

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF DOS PILAS ASSOCIATED WITH B'AJLAJ CHAN K'AWIIL

By Stanley Paul Guenter

Introduction

Dos Pilas is a small site in the Petexbatun region, in southwest Peten, Guatemala. Despite its size, Dos Pilas played an incredibly important role in Classic Maya history. The site was occupied for a very short time, barely a hundred years from the mid-seventh to the mid-eighth centuries AD. However, the four or five rulers who presided over Dos Pilas during this period made it the capital of a conquest-state along the Pasion River. They transformed their small village into a suitable royal court by constructing a number of palaces and temples, and lavishly decorating the buildings and plazas with carved monuments. Dos Pilas has been intensively studied, and there are many excellent reports available in print already on the subject (see Select Bibliography below).

Recently, the discovery of ten new carved steps, part of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 (Fahsen 2002), have sparked renewed interest in the textual history of Dos Pilas (Boot 2002). The excavator of the find, Federico Fahsen, has published an excellent preliminary report, including drawings and photos, at the FAMSI website, to which interested readers are directed (Fahsen 2002). Having just completed an intensive study of the relationship between Dos Pilas and Tikal for my master's thesis (Guenter 2002), I had an opportunity to visit the site in April of 2002, during filming of a documentary for National Geographic. Unfortunately, scheduling difficulties allowed only an hour at the site, which was mostly taken up in filming, although in the process valuable information was gleaned from the new stairs.

Due to potential dangers to the new steps (recently, Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 was badly damaged and partially destroyed by would-be looters), Simon Martin, Joel Skidmore, Marc Zender and I planned a trip to Dos Pilas in June in order to photographically record all of the new steps in detail and provide an online report for Mesoweb. Only a couple of days before this expedition was set to arrive, local disturbances in the Peten shut down the Flores airport and the expedition had to be cancelled. However, I had an opportunity to make a trip into the site alone in late July, at which time the steps were examined intensively, with yet further information coming to light. Unfortunately, technical difficulties (interspersed with torrential rains and hordes of mosquitoes) prevented a proper photographic documentation of the new stairs at this time. Most recently, in October of 2002, Marc Zender visited Dos Pilas along with a BBC film crew, and he managed to fully record the stairs. His photos are available on Mesoweb as a permanent record of the monuments, and an easily accessible resource for epigraphers and interested amateurs around the world.

What follows is an online resource for the study of the monuments of Dos Pilas, that will ultimately, it is hoped, include all inscriptions from the site, and those that relate to it

from other sites. The resource will include photos and drawings of all texts, where available, and full epigraphic analysis and discussion. This first contribution includes the monuments associated with Dos Pilas' first king, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, being Hieroglyphic Stairways 2 and 4, Panels 6 and 7, as well as Stela 9.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank Federico Fahsen, for his help and expertise on the new stairs, and great friendship while in Guatemala. I would also like to thank Joel Skidmore of Mesoweb, and Sr. Mynor Pinto of the Chiminos Island Lodge for their invaluable support in making my second trip to Dos Pilas possible. Chiminos Island Lodge proved to be an amazing and comfortable base from which to explore the ruins of the Petexbatun region. The Lodge provides the best food in the Peten, and is the nearest hotel to the site of Dos Pilas itself. Interested visitors are directed to the Chiminos website: www.chiminosisland.com.

While the discussion that follows reflects my own ideas, I am indebted on many of these to a number of colleagues and friends, who have joined with me in heated debates through the years on the subject of the history of Dos Pilas and its relationship with Tikal. I would like to thank: Armando Anaya Hernandez, Erik Boot, Federico Fahsen, David Freidel, Nikolai Grube, Steve Houston, Luis Lopes, Simon Martin, Peter Mathews, Joel Skidmore, David Stuart, and Marc Zender. I am also indebted to Linda Schele, whose work in the early 1990s was instrumental in bringing much of this information to public attention, including my own.

The Name of Ruler 1 of Dos Pilas

The name of Ruler 1 of Dos Pilas, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, has only recently been fully deciphered, thanks largely to the work of Marc Zender. The name consists of three parts, as do many names of Classic Maya royalty. Following a pattern first identified by David Stuart and Stephen Houston, these royal names often contain the glyph for sky, *chan* in ancient Mayan, as the central part, and conclude with the name of a major deity. In the case of Ruler 1, this deity is *K'awiil*, the Classic Maya version of the pan-Mesoamerican "Smoking Mirror" god. This god was intimately connected with royalty and ancestors, and was often conjured by kings. At Palenque an infant version of this deity was housed in the Temple of the Foliated Cross, the decoration of which connects this temple to maize and agricultural fertility.

Iconographically, *K'awiil* appears to be closely related to the rain deity *Chaahk*, and often *K'awiil* is the personified axe wielded by *Chaahk*. The name of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* of Dos Pilas can now be translated as "*K'awiil* Hammers (in) the Sky", and likely refers to the thunder and lightning that accompany the impressive rainstorms that regularly cross the Southern Maya Lowlands. The name perfectly captures the character of this ancient Maya ruler.

The Life of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil **A Summary of the Text of Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2**

B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil was born at Tikal in 625, just as that great city's fortunes began a precipitous downturn. In no small way was *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* involved in the collapse of his kingdom's power and its prostration to a foreign enemy, the Snake Kingdom of Calakmul. He was born the son of *K'ihnich Muwahn Jol II*, either the twenty-third or twenty-fourth king of Tikal, and was the brother or half-brother of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, his arch-rival and king of Tikal in the mid-seventh century. The newly discovered central portion of Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 records the pre-accession rituals he underwent as a legitimate prince of Tikal, and were likely carved at some point during the mid-seventh century.

At the tender age of 21 he apparently won a battle against a lord (possibly even the king) of Tikal, *Lam Naah K'awiil*, who appears to have died. This death sparked a civil war that split the kingdom of Tikal in two at a time when it was being pressed upon from all sides by the expansionistic Snake King, *Yuhknoom Ch'een* the Great. This immensely powerful king, who held numerous kingdoms under his sway, seized this opportunity while his enemy was divided, and conquered, in turn, Dos Pilas in 650 and Tikal itself in 657. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* and the new king in Tikal, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, were forced to submit to Calakmul and recognized a young *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'*, heir to the throne of the Snake Kingdom, as their future overlord in a ceremony at the lake-side city of Yaxha.

From this moment on, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* remained a staunch ally of Calakmul. He also styled himself the legitimate king of Tikal, in opposition to *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. Simmering tensions between these siblings boiled over in 672 when *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* attacked Dos Pilas and drove out *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, who was forced into exile, first in an unlocated place named *Chaahk Naah* ("House of the Rain God"), and then in *Hiix Witz* ("Jaguar Mountain"), to the north in the Western Peten. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* remained in exile for over five years, until the 77 year old *Yuhknoom Ch'een* sent his troops south to evict his incorrigible vassal, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. Tikal's forces were evicted from the Petexbatun and forced to retreat into the Central Peten. There, just over a year later, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*'s forces were decisively defeated in, if we believe the Dos Pilas rhetoric, a great slaughter.

With this victory, undoubtedly aided significantly by muscle from Calakmul, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* established himself as *the* King of Tikal. In 682 he celebrated his triumph in Calakmul when he participated in a dance with the venerable octogenarian, *Yuhknoom Ch'een*. However, at this time Tikal broke free of his grasp and set up *Jasaw Chan K'awiil*, his nephew and the young son of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, as its new king. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* returned to Dos Pilas and began to decorate it with monuments to befit its new status as the royal court of a king in exile, almost certainly using artists from Calakmul. These early monuments include Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 and Stela 9.

Two and a half years later *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* turned 60 *tuns* old. Finally, in 686 he journeyed once again to Calakmul to witness the inauguration of his new overlord,

Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk', as the Snake King of Calakmul. The last step, West Step 1, records the name of an *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam*, son of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, who apparently dedicated the stairs, presumably after the latter's death in the early 690s. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was buried, and there are indications that his tomb may have been built inside Structure L5-49, the largest building at Dos Pilas, against which were laid the steps of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2.

Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2

Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 consists of three sections of stair risers, each consisting of six steps, that ascend the northern stairway of Structure L5-49 of Dos Pilas. Each step includes twelve glyph blocks, with a total count of 226 glyph blocks for the entire monument, making Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 one of the longest texts from the Classic Maya civilization. The stair clearly has had an interesting history itself, as at least three portions are missing and had been replaced in antiquity by plain stair blocks (see below). This has resulted in the loss of eleven entire glyph blocks. Of the 215 blocks that remain, a number are badly eroded. Nevertheless, enough remains of the original text to allow recovery of almost all of the original information, and the story that this monument tells is of immense importance to the history of both Dos Pilas and the Central Peten giant, Tikal.

Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 records in unusual detail the story of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the first king of Dos Pilas and one of the most fascinating characters to emerge from Classic Maya history. As the new steps from Stairway 2 finally make clear, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was a native prince of Tikal. The three sections of the stair conveniently separate the major periods in the life story of this king. The first division, found on the Center Steps, consists of the early years of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, from his birth in 625 until his nineteenth year, in 643. The East Steps follow the middle period of his life, from his first great victory in battle, which began Tikal's civil war in the year 648 (when he was only 22 years of age), until his most famous capture at the age of 38 in 664. Finally, the West Steps follow the last period of his life, from the 672 attack on Dos Pilas by his kinsman, the king of Tikal, through his ultimate victory in this, the second phase of Tikal's civil war, until his sixtieth *tun* birthday in 684. The final step in the western series is now badly eroded but likely recorded the dedication of these stairs shortly after the death of this great monarch.

The inscriptions of Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 are currently under analysis by Federico Fahsen, who has provided a preliminary report at FAMSI (www.famsi.org/reports/01098/index.html). Fahsen is currently working on the official write-up and analysis of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2. Recently Erik Boot has also published an interpretation of these texts (www.mesoweb.com/features/boot/DPLHS2.html). Boot's report was made from the published drawings and discussion in Fahsen's preliminary report. However, after two visits to Dos Pilas this past summer, it became apparent that there were a number of problems with the original drawings, also recognized by Federico Fahsen (personal communication, October 2002). (These being preliminary drawings,

this is a not-unexpected situation. See <www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPLHS2.html> for a complete photographic record of the new steps taken by Marc Zender in October of 2002.) While these differences mainly involve rereading a number of the dates, these are of utmost importance in a proper understanding of the texts and the history that they record.

The following is presented, then, as not simply another analysis of the texts. In addition to the reinterpreted dates and the history they imply, this report incorporates many findings made by the author in previous analyses of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, made over the past ten years. In anticipation of Federico Fahsen's official report, the following is presented as a revised interpretation of the text and history of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 of Dos Pilas.

Center Stair <www.famsi.org/reports/01098/section05.htm>

Step 6

Transcription

Transliteration

A1:	2-he-wa, *11-WINAL	<i>cha' hewa, b'uluch winal(jiyy)</i>
B1:	2-HAAB'-ya	<i>cha' haab'iyy</i>
A2:	u-ti-ya	<i>uhtiyy</i>
B2:	TAHN-na-LAM	<i>tahn lam</i>
C1:	2-AJAW	<i>cha' ajaw</i>
D1:	13-HAL[K'AN]-wa	<i>huxlajuun¹ k'anhalaw</i>
C2:	a-ALAY?-ya	<i>alay?²</i>
D2:	8-IK'	<i>waxak ik'</i>
E1:	5-IK'-SIHOOM?	<i>ho' ik'</i>
F1:	SIH-ya-ja	<i>sihyaj</i>
E2:	B'AJ-K'AWIIL[CHAN-na]	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil</i>
F2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

"2 kins, 11 uinals; 2 tuns; after; midpoint/descent; 2 Ahau; 13 Pop; it came to be; 8 Ik; 5 Ceh; was born; *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord"

Free Translation

"2 years, 11 months, and 2 days after the halfway Period Ending of 2 Ahau 13 Pop, it was on the day 8 Ik 5 Ceh, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the Lord of Tikal, was born."

Date: 9.9.12.11.2, 8 Ik 5 Ceh (15 October, 625)

Discussion: Center Step 6 provided an excellent confirmation of Stephen Houston's suggested date for the birth of the first ruler of Dos Pilas, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* (Houston

¹ Erik Boot has pointed out that the ancient reading of the number three (modern *ux, ox*) could not have begun with a vowel as it is often preceded in ordinal positions by the ergative *u*. The ancient reading was thus presumably *hux*.

² This reading for the PSSIG follows proposed readings by Barbara Macleod and Yuriy Polyukhovych.

1993: 104-107). Interestingly, Step 6 includes the only example in this inscription of the Initial Glyph of the Primary Standard Sequence (glyph C2), which highlights the birth date of this king as being of prime importance to the text as a whole. This implies that Center Step 6 is indeed the first part of this inscription.

Center Step 6 informs us that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was born during the rainy season of 625, during the darkest period of Tikal's Hiatus period (557-692). Panel 6, placed just to the left of the main stair of Structure L5-49 and clearly part of the same textual program (last phase), indicates that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was the son of *K'ihnich Muwaan Jol II* (Martin and Grube 2000: 231, Guenter 2002). While it was not immediately clear that this *K'ihnich Muwaan Jol II* was a king of Tikal, as opposed to an earlier lord of Dos Pilas (Houston 1993: 103), evidence from Center Step 4 of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 (see below) indicates that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was a native of Tikal, and by implication, his father should have been an earlier king of that city.

Step 5

Transcription	Transliteration
A1: 12-he-*wa	<i>b'uluch hewa'</i>
B1: 10-WINAL	<i>lajuun winal(jiyy)</i>
A2: u-*to-*ma	<i>uhtoom</i>
B2: JUUN-AJAW	<i>juun ajaw</i>
C1: 8-a[*K'AN]-ya-si	<i>waxak k'anasiy</i>
D1: 10-WINIKHAAB'	<i>lajuun winikhaab'</i>
C2: 10-LAMAT?	<i>lajuun lamat</i>
D2: 16-TZIK	<i>waklajuun tzik(in)</i>
E1: ?-li?	<i>???</i>
F1: ?-EHB'?-?	<i>(Yax Ehb' Xook??)</i>
E2: B'AJ-K'AWIIL	<i>B'aj(laj Chan) K'awiil</i>
F2: K'UH-*AJAW-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“12 *kins*; 10 *uinals*; it will happen; 1 Ahau; 8 Kayab; 10 *Katun*; 10 Lamat; 16 Xul; (event); Yax Ehb' Xook??; *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“On 10 Lamat 16 Xul, 10 months and 12 days before 1 Ahau 8 Kayab, when the 10 *Katun* Period Ending occurred, something happened to *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the Tikal King.”

