

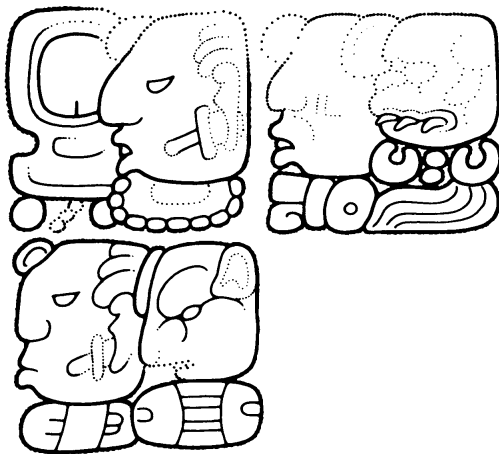


## THE FEMALE TITLE PREFIX<sup>1</sup>

Elisabeth Wagner

Institut für Altamerikanistik und Ethnologie (IAE)  
Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn

It had already been proposed earlier that the female head prefixed to names and titles of women may be read **IXOK** (Nikolai Grube, pers. comm. 1994) instead of **NA**. The reason for that proposal is the spelling of the title with the logograph T1000-1003 with the syllable **ki** as suffix in some inscriptions (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1:** Yaxchilan, Structure 11, Lintel 56, detail (I1-J1), nominal phrase of Lady Sak Bii-yaan (from a drawing by Ian Graham, Graham 1979:121)

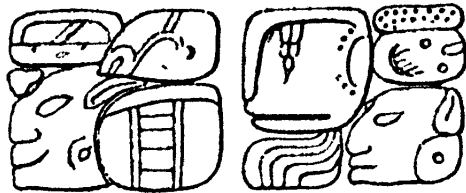
Thus the logograph representing the word for woman bearing the phonetic complement **ki** indicates that this word must end on **-k**. Words for woman are listed in Table 1 below.

It should be noted that if there is a final phonetic complement, there is only the syllable **ki** so far, but no **ko**, **ku**, **ka**, or **ke**. Assuming vowel harmony of the final syllable to the last vowel of the word represented by T1000-1003, a reading as *ixik* should not be excluded – especially if one considers the fact that *ixok/ixuk* (vowels /o/ and /u/) only exists in Highland languages. In contrast the languages of the

<sup>1</sup> Update of an earlier version of this paper titled "Further Evidence for a Reading of the Female Title Prefix" (1994)

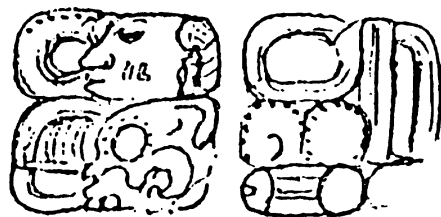
Eastern and Western Cholan branches have *ixik* (vowel /i/). Considering that the language recorded in the hieroglyphic inscriptions is assumed belonging to the Eastern Cholan and Yucatecan branches of the Mayan languages, I prefer the reading *ixik* for the female title prefix.

Further evidence for the presented possible readings can be found in the name of Lady Ton Mul Tuun of Chichen Itza whose name is recorded on the front of the inscribed Lintel in the Akab Dzib (Fig. 2). Here the female head is prefixed by T679, the phonetic sign for the vowel /i/. This is the initial sound of the word *ixik* or at least *ix-* as it is still used as female prefix in modern Yucatec.



**Figure 2:** Chichen Itza, Akab Dzib, inscribed lintel, front, detail (G2-H2), nominal phrase of Lady Ton Mul Tuun (from Maudslay 1989-1902,3: Pl. 19)

The proof that also *ix-* had been used in the inscriptions one can find on Bonampak, Sculptured Stone 4 (Fig. 3). In the name of Lady K'an Tok ? appears a full phonetic spelling T679:782/1048, *i-xi* of the female prefix, yielding *ix-*.



**Figure 3:** Bonampak, Structure 8, Sculptured Stone 4, detail (G2-H2), nominal phrase of Lady K'an Tok ? (from a drawing by Ian Graham, Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.)

Language	= "woman"	Reference
*proto-Mayan	* <i>ix</i>	England 1992: 149
CHUJ	<i>ix</i>	"
Q'ANJOBAL	<i>ix</i>	"
AKATEKO	<i>ix</i>	"
POPTI'	<i>ix</i>	"
IXIL	<i>ix'oq</i>	"
K'ICHE'	<i>ix'oq</i>	"
TZ'UTUJIL	<i>ix'oq</i>	"
KAQCHIQUEL	<i>ix'ok</i>	"
POQOMAM	<i>ix'oq</i>	"
POQOMCHI'	<i>x'oq</i>	"
Q'EKCHI'	<i>ixq</i>	"
MOPAN	<i>ixch'up</i>	"
TOJOLAB'AL	<i>ixuk</i>	Lenkersdorf 1979,1: 133-134
ITZAJ	<i>ix-</i>	Hofling and Tesucún 1997:255
YUKATEK	<i>ko'lel, ix-</i>	England 1992: 149
CHONTAL	<i>ix-</i>	Knowles 1984: 401-402
CH'OL	<i>ixik</i>	Josserand and Hopkins 1988: 7
CH'OLTI'	<i>ixik</i>	Morán 1695
CH'ORTI'	<i>ixik</i>	Pérez Martínez et al. 1996: 76
TZOTZIL	<i>antz</i>	Laughlin 1988,1: 136
TZELTAL	<i>antz</i>	Slocum and Gerdel 1971: 77

**Table 1:** Dictionary entries for "woman" in various Maya languages

## References Cited

England, Nora

1992 *Autonomía de los Idiomas Mayas*. Guatemala.

Graham, Ian

1979 *Corpus of Maya Hieroglyphic Inscriptions, 3 (2): Yaxchilan*. Cambridge, Massachusetts

Hofling, Charles A., and Félix Fernando Tesucún

1997 *Itzaj Maya-Spanish-English Dictionary / Diccionario Itzaj-Español-Ingles*. Salt Lake City.

Josserand, Kathryn, and Nicholas Hopkins

1988 *Chol Dictionary Database*. Privately published.

Knowles, Susan Marie

1984 *A Descriptive Grammar of Chontal Maya (San Carlos Dialect)*. Ph D Dissertation. Tulane University, New Orleans.

Laughlin, Robert M.

1988 *The Great Tzotzil Dictionary of Santo Domingo Zinacantán*. 3 volumes. Washington, D. C.

Lenkersdorf, Carlos

1979 *Diccionario Tojolabal – Espanol*. México, D.F.

Maudslay, Alfred P.

1989-1902 *Biología Centrali Americana. Archaeology*. London (Reprint 1974, New York).

Morán, Francisco

1695 *Arte y Diccionario en la Lengua Cholti*. Edited by Christian Prager. Unpublished manuskript.

Pérez Martínez, Vitalino, Fedrico Garcia, Felipe Martinez, y Jeremias Lopez

1996 *Diccionario del Idioma Ch'orti'*. Guatemala.

Slocum, Marianna C., and Florencia L. Gerdel

1971 *Vocabulario Tzeltal de Bachajon*. Série de Vocabularios Indígenas Mariano Silva y Aceves, 13. México, D.F.

Thompson, John Eric S.

1962 *A Catalog of Maya Hieroglyphs*. Norman.