



# Texas Notes on Precolumbian Art, Writing, and Culture

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## Another Glyph for *Na*

by Bruce Love

There is a hieroglyph that appears in the Paris Codex and seems to work as phonetic *na*. It occurs in three contexts in the Paris, as redundant phonetic indicators to *TUN* and *AAN* and as a mainsign for "house," *NAH*. This glyph does not have a Thompson catalogue number in its affix form and is incorrectly lumped with the *il* affix by Zimmerman.

As phonetic indicator to *TUN* it appears twice on Paris 3 (Fig. 1) on two versions of the *Pauhtun* compound. The affix resembles the *il* affix, but

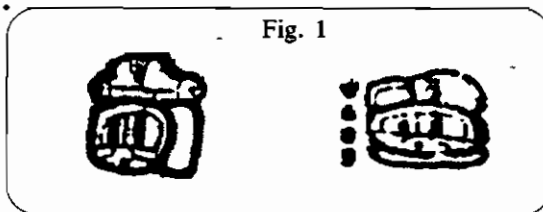


Fig. 1

on this page one can see the *il* affix used elsewhere, and the difference is clear. The proposed *na* affix has its "open" side to the mainsign, while the *il* affix has its "back" to the main sign. The "new" *na* glyph probably appears attached to a *TUN* glyph on Paris 4 as well but it is a bit too erased to be identified with certainty (Fig. 2).

Lest one confuse this proposed glyph to the more familiar *na* glyph, examples of the known *na* glyph can be seen on Paris 8 (Fig. 3) where *na* is used to spell (probably) *KU NA* "temple" and *CAAN-(na)* "sky."

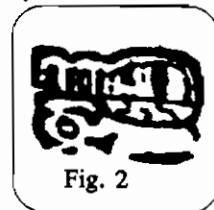


Fig. 2

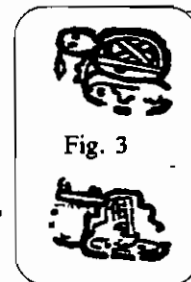


Fig. 3

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The new *na* glyph also appears on the God C pages, Paris 15-18. There it has an optional inner marking which appears on pages 15-17 (Fig. 4) but not on 18 (Fig. 5). The proposed *na* glyph appears in the opening compound of each of the God C *t'ols*, probably spelling (a)-AAN-(na) "there is," (see Fox and Justeson 1984:56-58) giving a reading for the first two compounds of each *t'ol* "there is God C" or *aan ku*.



Fig. 4

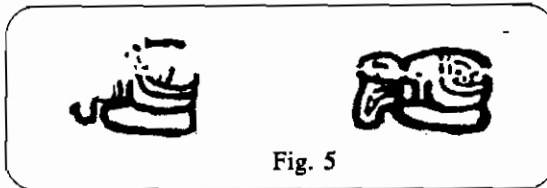


Fig. 5

The same glyph is used in its mainsign form to spell *TI NAH-i* "at his house" (Fig. 6) on Paris 17. The reading would be grammatically correct if the *TI* were a *TU* due to the possessed form of *NAH*. *Tu nahil* in Yucatec is "at his house," but the appearance of the *TI* sign instead of *TU* is simply another example of the defective nature of the script. Both signs are locatives and the meaning was clear to the reader. This reading of *NAH-i* was prompted by Grube's reading of the *emi*



Fig. 6

verb, "he descended" that precedes the *NAH-i* compound. As Grube says "The fourth glyph in this text, introduced by a *ti* preposition, gives us the specific name for the place where God C descends" (Grube and Nahm 1990:21). From the picture, one can see that God C is descending in a house. The whole passage reads *Aan ku, ya emi ti nahi(l), ox wah u* [offerings/sustenance] "There is Ku, -?- he descended to his house, three (many) maize tamales are his offerings/sustenance."

There are many glyphs in the Paris Codex that appear to be idiosyncratic, especially head variant glyphs. To my knowledge, this version of *na* appears nowhere else in the codices. Reading the texts phonetically has been very difficult, but for this one glyph, for which I offer the reading *na*, perhaps a small piece of the puzzle has now been clarified.

### Reference

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