Date: 9.9.19.7.8, 10 Lamat 16 Xul (26 June, 632)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 6.14.6 (6 years³, 286 days old)

Discussion: The date given here for Center Step 5 is different from that in Fahren and Boot. My examination of the step in person in August convinced me that the *tzolkin* is recorded as Lamat and not Ben, a position with which Federico Fahren (personal communication, 2002) also agrees. There is only one possible date given the other

³ This is the 360 day Maya “year”.

parameters imposed by the Distance Number, and this change makes the date of Step 5 three years later than originally proposed. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was thus six and a half years old on this date.

While the original interpretation of this event is that of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* arrival at Dos Pilas, the extreme erosion to the verb in E1 cannot preclude a number of other possibilities. Interestingly, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was of the age here that many other future kings were when they experienced a major pre-accession rite. *K'an Joy Chitam I* and *K'ihnich Kan B'ahlam II* of Palenque were also six years of age when they were apparently made heir designates of their kingdom. "*K'an*" II of Caracol experienced his first ritual bloodletting and "creation" event at the age of five, as possibly did *K'awiil Chan K'ihnich*, Ruler 4 of Dos Pilas⁴. It is thus here suggested that Center Step 5 originally recorded a pre-accession rite for *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*.

The evidence at hand currently offers little support for the belief that this rite was the young prince's arrival at Dos Pilas. The glyph at F1, the logical place for the toponym if arrival was indeed the verb at E1, is certainly not the "Dragon-Water" glyph, the undeciphered ancient name of Dos Pilas. In fact, careful examination of this glyph under raking light suggested some affinity with Middle Classic forms of the name of Tikal's dynastic founder, *Yax Ehb' Xook* (www.mesoweb.com/pari/publications/journal/201/martin.html). However, while we can discount the possibility that F1 is the Dos Pilas toponym, we are not yet able to read this glyph, and probably never will.

As shall be seen in the following steps of the center series, the text that follows includes a number of other apparent pre-accession rites that would be difficult to explain were this earlier event *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* arrival at Dos Pilas. Thus, it is only suggested here that the eroded event corresponded to some pre-accession rite of indeterminate nature.

Step 4

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	*17 he-wa	<i>huklajuun hewa</i>
B1:	7-WINAL	<i>huk winal(jiij)</i>
A2:	u-ti-ya	<i>uhtiij</i>
B2:	2-AJAW	<i>cha' ajaw</i>
C1:	13-HAAB'[PA'']	<i>uxlajuun pa'haab'(?)</i>
D1:	YAX-tzi-pi	<i>yax tzij(?)</i>
C2:	ti-7-KAB'	<i>ti huk kab'</i>
D2:	10-TZIK-ni	<i>lajuun tzikin</i>
E1:	YAX-?-K'AL-ja	<i>yax k'a(h)laj ?</i>
F1:	?-NAL-?	<i>???</i>
E2:	b'a-la-K'AWIIL	<i>B'a(j)la(j Chan) K'awiil</i>
F2:	K'UH-?-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) ...l</i>

⁴ Panel 19 shows the ritual bloodletting of a young prince, overseen by Ruler 3 of Dos Pilas (Houston 1993: 115, Martin and Grube 2000: 61). The text refers to this prince as the son of a Dos Pilas king whose name is consistent with that of *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, the father of *K'awiil Chan K'ihnich*.

Direct Translation

“17 *kins*; 7 *uinals*; after; 2 Ahau; 13 Pax; first 3-*tun* Period Ending; on 7 Caban; 10 Xul; the first ‘flat-hand’ event; (of/for) ???; *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Native”

Free Translation

“7 months and 17 days after the 2 Ahau 13 Pax, 3-*tun* Period Ending, on 7 Caban 10 Xul, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, noble son of Tikal, celebrated a pre-accession rite.”

Date: 9.10.2.7.17, 7 Caban 10 Xul (20 June, 635)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 9.14.15 (9 years, 295 days old)

Discussion: I follow here Fahsen’s original proposal for the date of this event. However, it should be noted that the extreme erosion to critical parts of this text leave the dating of this event quite problematic. The proposed date is a “best fit” but is by no means certain, and necessitates the belief that there are a number of errors in the text. These include a missing bar in the *kins* coefficient of the Distance Number and the fact that this Distance Number leads not from the Period Ending that is explicitly recorded (9.10.3.0.0, 2 Ahau 13 Pax), but from the previous *tun*, 9.10.2.0.0, 6 Ahau 18 Pax. It should be noted that there is not a single other case of the second *Tun* Ending being used as a base date for a Distance Number. It can easily be seen, then, that being confident of the specific date for the event of Center Step 4 is more than a little problematic. Nevertheless, this does not affect the ultimate interpretation of the step, as the Distance Number here involves only around 150 days from the 9.10.3.0.0 Period Ending. *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* would have been around nine or ten years old at the time, and this allows us to place this event in proper historical context.

There are only two main points I wish to add to the discussion of the non-calendric portion of this text. First, I am somewhat skeptical that the event seen here is an accession. Fahsen alludes to the fact that the erosion of the object held in the hand of the verb at E1 allows for a number of possible interpretations of the glyph in question. Accession would imply that the eroded portion of the glyph was the *hunul* headband. The eroded remains of this sign do not help in verifying or denying this hypothesis. It is significant, though, that when the flat-hand verb indicates an accession, the **YAX** sign seen here is never present (one would assume because accession was a one-time event).

However, there are many forms of the flat-hand verb other than the one meaning “accession”. The most relevant is the example seen on Palenque’s Palace Tablet (www.mesoweb.com/palenque/monuments/PT/single/F7.html; also see www.mesoweb.com/palenque/monuments/PT/single/E8.html). Note the **YAX** prefix, as well as the curved form of the superfix sign. This latter sign resembles one for which David Stuart has recently suggested a reading of **CH’ICH’**, “blood”, and the event here is probably the first bloodletting of the future *K’ihnich K’an Joy Chitam II*. This text is very much analogous to Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 of Dos Pilas, in giving a history of the legitimization rituals this king experienced on his way to power. It is significant that this event took place when this Palenque prince was seven years old. *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* was nine years old when he underwent his own “first flat-hand” event, and it is thus far more likely that the event on Center Step 4 is another pre-accession rite than the accession of this lord.

The final glyph on Center Step 4 is potentially the single most important individual glyph from the new steps. It greatly resembles the Tikal Emblem Glyph but with one major difference; rather than having an **AJAW** glyph above the Main Sign, there is a curl design. This sign is rare and undeciphered but is found a number of times as a superfix to one of the names of the Maize God (see especially the bone plaque in the Dallas Museum of Art). This glyph appears to be a title analogous to *ajaw* (given the substitution pattern). However, it is clearly of different meaning, as there is an example from a plate in Burial 30 at Dos Pilas where a lord of the *Ik'* polity has both a normal Emblem Glyph, as well as this variant with the curl in place of the **AJAW** sign.

Linda Schele and Nikolai Grube (1994: 104,131), following Stephen Houston, proposed the reading of **NAL** for this head (*nal* being a word for maize), and noted that it provided a reference to an individual as a “native” of a given location. The earliest known example of such a glyph comes from a throne inscription from the site of Chinikiha, describing the capture of a person from Tonina (Schele and Grube 1994: 104).

The majority of the currently known examples of the Maize God title come from Dos Pilas and are associated with the reign of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*. Before the excavation of the new steps of Stairway 2, there were two previously known examples of the title: Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, West Step 3; and Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step III. Apart from the Center Step 4 example, there is another instance of this title from the new steps: West Step 6 (see below). All three of these other examples of the Maize God title refer to *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s probable brother, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. Schele and Grube, citing Houston, state that this was because *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* refused to acknowledge the right of this lord to carry the Tikal Emblem Glyph, instead simply referring to him as a “person from Tikal” (Schele and Grube 1994: 131,133).

Step 3

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	19-HEWA?	<i>b'alunlajuun hewa?</i>
B1:	*3-WINAL	<i>hux winal</i>
A2:	*1-HAAB'	<i>juun haab'iiy</i>
B2:	u-ti-ya	<i>u(h)tiy</i>
C1:	JUUN-AJAW	<i>juun ajaw</i>
D1:	8-a[*K'AN]-ya-si	<i>waxak k'anasiy</i>
C2:	LAJUUN-WINIKHAAB'	<i>lajuun winikhaab'</i>
D2:	11-CHAHUK	<i>b'uluch chahuk</i>
E1:	17-IK'-AT	<i>huklajuun ik'at</i>
F1:	i?-LOK'?-yi-ti-?-?	<i>i lok'oy(?) ti ???</i>
E2:	B'AJ-CHAN-na-K'AWIIL	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil</i>
F2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“19 *kins*; 3 *uinals*; 1 *tun*; after; 1 Ahau; 8 Kayab; 10 Katun; 11 Cauac; 17 Uo; and then he left (??) ???; *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“1 year, 3 months, and 19 days after the 10 Katun Period Ending on 1 Ahau 8 Kayab, on 11 Cauac 17 Uo, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, Lord of Tikal, left(?) ???”

Date: 9.10.1.3.19, 11 Cauac 17 Uo (8 April, 634)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 8.10.17 (8 years, 217 days old)

Discussion: With the calendric revisions proposed in this report, Center Step 3 is the only step not in chronological order. There is a problem with the Distance Number of this step as well, in that one dot has been left off of the *uinal* portion, while an extra dot has been added to the *tun* position. This is an understandable error, but one that does not explain the incorrect position of Step 3 in Stair 2, for even the Period Ending Base Date of Step 3 is earlier than that on Step 4. The best explanation for this situation is post-dedication rearranging of the steps, in the process of which Steps 3 and 4 were mixed up.

Unfortunately, the verbal passage here is quite eroded. Nevertheless, Fahsen posits that this verb is **LOK’-yi**, which means “to exit, leave”. Certainly there appears to be a snake-like emanation from the **yi**-sign on the bottom of glyph F1a. While erosion precludes complete confidence in this, Glyph F1b does appear to support this contention. This includes the **ti**- preposition and a sign consisting of a human head and an eroded suffix.

This passage has been interpreted as *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* fleeing Dos Pilas after an unrecorded war. There are, however, a number of problems with this interpretation. First, in war-related *lok’* events, a mention of the war is invariably given previously in the text, in order to allow the reader to understand why a lord had to flee. Furthermore, at Dos Pilas, in every instance of the use of this verb, the name of the person who fled immediately follows the verb. The place to which the person fled is given in a following subclause that is introduced by the step-verb. It should also be mentioned that these latter toponyms are never introduced by a preposition. The *ti*-glyph found in the middle of Glyph F1 is thus further reason to doubt that Center Step 3 has any war-related meaning.

It should here be noted that Boot has suggested that the final signs in Glyph F1 in fact spell out the toponym *Paptuun*, seen elsewhere on the monument. (One can read below reasons why the glyph in question probably cannot be read as *Paptuun*.) Boot’s observation on the line around the mouth on the head in this glyph is well taken, as this is a feature of his “*Paptuun*” glyph. However, erosion does not allow for finding any other lines that may confirm or contradict this hypothesis. What does contradict it, however, is the suffix below the head. Boot interprets this as the **-ni** complement to the word *tuun*. However, if one compares this eroded sign to that of a certain **ni** sign from Center Step 4 (www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/HS2/460z.html and [461z.html](http://www.mesoweb.com/monuments/DPL/HS2/461z.html)), it becomes obvious that this is no **ni** suffixed to the “*Paptuun*” locative. This sign thus remains undeciphered.

If this probable *lok’* event does not refer to war, what does it mean? Site Q Glyphic Panel 11 provides a helpful clue (Schele and Grube 1994: 136). This looted panel records that on 25 February, 683 (9.12.10.14.11, 1 Chuen 4 Pop), *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’*, future king of Calakmul was involved in a *lok’* event in the company of *Chak Ak’aach Yuhk* of La Corona/Site Q. Most pertinent to our discussion are the glyphs at AB3. Here we have the preposition **ti**- before the phrase *K’a(h)n Tok Joloom*, or

“Yellow/Base Fire Skull”. This should be a reference to the rising of the Maize God from the Cosmic Turtle (see K1892; although the skull on this plate does not have a *k’an* cross on it, the turtle with which it is here associated quite often does.) Apparently, *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’* impersonated the resurrection of the Maize God in this event.

Most relevant to our discussion of Center Step 3 is the fact that *Yich’aak K’ahk’* carried out this event three years before his accession. In other words, it was a pre-accession event. While we cannot read the exact event on Center Step 3, I would postulate that it, too, was most likely a pre-accession event, like those on the previous two steps.

Step 2

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	2-HEWA?	<i>cha’ hewa?</i>
B1:	17-WINAL	<i>huklajuun winal(jiiy)</i>
A2:	u-ti-ya	<i>uhtiiy</i>
B2:	13-AJAW	<i>uxlajuun ajaw</i>
C1:	18-UN-wa	<i>waxaklajuun uniiw</i>
D1:	LAM[*TAHN]	<i>tahn lam</i>
C2:	*4-MULUK?	<i>chan muluk</i>
D2:	*2-ma-ka	<i>cha’ mak</i>
E1:	wi-CH’AM-?-a	<i>ch’amiw ???</i>
F1:	B’AAH-TE’-pi-tzi	<i>b’aahte’, pitzil</i>
E2:	b’a-la-K’AWIIL[CHAN-na]	<i>B’a(j)la(j) Chan K’awiil</i>
F2:	K’UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K’uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“2 *kins*; 17 *uinals*; after; 13 Ahau; 18 Kankin; Half Period Ending; 4 Muluc; 2 Mac; he grasped the ???; the Head-Tree, Ballplayer; *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“17 months and 2 days after the Half-Period Ending of 13 Ahau 18 Kankin, on 4 Muluc 2 Mac, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, Lord of Tikal, took possession of something.”

Date: 9.10.10.16.9, 4 Muluc 2 Mac (28 October, 643)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 18.5.7 (18 years, 107 days old)

Discussion: Once again, there is a problem with the calendrics as the Distance Number as recorded gives a date 13 days later than the Calendar Round date. The Calendar Round has been chosen as correct here, although this decision could be questioned. The correct Distance Number needed to reach the Calendar Round from the Base Date of 9.10.10.0.0, 13 Ahau 18 Kankin is 16.9, not 17.2.

