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Suggested Decipherrnent of the Alabama Hills Solar Site Inscriptions: An Interim Report

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Adjacent inscriptions 10' apart and 700' above the valley floor appear to contain the Chinese yin yang symbol, along with signs similar to Egyptian hieroglyphics. A preliminary study suggested the signs marked a summer solstice site.This prompted a test of the hypothesis. Allowing for some precession, a direct observation was made.As predicted, the sun was seen to rise over an identifiable mountain peak. Further study of the glyphs disclosed that all of them were derived from Egyptian determinatives and where phonetic values could be assigned, yielded appropriate Egyptian words;however the yin yang symbol was used so aptly as a solstice indicator, it may yet be possible to establish a Chinese connection. This may help to date these inscriptions if it can be shown that the yin yang and yang yin were ever used as Chinese script characters to indicate the solstices.

INTRODUCTION

In 1982, while making an ecological study of desert shrubs in Inyo County California, Vincent Yoder found two inscriptions ten feet apart on a ridge, seven hundred feet above the valley floor. He made careful drawings and measurements of the glyphs, and reported his find to Burrell Dawson. Subsequently, Vincent and Alice Yoder and Burrell and Margaret Dawson returned to the site to study and photograph the inscriptions. Burrell said that the last pitch up to the site was so steep he could get there only by crawling on his hands and knees.

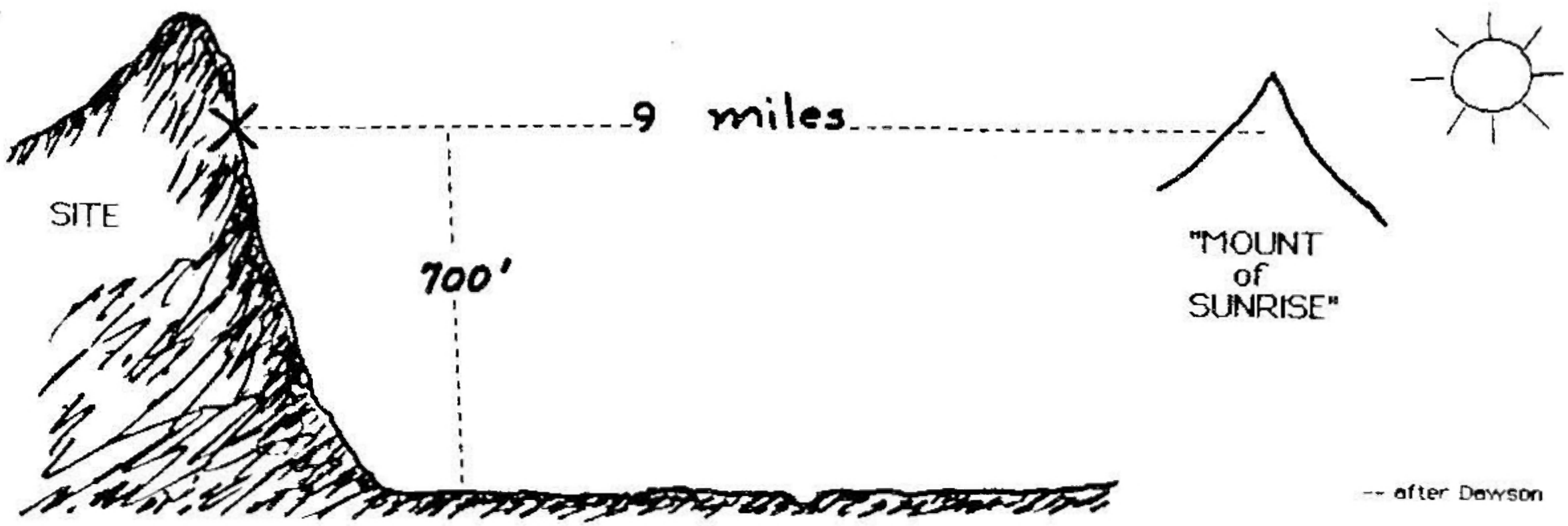
The individual glyphs are quite small, ranging in size from 1 1/2" to 4 1/2". They were neatly and artistically incised into the live, hard granite with a metal tool. The inscriptions appear to be very old; no difference in the depth of the patination, or desert varnish, on the glyphs and the surrounding granite could be detected. Geologist Allan Gillespie thinks the glyphs were placed there at least a thousand years ago.

When the inscriptions were first found it was thought that some of the glyphs appeared older than others, but that opinion was later revised. However, it was still in effect when Burrell Dawson presented the find at the Western Epigraphic Society meeting held in Salt Lake City in October, 1983. At that meeting it was seriously suggested that the inscriptions were a product of the Haight-Asbury culture of the '60's. As a result of the remark, and the mere presence of the yin yang symbols among the Egyptian-like glyphs, most members were inclined to regard Yoder's find as a meaningless joke.

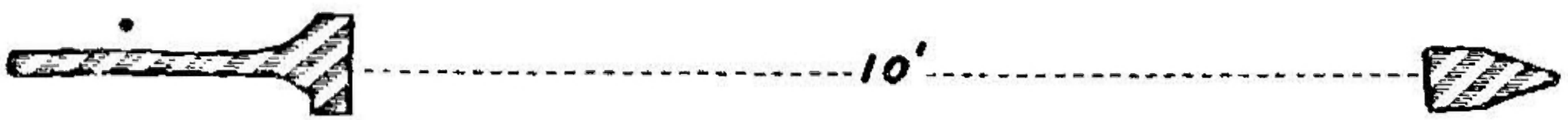
However, for Dawson it simply raised more questions. If, indeed, some wag had copied random signs from an Egyptian hieroglyphic dictionary, why were they not in the 'traditional' Palace Script? Why were some of them turned sideways or up-side down? He sent these questions, along with a skimpy site description (for protection of the glyphs from vandals), Yoder's drawings, and a request for someone to make a serious attempt at decipherment, to the editor of the WES Newsletter, for pub-lication in the next issue.

The information was published in January, 1984, headlined WHATSIT#6. The only solid fact given was that the inscription (sic) was somewhere in Inyo County, California, 700' above the valley floor. It was at the WES meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in October of that year, when I learned that I was act-ually working on two adjacent inscriptions. (Figure 1.) However, this posed no real problem, because the message I was getting fell naturally into two parts: one describing celestial events at the time of the summer solstice; the other holding explanatory notes and supplemental data.

Late in May, 1984, I wrote to Dawson, giving him the gist of what I had unraveled and suggesting it would help to confirm my decipherment if he could get someone up to the site to ob-serve the summer solstice. He,knowing Gillespie's evaluation of the age of the glyphs, allowed for some precession. Before day break on June 20, 1984 the Dawsons and Vincent Yoder returned to the site, to observe and photograph the sun rise over the tip of a triangular, identifiable mountain some nine miles distant. It was then that they re-examined the glyphs and decided they had all been made at the same time.



SOLSTICE SITE — INYO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA



Relative size and placement of glyphs.

Figure 1

DECIPHERMENT

I think that most of Dawson's questions can be answered by keeping in mind that the scribe was working in an extremely difficult medium--live, hard granite--which forced him to make every stroke count and in several places use original, imaginative ways to make one line do the work of two. Another thing to keep in mind: when working in such a hard medium it is easier to cut a straight line than a curved one; therefore, when a curved line is used, one may be sure it is there for a purpose. This is particuarly true when curved lines are substituted for what would be straight lines if the glyph were carved in Palace Script.

