

THE DATE OF TONINA F. 35 (CHIAPAS, MEXICO)

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Les dates du monument F.35 de Tonina (Chiapas, Mexique)

Las fechas del monumento F.35 de Tonina (Chiapas, Mexico)

The fragmentary sculpture F.35 of Tonina consists of the feet of a standing dignitary surmounted on a base (Figure 1). The front edge of the base is inscribed with a single row of 6 hieroglyphs, A-F.

Glyph A of the inscription is fairly clearly 6 Etz'nab. We could reasonably expect to find a coefficient and month sign to accompany the 6 Etz'nab, to form a Calendar Round date. A month sign is indeed present: a typical Yaxkin glyph occurs at D. However no bar and/or dot or head variant form of a numeral is present between "6 Etz'nab" and "Yaxkin". Rather, there are two glyphs, B and C: the first is a verb, commonly interpreted as "was completed", or "completion" (cf. Thompson 1950:184-186), while the second glyph is a "hel" ("successor, change") compound (Thompson 1950: 161-162). Although there are possible readings apart from hel for T573, the general meaning of "change, successor" is, I think, accepted by most Mayan epigraphers.

The third sign of the glyph at C is T87, te, which commonly occurs as a prefix to month signs: it is universally accepted in such contexts as a numerical classifier (Thompson 1950:54-56). This strengthens the hypothesis that the Yaxkin glyph at D does indeed function there as a month.

We can thus interpret the first four glyphs of the text of F.35 as follows:

"6 Etz'nab, was completed its change, Yaxkin".

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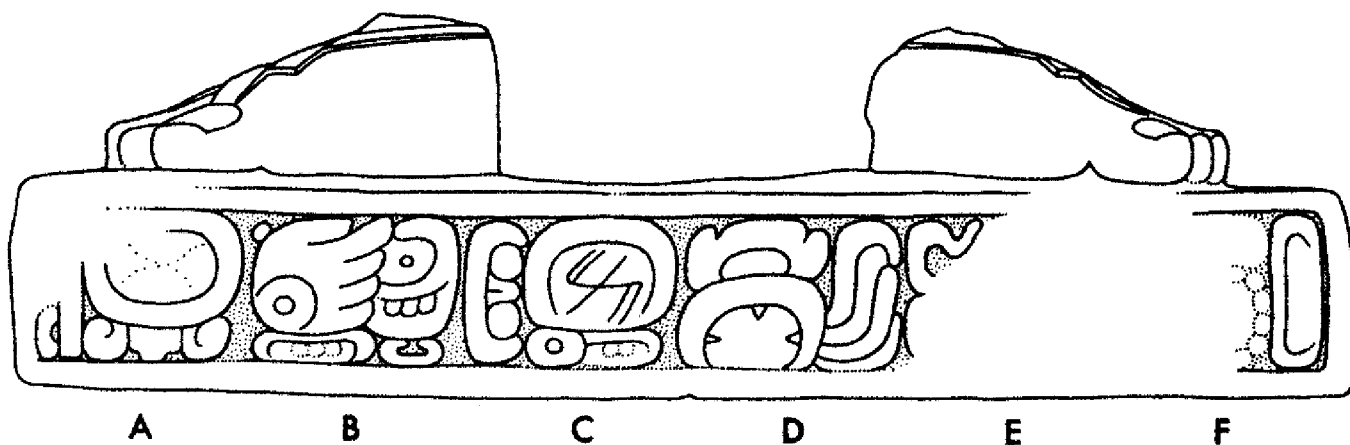


Figure 1.