Fahsen identifies the verb as *ch’am k’awiil*, “to grasp *k’awiil*” (note that the drawing is in error in portraying the “grasping hand” in the **YAL** form rather than **CH’AM**). I concur with Fahsen’s reading of the hand as **CH’AM**. However, the glyph that follows is not any variant of *k’awiil*, but another, more anthropomorphic head. This head is distinguished by a large down-pointing triangle covering the face. This glyph is

rare, but is known from other contexts, including Tikal Stela 10, Yaxchilan Lintel 37, an inscribed shell from Piedras Negras Burial 13 (Houston et al 1998: 18), Copan Stela J and the Hieroglyphic Stairway of Copan. In the examples of this glyph from Tikal and Copan the glyph, clearly a logogram, is prefixed by a **ya** syllable and suffixed by **la**, but it is still undeciphered. However, in all cases it appears to be a title or name, and this will impact our reading of it at Dos Pilas.

In the Dos Pilas example this glyph is not suffixed by **la**, but by **a**, a feature seen also on the Piedras Negras shell example, and this will certainly affect its ultimate meaning. It is quite possible that the glyph is of the form Ca' or CVCa'. Because of the preceding **CH'AM** glyph, we know that the glyph represents something that can be possessed. If the meaning here is related to that in the other examples seen above, this may be a staff of office of some sort (much like a *k'awiil* scepter?), that identified a rank or status of the individual. In any event, this does not appear to denote accession to *ajaw*-ship but rather is probably yet another pre-accession event.

There is actually another example of this mysterious glyph from Dos Pilas. Step III of Hieroglyphic Stairway 1 bears the exact same phrase as seen on Center Step 2 of Stairway 2, including the **CH'AM** hand and the **-a** suffix. This latter example is likely associated with a young *K'awiil Chan K'ihnich*, the fourth ruler of Dos Pilas and the one who commissioned this stair. Stairway 1 leads up from the same plaza that is serviced by Stairway 2, and it is quite likely that this text was modeled with Stairway 2 in mind.

Step 1

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	5-7-WINAL-ji-ya	<i>ho', huk winaljiiy</i>
B1:	u-ya-ti	<i>uhtiiy</i>
A2:	*4-AJAW	<i>chan ajaw</i>
B2:	13-mo[lo]	<i>uxlajuun mol</i>
C1:	WI'-5-TUUN-ni	<i>wi' ho' tuun</i>
D1:	i-u-ti-6-CHAN?	<i>i uht wak chan</i>
C2:	18-MUWAHN	<i>waxaklajuun muwahn</i>
D2:	?-na?-wa?-ja	<i>???</i>
E1:	K'AN?-na?-?	<i>k'an? ???</i>
F1:	???(B'AJ?)	<i>??? (B'ajlaj?)</i>
E2:	CHAN-(K'AWIL?)	<i>Chan (K'awiil?)</i>
F2:	???(K'UH-AJAW-MUT??)	<i>??? (K'uhul Mutul Ajaw?)</i>

Direct Translation

“5 *kins*, 7 *uinals*; after; 4 Ahau; 13 Mol; last *hotun* (Period Ending); and then on 6 Chicchan; 18 Muan; ??? (an event to/against); *K'an?*...; (by *B'ajlaj*); *Chan (K'awiil)*; Divine Tikal Lord)”

Free Translation

“7 months and 5 days after the last *hotun* Period Ending of 4 Ahau 13 Mol, on 6 Chicchan 18 Muan, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* did something.”

Date: 9.11.15.7.5, 6 Chicchan 18 Muan (17 December, 667)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 2.2.14.3 (42 years, 283 days old)

Discussion: Marc Zender was the first to correctly date this step, and he notes that this step certainly is carved in a very different style than the other Center steps, and also may be different than the East and West series. Anciently, the right half of this step was removed for unknown reasons and replaced with a plain block. The result is the loss of approximately three whole glyph blocks. Erosion leaves the verb undeciphered, and little can be said of this event. This is all the more lamentable as this is the last event before the second phase of the *Mutul* civil war began, and may have given us a clue as to the trigger for the flaring up of hostilities in 672, only five years later.

East Stair

Step 6

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	9-4-WINAL-ya-u?-ti?-ya?	<i>b'aluun, chan winal(j)iiy, uhtiiy</i>
B1:	6-AJAW-13-ma-ka	<i>wak ajaw uxlajuun mak</i>
A2:	WI'-5-TUUN-ni	<i>wi' ho' tuun</i>
B2:	i-u-ti	<i>i uht</i>
C1:	4-MULUK?-2-o-OHL	<i>chan muluk, cha' ohl</i>
D1:	CHAM-mi?-na	<i>chami ...n</i>
C2:	K'AWIIL-la-AJAW-MUT-la	<i>K'awiil, Mutul Ajaw</i>
D2:	u-ti-ya-SAK-HA'-la	<i>uhtiy Sakha'al</i>
E1:	ta-b'a-chu[ku]	<i>tab' chuk</i>
F1:	AJ-TUUN[?]-ni-u-KAB'-ji-ya	<i>Aj ...tuun u kab'jiiy</i>
E2:	B'AJ-la-CHAN-na	<i>B'ajla(j) Chan</i>
F2:	K'AWIIL-la-K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'awiil, K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“9 kins, 4 uinals after; 6 Ahau 13 Mac; last 5-tun Period Ending; and then it happened; 4 Muluc 2 Cumku; he died ???; *K'awiil*, Tikal Lord; at *Sakha'al*; tied up-captured was; he of ... *tuun*, he did it; *B'ajlaj Chan*; *K'awiil*, Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“4 months and 9 days after the 6 Ahau 13 Mac Period Ending, on 4 Muluc 2 Cumku, ... *K'awiil*, Lord of Tikal, died at *Sakha'al*. He of ... *tuun* was captured, and *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, Lord of Tikal, was responsible.”

Date: 9.10.15.4.9, 4 Muluc 2 Cumku (4 February, 648)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 1.2.11.7 (21 years, 227 days old)

Discussion: East Step 6 is one of the most important of the new steps from Stairway 2. The date, though slightly eroded, is fairly straightforward, and it is interesting to note that the *tzolkin* here is exactly the same as on Center Step 2, 4 Muluc, only four and a half

years ahead in time. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was not even 22 years old on this date, which is truly remarkable given the nature of this event.

The verb is *chami*, “death”, and the person dying is a lord of Tikal whose name includes an undeciphered element, complemented phonetically by **na**, and concluding with the deity name *K'awiil*. As Fahsen has pointed out, the date of this event is the same as that of Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step IV, and by viewing these two texts as complementary, we can perhaps gain a better understanding of these events and their significance.

On Stairway 4, Step IV, the event is the “downing of the flint and shield” of an otherwise unknown lord named *Lam Naah K'awiil* by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*. This event is on Step V connected to the defeat of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* in 679, 31 years later. As *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* is a known king of Tikal, it is tempting to see the name of the dying person on Stair 2, East Step 6 as equivalent to *Lam Naah K'awiil*. Certainly both names end in *K'awiil*, and seem to be lords of Tikal. The Main Sign of the logogram in Glyph D1b on East Step 6 is suffixed by **na**, and it may be that this is an underspelling for *Naah*. In addition, one can note that the logogram itself incorporates the logogram for *Naah* as a superfix. Finally, we may note that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* is credited on the stairs with the defeat of *Lam Naah K'awiil* and ultimately, with the death of ... *K'awiil*, and it would be logical were these the same person. These indications are all very suggestive, and it may be that *Lam Naah K'awiil* is the person being referred to in both cases. Unfortunately, the Main Sign in East Step 6 Glyph D1b is unique, and we cannot be certain of this conjecture.

In any event, it is clear we are dealing with one or two otherwise unknown lords of Tikal. *Lam Naah K'awiil*, as we have seen, appears to have been a lord of Tikal, and the individual whom *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* killed on East Step 6 certainly was a lord of that site. Interestingly, this is the only example of the Tikal Emblem Glyph on any of the stairs without the *k'uhul* prefix, suggesting that perhaps *Lam Naah K'awiil* was not a king, but only a prince. As we shall see on East Step 4, when referring to the heir of Calakmul, the scribes of Dos Pilas recorded the Snake Emblem Glyph without a *k'uhul* prefix. However, elsewhere at Dos Pilas princes of the realm are referred to as *Ch'ok Mutul Ajaw*, “Youth Tikal Lord” (see Panel 19 for examples), and it was common practice to refer to foreign lords, especially when enemies, with only their basic Emblem Glyph (Main Sign and *ajaw* title).

Interestingly, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, known from Tikal to be a king of that site (all references to him at Tikal include a full Tikal Emblem Glyph), is never given an Emblem Glyph of any sort in texts from Dos Pilas. The lord on East Step 6, then, may have a prince of Tikal or a king whom even *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* had to consider legitimate. (As *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* always gave himself the full Tikal Emblem Glyph, he obviously considered himself to be the legitimate king of Tikal, in opposition to *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, his probable brother and lifelong rival for the throne.) Unfortunately, there is simply not enough evidence at the moment to decide between these possibilities.

While much mystery clearly remains surrounding the defeat and death of a lord or lords of Tikal in 648, we can with confidence state that this was a victory by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* over Tikal. That *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was willing to take on the military might of Tikal, the great kingdom that he called home, at the tender age of 21 is truly astounding, and gives us a privileged glimpse at the character of this remarkable

individual. (That this was not simply an opportunistic capture of a Tikal lord is made clear from Stairway 4, Step IV, where the event is referred to in terms regularly applied to great battles.) There are only a few events repeated on Stairways 2 and 4, and of these only this one is given in two different accounts. It would appear that this was a truly defining moment in the life of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, and it is no surprise that this event begins the second phase of the story of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2. This was the event that set up *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* against Tikal, and this opposition would define the rest of his life. This event begins the “civil war of Tikal”.

This event is said to have taken place at a location named *Sakha'al*. This is most likely the place referred to elsewhere in the hieroglyphic corpus as *Sakha'*. *Sakha'* is another unlocated site that is found in a number of different inscriptions, including Naranjo Stelae 23 and 30, the Hieroglyphic Stairway of Seibal, and an unprovenienced ceramic vessel. The Naranjo examples are references to battles in 711 and 714. Schele and Grube (1994: 149) suggest that this is a reference to Lake Sacnab (*Sakha'* and *Saknab'* are virtual synonyms). While this is possible, it is not certain (the attacks by Naranjo on *Sakha'* came after the former polity had already conquered the city of Yaxha, on the other side of Lake Sacnab). However, it is probably safe to say that this first battle in the civil war of Tikal took place not near Dos Pilas or Tikal, but in the central or eastern Peten.

The glyph at E1 introduces a second clause in this text, and consists of two separate words, *tab'* and *chuk*. While the fact that there are no verbal complements found here, I will follow Fahren's proposal of this being a reference to a capture, probably with ropes (*tab'*). The victim is said to be an individual from a site, the glyph of which consists of a human head with *cauac* markings, a cross-hatched circle over the mouth, and a **ni** phonetic suffix. The *cauac* markings and **ni** complement suggest that this site name ends in *tuun*, or “stone”. Fahren and Boot read the full name as *Patuun* or *Paptuun* (I regard the dot or dots in front of the eyes of the face of this glyph to be decorative elements and not a “doubler”, thus making a reduplication in this glyph quite unlikely), but it must be said that there are no phonetic prefixes to enable a decipherment of this logogram, nor is there any precedent for a cross-hatched circle over a mouth being a simple replacement of a **pa** syllable.

Interestingly, Naranjo Stela 10 records that a later Naranjo king, *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, was born at a site that is identified by the glyphs **TI'** (“mouth”), **pa**, and **ni**. If this is merely an alternate way of writing the same glyph as the one above, the reading may be something like *Ti' Patuun* (“Edge of the Fortress?”), and would suggest that this site is indeed in the eastern Peten⁵. Even if the Stela 10 example is not equivalent, it is relevant that the scribe who carved Naranjo Stela 14 was from the same site that provided *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* captive.

To conclude this perhaps over-detailed discussion of East Step 6, it can be said that in 648 the Tikal civil war broke out when *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* defeated the armed forces of Tikal, under the leadership of a lord named *Lam Naah K'awiil*, either the king or a high prince of that city. The battle likely took place in the eastern Peten at a site named *Sakha'al*, perhaps near to modern Lake Sacnab. The 21-year old lord of Dos Pilas

⁵ This possible connection was first pointed out to me by Erik Boot and Harri Kettunen, at the European Maya Meetings in London, November, 2002.

had declared his independence from and opposition to his kingdom and the city of his birth.

Step 5

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	*1-HEWA?-?-*15-WINAL-ji-ya	<i>juun hewa, ho'lajuun winaljiiy</i>
B1:	*1-HAAB'-*u-to-ma	<i>juun haab'(iyy) uhtoom</i>
A2:	12-AJAW-8-CHAK-SIHOOM?	<i>lajchan ajaw waxak chak</i>
B2:	u-11-WINIKHAAB'	<i>u b'uluch winikhaab'</i>
C1:	i-u-ti-*1-CHAHUK	<i>i uht juun chahuk</i>
D1:	17-MUWAHN	<i>huklajuun muwahn</i>
C2:	?-yi-?-HA'	<i>...y ... Ha'</i>
D2:	u-KAB'-ji-ya-yu[ku]-CH'EEN-na	<i>u kab'jiy Yuhknoom Ch'een</i>
E1:	*K'UH-ka-AJAW-KAN-la- LOK'-yi-ya	<i>K'uh(ul) Kan(al) Ajaw, lok'oyiyy?</i>
F1:	B'AJ-CHAN-K'AWIL-la	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil</i>
E2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT-?⁶-yi	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw,???</i>
F2:	K'IHNICH-pa-a-WITZ	<i>K'ihnich Pa' Witz</i>

Direct Translation

“1 *kin*, 15 *uinals*; 1 *tun* and it will happen; 12 Ahau 8 Ceh; the eleventh *Katun*; and then it happened 1 Cauac; 17 Muan; was warred against Dos Pilas; by the doing of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*; Divine Calakmul Lord, he left; *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord, he went to; *Aguateca*”

Free Translation

“1 year, 15 months and 1 day before the 12 Ahau 8 Ceh Period Ending, the eleventh *Katun*, on the day 1 Cauac 17 Muan, Dos Pilas was overrun by *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, King of Calakmul. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, Lord of Tikal, had left and found refuge in *Aguateca*.”