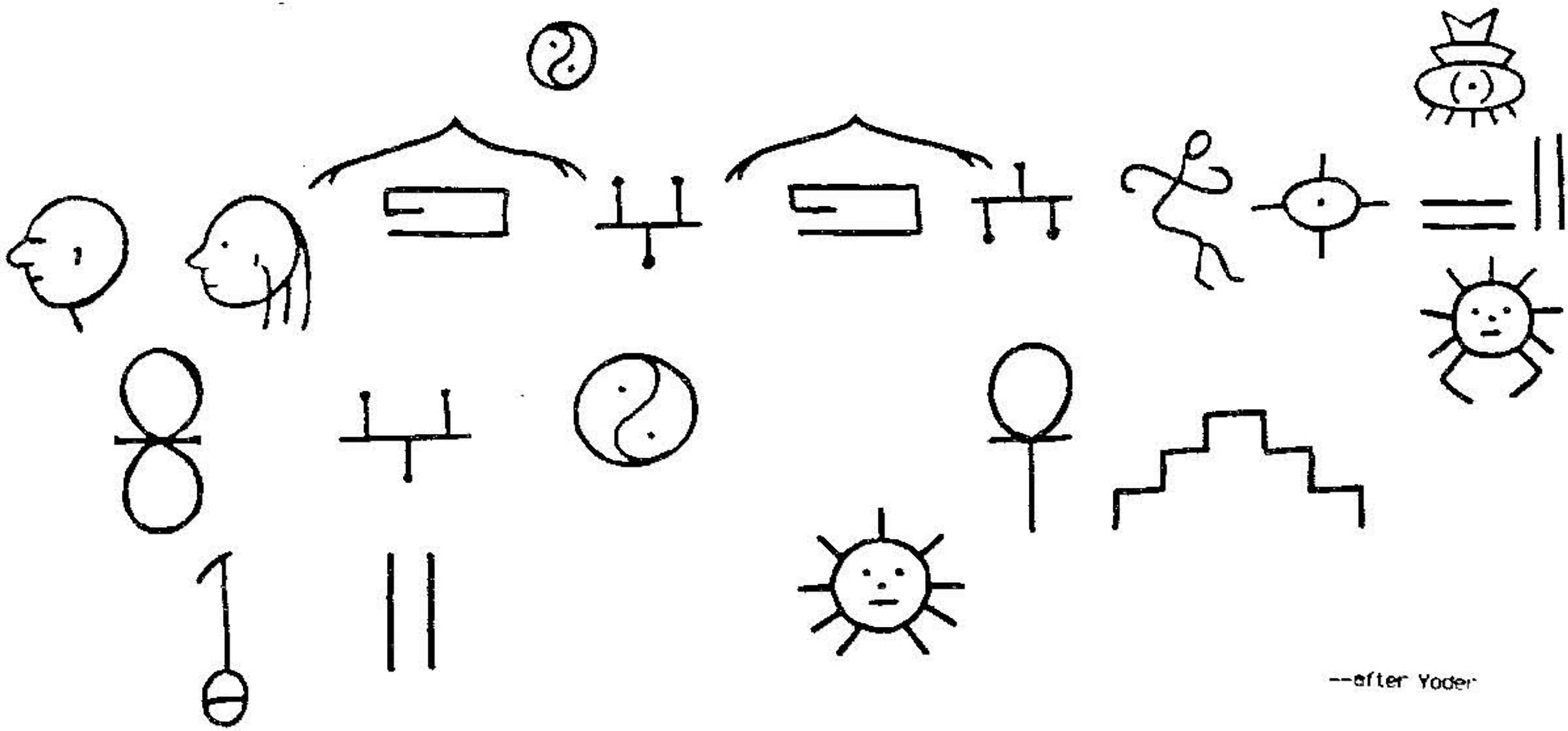
While Yoder took pains to draw and measure the glyphs accurately, from the way they were shown in the WES Newsletter (Figure 2), it is not readily seen that they were not drawn to the same scale in relation to one another.The top line, which contains most of the information, is about 30" long and is read from right to left. The rest of the glyphs cover an area a little over a foot long, contain explanatory notes and supplemental information, and tend to be read from left to right. Note that in Figure 1, where their relative size and position are shown, the inscriptions seem to bracket the 10' space, suggesting that one should stand between them to view the solstice sunrise.

Perhaps it was fortunate that Yoder's drawings were published in such a way as to appear to be one inscription. (Figure 2.) The juxtaposition of the sun signs made it possible to recognize 'the Sun in Cancer,' and to infer that one set of parallel lines above it must represent Gemini, the twins. Note that both sun signs have the same number of rays,but the sign on the far right has two lower rays bent, suggesting the claws of a crab. It was from this point that the decipherment began to unwind.

But the very fact that the scribe made reference to Cancer and Gemini is itself curious. This, along with the yin yang, may have subconsiously contributed to others' feeling that these inscriptions were spurious. At the least, it shows that the scribe was conversant with Graeco-Roman nomenclature of the skies, which might be expected from Ptolemaic times onward.

It would be consistent, too, with inscriptions left by the Rata-Maui expedition. This is not to suggest that these present inscriptions are a product of that expedition; rather, that they may be a legacy from it. There is a 'Maui-esque' feel to them.

The Invocation to Tawera that Maui left blazoned upon the schoolroom wall at McClurer Bay is a case in point. There he demonstrated he would not hesitate to mix unrelated scripts, if it suited his purpose.



--after Yoder

Figure 2

We do know that Maui's School of Astronomy and Celestial Navigation was in existence for at least twelve years. We also know that Maui--and presumably, some of his students--reached America. But we do not know how many students Maui had, nor how many generations of their descendants were trained in the Mauian tradition, nor how long the scripts they knew remained in use here. Nevertheless, these Alabama Hills inscriptions seem to echo Maui's style.

Maui's willingness to use symbols from other scripts when they best expressed the concept he was trying to convey may be behind our scribe's use of "foreign" names for the constellations, and may also account for the yin yang. I cannot imagine Maui or one of his students being in an area long before wanting to compare notes with the local astronomers. It seems to me that any one of them, having come upon the concept of yin & yang, would immediately see how it could be applied to the solstices. But in this case the scribe felt obliged to explain in his supplementary notes, how the symbol was used in the main inscription. This seems to argue that most of his 'readers' would not be familiar with the symbol. He did not need to explain the 'new' names for the constellations because by then they were in common use.

In the days when astronomy and astrology were one and the same, the passage of the sun from Gemini into Cancer heralded the approach of the summer solstice. For many peoples it was a time of apprehension and propitiation, for at that time the sun would begin to 'turn away from the people.' However, for the ancient Egyptians it signaled a time of rejoicing, because very near that time,with the heliacle rising of Sirius,would come the Mile flood and the beginning of their New Year.

This duality, this opposite reaction to the same celestial event,was demonstrated by the customs and ceremonies in practice among the various Amerindian tribes. So, too, was duality evident in the Egyptian language. As will be shown later in this paper,the Egyptians frequently employed words which could have exactly opposite meanings. This suggests a similarity between Egyptian and Oriental thought,concrete evidence of which may be before us, in the inscriptions under consideration.

The yin yang/yang yin is a symbol of opposites that are part of the whole--light and dark, day and night, sun and moon, male and female, cold and warmth, strength and weakness. Wherever opposites occur the concept can apply. It is so much a part of Chinese culture that when I asked Dr. C. S. Kiang, Professor and Director of the School of Geophysical Sciences at Georgia Tech, if the yin yang was ever used as a script character, to indicate the solstices his immediate reply was, "Yes." However, despite direct consultation with members of the Chinese Academy of Science, he was unable to confirm this for me.

In a 1985 article for BAR Howard W. Goodkind touched upon the similarities between Oriental and Amerindian thinking. He wrote: "An overarching theme in Mesoamerican religions is the cosmic principle of dualism: the unity of opposites. Ometeotl, the god who ruled the Aztec heaven, was bisexual, as was the "Lord and Lady of the Dead," a single deity who reigned in the underworld. Hot and cold, fire and water, life and death, light and dark -- these opposing concepts intrigued the Aztec mind as much as the concept of yin and yang permeates Oriental thinking. . . ."

Among the Plains Amerindians it was important to know when the summer solstice occurred, because preparations for the Sun Dance had to begin on that day. However, the ceremony itself usually was postponed until the time of the full moon,"when . . . it is as if the eternal light of the Great Spirit were upon the whole world."

