

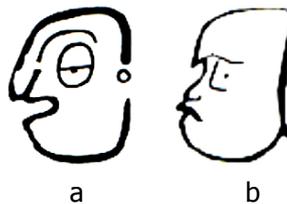


## A NEW SIGN WITH PHONETIC /NO/ READING?

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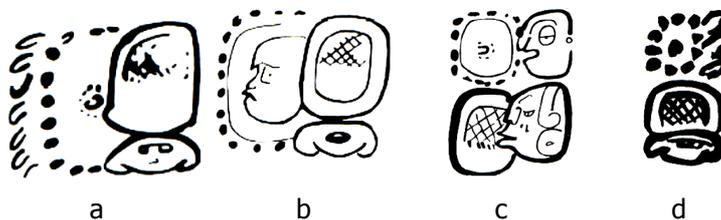
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There is a sign that looks like a human head in profile that may be another syllabogram with the reading /no/, seen in figure 1.



**Figure 1:** a) Naj Tunich Drawing 25:A4. b) Naj Tunich Drawing 66:D1. Drawings by Barbara MacLeod in Stone (1995:168).

One of the instances of this face show it as an unusual face (Figure 1b), hence for now I'll label this sign FACE. It appears in substitution for T134/136 [595] /no/ at Naj Tunich, as seen in figure 2.

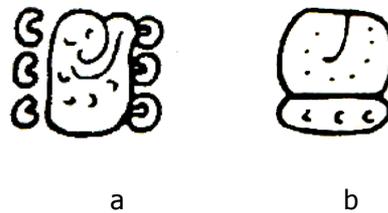


**Figure 2:** a) Drawing 28:A4. b) Drawing 66:D1. c) Drawing 25:A4. d) Drawing 23:A4. Drawings by Barbara MacLeod in Stone (1995:166, 168).

Naj Tunich Drawing 28:A4 shows the spelling of a proper name as **no[mo]-pa-na** (Figure 2a), with the typical syllabogram T134/136 [595] **no**, which was first proposed by David Stuart, according to Prager (2002:60). On Drawing 66 at D1 one sees **mo[FACE]-pa-na** (Figure 2b). On Drawing 25:A4 one sees **mo-FACE-pa-na** (Figure 2c), while on Drawing 23 at A4 one sees **mo-no-pa-na** (Figure 2c). The spellings appear in a nearly identical context, as evident from MacLeod and Stone's

structural analysis (in Stone 1993:165): after the verbs **y(i)-(Y)IL-ji** (Drawing 28 at A3), **(Y)IL-ja** (Drawing 25 at A3), or **(Y)IL-l(i)-a-j(a)** (Drawing 66 at B1), and before the phrase **ma-na-ma CHAN a-ku ?-AJAW**.

At this time I do not know of other occurrences of this FACE sign, but its clear contexts at Naj Tunich strongly support a **no** reading given its substitution for T134/136[595] **no** in a word-initial context. Nevertheless, there is tentative but interrelated iconographic and epigraphic evidence to support this identification. Indeed, Prager (2002:59) has suggested that the sequence T134[210a], which is associated with imagery of dwarfs, is read **no-NOL** (Figure 3a). He supports this hypothesis with the sequence **NOL-le** (Figure 3b), based on the possible match between this term and the colonial Tzeltal and Tzotzil terms *nolnol* and *nolnol uinic* 'enano (dwarf)' (Ara 1986:348), and *nopnol* 'enano (dwarf)' (Ruz 1989:195), respectively. Thus, he argues that T210a is logographic **NOL** 'dwarf'.



**Figure 3:** a) Yaxchilan Hieroglyphic Staircase 2, Step 7. b) Vase in Coe (1973:58). Drawings by Stephen Houston as found in Prager (2002:Figure 26).

It is possible that the FACE sign discussed here, especially as seen in the second instance above (Figure 1b), could be a depiction of a dwarf's face, and therefore, the sign might be **DWARF.FACE** rather than just **FACE**. If so, it might even have a logographic reading **NOL**, or at least it may have been derived acrophonically from a source word *nol* 'dwarf', although for now this is of course highly speculative. However, should this external sources of evidence be proven incorrect, the identity between the **FACE** glyph and T134/136 [595] **no** would not be affected.

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