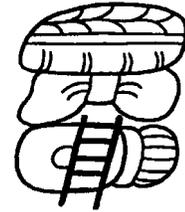

Glyph Dwellers



Report 15

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The 3-11-pih Title in Classic Maya Inscriptions

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This note concerns a title that appears infrequently in the Classic Maya lowlands (Fig. 1). It includes the numerals 3 and 11 preceding either T200 or T1033 and then, in two cases (Figs. 1d, 1e), *ajaw*. Presumably, because it stands alone, the T200/1033 glyph functions in this context as a logograph, possibly having the same reading as the b'ak'tun glyph, **PIH**. Although the structure of the title might suggest a distance number of 3 k'atuns, 11 b'ak'tuns, the glyph has no such function in this context. In fact, it can be shown that the 11-*pih* part of the title denotes a period of only 8660 days.

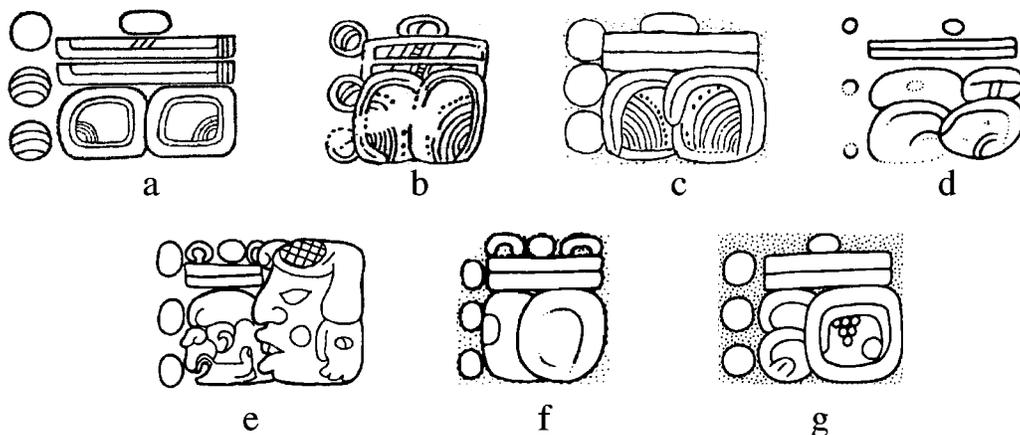


Figure 1. 3-11 *pih* Compounds.

a) CPN Altar M' A1 (Morley 1920:59), b) CPN Papagayo Step E1 (drawing by Linda Schele) c) CPN Stela 49 D1 (drawing by Linda Schele), d) NAR Altar 1 H12 (CMHI 2:103), e) QRG Stela F C13 (author drawing), f) TZM Stela 1 pA2 (CMHI 4:51), g) XCL (CMHI 4:197).

Before presenting evidence for this interpretation of 11-*pih*, it is useful to review the contexts of the 3-11-*pih* title. There are seven known examples of the title, four of which are from the southeastern Maya zone: CPN Altar M' A1, CPN Papagayo Step E1, CPN Stela 49 D1, NAR Altar 1 H12, QRG Stela F C13, TZM Stela 1 pA2, and XCL Miscellaneous 5 A1. Chronologically, the earliest of these are the Copan examples,

which are associated with the mid-fifth century. Next is Naranjo Altar 1, which dates to 9.8.0.0.0. The Late Classic examples are Quirigua Stela F (9.16.10.0.0), Xcalumk'in Miscellaneous 5 (ca. 9.17.0.0.0, see Grube 1994: 322) and Tzum Stela 1. Very little can be said about the title from its contexts, most of which are broken monuments. In fact, the only two that securely include the *ajaw* part of the title are at Naranjo and Quirigua.

Although the significance of the 3-11-*pih* title is not clear from these examples, an inscription on a carved bone from Tikal Burial 116 suggests at least a partial interpretation (Fig. 2). On Tikal MT 26 are listed three dates, each followed by a different compound consisting of an ordinal number followed by "11-*pih*." The first date, 6 Ajaw 8 Mak, is stated as the first "11-*pih*," while the second date, 8 Ajaw 8 Mol, is the second "11-*pih*." Finally, 10 Ajaw 8 Sip is recorded as the third "11-*pih*." As it turns out, these dates occur in a sequence separated by intervals of exactly 1.4.1.0, or 8660 days following the calendar round date 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u. Placing the 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u arbitrarily at 13.0.0.0.0, the calculation proceeds thus:

13.0.0.0.0	(4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u)
<u>+ 1.4.1.0</u>	
13.1.4.1.0	(6 Ajaw 8 Mak)
<u>+ 1.4.1.0</u>	
13.2.8.2.0	(8 Ajaw 8 Mol)
<u>+ 1.4.1.0</u>	
13.3.12.3.0	(10 Ajaw 8 Sip)

The conclusion is that in this context, "11-*pih*" refers to an interval of 1.4.1.0 or 8660 days. This text offers no additional evidence concerning the meaning of this interval, beyond a possible relationship with the cosmological events associated with the calendar round date 4 Ajaw 8 Kumk'u. It is interesting to note, however, that in both cases in which the 3-11-*pih* *ajaw* title is linked with a known ruler, the age indicated by the title (47-71 years old) is consistent with that indicated elsewhere by numbered k'atun titles. Thus, at Quirigua, the ruler K'ak' Tiliw was at least 28 years old when he acceded to the throne in 725. 36 years later, when Stela F was erected, he bears a 3-11-*pih* *ajaw* title (28 + 36 = 64). Likewise, Aj Wosal of Naranjo was about 12 years old upon accession in 546. In 593 (47 years later), he is given the 3-11-*pih* *ajaw* title on Altar 1 (12 + 47 = 59). These examples suggest that as a title, 3-11-*pih* functioned similarly to a numbered k'atun title.

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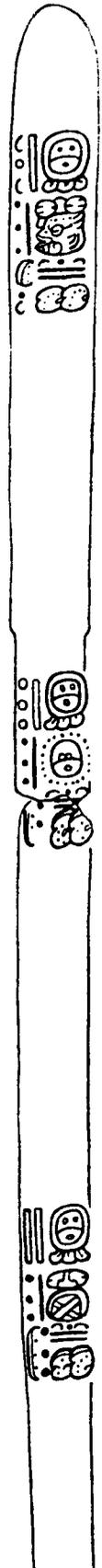


Figure 2. Tikal Miscellaneous Text 26. (Drawing from University of Pennsylvania Tikal Project Field Notes).