Earlier I mentioned the Egyptian propensity for having opposite meanings for the same or similar words. Whenever I came across a word with reference to the jackal-headed stakes in the Tuat, to which the damned are tied, I was again reminded of the Sun Dance. In this bloody ritual, so vividly portrayed and described by George Catlin(among others),the participants submit themselves to various tortures. Yet even here the concept of yin and yang is manifest. A painting made about 1930 by Short Bull, Chieftain of the Oglala Sioux, depicts the interior of the sacred lodge. In the middle of the lodge is a living tree which represents the Great Spirit, "who is the center of everything. Two thongs fastened to this central tree are really one thong passed around it; *for all things which in appearance are two are in reality one.* They are tied to skewers through the chest of the [participant]. . . ." (italics mine..)*

A ceremony more in accord with Egyptian practice was held annually by the agricultural peoples of the Southeast. Each tribe had its own version of the Busk, or Green Corn Dance. To this day the Yuchis hold their sun dance near the summer solstice. It is a First Fruits festival, so similar in form to the Festival of the Booths described in Leviticus that a number of authorities think it is a survival of precolumbian Hebrew contact.

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* The quoted words are those of Black Elk, the venerable Oglala Holy Man and Keeper of the Sacred Pipe.

The Alabama Hills inscriptions are, I think, an example of a script in transition. Otherexamples have been reported from the Bay area and as far East as Nevada and Idaho, but most of them seem to be of a later date, and their relationships to Egyptian hieroglyphics are more difficult to discern.

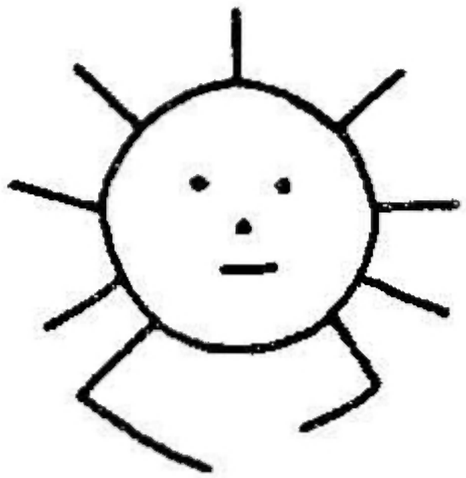
Compound glyphs of one kind or another are rife in the Alabama Hills inscriptions: the scribe's solution to the problems he encountered in carving the glyphs in granite. Figure 3 shows the first glyph I recognized--the Sun in Cancer. Beside it the component parts are shown. Note that in the representation of the crab the bare minimum of lines is used to evoke a recognizable essence of "crabbiness."In the face of the sun the dot representing the nose is placed in the exact center of the circle. If the other features are ignored, the symbol for the Sun god remains.

Below are some more conventional versions of the symbol for Cancer. In the upper right corner is a later version, I believe, of the Sun in Cancer. It may have evolved into a simple solstice indicator because, with the passage of time, the sun would not be in Cancer at the time of the solstice.

It was March or April, 1986, before I remembered that Budge gives phonetic value to some of the determinatives listed in the forepart of his Egyptian Hieroglyphic Dictionary. When I started searching for and combining ones applicable to the Alabama Hills inscriptions long lists of pertinent Egyptian words tumbled out.

Two of the phonetic values are shown in Figure 4 in conjunction with the two sets of parallel lines. The upright pair means *two, twins, Gemini.* The horizontal pair is associated with Gemini, and at the same time is part of a compound glyph. The scribe needed to use the word PER, meaning *leave, pass by, transit,* but none of the more than twenty PER words with a departure connotation use the horizontal lines, which he also needed for a dawn word series. However, PER, meaning *subtract,* and PER, *to rise (of the sun),* both use the symbol.

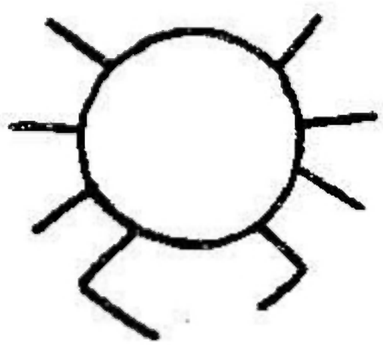
Figure 5 shows all the "supplementary notes and explanatory data," which will be dealt with in detail later. They are shown together now in order to focus attention on their layout and relationship to one another.Note how often the scribe suggests the idea of two or half. The ankh and the figure eight glyph are in different groups, yet they are on the same line, and each glyph is three inches long. Each glyph has a straight line at midpoint, which, combined with the loops of the figures strongly suggests the glyph meaning, *divide, cut in two.* The yin yang is certainly divided equally. Below it is the glyph for *two.* Beside that glyph, on the left, is a staff with an ovoid shape at the bottom. The ovoid is also divided in half.



"THE SUN IN CANCER"

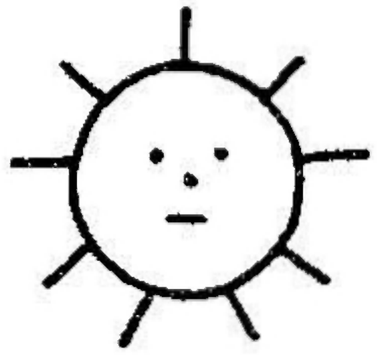
=

COMPOUND GLYPH



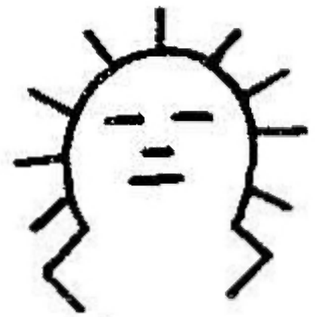
CRAB

+

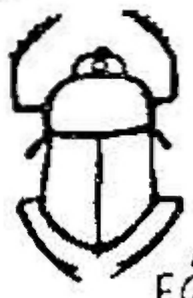


SUN

LATER FORM?



ALAMEDA & SOLEDAD CALIFORNIA

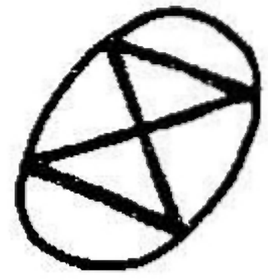


COMPARISON FORMS

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN

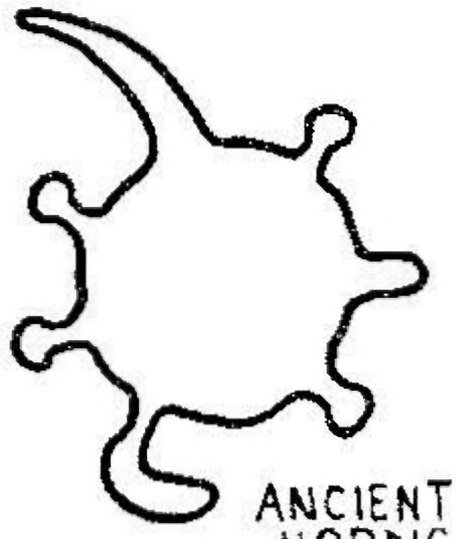
JAVA & NEW GUINEA

ca. 250 B.C.

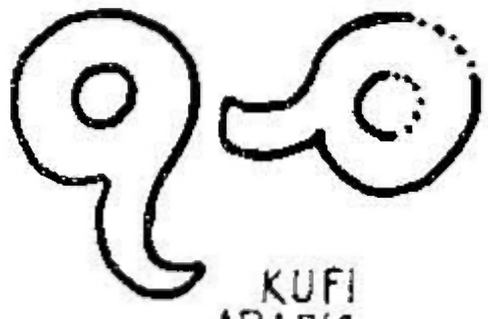


ORA ISLAND IRIAN

NEW ZEALAND



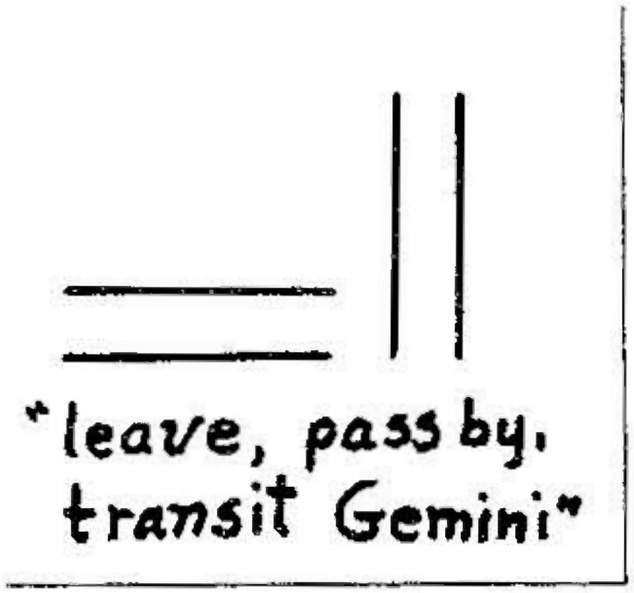
ANCIENT NORDIC (ca. 1700 B.C.) ONTARIO, CANADA