Date: 9.10.18.2.19, 1 Cauac 17 Muwan (20 December, 650)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 1.5.9.17 (25 years, 197 days old)

Discussion: The date of this step has been reconstructed to fit both the remaining carving and the position of this step in relation to both the other steps of Stair 2 and the chronology that this entails. As Fahsen has observed, this step records the attack on Dos Pilas in December of 650 by the forces of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, Snake King and lord of Calakmul. At the height of his reign, this enormously powerful king and nemesis of Tikal took the opportunity of his enemy kingdom's civil war to follow the old adage of “divide and conquer”. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s victory at *Sakha'al* had divided Tikal's

⁶ This, the so-called “Step Verb” glyph is popularly regarded as being deciphered as the word **T'AB'** (a verb that has at least one meaning of “to ascend”), following suggestions by David Stuart and Elisabeth Wagner. However, while the meaning of *t'ab'* provides a decent description of the visual reference of this glyph, no meaning of *t'ab'* makes sense for the contexts in which it is used, dedication phrases and journeys. I regard this glyph as remaining undeciphered.

kingdom into two parts: the remnant kingdom with the capital under the rule of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, and the rebel area to the southwest under the control of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, based out of Dos Pilas. *Yuhknoom Ch'een* chose to first attack the much smaller, and presumably weaker of the two as his first target. Not surprisingly, the 25-year old lord, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, fled Dos Pilas, which at this time must have been little better than a village, and retreated to the cliff-top citadel of Aguateca.

The Cancuen Looted Panel begins with an event that occurred only 55 days after this attack on Dos Pilas, and this unknown event, almost certainly involving a lord of Cancuen, took place “in the presence of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, Divine Snake King”. This suggests that Calakmul consolidated its victory over Dos Pilas by subjecting the rest of the Pasion region. Supporting this contention is a mention on a hieroglyphic stairway at Itzan of the Calakmul toponym, *Huxte' Tuun*, in association with the 9.11.0.0.0, 12 Ahau 8 Ceh Period Ending of 652. Itzan is a site on a small tributary of the Pasion River, only 20 km northwest of Dos Pilas, and so this reference to Calakmul provides further support for the contention that the turn of this katun must have been a joyous occasion for the Snake Kingdom; an ominous one for the Kingdom of Tikal.

Step 4

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	14-5-WINAL-ja?-ya	<i>chanlajuun, ho' winaljiiy</i>
B1:	4-HAAB'-ya-u-ti-ya	<i>chan haab'iy uhtiyy</i>
A2:	?-?-11-WINIKHAAB'	<i>??? b'uluch winikhaab'</i>
B2:	i-u-ti	<i>i uht</i>
C1:	6-HIX-2-a[*K'AN]-si-ya	<i>wak hix cha' k'anasiy</i>
D1:	?-yi-MUT-la	<i>...y Mutul</i>
C2:	u-KAB'-ji-ya-yu[ku]- no[CH'EN]-na	<i>u kab'jiiy Yuhkno(om) Ch'een</i>
D2:	K'UH-ka-AJAW-KAN-yi[LOK']	<i>K'uh(ul) Kan(al) Ajaw, lok'oy</i>
E1:	nu-JOL[CHAHK]-?[yi]	<i>Nuun u Jol Chaahk, ???</i>
F1:	SAK-pa?-na?	<i>Sakpa...n</i>
E2:	nu-?-ja	<i>nu...j</i>
F2:	MUT-AJAW-TAAK	<i>Mut(ul) Ajawtaak</i>

Direct Translation

“14 kins, 5 uinals; 4 years after; ??? the eleventh *Katun*; and then it happened; (on) 6 Ix 2 Kayab; was attacked Tikal; by the doing of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*; Divine Calakmul King, he left; *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, he found refuge in; *Sakpa...n*; ??? happened to; the Tikal lords”

Free Translation

“4 years, 5 months, and 14 days after the end of the eleventh *Katun*, on the day 6 Ix 2 Kayab, Tikal was attacked by *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, King of Calakmul. *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* left and found refuge in *Sakpa...n*. Something happened to the nobility of Tikal.”

Date: 9.11.4.5.14, 6 Ix 2 Kayab (12 January, 657)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 1.11.12.12 (31 years, 252 days old)

Discussion: Center Step 4 is the first step from Hieroglyphic Stairway not to present *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* as the main actor. In fact, it is the only step from this program on which he is not mentioned at all, highlighting this event as being of crucial importance to the story of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s life, even though not directly involving him.

Six years passed between the fall of Dos Pilas and the final collapse of Tikal itself. In January of 657 the forces of *Yuhknoom Ch'een* finally overwhelmed Tikal and entered the city. (Much of the damage to Early Classic stelae and structures likely can be attributed to this event.) *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, king of Tikal, is said to have fled to another unidentified city, *Sakpa...n*. This is the only reference to this site, and one can assume that it is located somewhere in the Central Peten, as the territory still loyal to the king of Tikal at this point cannot have comprised much more than the heartland of the Tikal kingdom, including the area immediately around Tikal and the eastern portion of Lake Peten Itza.

The text continues with an undeciphered verb affecting the *Mutul Ajawtaak*, the "lords of Tikal". The verb is passive and begins with the sound *nu...* Schele and Grube (1994: 122) suggest a couple of possibilities for this word, including *nutz*, "banish, chase" in Tzotzil, and *nup'*, "to enclose" in Chol. Whatever the event, it certainly meant no good for the lords of Tikal and must be regarded as the blackest of days in Tikal's history. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, either still in his hilltop redoubt of Aguateca, or more likely already captured by Calakmul, must have reveled in the humbling of his kinsman and enemy and the nobles of Tikal who had not joined him in his rebellion.

Step 3

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	???	???
B1:	???	???
A2:	???	???
B2:	i-u-ti	<i>i uht</i>
C1:	???	???
D1:	i-ti-hi-B'AAH-ja	<i>i ti b'aahaj??</i>
C2:	???	???
D2:	yu[ku]-no[YICH'AK-K'AK']- ka-AJAW-KAN	<i>Yuhkno(om) Yich'aak K'ahk', Kan(al) Ajaw</i>
E1:	yi?-?-nu-JOL[CHAAHK]	<i>yitaaj? Nuun u Jol Chaahk</i>
F1:	B'AJ-CHAN-K'AWIIL-la	<i>B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil</i>
E2:	*K'UH-AJAW-MUT-wa	<i>K'uhul Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>
F2:	u-ti-ya-YAX-a	<i>uhtiiy Yaxa'</i>

Direct Translation

"???; ???; ???; and then it happened; (on the day ???); (event); (event to); *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'*, Calakmul Lord; it was witnessed by; *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*; (and) *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord; it happened at Yaxha"

Free Translation

“...amount of time after ... (date) and then on the day ..., there was an event for *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'*, Prince of Calakmul, which was witnessed by *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the King of Tikal, and which took place at Yaxha.”

Date: (unknown: between 12 January, 657 and 10 July, 662)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: between 31 and 36 years old

Discussion: It is a terrible shame that the left side of East Step 3 is so badly eroded, as the date of this crucial event is now lost, probably forever. Nevertheless, the position of this step in the stair as a whole, and in terms of the chronology, must fall between 657 and 662. Given the nature of the event, it is likely that this occurred closer to 657 than to 662.

The actual occasion is some preaccession event of undetermined nature (the crucial area of the text, as one should expect, is eroded beyond recognition) that occurred to *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'*, prince of Calakmul and heir to the throne of the Snake kings. Probably a son or grandson of *Yuhknoom Ch'een* the Great, *Yich'aak K'ahk'* was born in 649, and so would have been between the ages of 8 and 13 at the time of this event. Marc Zender has speculated that Site Q Glyphic Panel 6 may make a second reference to this event. On this monument an almost eight year Distance Number leads from the birth of *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'* to an unknown event occurring on the date 9.11.4.11.14, 10 Ix 18 Xul, only 120 days after the conquest of Tikal by Calakmul. While Zender may be correct, the outlines of the date on East Step 3 do not resemble those for the date from the Site Q panel. As we have seen for *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* and the young *K'an Joy Chitam II* of Palenque, Classic Maya princes appear to have experienced a number of pre-accession rituals as they grew up. Thus, the missing Site Q event, even if it does refer to *Yich'aak K'ahk'*, is not necessarily the same as that seen on the Dos Pilas step.

Whatever the precise date, we know that this is some pre-accession event for the young *Yuhknoom Yich'aak K'ahk'*. Most importantly, the final four glyph blocks of East Step 3 record that this event was either witnessed or attended by *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the *Mutul* lords. (Note the probable **yi-** prefix to the glyph preceding the name of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, suggesting that the glyph here is either *yilaaj*, “was witnessed by”, or *yitaaj*, “was accompanied by”; personal communication, Nikolai Grube, 2000.) The text of this step concludes with the comment that this event occurred at *Yaxa'*, probably the Classic period metropolis of Yaxha', southeast of Tikal.

I have elsewhere (Guenter 2000, 2002) described this event as the “Yaxha Agreement”. By witnessing this childhood ritual for the young heir of Calakmul, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* were likely recognizing him as their future lord. This event, then, was public acknowledgement of the surrender of Tikal (and Dos Pilas) to Calakmul, and the acceptance of its lords of their new status as vassals of the Snake king. This event, then, marks the true nadir of the fortunes of the *Mutul* kingdom.

It is at this point that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* would have pledged his loyalty to Calakmul's king, *Yuhknoom Ch'een* the Great (Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step IV specifically refers to *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* as the *yajaw*, or “vassal of”, *Yuhknoom Ch'een*). The Dos Pilas scribes, however, wished to make it explicitly known that *Nuun*

u Jol Chaahk had also been forced to submit to Calakmul. This would be of crucial importance to the Dos Pilas “spin” on future events, as *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*’s further wars with Dos Pilas and Calakmul could now be cast in terms of a rebellious vassal injuriously upsetting the *pax kanalorum* established by *Yuhknoom Ch’een* following his great victories in the 650s.

The Yaxha Agreement, then, is the formal surrender of Tikal and Dos Pilas, the two factions of the *Mutul* Kingdom, to Calakmul, whereby *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* participated in a pre-accession rite for the young *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’* at the lakeside city of Yaxha. This event was quite likely the heir-designation of *Yich’aak K’ahk’*, and it is perhaps not coincidental that this prince appears on Calakmul Stela 9, dating to 662, when he was only 13 years old⁷. This monument was carved from slate, which can only have come from the Maya Mountains region of Belize, hundreds of kilometers to the southeast, providing evidence of the long-reaching sway of the Snake lords in the mid-seventh century.

Step 2

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	1-2-WINAL-ji-ya-u-to-ma	<i>juun, cha’ winaljiiy uhtoom</i>
B1:	11-AJAW-18-SIHOOM?[IK’]	<i>b’uluch ajaw waxaklajuun ik’</i>
A2:	LAM[TAHN]-9-CHAHUK	<i>tahn lam b’alun chahuk</i>
B2:	17-YAX-K’IN	<i>huklajuun yaxk’in</i>
C1:	u-na-ka-wa	<i>u nakaw</i>
D1:	ta-b’a-JOL-mi	<i>Tab’ Joloom</i>
C2:	ko-AJAW-b’a-na	<i>Kob’an Ajaw</i>
D2:	B’AJ-CHAN-K’AWIIL-la	<i>B’aj(laj) Chan K’awiil</i>
E1:	K’UH-AJAW-MUT-yi-ta-ji	<i>K’uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw, yitaaaj</i>
F1:	ya-xi?-ma?-li?	<i>Yaax ...</i>
E2:	ka-la-wa-AJAW-B’AHLAM	<i>Kalaw, B’ahlam Ajaw</i>
F2:	u-ti-ya-hi?-ju	<i>uhtiiy Hi...j</i>

Direct Translation

“1 kin, 2 uinals and then it will occur; 11 Ahau 18 Chen; the middle descent, (on the day) 9 Cauac; 17 Yaxkin; attacked; *Tab’ Joloom*; *Kob’an* Lord; *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord, in the company of; *Yaax ...*; *Kalaw, B’ahlam* Lord; it happened at *Hi...j*”

⁷ Martin and Grube (2000: 110) suggest that this mention of *Yich’aak K’ahk’* on Calakmul Stela 9 may suggest that “the aged [*Yuhknoom Ch’een* the Great], ailing or infirm, passed the effective running of the state to the younger man, most likely his son. If so, [*Yich’aak K’ahk’*] should be credited with a major hand in Calakmul’s recent military and diplomatic successes”. However, the fact that this prince was only 13 years old at the time the monument was erected makes this scenario quite unlikely. Rather, it may be that this was *Yuhknoom Ch’een* making a public proclamation that this young son of his was to be his successor. It should be remembered that *Yich’aak K’ahk’* was born when *Yuhknoom Ch’een* was already 49 years old, by which time one would expect him to have had many children and a number of sons. In order to prevent a future fight for the throne between his various sons, *Yuhknoom Ch’een* may have been making his choice public. Without further evidence, however, even this scenario is but speculation.

Free Translation

“2 months and 1 day before the Half Katun Period Ending on 11 Ahau 18 Chen, on 9 Cauac 17 Yaxkin *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, King of Tikal, attacked *Tab’ Joloom*, Lord of *Kob’an*, in the company of *Yaax ... Kalaw*, Lord of *B’ahlam*. The attack took place at *Hi...j*.”

Date: 9.11.9.5.19, 9 Cauac 17 Yaxkin (10 July, 662)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 1.17.4.17 (37 years, 97 days old)

Discussion: *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* must have returned to Dos Pilas shortly after the Yaxha Agreement to take up his job again as lord of the Petexbatun, this time, however, as vassal of the Snake king, who now dominated the entire political landscape of the Maya Lowlands. His first major act was this attack on a lord of *Kob’an*, in the company of an ally, the king of *B’ahlam*, the “Jaguar” site⁸. Schele and Grube (1994: 126) note that this may be a reference to the modern city of Coban, far to the south of Dos Pilas in the Department of Alta Verapaz. While this is an extremely long distance from Dos Pilas, making it a rather unlikely correlation, the author has noted that a Tikal vase, currently on display in a private museum in Coban, is said to have been found in Alta Verapaz. The fact that this war event is only referred to as an attack on a lord of that site, and not an actual attack on *Kob’an*, is also relevant. Ultimately, the location of this *Kob’an* place is not clear.

