

## DUMBARTON OAKS RELIEF PANEL 4\*

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In 1963, Dumbarton Oaks acquired a Maya relief panel from a European dealer in exchange for another object. The relief had been broken in antiquity and then suffered further dissection in modern times. When Dumbarton Oaks received the piece, all recovered fragments had been awkwardly set in cement, within the bands of a steel frame. The stone is a yellow-gray limestone, easily pocked by erosion, and some fragments are consequently very worn. As the piece now stands, it measures 151.5 by 56 cm. It has been designated Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4 (figures 1 and 2).<sup>1</sup>

Figured on the relief is a single Maya ruler. He record his celebration of the lahuntun ending 9.18.10.0.0 (A.D. 800) in the glyphic text at lower left. His bare feet are turned outward; the slight suggestion of a lifted heel is caused only by unevenly matched stone fragments. With his left hand, he holds an abbreviated ceremonial bar to his chest. In his right hand, he holds the strap on the rear of a shield. In this way, we are shown the clenched palm of the ruler, an unusual view with a limited geographical distribution.

Unfortunately, most of the head and headdress of the figure have been lost. The only visible remains of a tiered headdress are the

\* The authors would like to thank Dumbarton Oaks for permission to study and publish this sculpture.

<sup>1</sup> This follows nomenclature established by Coe and Benson, 1966. The relief has been published several times, first, as the cover to D'Arquian and Stolper's 1962 catalogue and again by the same persons in 1964, even though the monument belonged to Dumbarton Oaks by that date. Karl Herbert Mayer includes the piece in his *Maya Monuments: Sculptures of Unknown Provenance in Europe* (1978, p. 35; plate 51). Mayer writes that the monument was "allegedly offered for sale in 1970 in Munich", referring to a monument described by Clemency Coggins as coming from the "Yaxchilan area" (Coggins, 1970, p. 21). Clearly, this Munich piece cannot be Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4.

feathers that drape down across the collar of jade beads. Well-preserved is the series of lower torso garments. Around the figure's waist is worn a loincloth tucked under the other clothes. Below knee level drape two ends of cloth from under his jaguar skirt, which might possibly be continuations of the loincloth seen at waist. One layer of cloth hangs down in a triangle, and along one selvage of this runs a fluid line of cursive, incised glyphs under the scrolls of the belt's apron.<sup>2</sup> The other end extends across the ruler's right leg and is trimmed with a tabbed border. Over these undergarments is worn a jaguar skirt. Wrapping the hips is an exterior belt, a series of crossed bands divided from one another with double bars as if elements in a skyband. The attached elements at the bottom of the apron swirl and extend beyond the body in a manner consistent with the late date.

No single element of this relief panel determines its origin. The text includes no emblem glyph, and the ruler's name is not known on any other monument. Peter Mathews has suggested that the piece comes from Pomona, a badly looted site whose monuments are not well known.<sup>3</sup> The short serpent bar is popular at Naranjo at this late date, while the display of the hand holding the rear of the shield occurs only in the Petexbatun region of the Peten.<sup>4</sup>

Not only must the source of this piece reflect these attributes, but it must also be a site whose pieces were removed to Europe in the late 1950's or early 1960's. Pomoná is such a site.<sup>5</sup> Acquisition dates of Maya sculpture in the Rietberg Museum in Zurich and the similarity to pieces known at Pomoná suggest that monuments from this site reached Europe in the early 1960's. Unlike many Maya sites, such as Palenque, which were no longer erecting Maya monuments by the late date of Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4, Pomoná's chronology extends to the end of the Maya Late Classic.

Heinrich Berlin published a fragment of a stela in 1968 that may have some bearing on our relief.<sup>6</sup> The fragment he published had been

<sup>2</sup> Proskouriakoff calls this the "loincloth apron" (1950, pp. 70-71). Here the apron clearly depends from the belt, rather than from the loincloth.

<sup>3</sup> Mayer, 1978, p. 35.

<sup>4</sup> For Naranjo, see CMHI, II, 1 and 2. Petexbatun monuments showing the shield in this fashion are Aguateca St. 7 (Graham, 1967, pp. 24-27), Dos Pilas St. 25 (Stuart and Stuart, 1978, p. 19), among others. The single instance outside the Petexbatun occurs on Lintel 25, Yaxchilan, where the shield is held in a different context.

<sup>5</sup> Much of Pomona's sculpture had been removed when Lizardi Ramos visited the site in 1959 (1963, p. 187).

<sup>6</sup> Berlin, 1968, pp. 169-171.