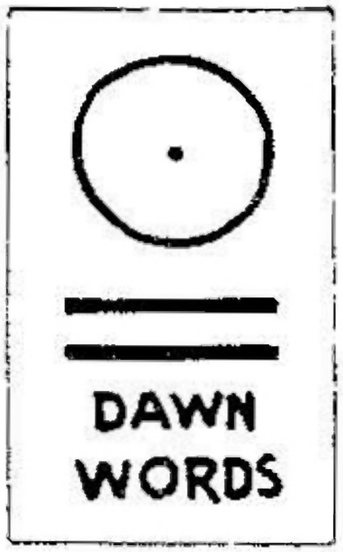


KUFI ARABIC LITTLE LAKE, CALIFORNIA

—after Fell, Wooden-Iron, et al

Figure 3





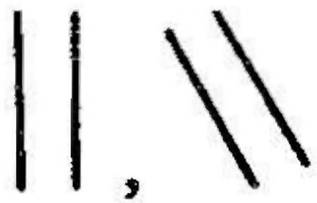
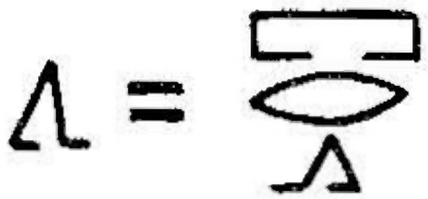
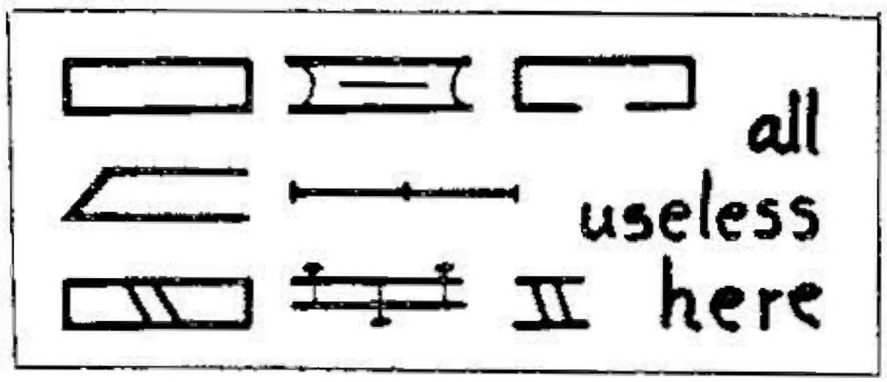
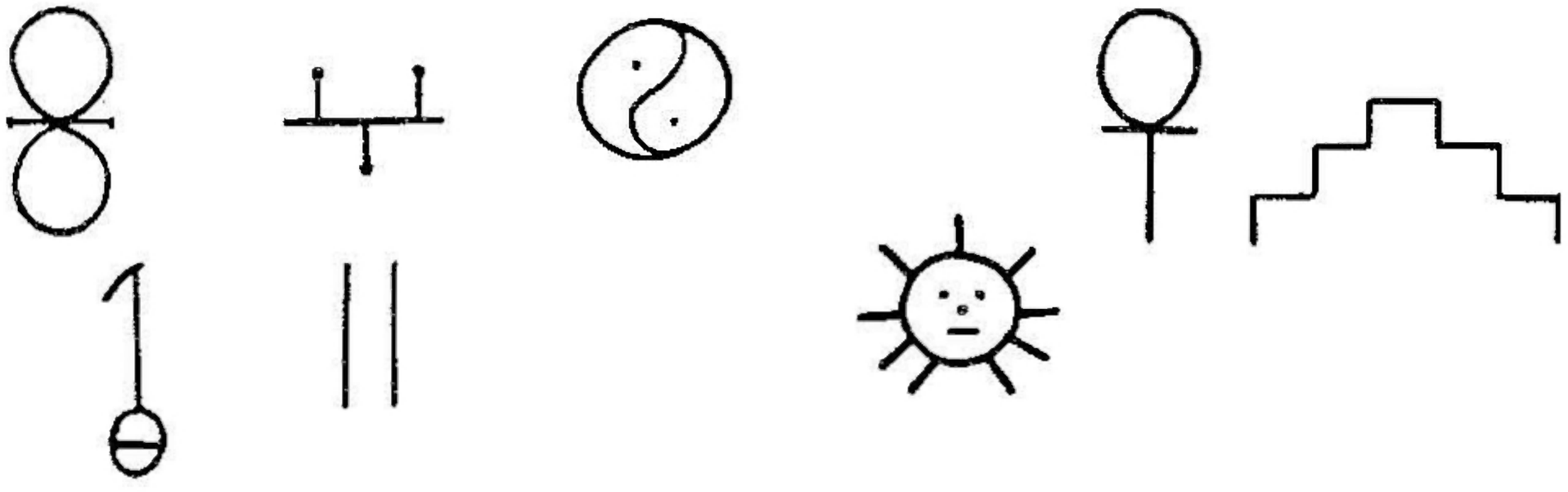
SIGN	VALUE	MEANS
	i	two, twins, Gemini
	per	Subtract ("take away")
	per	(20+ all mean 'depart')
	per	to rise (of the sun)

Figure 4



SIGN	MEANS
	DIVIDE, CUT, THE HALF OF ANYTHING

Figure 5

Since these inscriptions concern a solstice, and the solstices mark the midpoint of the sun's North-South journey, there is no difficulty in understanding the many references to the fraction 1/2. However, throughout this study I have encountered another fraction-2/3-the meaning of which has so far eluded me. It has a calendrical significance, I feel sure, and may be a reference to Thoth, the Measurer, Regulator of Times and Seasons. Some facts which may have bearing--

The Egyptian year had three seasons of four months.
Each 30-day month had three dekans of ten days.
There were five epagomenal days between
The Great (solar) Year and
The Little (lunar) Year
Thoth was the god of the first month
Thoth was the god of the 1st and 13th days of each month
His festival was on the 19th of Thoth (Tekhi)
Each of the 36 dekans had a god
Thoth was chief judge and scribe of the gods
Thoth was associated with the moon

If I am correct in my surmise, that a connection exists between the 2/3 fraction and Thoth, there is a built-in reference to him in the lower left glyphs of Figure 5. The upright lines may represent tally sticks. They are exactly 2/3 the over-all length of the staff-plus-ovoid glyph. The staff itself is 2/3 the length of the glyph, with the ovoid makng the remaining third.

In this country only recently have the researches of R.A. and Isha Schwaller de Lubicz begun to receive the attention they deserve. While reading one of Isha's books I learned that the solstices were referred to in Egypt as the Giant Step. In Figure 6 the Giant Step is shown as it is portrayed in Egyptian art. The stance of the figure is so common I suspect one should observe and contemplate the activity of the figure. For example, in this instance the king is ostensibly offering libation jars to the god, but their shape is so similar to some of the pillar hieroglyphs I suspect they represent the North and South pillars of the earth that support the sky. In another example, the royal family is hunting birds among the rushes along the Nile. Even the family cat is trying to catch the birds. Among Egyptian sacred animals the cat is associated with both the sun and the moon. The king, standing in the solstice stance, is about to throw a boomerang. Boomerangs revolve. Boomerangs return.

Across the top of Figure 6 a bar with angled ends is shown. This is the hieroglyph for heaven or sky. According to de Lubicz it identifies the subject matter of the panel. Behind the king is one end of the bar, representing 1/2 of the sky.This is supported by a large loop or knot in the "circuit of the sky." Over the bar two smaller loops each support a fan-like object on a long stem. The curved outer and inner edges of the "fan" are the different shadow arcs cast by an upright rod on the solstice and equinox.