Step 1

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	*17-*9-WINAL-ji-ya-1-HAB’-ya	<i>huklajuun, b’aluun winaljiiy,</i> <i>juun haab’iiy</i>
B1:	u-*ti-ya-LAM[*TAHN]	<i>uhtiyy tahn lam</i>
A2:	11-AJAW-18-SIHOOM?[*IK’]	<i>b’uluch ajaw waxaklajuun ik’</i>
B2:	i-u-ti	<i>i uht</i>
C1:	9-KAB’?-5-HAL[K’AN]-wa	<i>b’aluun kab’ ho’ k’anhalaw</i>
D1:	chu-ka-ja	<i>chu(h)kaj</i>
C2:	TAJ-MO’-o	<i>Taj(al) Mo’</i>
D2:	AJ-?-su?-u-B’AAK-ki?	<i>Aj ???, u b’aak</i>
E1:	b’a-la-ja	<i>B’a(j)laj</i>
F1:	CHAN-na-K’AWIIL-la	<i>Chan K’awiil</i>
E2:	K’UH-AJAW-MUT-la-wa	<i>K’uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>
F2:	b’a-ka-b’a	<i>B’a(ah)kab’</i>

Direct Translation

“17 kins, 9 uinals, 1 tun; after the Midpoint Descent; (of) 11 Ahau 18 Chen; and then it happened; (on) 9 Caban 5 Pop; was captured; *Tajal Mo’*; of Machaquila?, the captive of; *B’ajlaj; Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord; *Bacab*”

⁸ *B’ahlam* may be the site of La Amelia, northwest of Dos Pilas in the Pasion region.

Free Translation

“1 year, 9 months, and 17 days after the Half *Katun* Period Ending of 11 Ahau 18 Chen, and then on 9 Caban 5 Pop *Tajal Mo’* of Machaquila(?) was captured. He was the captive of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, Lord of Tikal and *Bacab*.”

Date: 9.11.11.9.17, 9 Caban 5 Pop (20 February, 664)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 1.18.16.15 (38 years, 335 days old)

Discussion: *Tajal Mo’* is the most important captive taken by *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* and the one with whom he is most often associated. One of his most common titles, it is seen on Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, Step 4, Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step V, and Aguateca Stela 5. This was certainly not the first captive of his career (see above, East Step 6) but was apparently his most important. *Tajal Mo’* (“Torchy Macaw”) is identified as to his site, but the glyph in question is rather eroded. Nevertheless, the outlines of the glyph match only one known site, Machaquila, east of Dos Pilas. While this event is expressed only in terms of the capture of one individual, it may be that *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* was at this time attempting to expand his influence and realm. Here we see interaction with the east, and the previous step provides a possible instance of interaction with the far south. At some point around this time we know that *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* married a princess from Itzan, indicating marital alliances directed towards the northwest. To the northeast of Dos Pilas lay the Central Peten and the cowed, though mighty, Tikal. *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil’s* further actions would be towards this direction.

West Stair

Step 6

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	???	???
B1:	???	???
A2:	???	???
B2:	???	???
C1:	?-*11-MUWAHN	<i>b’uluch muwahn</i>
D1:	?-yi?-HA’	<i>...y ...Ha’</i>
C2:	u-KAB’-ji-ya	<i>u kab’jiy</i>
D2:	nu-u-JOL[*CHAK]	<i>Nuun u Jol Chaahk</i>
E1:	yi[*LOK’]-B’AJ/b’a-la-ja	<i>lok’oy B’ajlaj</i>
F1:	*CHAN-na-*K’AWIIL-la	<i>Chan K’awiil</i>
E2:	K’UH-AJAW-MUT?	<i>K’uh(ul) Mut(ul)? Ajaw</i>
F2:	?[yi]-CHAAHK-NAH	<i>??? Chaahk Naah</i>

Direct Translation

“???: ???; ???; ???; 11 Muan; was attacked Dos Pilas; he oversaw it; *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*; he left, *B’ajlaj*; *Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord; he found refuge in *Chaahk Naah*”

Free Translation

“(8 months and 3 days after the 12th *Katun* Period Ending of 10 Ahau 8 Yaxkin, on 4 Akbal) 11 Muan, Dos Pilas was attacked by *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, King of Tikal, fled to *Chaahk Naah*.”

Date: 9.12.0.8.3, 4 Akbal 11 Muan (8 December, 672)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 2.7.15.1 (47 years, 301 days old)

Discussion: The first step of the West series of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, like the bottom step of the Center series, is missing half of the original block. However, in this case it is the left half that is missing. As this side carried the date, and as the event recorded is one recorded elsewhere, no real loss of information has taken place through this destruction.

This is the single most-often mentioned event in the history of Dos Pilas. It is also mentioned on Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, West Steps 5 and 4, and Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step III. Curiously, this oft-cited event is actually the attack on Dos Pilas in 672 by *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and the expulsion of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*. Before the discovery of these new steps it was believed that this Dos Pilas lord had likely fled to Calakmul (Martin and Grube 2000: 58), but this step informs us that *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* first fled to a previously unknown site named *Chaahk Naah*, “Rain-god House”. Given the probable direction in which *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* would have been retreating, this may be a site to the north of Dos Pilas.

Step 5

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	11-he-wa-8-WINAL-*ji?-*ya	<i>b’uluch hewa waxak winaljiiy</i>
B1:	?-yi-ya-*?-*HA’	<i>...yiy ... Ha’</i>
A2:	i-u-ti	<i>i uht</i>
B2:	*6-HIX-17-ka-se-wa	<i>wak hix huklajuun kasew</i>
C1:	PUL[yi]-?-HA’?	<i>puluy ... Ha’?</i>
D1:	PUL[yi]-?-ka-a	<i>puluy ...ka’</i>
C2:	*9-1-WINAL-ya-9-AK’AB’	<i>b’alun, juun winaljiiy b’alun ak’ab’</i>
D2:	6-YAX-K’IN-?-yi	<i>wak yaxk’in ...y</i>
E1:	(CHAAHK)-NAAH-(u)- KAB’-ji-ya	<i>Chaahk Naah, u kab’jiiy</i>
F1:	MUT-la-?-li	<i>Mutul ...l</i>
E2:	yi[LOK’]-B’AJ-K’AWIIL[CHAN]	<i>lok’oy B’aj(laj) Chan K’awiil</i>
F2:	?[yi]-HIIX-WITZ	<i>??? Hiix Witz</i>

Direct Translation

“11 *kins*, 8 *uinals*; after the attack on Dos Pilas; and then it happened; on 6 Ix 17 Tzec; was burned ... Ha’; was burned ...ka’; 9 *kins*, 1 *uinal* (later, on) 9 Akbal; 6 Yaxkin; was attacked (*Chaahk*) *Naah*, by the doing of; the Tikal person/people; he left, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*; he found refuge in *Hiix Witz*”

Free Translation

“8 months and 11 days after Dos Pilas was attacked, on 6 Ix 17 Tzec, ... Ha’ and ...ka’ were burned. 1 month and 9 days later, on 9 Akbal 6 Yaxkin, *Chaahk Naah* was attacked by Tikal and *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* retreated to *Hiix Witz*.”

Date: 9.12.0.16.14, 6 Ix 17 Tzec (28 May, 673)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 2.8.5.12 (48 years, 112 days old)

Date: 9.12.1.0.3, 9 Akbal 6 Yaxkin (26 June, 673)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 2.8.9.1 (48 years, 181 days old)

Discussion: *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* continued to pursue his brother across the landscape of the Peten after his initial attack on Dos Pilas in December of 672. At the beginning of the next rainy season, on 31 May, 673, two sites were burned. Unfortunately, erosion and fracturing of the upper row of glyphs obscures the identities of these sites. Of the name of the first site, only a probable **HA’** logograph can be seen. The second named site is spelled as **?-ka-a**, or ...ka’. The only known site with these components is El Peru, which anciently was named *Waka’*. Whether this is a reference to El Peru or not cannot be determined, unless the missing fragments of this step are recovered and can be refitted into the text as a whole. If this does describe a torching of El Peru, it would indicate that this second phase of the *Mutul* civil war actually spread the conflagration of war to regions distant from the Central Peten and Pasion regions.

We are not informed directly of how the sacking of these two sites affected *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, but it seems probable that they were guarding the approaches to the site of his refuge, stated on the previous step to have been the otherwise unknown site of *Chaahk Naah*. West Step 5 continues by leading forward 29 days to the 29th of June, 673, when there was a second star war in this phase of the war (the first being against Dos Pilas itself). Fracture of the stone leaves only the last part of the name of this site, ... *Naah*, undoubtedly a reference to *Chaahk Naah*. This action was carried out by someone named with the title *Mutul (Nal)il*, or “Tikal person”. This is a title seen elsewhere on these steps, and refers to *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. Though king of Tikal, he was not accorded the Tikal Emblem Glyph, as *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* claimed that title as his own.

The final two glyph blocks on this step record that following the sack of *Chaahk Naah*, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* found refuge at the site of *Hiix Witz*. *Hiix Witz*, or “Jaguar Mountain(s)”, was an important polity in the Western Peten, and David Stuart has recently noted that its Emblem Glyph appears in local contexts at the sites of Pajaral and Zapote Bobal, between the San Pedro Martir and Pasion Rivers, amongst a series of limestone hills (www.mesoweb.com/features/ask/el_pajaral.html). At the time *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* was in residence at *Hiix Witz*, this kingdom may well have been ruled by a king named *Janaab’ Ti’ Ch’een*⁹.

The Western Peten and *Hiix Witz* in particular became very important in the 670s and 680s, at the time when *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* was in refuge at *Hiix Witz*. Panel 7 of

⁹ *Janaab’ Ti’ Ch’een, Hiix Witz Ajaw*, is named in the PSS on a Codex-style vase (Robicsek and Hales 1981: 184, Vessel 170). A virtually identical vase, only painted for the Snake King, *Yuhknoom Ch’een* the Great, was excavated at Calakmul, in Tomb 4 of Temple II. As these vessels appear to be contemporary, *Janaab’ Ti’ Ch’een*, otherwise unknown, would appear to date to the later period of *Yuhknoom Ch’een*’s reign (ca. 670-686), when Codex-style vases were being produced.

Piedras Negras, dating to around 677, mentions a *Hiix Witz* princess in relation to an event occurring in 665 (Martin and Grube 2000: 144, Morley 1938, Volume III: 123). The panel itself mentions a *Hiix Witz* lord by the name of *Aj Paat Kab'al? Naah*, and portrays this lord and others probably bearing tribute to *K'an Ahk II* (a.k.a. Ruler 1). Only days before his death in 686, this king of Piedras Negras, who appears to have been in allegiance or even vassalage to the Snake King, arranged the marriage of his son to a princess of the site of *Namaan*. This site, referred to variously as *Namaan* or simply *Maan*, has been identified by the author and Alexandre Safronov as probably corresponding to the archaeological site of La Florida on the San Pedro River east of Piedras Negras. It was another important tertiary center, caught up in the wars of this period. In 681 *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam III* (the Great¹⁰) of Yaxchilan caught his most important prisoner, "*Aj Nik*", a vassal lord of the (*Na*)*Maan* king, *K'ahk' Ti' Kuy*, "Fire-mouth Owl".

There was also activity in this period at the sites of El Peru and La Corona, to the north of the San Pedro River. El Peru Stela 34, on its fragmentary left side, records an arrival around 675, almost certainly of the Calakmul princess portrayed on the front. Site Q Altar 1 (which was looted from La Corona or a nearby site) records the arrival of a Calakmul princess at that site in 679. Calakmul appears to have been (re)consolidating its control over the Western Peten in the years following *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* sojourn in *Hiix Witz*. While there, the king of Dos Pilas would have been in the land of allies and fellow vassals of the great Snake King.

Step 4

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	11-1-WINAL-ji-ya	<i>b'uluch, juun winaljiiy</i>
B1:	5-HAAB'-ya-?[yi]-ya	<i>ho' haab'iiy ...yiy</i>
A2:	?-HA'-i-u-ti	<i>...Ha', i uht</i>
B2:	*2-HIX-*17-MUWAHN	<i>ux hix waklajuun muwahn</i>
C1:	?[yi]-li[PUL]	<i>...y Puluul</i>
D1:	yi[LOK']-nu-u-JOL[CHAAHK]	<i>lok'oy Nuun u Jol Chaahk</i>
C2:	?[yi]-?[TUUN]-ni	<i>??? ...Tuun</i>
D2:	7-la-ta-9-HA'	<i>huk lat, b'aluun ha'</i>
E1:	4-HAAB'[PA']-HUL-li	<i>chan pa'haab'(?), huli</i>
F1:	?-HA'-B'AJ-CHAN-na	<i>...Ha' B'ajl(aj) Chan</i>
E2:	K'AWIIL-la-u-CHAN-nu	<i>K'awiil, ucha'n</i>
F2:	TAJ-MO'-o-K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>Taj(al) Mo', K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

"11 *kins*, 1 *uinal*; 5 *tuns* after the attack against; Dos Pilas and then it happened; on 2 Ix 17 Muan; was burned *Puluul*; he left, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*; he went to ...*tuun*; 7 days later (on) 9 Imix; 4 Pax, he arrived; (at) Dos Pilas, *B'ajlaj Chan*; *K'awiil*, the Captor of; *Tajal Mo'*, Divine Tikal Lord"

¹⁰ While *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam* the Great of Yaxchilan (ruled 681-742) is traditionally the second of that name, evidence for another king of this name, ruling around the turn of the seventh century, comes from Palenque and Bonampak (Guenter 2002: 156, note 9).

Free Translation

“5 years, 1 month and 11 days after the attack on Dos Pilas, and then on 2 Ix 17 Muan, *Puluul* was burned and *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* fled to ... Tuun. 7 days later, on 9 Imix 4 Pax, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, Captor of *Tajal Mo’* and King of Tikal, arrived at Dos Pilas.”

