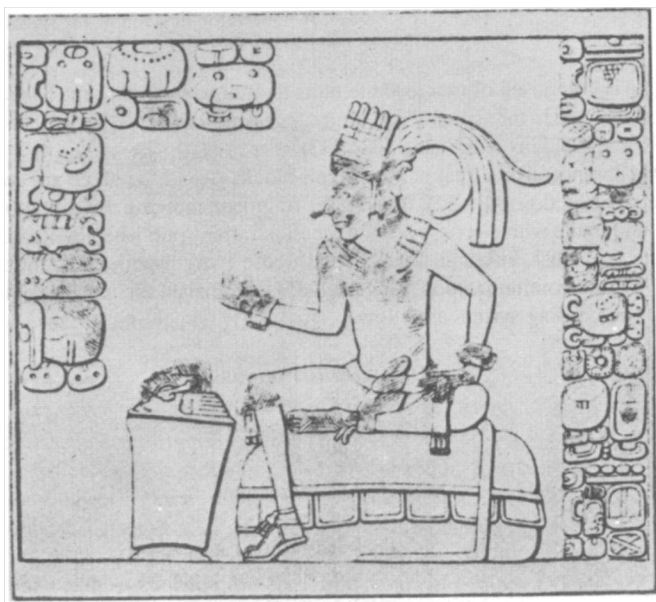


Fig. 5 Underside of the lintel from the Akab Dzib Structure at Chichén Itzá. (Drawing from Maudslay 1889—1902, Vol. 3, Pl. 19)

Chronologically, the carving has been considered as of Late to Terminal Classic Maya in style (Coggins and Shane 1984: 33) and it dates very probably to the Terminal Classic period, ca. A.D. 800—900.

In conclusion, Uxmal MT—1 is, despite its short carved text of only nine glyph-blocks, a very important part of the corpus of hieroglyphic inscriptions at the Puuc center of Uxmal, because the majority of the longer texts on stone monuments at Uxmal are very poorly preserved and erosion has destroyed many of the details in these hieroglyphs.

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