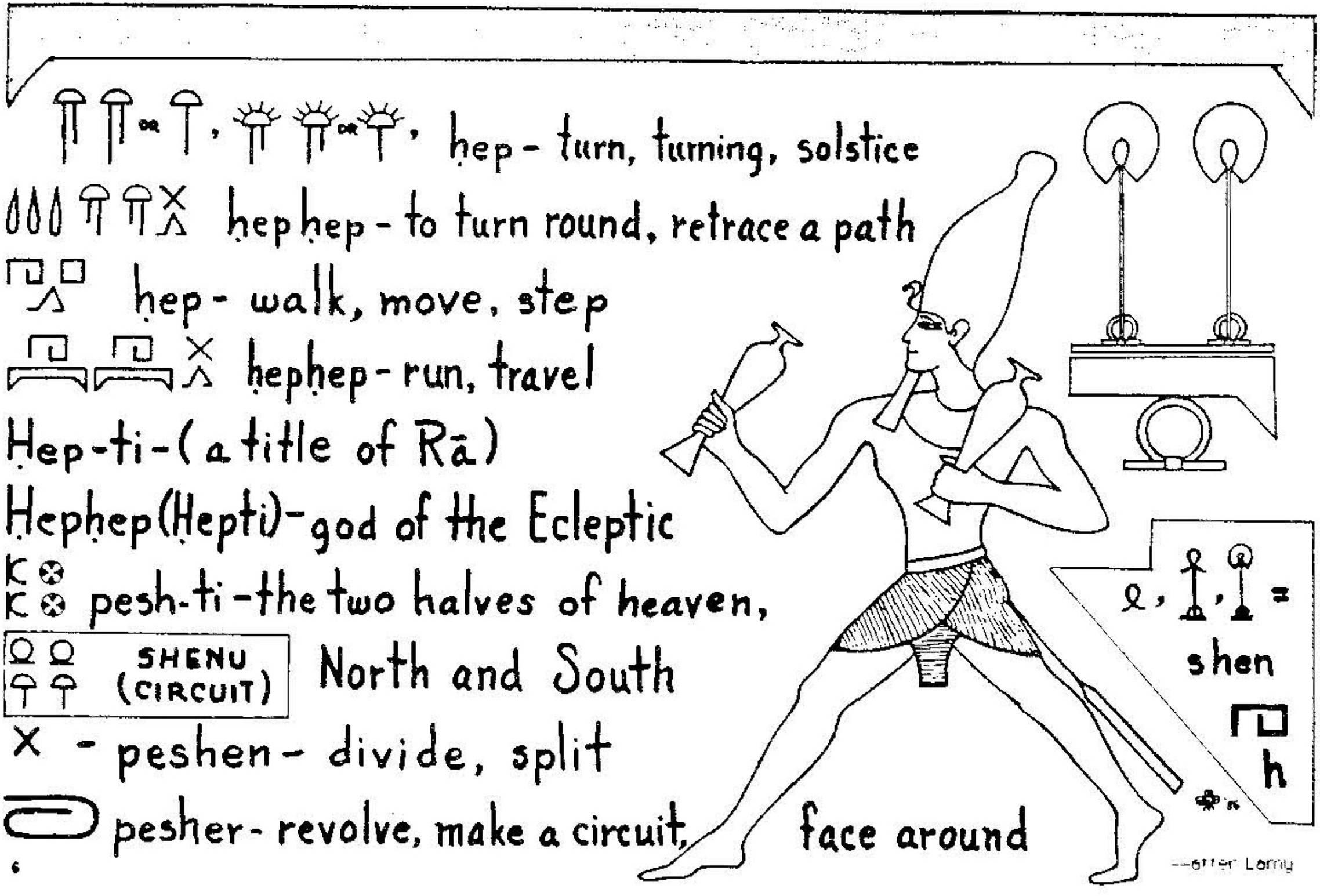

ḥep - turn, turning, solstice
ḥepḥep - to turn round, retrace a path
ḥep - walk, move, step
ḥepḥep - run, travel
Ḥep-ti-(a title of Rā)
Ḥephep(Ḥepti)-god of the Ecleptic
pesh-ti-the two halves of heaven,
SHENU (CIRCUIT)
North and South
- peshen - divide, split
pesher - revolve, make a circuit, face around
shen
h
--after Lamy

Figure 6

By actual measurement I found that the stems are exactly twice the length of the "fans;" in other words, 2/3 of the whole sign. This may be the significance of the two uprights in Figure 5, in addition to--or instead of--a reference to tally sticks. Perhaps the scribe intended to trigger a whole series of associations in the mind of the person reading the inscriptions.

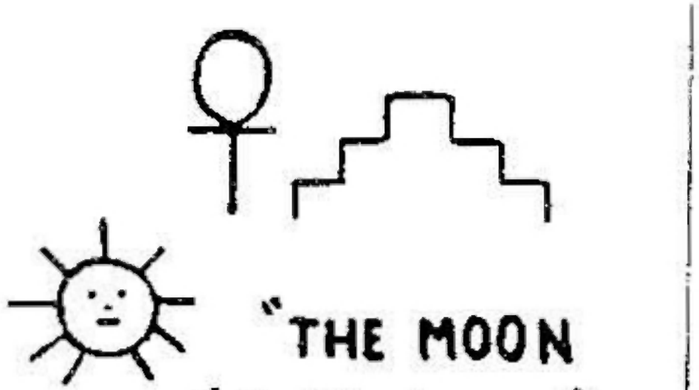
The usual sign for the solstice was the arc of the sky supported by a single long stem. Even more familiar was the sign with two supports of unequal length. Again, by actual measurement, I found that one stem was 2/3 the length of the other. I now suspect that whenever one encounters two lines of unequal length in the proportion of two to three, one should be alerted to the possibility of a hidden solstice connection.

Quite early in my research of the signs in Figure 7 I wrote to Clyde Keeler requesting his help in locating a particular reference. Somewhere in the literature I recalled seeing the moon referred to as, "the mirror of Isis," but could not remember or relocate the source. Dr. Keeler could not cite the reference I wanted, but remarked on the similarity in shape of the ankh and the so-called 'mirror of Venus,' which is made with a bar near the top of the handle,"so the lady will not get Oil of Olee on the polished surface."

After my return from the Ancient Mariner conference, held in November, 1985, I wrote to Rollin Gillespie, wondering if it might be possible to date these inscriptions using the astronomical data they contain. His gracious reply explained some of the problems such an attempt might encounter.By way of illustration he included some of his work sheets. Quite by accident, on one of them he had underlined the word <u>VENUS</u> in red. Seeing this triggered the memory of Dr. Keeler's remarks and sent me scurrying back to Budge. To my delight, I found determinatives used in Egyptian names for Venus and the morning star are a part of the "super glyph" in the main inscription.

Some of the phonetic values in this and subsequent Figures are enclosed in parentheses. This indicates that the word was taken from the main dictionary, not the list of determinatives.

In Yuchi art the stepped pyramid design is called "the meeting of sky and earth."Is it coincidence that the meaning is so similar to that of the Egyptian hieroglyph?

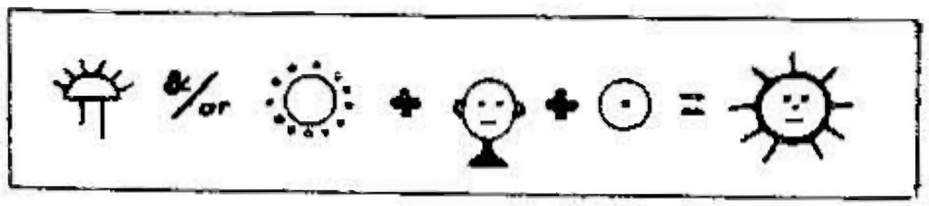


"THE MOON (HALF MOON?) &/OR VENUS RISES JUST BEFORE THE SUN"

'MIRROR OF ISIS" (MOON)

MIRROR OF VENUS

ASTRONOMICAL SIGN-VENUS



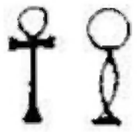
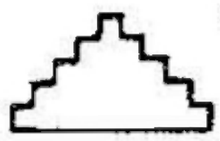
SIGN	VALUE	MEANS
	(ānkh)	live, life
	(ānkh)	mirror
	(ānkh)	star, planet
	———	ascend
	hep	turn. turning, solstice
	———	shine, lighten
	her	-----
	———	Sun-god, Rā

Figure 7

The remainder of the "explanatory notes" are shown in Figure 8, along with a partial list of pertinent words. Again, the glyphs will be dealt with individually a bit later. They are shown together here to illustrate how an allusion to one determinative can generate a series of associated words and ideas.