Date: 9.12.5.9.14, 2 Ix 17 Muan (13 December, 677)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 2.12.16.12 (52 years, 332 days old)

Date: 9.12.5.10.1, 9 Imix 4 Pax (20 December, 677)

Age of B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil: 2.12.16.19 (52 years, 339 days old)

Discussion: After his retreat to *Hiix Witz* in 673, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* appears to have bided his time while his lord, *Yuhknoom Ch’een* the Great, mustered a mighty force to confront and defeat the rebellious *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*. In January of 677, *Yuhknoom Ch’een* installed a new lord of Cancuen, another kingdom from the Pasion Region that was apparently upset by the actions of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* (www.mesoweb.com/features/cancuen/Panel.pdf). It is likely with a number of dispossessed lords such as this, and a large and motley group of kings, lords, and warriors, that the army of the Snake king finally moved south.

West Step 4 begins with a Distance Number that relates the amount of time between the initial attack on Dos Pilas and the apparent return of Snake forces to Southwestern Peten. On the 13th of December, 677, five years after Tikal initiated the second phase of the *Mutul* civil war, the site of *Puluul* was attacked in a “Star War”, and *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* fled to the “*Ti’ Patuun*” site (see above). The location of *Puluul*, as with so many of the places named on Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, is not certain. Linda Schele has suggested that this may be a reference to the archaeological site of Polol, halfway between Dos Pilas and Tikal (Schele 1995: 14). Interestingly, a seventeenth century Spanish text refers to an Itza town on Lake Peten Itza as being named *Pululha*, or “*Pulul Water*” (G. Jones 1998: 138). The *Puluul* mentioned at Dos Pilas could be either or neither of these sites, but we are probably safe in concluding that this site was located somewhere on the southwestern edge of the Central Peten.

Only seven days after this attack on *Puluul*, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* finally returned to Dos Pilas, more than five years after having been ousted from his town. Interestingly, Hieroglyphic Stairway 4, Step III gives the date for both the attack on *Puluul* and *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*’s arrival at Dos Pilas as the day 9 Imix 4 Pax. This would appear to be either a mistake, or a narrative device, to more directly connect these two events. That these two events took place on separate days, as given here on Stairway 2, appears to be the more logical sequence. It would appear, then, that *Yuhknoom Ch’een*’s conquest of *Puluul* cut off *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* from the Pasion region, and Tikal was forced to abandon Dos Pilas. Such an understanding of these events serves to highlight the dependence of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* on his Calakmul patron (Martin and Grube 2000: 57).

Step 3

	Transcription
A1:	3-WINAL-ji-ya-8-AJAW
B1:	13-ka-se-wa-u-7-HAAB’

Transliteration
<i>ux, winaljiiy waxak ajaw</i>
<i>uxlajuun kasew, u huk haab’</i>

A2:	i-u-ti-11-KAB'	<i>i uht b'uluch kab'</i>
B2:	10-SUUTZ'-ju-b'u-yi	<i>lajuun suutz', jub'uy</i>
C1:	u-TOOK'-PAKAL-nu-u- JOL[CHAAHK]	<i>u took' u pakal Nuun u Jol Chaahk</i>
D1:	NAAHB'-ja-u-CH'ICH'?'-le?	<i>naahb'aj u ch'ich'el</i>
C2:	WITZ-ja-u-JOL-li	<i>witzij u jolil</i>
D2:	13-tzu-ku	<i>uxlajuun tzuk</i>
E1:	MUT-la-?-li	<i>Mutul ...l</i>
F1:	u-KAB'-ji-ya-B'AJ-CHAN-na	<i>u kab'jiy B'aj(laj) Chan</i>
E2:	K'AWIIL-la-K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'awiil, K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>
F2:	B'AAH-ka-b'a	<i>B'aahkab'</i>

Direct Translation

“3 and a score days before 8 Ahau; 13 Tzec, the seventh *Tun*; and then on 11 Caban; 10 Zodz was brought down; the flint and the shield of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*; pooled was the blood¹¹; mountained were the skulls of; (at?) the 13 Partition place; Tikal person/people; he oversaw it, *B'ajlaj Chan*; *K'awiil*, Divine Tikal Lord; *Bacab*”

Free Translation

“23 days before the seventh Tuun ended on 8 Ahau 13 Tzec, on 11 Caban 10 Zodz, the war party of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* were defeated. The blood pooled and the skulls were piled into mountains of the Tikal people, of the people of the 13 Partition?. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, King of Tikal and *Bacab*, oversaw it all.”

Date: 9.12.6.16.17, 11 Caban 10 Zodz (30 April, 679)

Age of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*: 2.14.5.15 (54 years, 115 days old)

Discussion: The climactic event of not only Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, but also of the life of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, is recorded on West Step 3. On the 30th of April, 679, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* and his forces¹² were decisively defeated in battle against *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* and the warriors of Dos Pilas. The scale of this victory is implied by the poetic phrase, “the blood was pooled and the skulls were piled into mountains of the people of the Central Peten, the Tikal people”. Although no mention is made of the fate of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, the king of Tikal presumably died in the battle or its aftermath. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* proudly takes credit for this regicide and fratricide; it was the highlight of his life.

It seems quite likely that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* took control of Tikal following this victory (Guenter 2002). It would be three years before *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*'s son would take the throne as *Jasaw Chan K'awiil I*; not coincidentally only four days before *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* celebrated the 9.12.10.0.0, 9 Ahau 18 Zodz Period Ending at Calakmul, far from the Central Peten. During this three-year interregnum, war flared up again between Naranjo and Caracol, with Caracol being sacked in 680 (Martin and Grube 2000: 95).

¹¹ This reading follows a suggestion by David Stuart.

¹² Simon Martin has recently proposed that the *took'* and *pakal* references in this war phrase are not so much emblems of war as they are titles of warlords and warriors. *Hub'uy u took' u pakal* could thus be interpreted as a statement akin to the “downfall of the army of...”.

Caracol was a strong ally of Calakmul, and it seems probable that Naranjo at this time was in allegiance with Tikal (Guenther 2002).

Although no monument records it, we know that revenge must have been attained as a new dynasty emerged at Naranjo in 682. Because there is no text referring to this event, we cannot be certain as to who oversaw the defeat of Naranjo, but most probably this was carried out by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* in association with Calakmul. It was *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* daughter, Lady *Wak Chan Ajaw*, who moved to Naranjo in 682 and restored a dynasty to the city five years later when she gave birth to a son, the famous *K'ahk' Tiliw Chan Chaahk*. With his grandson in power at Naranjo, the aging *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* maintained the presence in the Central Peten that he had won on the battlefield in 679.

Step 2

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	(2-11-WINAL-ji-ya-2)-HAAB'-ya	<i>(cha', b'uluch winaljiiy cha')</i> <i>haab'iiy</i>
B1:	u-ti-ya-9-*AJAW	<i>uhtiiy b'aluun ajaw</i>
A2:	(18)-SUUTZ'-LAM-TAHN	<i>waxaklajuun suutz' tahn lam</i>
B2:	AK'-TAJ-ja	<i>ahk'taj</i>
C1:	ti-?-?	<i>ti ???</i>
D1:	yu[ku]-no[CH'EEN]-na-K'UH- ka-AJAW-KAN	<i>Yuhkno(om) Ch'een,</i> <i>K'uh(ul) Kan(al) Ajaw</i>
C2:	yi-ta-ji-B'AJ-CHAN-K'AWIIL-la	<i>yitaaj B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil</i>
D2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT-i-u-ti	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw, i uht</i>
E1:	2-IK'-10-MUWAHN	<i>cha' ik' lajuun muwahn</i>
F1:	TZUTZ-yi-3-TAL-la	<i>tzutzuy huxtal</i>
E2:	u-WINIKHAAB'-b'a-la-ja	<i>u winikhaab' B'a(j)laj</i>
F2:	K'AWIIL-la-K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'awiil, K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“2 kins, 11 uinals and 2 tuns; after 9 Ahau; 18 Zodz, the Midpoint Descent; (when) danced; the ??? dance; *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, Divine Calakmul Lord; in the company of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord, and then it happened (on); 2 Ik 10 Muan; it ended the third; his *katun*, *B'ajlaj*; *Chan K'awiil*, Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“2 years, 11 months and 2 days after the 9 Ahau 18 Muan Half Period Ending, when *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, King of Calakmul, danced the ... dance in the company of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, Tikal King, and then it happened, on 2 Ik 10 Muan, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, King of Tikal, celebrated his 60th birthday.”

Date: 9.12.10.0.0, 9 Ahau 18 Zodz (10 May, 682)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 2.17.6.18 (57 years, 138 days old)

Date: 9.12.12.11.2, 2 Ik 10 Muan (7 December, 684)

Age of B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil: 3.0.0.0 (60 years old)

Discussion: *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* journeyed to the great city of Calakmul in 682 to celebrate the 9 Ahau Lahuntun along with his great supporter and overlord, *Yuhknoom Ch'een* the Great. *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* danced alongside the Snake King on this occasion, apparently as the Maize God according to Dos Pilas Stela 9 (see below). Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 mentions that on this date that stairway was built.

West Step 2 of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 mentions this event merely as the background to the prime event of this step, the third katun anniversary of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s birth; his 60th birthday. These sixty years had seen an incredible history, one in which *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* found himself, more often than not, at the center of events that would shape the Late Classic period.

Step 1

	Transcription	Transliteration
A1:	???	???
B1:	???	???
A2:	???	???
B2:	???	???
C1:	???	???
D1:	???	???
C2:	ITZAMNAAJ-ji-B' AHLAM-ma	<i>Itzamnaaj B'ahlam</i>
D2:	?-?-?	???
E1:	IX-AJAW-?-TE'	<i>Ix ...te' Ajaw</i>
F1:	u-?-ki?-b'a/B'AJ-la-ja	<i>u ... B'ajlaj</i>
E2:	CHAN-na-K'AWIIL-la	<i>Chan K'awiil</i>
F2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“???, ???, ???, ???, ???, ???; *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam*; (son of Lady ...?); Lady *Itzan* Lord; the son of *B'ajlaj*; *Chan K'awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“... *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam*, son of Lady ..., Princess of *Itzan* and son of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, Lord of Tikal.”

Date: unknown (after 7 December, 684)

Discussion: The left side of West Step 1 was completely destroyed and/or missing when archaeologists first came upon this monument, with the result that the first two columns of text are completely gone. This means that, as with East Step 3, there is no date or verb for this event. This is all the more lamentable, as the narrative for the first time switches away from *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*. The text ends with the name *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam*, and gives his parentage, the Princess of *Itzan* and *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*. This is the same parentage as for *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, Ruler 2 of Dos Pilas. However, rather than

being another name for *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam* may well be another son of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* and his direct successor (Houston 1993).

It is not known when *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* died. Aguateca Stela 5 mentions that he oversaw the 9.13.0.0.0, 8 Ahau 8 Uo Period Ending. *Itzamnaaj K'awiil* acceded only six years later, and so the death of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* and the short reign of *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam* must be fitted into this period. It may not be coincidence that during this period Calakmul was decisively defeated by Tikal, and Dos Pilas lost its major ally. These first two kings of Dos Pilas may well have died in or as a result of these later battles.

Dos Pilas Panel 6

Of all the monuments associated with the Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 program, Panel 6 contains the only evidence of an Initial Series date and is thus best considered as the first monument, at least of the last phase of construction. Panel 6 was found to the right (west) of the stair itself, resting against the bulk of the pyramid. It is paired with Panel 7, which was found to the left (east) of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 and contains presently the last date of this inscription. Panels 6 and 7 thus frame the text of Stairway 2 and are considered as part of this same monumental program.

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1-B2:	???	???
A3:	???	???
B3:	???	???
A4:	???	???
B4:	???	???
A5:	???	???
B5:	???	???
A6:	K'IN-ni-?-la	<i>K'in ...l</i>
B6:	???	???
A7:	u-?-li-na	<i>u ???</i>
B7:	K'IHNICH-JOL?[MUWAHN]	<i>K'ihnich Muwahn Jol</i>
A8:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>
B8:	b'a-ka-b'a	<i>B'a(ah)kab'</i>

Direct Translation

“???, (ISIG); ???; ???; ???; ???; ???; ??? (son of?); ‘Queen’ ...; ???; son of father; *K'ihnich Muwahn Jol*; Divine Tikal Lord; Head Earth”

Free Translation

“...., the son of Lady ..., the son of *K'ihnich Muwahn Jol* (II), King of Tikal, *Bacab*”

Discussion: This monument is horribly eroded, and nothing of the date can be read. The text clearly ends with a parentage statement. The mother’s name cannot be read, only her titles (which include a rare instance where the **K'IN** sign is separated from the upturned

vase, in what is apparently the major Classic period title for queens). The father's name is *K'ihnich Muwahn Jol*. Given the fact that the rest of the Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 program is devoted to the life of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, he is almost certainly the subject of Panel 6, and this parentage is his own.

If one accepts this reasonable assumption, then one must account for *K'ihnich Muwaahn Jol II* (his earlier namesake, *K'ihnich Muwahn Jol I*, was father to the famous *Chak Tok Ich'aak I* of the late fourth century). As *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* can now be stated to have been a native of Tikal, his father, seen here with the full Tikal Emblem Glyph, was almost certainly an earlier king of that great center. The current dynastic list for Tikal is missing Rulers 23 and 24, who would have ruled during the early seventh century, right at the time that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was born. *K'ihnich Muwaahn Jol II* is a perfect candidate for one of these missing rulers, and with this understanding, Tikal's "Dark Age" becomes far less obscure.

Dos Pilas Panel 7

Panel 7 was found to the left of the East set of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2, set against the bulk of the pyramid. It contains the last preserved date in this textual program, and was clearly made as a mate to Panel 6; the two frame the stairway texts both physically and calendrically. If this consideration is made, it becomes apparent that Panels 6 and 7 are in each other's places. Panel 6, with the only Initial Series date of the entire text, is found at the end of the monumental program, while the last event, on Panel 7, is found at the front. This may well be the work of the site's latest occupants, who are known to have moved around other monuments after the site was abandoned by the ruling elite after their defeat of 761. It will be remembered that West Steps 6 and 1 are both missing sections of stair that have never been found.

