



Glyph Dwellers

Report 30

October 2015

A New Drawing of the Inscribed Jade Pendant in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

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During a recent visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, we had the opportunity to examine and photograph the so-called Bishop jade pendant (02.18.309). This small object is well known to Mayanists through Spinden's *A Study of Maya Art* (Spinden 1913), though it had been discussed even earlier, in R. H. Bishop's *Investigations and Studies in Jade* (Bishop 1906). In Spinden's work appear line drawings of both the front figure of the jade as well as the inscription, which occupies the reverse (Fig. 1). Although fairly accurate, this drawing lacks certain critical details of epigraphic significance. Later, Hermann Beyer (1945) published a slightly more accurate drawing of the inscription; however, he omitted non-calendrical signs (Fig. 2).



Fig. 195. — Carved jadeite amulet with inscription.



Fig. 1. Drawing of the Metropolitan pendant, after Spinden (1914:Fig. 195).

Fig. 2. Partial drawing of the inscription of the Metropolitan pendant, after Beyer (1945).

Owing to the problems with earlier drawings, it seems useful to publish a more accurate and complete drawing of the inscription of this important object (**Fig. 3**), accompanied by photographs (**Figs. 4 and 5**).

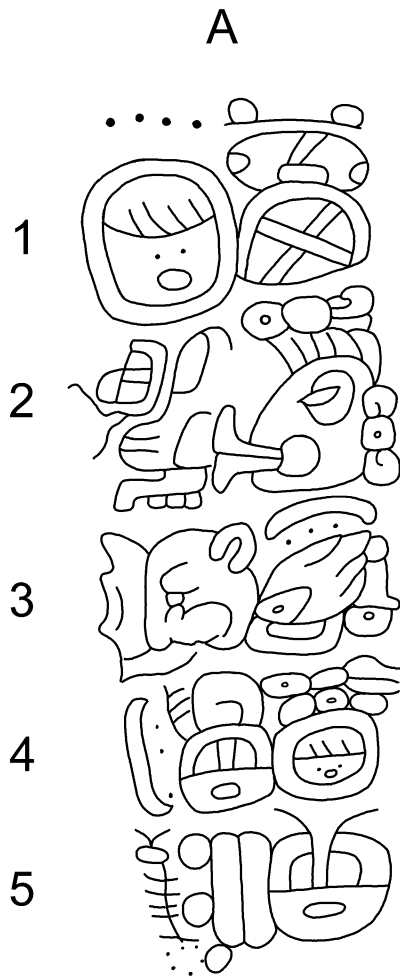


Fig. 3. Metropolitan pendant inscription. Drawing by Matthew Loper.



Figs. 4 and 5. [Head Pendant](#), 6th-9th century. Maya (Mexico or Guatemala). Jade (jadeite); H. 3 3/8 in. (8.6 cm); W. 2 3/16 in. (5.5 cm); L. 11/16 in. (1.8 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of Heber R. Bishop, 1902 (02.18.309). Photographs by Yuriy Polyukhovych.

The epigraphic information from this inscription is summarized in the table below.

A1	4 HIX 7 CHAK-AT	chan hix huk chakat	4 lx 7 Sip
A2	CH'AM/K'AM-wi K'AWIIL SAK ??	ch'amiw K'awiil Sak ??	Sak ?? Baah takes K'awiil
A3	BAAH u-TZUTZ-wa	baah utzutzuw	he completes
A4	u-WINIK?-HAAB ti 2 HIX	uwinihaab? ti cha' hix	his "k'atun" on 2 lx
A5	ta 12 PAX	ta lajchan pax	on 12 Pax

Briefly, the text records two events, associated with two dates. The first date, recorded as the calendar round 4 lx 7 Sip, is an accession of a personage whose name consists of Sak plus a crested long-lipped deity head followed by Baah. The second date (2 lx 12 Pax) is the one-k'atun anniversary of the first date (see Beyer 1945:87-88). Presumably, this object was commissioned to celebrate this important dynastic



event. Because this object includes only calendar round dates, the placement of these events in the long count is problematic. Beyer (1945) used paleography to associate these dates with either 9.10.10.6.14 4 lx 7 Sip (Apr. 19, 643) or 9.13.3.1.14 4 lx 7 Sip (Apr. 6, 695) and 9.11.10.6.14 2 lx 12 Pax (Jan. 4, 663) or 9.14.3.1.14 2 lx 12 Pax (Dec. 23, 714). However, we note that a Late Classic attribution for this object would encompass two additional possibilities for these dates:

4 lx 7 Sip: 9.15.15.14.14 (Mar. 25, 747) or 9.18.8.9.14 (Mar. 12, 799)

2 lx 12 Pax: 9.16.15.14.14 (Dec. 10, 766) or 9.19.8.9.14 (Nov. 27, 818)

Further research may suggest a more secure dating of this object.

Acknowledgment: We would like to thank James Doyle for allowing us to examine and photograph this object. We also thank Thomas Tolles for assistance with image preparation.

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Glyph Dwellers is an occasional publication of the Maya Hieroglyphic Database Project at California State University, Chico, California. Its purpose is to make available recent discoveries about ancient Maya culture, history, iconography, and Mayan historical linguistics deriving from the project.

Funding for the Maya Hieroglyphic Database Project is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, grants #RT21365-92, RT21608-94, PA22844-96, the National Science Foundation, grants #SBR9710961 and IBSS1328928, the Department of Native American Studies, University of California, Davis, and the Department of Art and Art History, California State University, Chico.

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ISSN 1097-3737