Leading the word list is an example of the many "disaster" words I encountered. Here, the word *ḏꜣs* can mean either ruin or serenity. The word repeated means "to cut." (Note how it mimics the sound of a saw cutting wood. *Ḏꜣs* also means a kind of wood. The scepter of dominion is a wooden staff.) Similar words refer to the Giant Step, worship, the path sign and crops.

Here the path sign is flanked on either side by a compound glyph. These will require considerable explanation. However,the path sign in this case simply means that its flankers represent the same thing; the sun's annual journey through the heavens. In this manner the scribe explained the use of the "yin yang" in the main inscription. This would seem to indicate that the scribe did not expect his readers to be familiar with the symbol.

However, this in turn implies that others would understand the glyph to the left of the path sign. This glyph is analyzed in Figure 8a, and the phonetic values of the component glyphs are given. For confirmation of my use of the glyph meaning same, or similar, see the name for the steering oar of Ra's magical sun boat, which was directed by Thoth. The glyph might also be seen as two loops of time in the circuit of heaven, as was shown in the illustration of the Giant Step.

Figure 8b brings us to grips with the problem of the yin yang. Surprisingly, it is not such a problem after all. It took me a long time to see it but this is just another compound glyph. In contrast to the one in 8a, this one is composed of only two components: the glyph for *limb, member, part,* and the sun sign. This raises a tantalizing question. Did our scribe invent the yin yang symbol, or did he encounter it in the Orient, recognize its similarity to Egyptian glyphs and appropriateness for use as a solstice symbol, and adopt it for that use?

Most of my sources say the yin yang symbol is so ancient its origins are lost. The Egyptians were certainly familiar with the concept of yin and yang,regardless of their knowledge of the symbol. Lubicz has her Sage state, "But a[n astrological] sign doesn't work alone, for its *rꜣ-ḥ-rꜣ* acts by way of complement. You notice that the sign opposite the sign of the Bull is the Scorpion . . . we feel the scorpion's influence at the same time as the Bull's. . . . We are now in the sign of the Ram. Its opposite is the sign *ꜣḫ.t*, horizon or balance, which is connected with the balance of Maât. You know how important are the roles of the balance and of Maât in our symbolism and theology. But when the sun rises in the sign of the Fish the fish will be the new Envoy's symbol and its complement will be the sign of the Virgin."

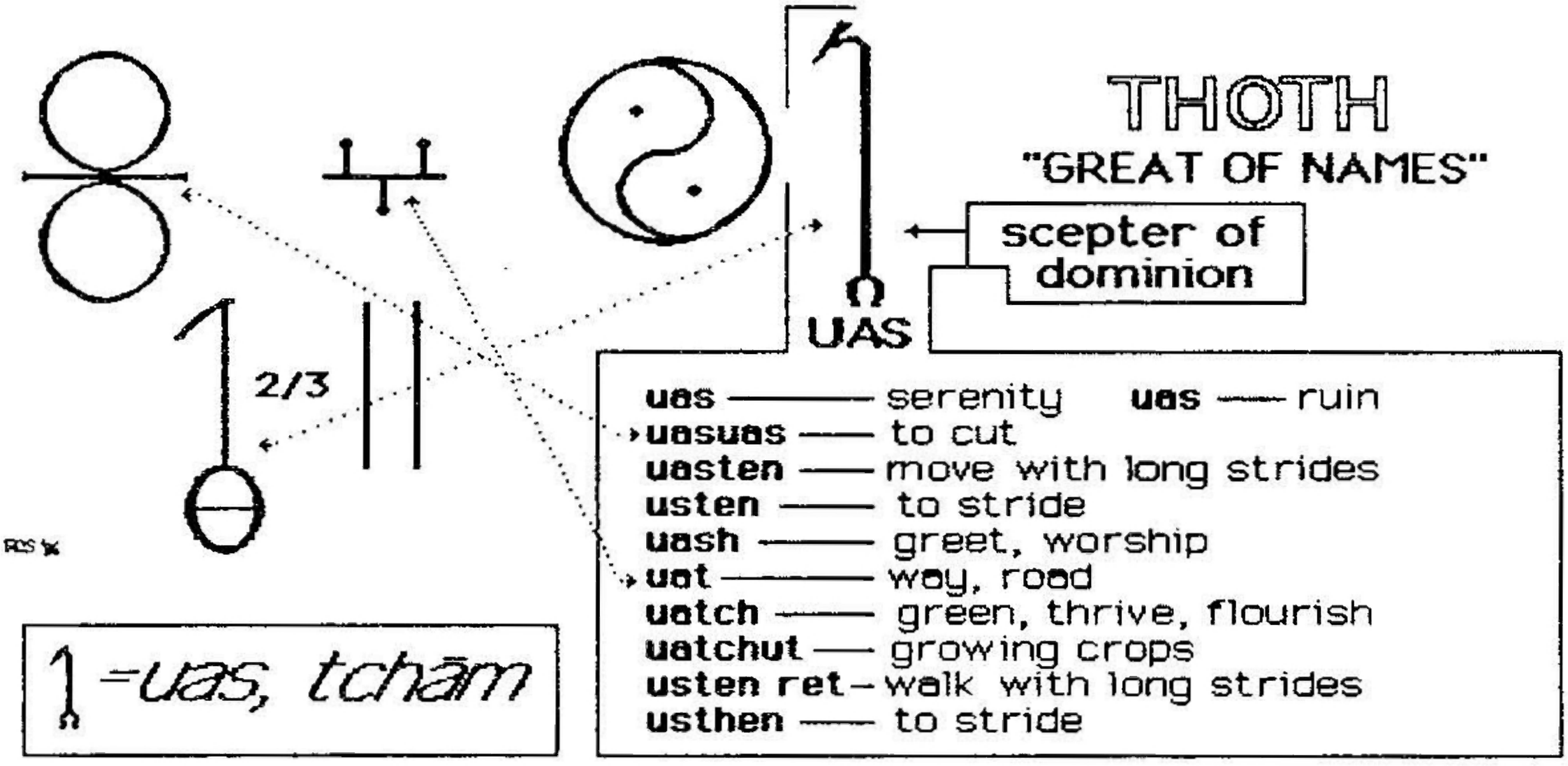

THOTH
"GREAT OF NAMES"
scepter of dominion
UAS
2/3
RCS
uas —— serenity uas —— ruin
uasuas —— to cut
uasten —— move with long strides
usten —— to stride
uash —— greet, worship
uat —— way, road
uatch —— green, thrive, flourish
uatchut —— growing crops
usten ret— walk with long strides
usthen —— to stride
1 =uas, tcham