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	???	???
B1:	???	???
A2:	???, (6)-MANICH'?	???, (<i>wak</i>) <i>manich'</i> ?
B2:	(5)-CHAK-AT-JOY[<i>ja</i>]	(<i>ho'</i>) <i>chakat, joyaj</i>
A3:	ti-AJAW-li-yu-ku-ma-no	<i>ti ajawil, Yuhknoom</i>
B3:	K'AHK'-ICH'AAK[<i>yi</i>]-ki- K'UH-ka-AJAW-KAN	<i>Yich'aak K'ahk', K'uh(ul) Kan(al) Ajaw</i>
A4:	ti?[WINIK/HUUN]-ki? / HUUN-SAK-?	<i>ti? Winik/Huun Sak ???</i>
B4:	IL-?la?-a	<i>ilaj</i>
A5:	B'AJ-CHAN-na	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan</i>
B5:	K'AWIIL-la-K'UH-AJAW- MUT-la	<i>K'awiil, K'uh(ul) Mutul Ajaw</i>
A6:	u-CHAN-nu-TAJ-MO'-o	<i>Uchaan Taj(al) Mo'</i>
B6:	u-ti-ya NAAHB'-chi[<i>ku</i>]	<i>uhtiy Naahb' Chiik</i>

Direct Translation

“???; ???; ??? 6 Manik; 5 Zip, he was dressed; into lordship, *Yuhknoom; Yich’aak K’ahk’*, Divine Calakmul King; in the mask of *Sak ???*; he witnessed it; *B’ajlaj Chan; K’awiil*, Divine Tikal Lord; the Captor of *Tajal Mo’*; it happened at Calakmul”

Free Translation

“On 6 Manik 5 Zip *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’* acceded at Calakmul in the guise of the god Sak ..., and this was witnessed by *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, the Tikal King and Captor of *Tajal Mo’*”

Date: 9.12.13.17.7, 6 Manik 5 Zip (3 April, 686)

Discussion: Panel 7 contains the last information on *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil’s* life found at Dos Pilas, a trip he made to Calakmul in 686 to attend the accession of *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’*, the very Snake prince whose preaccession rite he had witnessed at Yaxha over twenty years earlier. This confirms that *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil’s* association with the great northern capital remained strong, even after *Yuhknoom Ch’een* the Great left the scene.

At this time the lord of Dos Pilas was sixty-one years old. His daughter was established as ruler in Naranjo, and in only two years would give birth to a son, *K’ahk’ Tiliw Chan Chaahk*, who would revive dynasty at that city. *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil’s* grandson would contend with his elder cousin, *Jasaw Chan K’awiil*, who was actively involved in the recovery of his kingdom, and who must have already been making forays towards Lake Yaxha, striking a salient between Naranjo and Dos Pilas. With the death of the great *Yuhknoom Ch’een* and the rise of his successor, *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’*, an air of anticipation must have hung over the Maya world.

Such transitions of rulership were fraught with danger for Maya kingdoms, as an untested ruler, defeated in an early battle, could quickly lose the support of allied and subject kingdoms, which would rapidly swell the enemy’s ranks. This seems to have been the case with Calakmul, as only five years after his accession, we find *Yich’aak K’ahk’* had been forced to pay tribute to Tikal. The new king of Tikal, *Jasaw Chan K’awiil*, staged his acceptance of this tribute with close attention to rhetoric and drama. He held court at Topoxte, on Lake Yaxha, thus avenging his father’s capitulation at the same site over thirty years earlier, in the infamous Yaxha Agreement. Less than four years later *Jasaw Chan K’awiil* would decisively defeat *Yich’aak K’ahk’* in battle, crowning this amazing turn of fortunes for the two enemy kingdoms.

It is in this light that the last decade of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil’s* life must be viewed. In his twilight years, when this veteran of many a battle likely could not march off to new conflicts, his great benefactor, *Yuhknoom Ch’een*, passed away. *Yuhknoom Yich’aak K’ahk’*, the prince to whom *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* had likely pledged his loyalty at Yaxha, was now ruler of the most powerful kingdom in the Maya area, but he was not built in the mold of his father. From the pathetically few scraps we have left, it is still clear that almost immediately Calakmul’s power and prestige began to slip. And for Dos Pilas, far from the base of Calakmul’s power to the north, with a vigorous and vengeful king on the throne of Tikal between, this change could only prove negative. It is quite likely that *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* chose to shore up his new acquisition in Naranjo. This

had the advantage of keeping the battles from getting too close to his Petexbatun bastion, and was close enough to Calakmul to count on reinforcements from that area. It certainly seems that Tikal was concentrating its early efforts at expansion during the reign of *Jasaw Chan K'awiil* towards Yaxha, Naranjo and the east.

The last years of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s are silent ones. We have no monuments of his after Panel 7, and although Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 appears to have been dedicated by a son shortly after his death, no other monuments are known to have been carved until Stela 1 was erected in 706. Not coincidentally, this is only 4 years after we have the first mention of a new and powerful king of Calakmul, *Yuhknoom Took' K'awiil*. Dos Pilas' fortunes were intimately tied to those of the great Snake capital.

There is one retrospective mention of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* during his last years. Aguateca Stela 5, commissioned by his grandson, *K'awiil Chan K'ihnich*, mentions that the venerable 4 *Katun Ajaw*, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, danced on the occasion of the end of Katun 8 Ahau in 692. The implication seems to be that this dance took place at Aguateca, the cliff-top citadel to which he had fled in 650 after being ousted from Dos Pilas by the forces of Calakmul. Does *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s apparent location in 692 suggest that Tikal was making dangerous forays towards the Pasión already at this time? Unfortunately, without further evidence one cannot say. However, the silence of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s last years is somewhat more explicable in this light.

B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil must have died shortly after his "last dance". Dos Pilas Stela 8 records the accession of his son, *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, on 24 March, 698, indicating that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* must have died previously. However, if the interpretation that the *Itzamnaaj B'ahlam* mentioned on West Step 1 of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 is not an alternate name for *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*, then it is likely that the old king did not survive long past the 8 Ahau Period Ending. It is not known where *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* would have been buried. One logical possibility would be Structure L5-49 at Dos Pilas, given that the stairs are completely devoted to his life story. Without excavation, however, this cannot be confirmed or denied.

A final consideration on the life of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* comes from the site of Tonina, far to the west of Dos Pilas, in the mountains of Chiapas near modern-day Ocosingo. In the late nineteenth century excavations in the site uncovered a burial that contained, among other things, a large jade bead labeling it as the possession of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*. How this object got to Tonina is completely unknown, and this burial does not rule out the possibility that this took place many decades after *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s death. The piece may even have been looted from his tomb after Dos Pilas was abandoned in the early ninth century, while Tonina was still a thriving center. This jade bead simply adds yet another enigmatic piece to the story of the *K'awiil* who hammered the sky.

Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 4

Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 consists of five carved steps leading up to Structure L5-35, one of the major palaces of Dos Pilas. According to its inscription, the stair was built in 682, although an additional step appears to have been added two years later (see below). Along with Stela 9, this stairway was thought to be the first carved monument from the

site. However, this laurel must now be given to the central part of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2.

Discovered by Stacey Symonds while excavating with the Vanderbilt University Petexbatun project a decade ago, Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 was recently almost completely destroyed by would-be looters. This provides a sad reminder of why complete photographic records and molds must be made of all new monuments. Although they have survived many centuries beneath the jungle, the greed and ignorance of humans remain their greatest threat.

Step I

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	???	???
B1:	9-‘SKY’-?	<i>b’aluun ???</i>
A2:	12-WINIKHAAB’	<i>lajchan winikhaab’</i>
B2:	12-HAAB’	<i>lajchan haab’</i>
C1:	11-WINAL-la	<i>b’uluch winal</i>
D1:	2-K’IN-ni	<i>cha’ k’in</i>
C2:	2-IK’	<i>cha’ ik’</i>
D2:	9-?	<i>b’alun</i>
E1:	?-?	???
F1:	?-HUL-li-ya	<i>... huliyy</i>
E2:	5-?-K’AL-ja	<i>ho’ k’a(h)laj ...</i>
F2:	?-o?-?	???
G1:	u-K’AB’A’[ch’o-ko]	<i>u k’ab’a ch’ok</i>
H1:	WINIK-10	<i>winik lajuun</i>
G2:	10-MUWAHN	<i>lajuun muwahn</i>
H2:	TZUTZ-yi	<i>tzutzuy</i>
I1:	u-3-TAL-la	<i>u huxtal</i>
J1:	u-WINIKHAAB’	<i>u winikhaab’</i>
I2:	i-AK’-TAJ-ja	<i>i ak’taj</i>
J2:	ti-3-a	<i>ti hux a-</i>
K1:	je?-ne	<i>-jen (?)</i>
L1:	CH’EEN-na	<i>ch’een</i>
K2:	NAL-?	<i>...nal</i>
L2:	u-NAAHB’-chi[K’IN]	<i>u Naahb’nal K’i(h)nich</i>
M1:	AJ-WAL-la-CH’AK?-TUUN	<i>Ajwal Ch’aktuun???</i>
N1:	b’a-la-ja	<i>B’a(j)laj</i>
M2:	CHAN-na-K’AWIIL	<i>Chan K’awiil</i>
N2:	K’UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>K’uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>

Date: 9.12.12.11.2, 2 Ik 10 Muan (4 December, 684)

Direct Translation

“ISIG: Patron of *Muan*; 9 *Baktun*; 12 *Katun*; 12 *Tun*; 11 *Uinal*; 2 *Kin*; 2 *Ik*; G#; ???; 20? days after it had arrived; (Moon Name); (Moon Name); is the name of the young; 30 (day lunar month); 10 *Muan*; it ended; his third; *Katun*; and then he danced; at the *Hux Ajen*; cave/city; dance platform; the Pool-place of the Sun-God; (Names); *B’ajlaj*; *Chan K’awiil*; Divine Tikal Lord”

Free Translation

“On 2 Ik 10 Muan *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, the King of Tikal, danced at the 3 *Ajen Ch’een* dance platform to celebrate his 60th *Tun* birthday.”

Discussion: Step I records the 60th birthday of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, which was obviously celebrated with a dance, the location of which is recorded. This site has never been located but is presumably someplace at Dos Pilas, likely in the city center. It may even be the platform in front of the royal palace, to which lead the steps of Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 itself.

Step II

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	???	???
B1:	9-pi	<i>b’aluun pih</i>
A2:	12-WINIKHAAB’	<i>lajchan winikhaab’</i>
B2:	10-HAAB’	<i>lajuun haab’</i>
C1:	mi-WINAL-la	<i>mi winal</i>
D1:	mi-K’IN-ni	<i>mi k’in</i>
C2:	9-AJAW	<i>b’aluun ajaw</i>
D2:	?-TI’-HUUN-YIK’IN?	<i>yik’in ti’ huun</i>
E1:	2-he-wa-WINIK-ji-ya	<i>cha’ hewa winikjiy</i>
F1:	HUL-li	<i>huli</i>
E2:	3-NAL/IX-K’AL-ja	<i>hux k’a(h)laj Nal/Ix</i>
F2:	?-?	???
G1:	u-K’AB’A’[ch’o]	<i>u k’ab’a’ ch’o(k)</i>
H1:	WINIK-10	<i>winik lajuun</i>
G2:	18-SUUTZ’	<i>waxaklajuun suutz’</i>
H2:	u-ti	<i>uhti(iy)</i>
I1:	LAM[TAHN]	<i>tahn lam</i>
J1:	PAT-la-ja	<i>pa(h)tlaj</i>
I2:	K’AN-TUUN-ni	<i>K’a(h)n Tuun</i>
J2:	EHB’	<i>Ehb’</i>
K1:	???	???
L1:	???	???
K2:	ye-b’a	<i>yehb’</i>
L2:	?-(NAL-?)	???
M1:	???	???

N1:	???	???
M2:	???	???
N2:	???	???

Direct Translation

“ISIG: Patron of Zodz: 9 *Baktun*; 12 *Katun*; 10 *Tun*; 0 *Uinal*; 0 *Kin*; 9 Ahau; G9; 2 days and a score after; it had arrived; the third Moon Goddess; ???; the name of the young; 20 and 10 (day month); 18 Zodz; it was at the; Midpoint Descent; was created; the Step-Stone; stair; ???; ???; the stair of; (*B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*...)

Free Translation

“ On 9.12.10.0.0, 9 Ahau 18 Zodz Period Ending the Step-Stone Stair was dedicated...it is the stairway of (*B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*).”

Discussion: Step II is badly damaged in its right half, destroying a number of glyph blocks. However, enough remains to reveal that this step recorded the dedication of Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 in 682. The text originally would have concluded with the names and titles of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*.

Step III

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	4-AK’B’AL	<i>chan ak’b’al</i>
B1:	11-MUWAHN	<i>b’uluch muwahn</i>
A2:	???	???
B2:	B’AJ-CHAN-na	<i>B’aj(laj) Chan</i>
C1:	K’AWIIL-la	<i>K’awiil</i>
D1:	u-KAB’-ji-ya	<i>u kab’jiy</i>
C2:	nu-JOL	<i>Nuun u Jol</i>
D2:	CHAAHK	<i>Chaahk</i>
E1:	MUT-la-?-li	<i>Mutul ...l</i>
F1:	13-tzu[ku]	<i>huxlajuun tzuk</i>
E2:	9-HA’	<i>b’aluun ha’</i>
F2:	4-HAAB’[PA’]?	<i>chan pa’haab?</i>
G1:	???	???
H1:	pu-lu-li	<i>Puluul</i>
G2:	u-KAB’-ji-ya	<i>u kab’jiy</i>
H2:	yu-ku-ma-no	<i>Yu(h)knoom</i>
I1:	CH’EEN-na	<i>Ch’een</i>
J1:	yi[LOK’]	<i>lok’oy</i>
I2:	nu-JOL[CHAAHK]	<i>Nuun u Jol Chaahk</i>
J2:	18-he-wa	<i>waxaklajuun hewa</i>
K1:	WINAL-ji-ya	<i>winaljiy</i>
L1:	5-HAAB’-ya	<i>ho’ haab’iiy</i>
K2:	B’IX-ya	<i>b’ix(n)iy</i>
L2:	B’AJ-CHAN-na	<i>B’aj(laj) Chan</i>
M1:	K’AWIIL-la	<i>K’awiil</i>

N1:	(u-ti-ya)?	<i>u(h)tiy</i>
M2:	?-HA'	<i>... Ha'</i>
N2:	???	<i>???</i>

Direct Translation

“4 Akbal; 11 Muan; ‘star war’ against; *B’ajlaj Chan; K’awiil*; he carried it out; *Nuun u Jol; Chaahk*; Tikal native; 13 Partition; 9 Imix; 4 Pax; ‘star war’ against; *Puluul*; he carried it out; *Yuhknoom Ch’een*; *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*; 18 days; and a score days; and five years after; he had journeyed; *B’ajlaj Chan; K’awiil*; it happened at; Dos Pilas; ???”

