



# Texas Notes on Precolumbian Art, Writing, and Culture

No. 12

September, 1991

## A Substitution Pattern in Curl-Snout's Name

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During summer 1991, Federico Fahsen hosted a mini-conference on Maya glyphs at his farm, Xequistel. At that meeting, Fahsen and Schele were working on the inscription of Tikal Stela 31 when they noticed a substitution pattern in Curl-Snout's name which may clarify some identification problems of the Early Classic period at Tikal.

We began by collecting all of his known name phrases as a basis of comparison. On Stela 31, he is named with two glyphs. The second consists of a knot read by Grube, Houston, Stuart, and others as phonetic *nu*, the T565 shell that Stuart (1988) identified as *yi*, and the curl-snouted head that is the basis of his nickname. This glyph is the front head of the Cosmic Monster and occurs with his name in all but one example, so it can be considered the "lowest common denominator."

In two Stela 31 occurrences (Fig. 1), this Curl-Snout collocation is preceded by another glyph combination consisting of the T670- hand holding an arching element with lines along its lower bor-

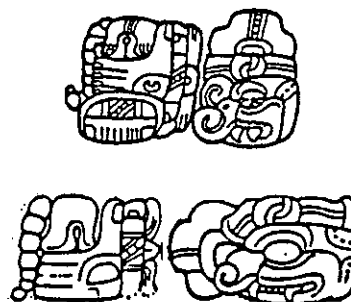
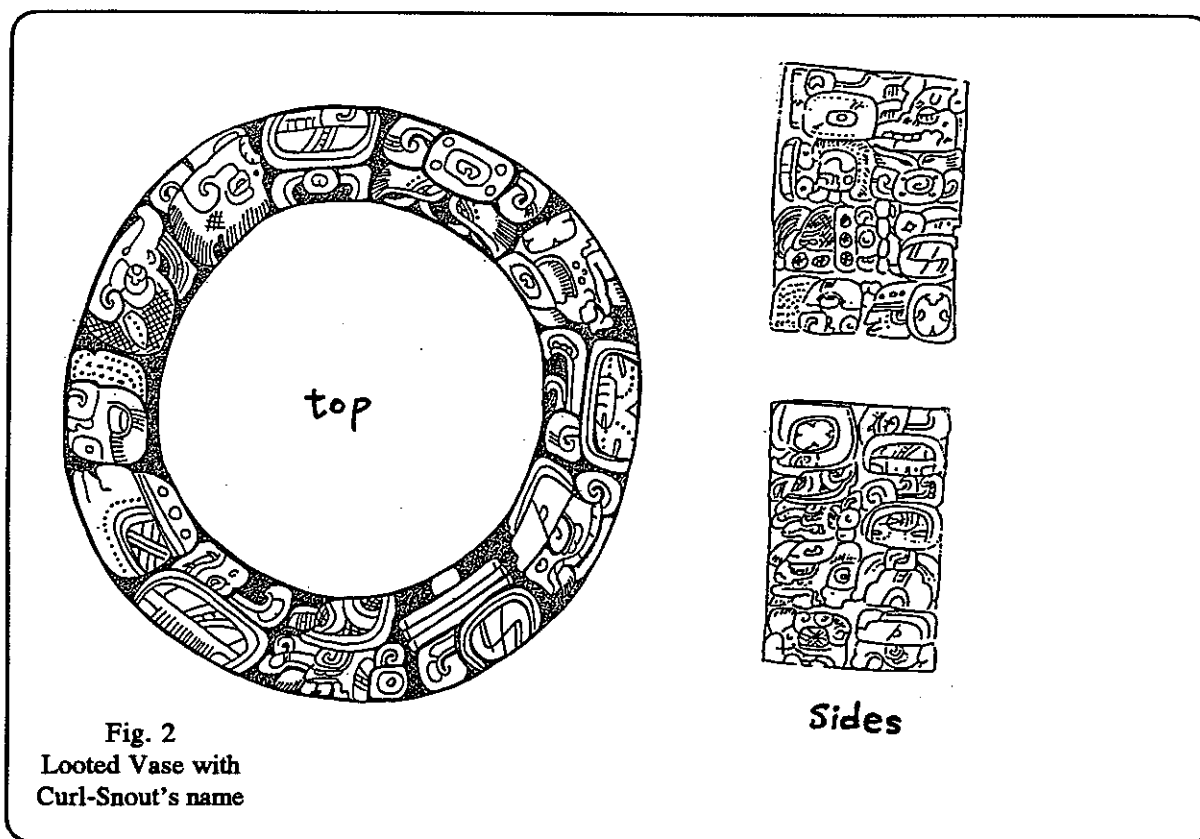


Fig. 1 Curl-Snout on Stela 31

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der; a sky sign; and the *Mah K'ina* title. Although this glyph has played a large role in past analyses, Schele noticed an important detail when she checked the University of Pennsylvania drawings against the original monuments in 1990. She discovered that the version of this glyph on the rear of Stela 31 has the sky sign infixed into the hand so that it can be identified as the exact equivalent of the version on the side.