Figure 8

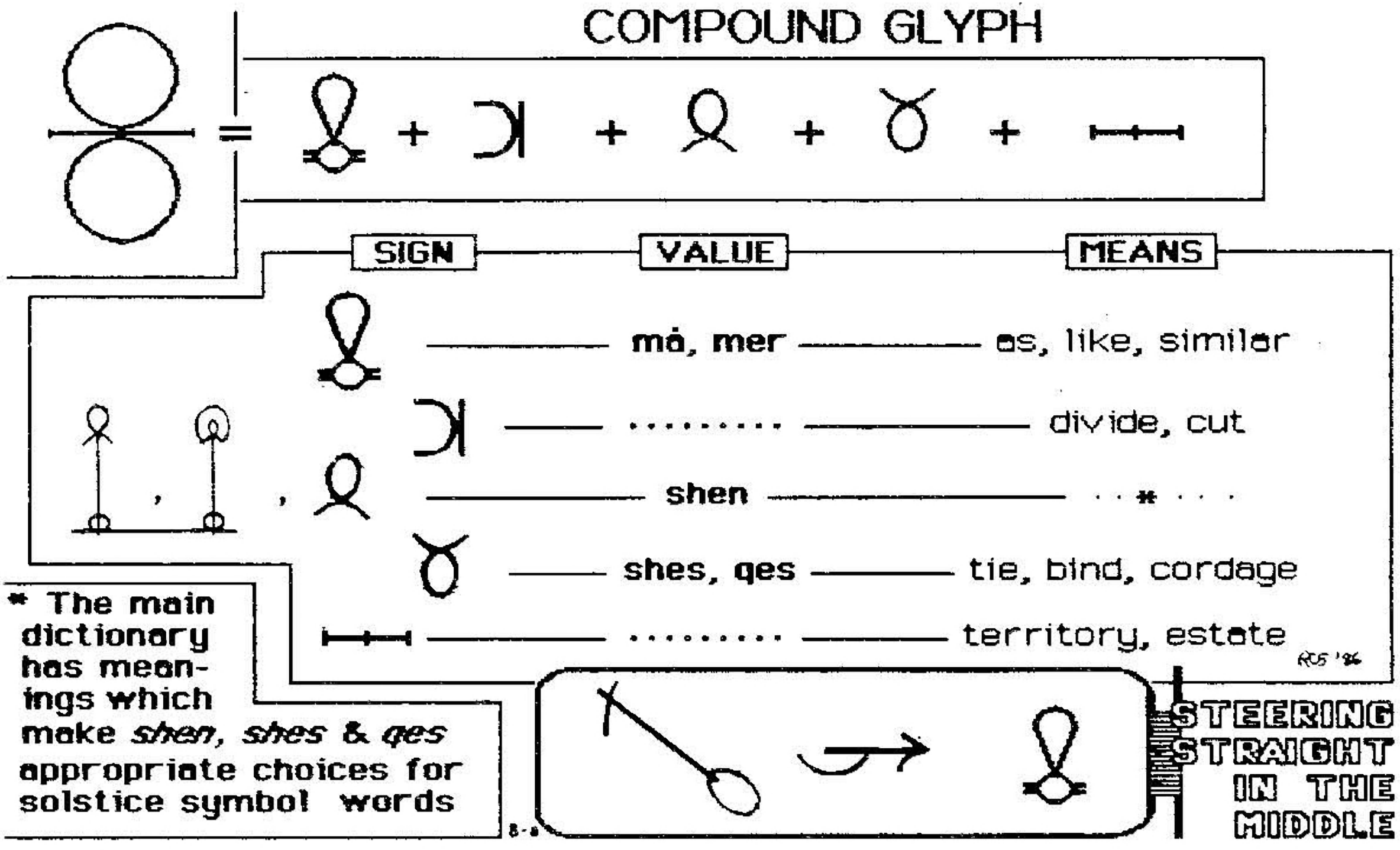

COMPOUND GLYPH
SIGN
VALUE
MEANS
mə, mer
as, like, similar
divide, cut
shen
shes, qes
tie, bind, cordage
territory, estate
RCS '86
* The main dictionary has meanings which make *shen*, *shes* & *qes* appropriate choices for solstice symbol words
STEERING STRAIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

Figure 8-a

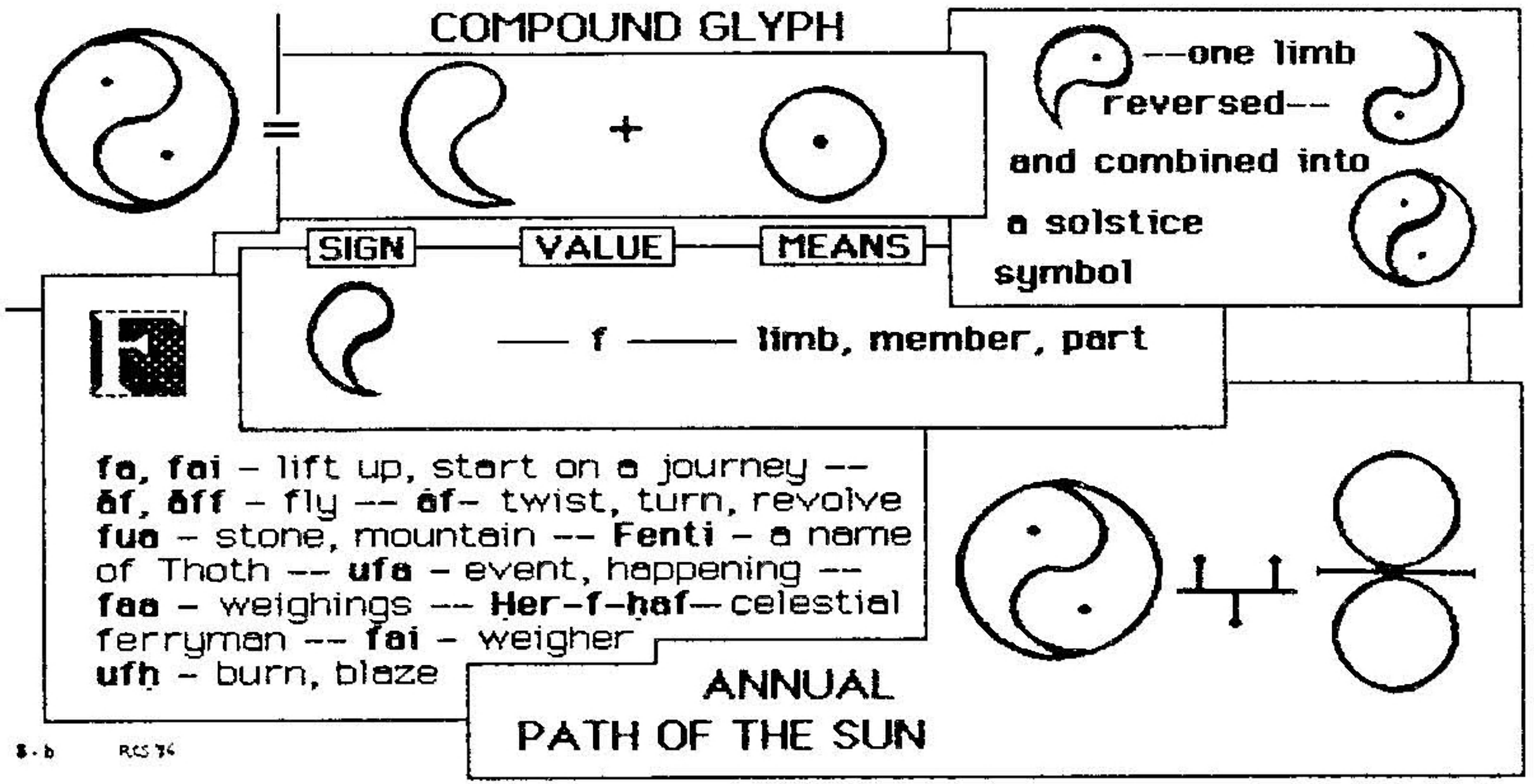

COMPOUND GLYPH
--one limb reversed--
and combined into
a solstice
symbol
SIGN
VALUE
MEANS
— f — limb, member, part
fa, fai – lift up, start on a journey --
ȧf, ȧff – fly -- ȧf– twist, turn, revolve
fua – stone, mountain -- Fenti – a name
of Thoth -- ufa – event, happening --
faa – weighings -- Ḥer-f-ḥaf– celestial
ferryman -- fai – weigher
ufḥ – burn, blaze
ANNUAL
PATH OF THE SUN
8-b RCS 76

Figure 8-b

In COMMENTARY V I I Lubicz says, "The idea of evil is expressed in Egyptian by the word *ḏft*. Its hieroglyph is a mountain separated into two parts by a valley, symbolizing separation and duality. Another word meaning "sin" or "evil" is *asfet*, from *asf*, "to cut," "to separate," which is a confirmation of the idea clearly expressed in the hieroglyph *ḏft*. . .We never find absolute good or evil expressed in Egyptian teaching. If there were absolute good or evil, they could never coexist in the original cause, since it would not be absolute if it were dualized. Good and evil as opposites can only exist in nature; therefore, they are not absolute."