Free Translation

“On 4 Akbal 11 Muan, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, from Tikal, attacked *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*. On 9 Imix 4 Pax *Puluul* was attacked by *Yuhknoom Ch’een*, forcing *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* to flee. After an exile of five years, 38 days, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* returned to Dos Pilas.”

Discussion

Step III provides a short history of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*’s five-year exile from Dos Pilas, occasioned by an attack by *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* in 672. Importantly, here *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*’s ultimate return to Dos Pilas is connected to a major victory at the site of *Puluul* by *Yuhknoom Ch’een*, the enormously powerful king of Calakmul. On this step the two events appear to be simultaneous, but in the Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 version *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*’s arrival is specified to have occurred seven days later.

Step IV

A1:	9-he-wa	<i>b’aluun hewa</i>
B1:	4-WINAL-ji-ya	<i>chan winaljiiy</i>
A2:	u-ti-ya	<i>u(h)tiy</i>
B2:	6-AJAW	<i>wak ajaw</i>
C1:	13-ma-ka	<i>huxlajuun mak</i>
D1:	5-wi-TUUN	<i>wi’ ho’ tuun</i>
C2:	i-u-ti	<i>i u(h)t</i>
D2:	4-MULUK?	<i>chan muluc?</i>
E1:	2-o-OHL	<i>cha’ ohl</i>
F1:	ju-yi-b’u	<i>jub’uy</i>
E2:	u-to-k’a	<i>u took’</i>
F2:	u-PAKAL-la	<i>u pakal</i>
G1:	la-ma(-?)	<i>Lam</i>
H1:	na-hi	<i>Naah</i>
G2:	K’AWIIL-la	<i>K’awiil</i>
H2:	u-KAB’-ji-ya	<i>u kab’jiiy</i>
I1:	b’a-la-ja	<i>B’a(j)laj</i>
J1:	CHAN-na	<i>Chan</i>
I2:	K’AWIIL-la	<i>K’awiil</i>
J2:	?-NAL-?	<i>???</i>
K1:	B’AAH-TE’	<i>B’aah Te’</i>
L1:	pi-tzi	<i>Pitzi(l)</i>

K2:	u-NAAHB'/NAL-chi[K'IN]	<i>u Naahb'nal K'i(h)nich</i>
L2:	K'UH-AJAW-MUT	<i>u K'uh(ul) Mut(ul) Ajaw</i>
M1:	ya-AJAW-wa	<i>yajaw</i>
N1:	yu-ku-ma	<i>Yu(h)k(noo)m</i>
M2:	CH'EEN	<i>Ch'een</i>
N2:	K'UH-ka-AJAW-KAN	<i>K'uh(ul) Kan(al) Ajaw</i>

Direct Translation

“9 days; 4 uinals; after; 6 Ahau; 13 Mac; last *hotun*; and then it happened; 9 Muluc; 2 Cumku; were brought down; the flint of; the shield of; *Lam*; *Naah*; *K'awiil*; he carried it out; *B'ajlaj*; *Chan*; *K'awiil*; ???; Head Tree; Ballplayer; Pool-place of the Sun God; Divine Tikal Lord; vassal of; Yuhknoom; Ch'een; Divine Snake Lord”

Free Translation

“Four months and nine days after the 6 Ahau 13 Mac *hotun* Period Ending, on 9 Muluc 2 Cumku, *Lam Naah K'awiil* was defeated by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, Lord of Tikal and vassal of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, Snake King of Calakmul.”

Discussion: As written, Step IV records an early victory of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, and importantly tells us that he was a vassal of *Yuhknoom Ch'een*, the lord of Calakmul. However, East Step 6 of Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 now sheds much more information on this battle, which we now know sparked a civil war in the kingdom of Tikal. Furthermore, East Step 5 of Stairway 2 informs us that Dos Pilas was attacked by *Yuhknoom Ch'een* only two years later, indicating that the reference to *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s vassalage from Stairway 4 is anachronistic. However, it may also be that the scribes of Dos Pilas recognized in retrospect that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*'s attack ultimately benefited the Snake King.

Step V

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	1-wi-WINIKHAAB'	<i>juun winikhaab'</i>
B1:	11-HAAB'-ya	<i>b'uluch haab'</i>
A2:	8-12-WINAL	<i>waxak, lajchan winal</i>
B2:	u-ya-ti	<i>u(h)tiy</i>
C1:	4-'MULUC'	<i>chan 'muluc'</i>
D1:	i-u-ti	<i>i u(h)t</i>
C2:	11-KAB'?	<i>b'uluch kab'?</i>
D2:	10-SUUTZ'	<i>lajuun suutz'</i>
E1:	ju-b'u-yi	<i>jub'uy</i>
F1:	u-to-k'a	<i>u took'</i>
E2:	u-pa-ka-la	<i>u pakal</i>
F2:	nu-na	<i>Nuun</i>
G1:	JOL	<i>(u) Jol</i>
H1:	CHAAHK-ki	<i>Chaahk</i>
G2:	u-KAB'-ya-ji	<i>u kab'jiy</i>

H2:	b'a-la-ja	<i>B'a(j)laj</i>
I1:	CHAN-na	<i>Chan</i>
J1:	K'AWIIL-la	<i>K'awiil</i>
I2:	u-CHAN-nu	<i>u chaan</i>
J2:	TAJ-MO'-o	<i>Taj(al) Mo'</i>
K1:	u-B'AAH[AAN]-li	<i>u b'aahil aan</i>
L1:	IK'-SIP?	<i>Ik' Sip?</i>
K2:	?-ne	<i>???</i>
L2:	?-NAL-?	<i>???</i>
M1:	3-wi-WINIKHAAB'	<i>hux winikhaab'</i>
N1:	AJAW-wa	<i>ajaw</i>
M2:	B'AAH-TE'	<i>B'aah Te'</i>
N2:	pi-tzi-la	<i>Pitzil</i>

Direct Translation

“1 *katun*; 11 *tuns*; 8 (*kins* and) 12 *uinals*; after; 4 *Muluc*; and then it happened (on); 11 *Caban*; 10 *Zodz*; was brought down; the flint of; the shield of; *Nuun*; *u Jol*; *Chaahk*; he caused it; *B'ajlaj*; *Chan*; *K'awiil*; the Captor of; *Tajal Mo'*; he impersonated (the deity); *Ik' Sip?*; *???*; *???*; 3 *Katun*; Lord; Head Tree; Ballplayer”

Free Translation

“31 years, 12 months and 8 days after 4 *Muluc*, it happened on the day 11 *Caban* 10 *Zodz* that the spears and shields of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* were brought down by *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, the Captor of *Tajal Mo'*. He was arrayed as the deity *Ik' Sip* ..., the 3 *Katun* Lord, Head Tree, Ballplayer.”

Discussion: Step V of Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 begins its text with a distance number written in reverse order, starting with the higher units (*katun*, *tun*) and proceeding to the *uinal* and *kin* values. Such a reversal, while not common, is usually found where the scribes wished to highlight an event and/or the period of time between two events. Here, this reversal serves to connect the defeat of *Lam Naah K'awiil* in 648 with the defeat of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk* in 679, thirty-one years later. These were *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil's* greatest victories, both against lords of Tikal, and served to reinforce his claim to the throne of the *Mutul* Kingdom.

While much of this text merely states information found elsewhere, especially on Stairway 2, it does add one crucial piece of evidence to understanding this victory of tiny Dos Pilas over its giant nemesis, Tikal. This is found in glyphs K1-L1, where it is said that on the day of his victory, *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was dressed as the god *Ik' Sip*. *Ik' Sip* is an elderly deer god who is shown with a Roman nose, deer ear and antlers, and a face painted black. He is the subject of many Codex-style vases, where he is attended upon his deathbed by a number of younger deer gods. Quite often, a woman is shown riding a deer, and she is said to be the wife of *Huk Ajaw* (“7 *Ajaw*”, likely another name of *Ik' Sip*, and the brother of the Classic-period version of the *Popol Vuh* god *Hunahpu*). Most importantly, a number of these Codex-style vases portray the way of the Snake Kings of Calakmul/El Mirador, the “Deer-Snake” *Chijil Chan*, with *Ik' Sip* emerging from its jaws. The association of *Ik' Sip* with *Chijil Chan*, and hence the Snake Kings, is

consistent, and so it would appear that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* was cloaking himself in the supernatural power of the Snake Kingdom on the day he defeated the king of Tikal. This goes a long way to supporting the thought that *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil* must have had considerable assistance from Calakmul during this final victory over his brother. It may well be that the aging *Yuhknoom Ch'een* “deputized” *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, to fight in his stead against the Dos Pilas lord’s kinfolk in Tikal.

Conclusion: Hieroglyphic Stairway 4 was one of the first monuments at Dos Pilas, and it gives a number of the highlights of the life and reign of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*, concentrating on his great victories over his arch-enemy, Tikal, and finishing with the great Period Ending he celebrated following his ultimate triumph. From Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 and Stela 9, we know this triumph occurred at Calakmul, although that information has not survived on Stairway 4. Step I was added two years later, on the occasion of *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*’s 60th birthday, and likely was placed towards the end of the construction process of the palace behind.

Dos Pilas Stela 9

Stela 9 was found just outside the city center, to the west of Structure M5-78 and behind Structure L5-1, the mortuary shrine of the *B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil*’s son, *Itzamnaaj K'awiil*.

	Transliteration	Transcription
A1:	u-B'AAH?	<i>u b'aah</i>
A2:	ti-9-AJAW	<i>ti b'aluun ajaw</i>
A3:	b'a-la-ja	<i>B'a(j)laj</i>
B1:	(CHAN-K'AWIIL-la?)	<i>Chan K'awiil?</i>
C1:	u-B'AAH	<i>u b'aah</i>
D1:	6-AJAW-?	<i>Wak ...Ajaw</i>
C2:	13-tzu-ku	<i>huxlajuun tzuk</i>
D2:	nu-B'AhLAM	<i>Nu(un) B'ahlam</i>
C3:	ye-TE'	<i>ye(h)te'</i>
D3:	B'AJ-CHAN-K'AWIIL-la	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil</i>
E1:	???	<i>???</i>
E2:	ti-9-AJAW	<i>ti b'aluun ajaw</i>
E3:	???	<i>???</i>
E4:	yu[ku]?-CH'EEN?-na?	<i>Yu(h)k(noom) Ch'een?</i>
F1:	?-?-?	<i>???</i>
F2:	B'AJ?-CHAN?-K'AWIIL?-la?	<i>B'aj(laj) Chan K'awiil?</i>
F3:	NAAHB'?-chi[K'IN?]-K'UH- AJAW-MUT-la?	<i>Naahb'nal K'ihnich?, K'uh(ul) Mutul Ajaw</i>
F4:	u-ti-ya-3-TE'-TUUN-ni	<i>uhtiiy Huxte' Tuun</i>

Direct Translation

“it is his image; on 9 Ahau; *B’ajlaj; Chan K’awiil?*; it is the image of; (the) Six ... Lord; 13 Partition; *Nuun B’ahlam*; the ‘captive’ of; *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil; ???*; on 9 Ahau; ???; *Yuhknoom Ch’een?*; ???; *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil?*; *Naahb’nal K’ihnich*, Divine Tikal Lord; it occurred at Calakmul”

Free Translation

“This is the image of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* and his captive, *Nuun B’ahlam* of 13 Partition place, at Calakmul on 9 Ahau. *Yuhknoom Ch’een ... B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, the *Naahb’nal K’ihnich*, Lord of Tikal.”

Discussion: Dos Pilas Stela 9 provides the only portrait of *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* to have survived the centuries. It portrays the 57 year old king on the day of his great triumph at Calakmul, dressed as the Tikal Maize God and standing atop his captive, *Nuun B’ahlam*. He is shown holding a *K’awiil* scepter in his right hand, a shield covering his left. Emblazoned upon his shield is the glyph, *U Naahb’nal K’ihnich*, the royal title of Tikal rulers, thus proclaiming this king of Dos Pilas to be, in fact, the king of Tikal. Only three years earlier he had decisively defeated the lord of Tikal, *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, after which he was probably effective ruler of Tikal itself. Four days before his triumph in Calakmul, though, his young nephew, *Jasaw Chan K’awiil*, had been elevated to the throne of Tikal, in apparent defiance of this quisling. News of this accession must have reached Calakmul at about this time, and the celebration must have been bittersweet for the Snake king and especially *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*.

Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 West Step 2 informs us that on this day, the 9 Ahau Lahuntun Period Ending, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil* danced with *Yuhknoom Ch’een*. This portrait indicates that the king of Dos Pilas danced as the Maize God of the Jaguar Throne; *Yuhknoom Ch’een* undoubtedly danced as the Maize God of the Snake Throne.

On Stela 9, the captive, *Nuun B’ahlam*, is bent over and compressed into the box atop which his captor, *B’ajlaj Chan K’awiil*, is standing. *Nuun B’ahlam* is shown with ropes around his arms and legs and, unusually for a captive, wearing a hat. *Nuun B’ahlam* may be mentioned on vase K4021, and he was most likely an important lieutenant of *Nuun u Jol Chaahk*, taken in the final battle in 679 (Martin and Grube 2000).

A Select Dos Pilas Bibliography

Boot, Erik

2002 The Life and Times of B'alah Chan K'awil of Mutal (Dos Pilas), According to Dos Pilas Hieroglyphic Stairway 2. *Mesoweb*: <www.mesoweb.com/features/boot/DPLHS2.pdf>.

Demarest, Arthur A.

1993 The Violent Saga of a Maya Kingdom. *National Geographic*, Vol. 183, No. 2: 94-111.

Fahsen, Federico

2002 Rescuing the Origins of Dos Pilas Dynasty: A Salvage of Hieroglyphic Stairway #2, Structure L5-49. *FAMSI*: <www.famsi.org/reports/01098/index.html>.

Guenther, Stanley Paul

2002 Under a Falling Star: The Hiatus at Tikal. M.A. Thesis, La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Houston, Stephen D

1993 *Hieroglyphs and History at Dos Pilas: Dynastic Politics of the Classic Maya*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Houston, Stephen D., and Peter Mathews

1985 *The Dynastic Sequence of Dos Pilas, Guatemala*. Pre-Columbian Art Research Institute, Monograph 1. San Francisco.