**Figure 1.** Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4. Photograph courtesy Dumbarton Oaks.

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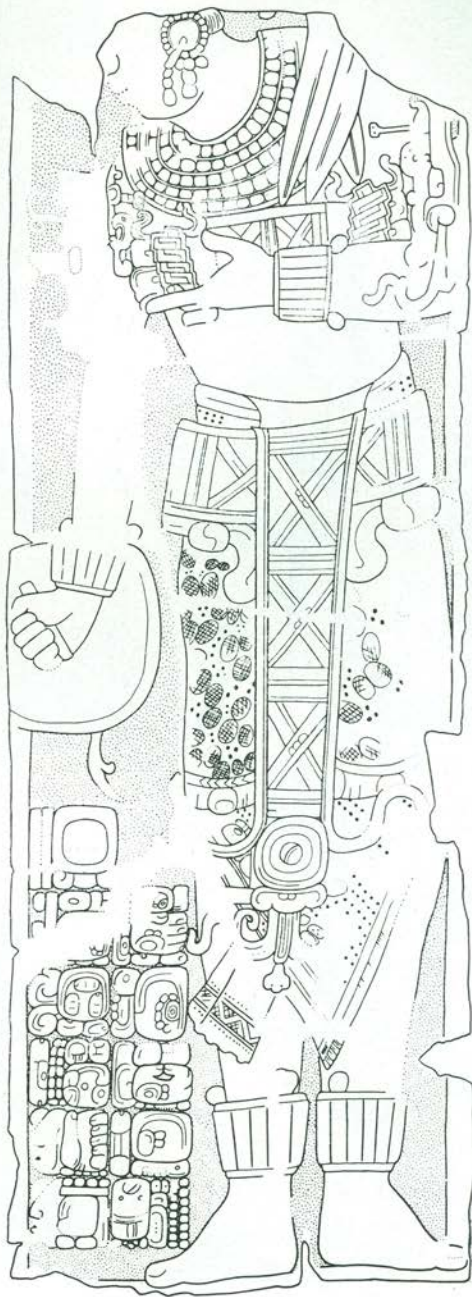


Figure 2. Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4. Drawing by David S. Stuart.

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confiscated by Mexican authorities and was then photographed by the mayor of Palenque. Later the piece was placed in the Regional Museum of Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas, where it was drawn by Eric von Euw (figure 3). This fragment relates more closely to Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4 than any other monument. The individual on the Tuxtla fragment wears a jaguar skirt with a thick exterior belt of crossed bands, as does the Dumbarton Oaks relief figure. The belt of the D. O. relief is attached with two flowing knots that hang below the belt. The belt of the Tuxtla fragment has knot-like loops. The figure on the Tuxtla fragments carries a short ceremonial bar and wears a broad collar of round beads and wristlets of straight beads, like the D. O. relief. Although the Tuxtla fragment is undated, the dynamic posture would be contemporary with the D. O. relief.

Berlin reports the Tuxtla fragment to be from either Chancala or Chinikiha, sites both originally explored by Teobert Maler.<sup>7</sup> Both sites lie between Palenque and Tenosique, as does Pomoná. Although there is no way to verify further the attribution, in all likelihood Dumbarton Oaks Relief Panel 4 comes from this region, and probably from the same site as the Tuxtla fragment.

The hieroglyphic text of the relief consists of eleven glyph blocks in two columns, six blocks in the first and five in the second (figure 2). Most of the glyphs are in a fairly good state of preservation although there are signs of erosion.

The short and simple inscription begins with a Calendar Round date recorded at A1 and A2. The first glyph appears to have a coefficient of 10, but the day sign is too eroded to yield its true value. At A2 the number 8 is attached to what is probably the month *Zac*. It is suggested in Mayer that this date be read 10 Ahau 8 *Zac*, or 9.18.10.0.0, which is confirmed by the glyph at B2 that appears exclusively with *tun* endings.<sup>8</sup>

The text continues at A3, B3, and A4 with the appellations of the protagonist, probably the figure shown on the relief. The first name glyph (A3) is probably the personal name of the ruler and is written as T122 (fire) prefixed to T520 which is in turn suffixed by T130.<sup>9</sup> The name phrase of this ruler continues with the glyph at B3, a common title of rulers found throughout Maya inscriptions. It consists of a form of the male article *ah* (T229) prefixed to *cauac* (T528) which could work as a reference to rain. The glyph at A4 also appears

<sup>7</sup> Berlin, 1968, p. 169. Maler mentions finding a small, eroded stela at Chinikiha (1901, pp. 10-13).

<sup>8</sup> Mayer, 1978, p. 35.

<sup>9</sup> Catalogue numbers refer to Thompson, 1962.



Figure 3. Stela fragment in the Regional Museum of Tuxtla Gutiérrez. Drawing courtesy Eric von Euw, retraced by Mary Ellen Miller.

to be a title of the ruler. This is written with a God C main sign superfixed with T168, or *ahpo*,<sup>10</sup> and prefixed by the so-called “water group”, which is commonly found with the head of God C. This glyph is prefixed by what seems to be T109.

At B4 occurs a glyph known by its context in other inscriptions to designate a relationship between two persons; here it is placed between two name phrases, working in a similar fashion.

At A5-B6 we find a name phrase of a female. The first of these appellations uses T1002 (*na*<sup>11</sup>), the distinguishing characteristic of female names, as a prefix to the well-known “fish-in-hand” (T714). When the fish-in-hand is used verbally it appears to bloodletting.<sup>12</sup> In the example under discussion T714 does not function verbally, but it is not impossible to suppose that it does refer to bloodletting in some way, either as a title or a name.

The glyph at B5 is probably also a name or title of Lady Fish-in-hand. The main sign is *muluc* (T513), prefixed by T110 (“bone”) and suffixed by T117. At position A6 is another name or title of this woman. Although the glyph is damaged, it also seems to be affixed by T1002 and consists of the number nine above an unclear main sign and elements. It is possible that this and the two preceding glyphs formed the personal name. The last glyph of the name phrase appears at B6, completing the text. It appears to be suffixed by T178, T57, and the water group.

A paraphrase of the inscription:

A1-A2 (On)	10 Ahau 8 Zac (9.18.10.0.0)
B2	It was ended the tun
A3	(by) name (of ruler)
B3	title
A4	title
B4	the relation (of)
A5	Lady Fish-in-Hand
B5	name
A6	name or title
B6	title

<sup>10</sup> Lounsbury, 1973.

<sup>11</sup> Lounsbury, 1979.

<sup>12</sup> Proskouriakoff, 1973.

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