With this new information, Schele and Fahsen examined the comparative chart they made to find possible substitutions of this hand-sky mah k'ina combination. The first possibility we found was on the "Hombre de Tikal," where Curl-Snout's name includes the T670-hand holding a torch-like device. It is followed by *sky* and a *k'in-n(i)* sign, which we take to be functionally equivalent to the *mah k'ina* title because of the substitution of *mah k'ina* and *k'inich* first identified by Mathews (1978).<sup>1</sup> We suggest this is similar. The T670 compound and the sky sign should then be

equivalent to the T670-sky combinations on Stela 31.

Curl-Snout's name also occurs also on a looted vase, the drawings of which were given to us at the 1990 Texas Workshop on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing. This version includes two title sequences and his personal name (Fig. 2), which ends, oddly enough, with a *te* head variant. The second of the title sequences is the *nab mah k'ina* ("Waterlily or Ocean Lord") epithet also occurring in his name on Tikal Stela 4.

The name phrase on the vase includes one more title. Both on the vase sides and lid, it consists of the birth frog, T181 *ha*, the sky sign, and finally the God K head. Grube (in a letter circulated in 1989) first demonstrated that the birth frog belongs to the substitution set for the syllable *hu*. Schele (1991) and others have tested this suggestion and found it very productive. Stuart (1988) has shown that the God K head reads *k'awil*, so the full title read *huh(a) kan k'awil*.

1. Mathews first saw the substitution, but David Stuart (personal communication, 1985) first realized that Peter's "west" glyph reads *k'inich*.

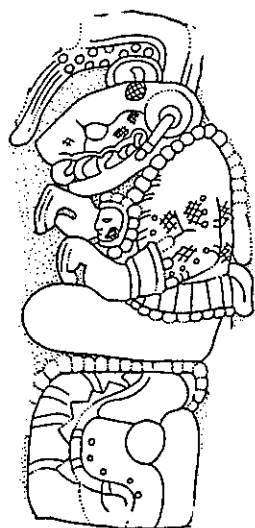


Fig. 3 Copán Altar T, *huh*, "iguana"

*Huh* is the word for iguana. The use of the birth frog *hu* with "iguana" is repeated on the side of Altar T at Copán (Fig. 3). Richard Johnson, a now-deceased herpetologist, long ago noted that the birth "frog" is here depicted in full-figure form with belly plates, which frogs do not have. As early as 1972, he suggested to Schele that the birth "frog" was in fact a birth iguana. The *hu* phonetic value may derive from "iguana." In any case, the *Huh Kan Mah K'ina* name recurs on Stela 31 at F23, but now we suggest it can be identified not as another unknown actor in Tikal's early history, but rather as Curl-Snout, here named by this title.

*K'awil* is recorded as "sustenance" in Yukatek, but following a hint by Grube (personal communication, 1990), Schele has found entries for *cauil* in sixteenth century Poqom as "statue" and "god." In Kaqchikel and K'iche', the cognate, *q'abwil*, has the same meanings. She suggests that *k'awil* in the Classic period was not only "sustenance," but also the word for "statue" and for the spirit, god, or *nawal* that inhabited the statue, just as it is both the saint and the stature of the saint in modern Kaqchikel. In Classic period

names, *k'awil* implies that the person named is the embodiment of a particular attribute or god, just as an ancient statue or modern saint statue embodies the supernatural. This collocation may then mean "iguana sky embodiment," an appropriate title for a man whose name includes the front head of the Cosmic Monster. Although *mah k'ina* is not phonetically equivalent, it shares the same functional domain in designating Curl-Snout an "iguana sky lord."

Furthermore, we also suggest that the *Huh Kan Mah K'ina* ("Iguana Sky Lord") is also the reading of the T670 collocation. How would this work? First of all, we note that the T670-hand already has two distinct values accepted by most epigraphers. In the "child of mother" parentage-statement it is *al* (Stuart 1989). And it reads *ch'am* in the context of displaying scepters and other objects (Schele 1989; Stuart personal communication, 1990; Grube personal communication, 1991). The difference is signalled partially by context, partially by phonetic complementation, and mostly by the sign placed inside the hand.<sup>2</sup> *Ch'am* always has an *ahaw* sign or the glyph for the object "grasped" by the actor. *Al* has one of a closed set of signs, including a *mu* scroll, *ah*, *ch'ul na*, T534 *la*, and a few others. We suggest that the arching element is the signal to read this version of T670 as *hu*.

There is some evidence to support the *hu* proposal. An Early Classic stuccoed cylindrical tripod from Waxaktun has four name phrases, each following the *u bah* verb. One of these phrases includes T228 *a* followed by the same arching sign (Fig. 4), giving *a-h(u)* as a spelling of *ah*, "he of." We suggest that this parallels a phonetic spelling of *ah* as *a-h(e)* on the sarcophagus lid at Palenque. Another possible context is the *yet* glyph prominent at Palenque and Yaxchilan. Many examples there have the *he* suffix attached to yield *yete*h as the inflected



Fig. 4

2. Similar usage of main signs has been demonstrated for the *ba*, *ma*, *nab*, *t'u* variants of the "Imix" glyph and the *mu*, *bu* head variants.

form. We suggest that our *hu*, in its Late Classic form, appears in this glyph to give a *yeteh(u)* spelling.

The values we propose here must be confirmed by other researchers who apply them to a variety of contexts, but we feel that the evidence is strong enough to treat the different versions of Curl-Snout's name as phonetic variants.

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