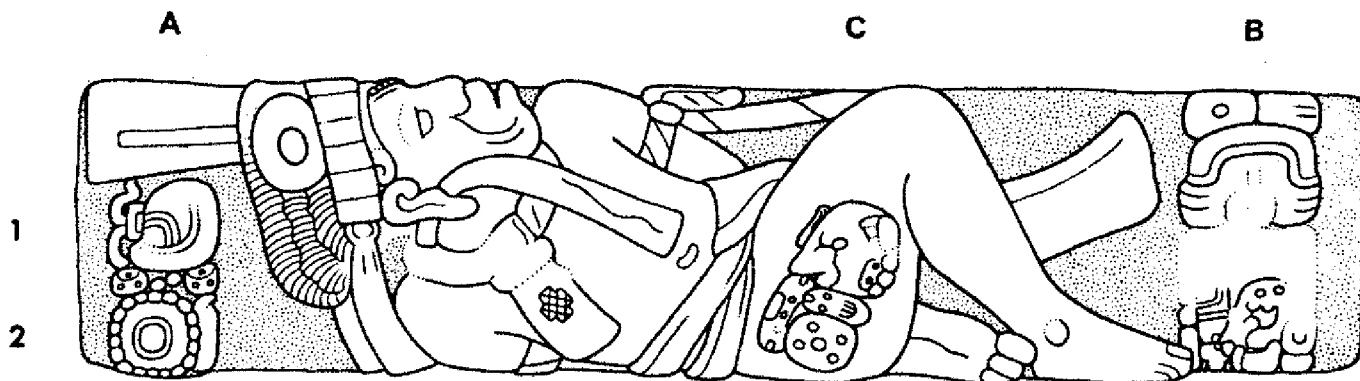
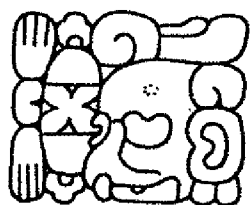


Figure 2.



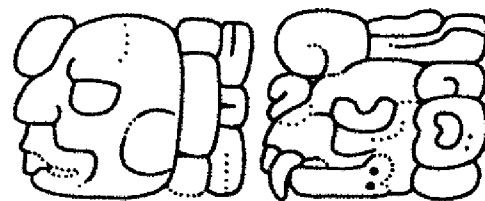
M.27, B2

a



M.134, Ap7

b



M.29, A3-A4

c

Figure 3.

The "change" occurs in the following way. The last day of the preceding month, Xul, is the same as the "seating" of Yaxkin: this succession of months, presumably, is what is referred to by the hel glyph, the "change". Therefore the completion of the change could be expected to be the following day, 1 Yaxkin. In the normal form of the Classic Maya calendar, a month coefficient of 1 is in keeping with the day Etz'nab. This is consistent with the interpretation of these glyphs of Tonina F.35 as "6 Etz'nab, completion of the change of Yaxkin", or more simply, "6 Etz,nab 1 Yaxkin".

There are various Long Count possibilities for this date:

- a) 9.8.3.16.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.
- b) 9.10.16.11.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.
- c) 9.13.9.6.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.
- d) 9.16.2.1.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.
- e) 9.18.14.14.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.
- f) 10.1.7.9.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin.

However, these possibilities can be reduced. It is likely that glyphs E and F of F.35 are the same as glyphs A1-A2 of Tonina M.27 (Figure 2). Since glyph B2 of M.27 is almost certainly the name glyph of Tonina Ruler 3 in my dynastic sequence of the site (see Figure 3 for other examples of Ruler 3's name glyph), presumably M.27, and by extension F.35, date to Ruler 3's reign. From other monuments of Ruler 3, we know that he was born on 9.11.0.3.13 7 Ben 1 Pax and acceded to the throne of Tonina on 9.12.16.3.12 5 Eb 20 Xul/0 Yaxkin. It is most likely that the date of F.35 is 9.13.9.6.18 6 Etz'nab 1 Yaxkin - which is 1 day after the 13 Haab anniversary of Ruler 3's accession.

Captions for Figures:

Figure 1. Tonina F.35 (drawing by Ian Graham).

Figure 2. Tonina M.27 (drawing by Ian Graham).

Figure 3. Examples of Tonina Ruler 3's name Glyph
(drawings by Peter Mathews).

Reference:

THOMPSON, J. Eric S.

1950 *Maya Hieroglyphic Writing. Introduction.* Carnegie
Institution of Washington, Publ. 589. Washington, D.C.