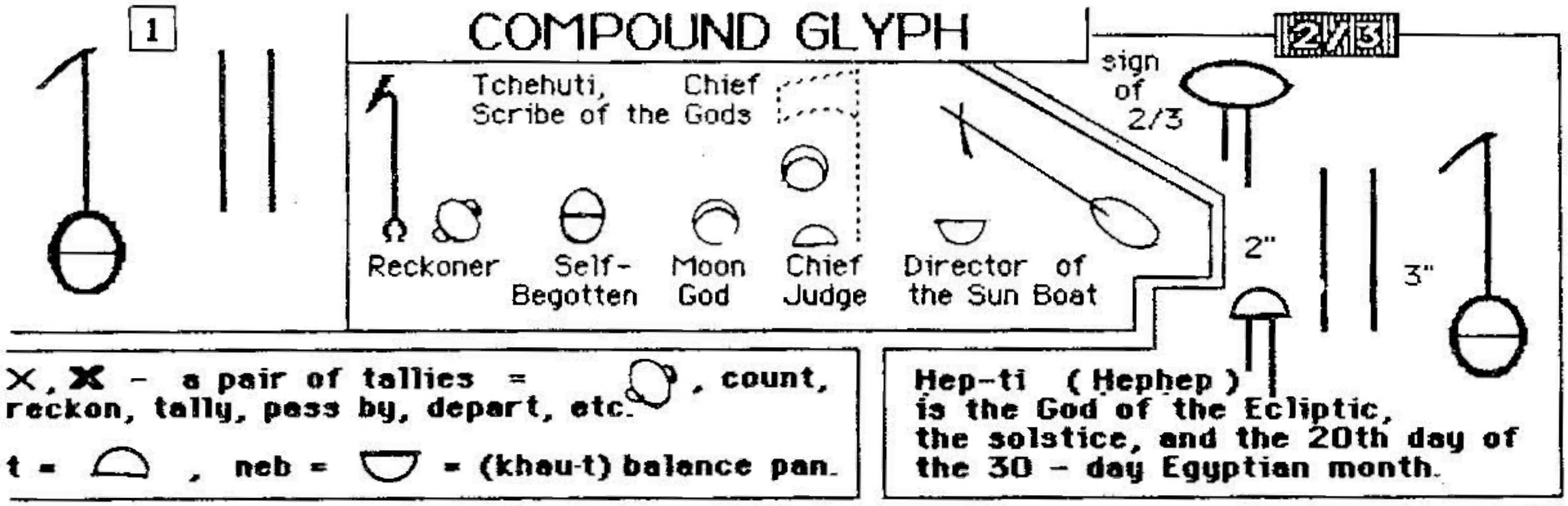
Surely the above concept is epitomized by the symbolism of the yin yang, which contains a speck of the opposite in each half of the whole. The concept also helps to explain why the same word so often has an opposite meaning and the same idea can be expressed by so many different words.

Figure 8-c deals with the glyphs below those just discussed. Here I give some of my reasons for thinking they may be a reference to Thoth (Tcheḥuti).

Thoth was such an ancient god that he was considered "self-begotten."The ovoid at the base of the staff certainly looks like the glyph for "father." And, as Regulator of Times and Seasons he certainly had dominion over the solstices. He was the moon god, the Reckoner (he invented mathematics), Chief Scribe of the Gods (he invented hieroglyphics), Chief Judge of the Gods, Director of the Sun Boat of Rā--on and on. He was not called Great of Names for nothing.

Several of the glyphs shown in Figure 8-c are associated with Thoth, and might be triggered in the mind of the viewer by seeing the staff-surmounted ovoid beside the two uprights. Also, since the staff glyph could be read either *was* or *tchem*, several pertinent words beginning with 'tch' are shown, not the least of which is a name of Thoth, Tcheḥuti.

The ubiquitous 2/3 is explored in more detail here. The glyph for the fraction is shown, along with the solstice sign, and the fraction as it appears in these inscriptions. More thinking on the subject made me realize this may be a reference to the god of the solstice and the ecliptic--Ḥep-ti (Ḥephep). Even his name is significant. *Ḥep* is the Egyptian word for step. He is also the god of the twentieth day of a thirty-day month. There is a 2/3 fraction. That in turn may be a reference to the two halves of the Giant Step being equal to the three seasons of their year.



scribe of the record office—**tcha** r-weigh, measure, compute
begin a journey-travel by boat—**tcha** nahu-rudder handle
stick, staff, stalk--**tchā** tch-keep watch **tcha**-t-judge
scepter-white gold—**tcham** papyrus, book, sheet
Tchā-benu Asar-a title of ♀ mā-of calculations, document
āsu XII-Divine Masters of Wisdom helped Thoth to plan the universe a-dry land, parched ground

RCS '86

8-c

Figure 8-c

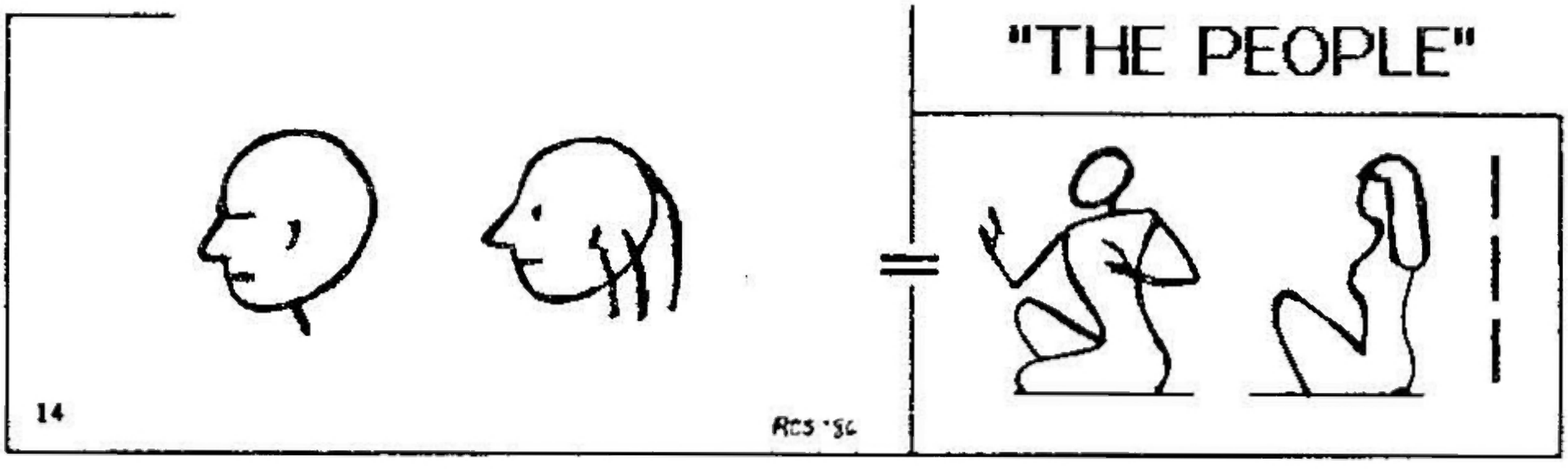


Figure 14

"The light was blinding. No more was said that day."

--from Her-Bak, Egyptian Initiate
by Isha Schwaller de Lubicz

The winter solstice site near Russellville, Arkansas, which Gloria Farley reported in ESOP Vol. 16, may express the same idea. There the three-and-two divisions are enclosed in a circle. Another circled ogam that she reported may carry the idea a bit further. In that one the ogam letters spelling "winter" are separated by a clear central band. Symbolically, this may mean that at the solstice the "three and two" are made one. This thought makes me wonder if the two dots in the yin yang may say something significant in Tifinag.

Figure 8-d is simply a continuation of the signs that might be brought to mind by seeing the ovoid-supported staff in association with the two uprights.

We are now ready to tackle the main inscription. Ordinarily, when reading Egyptian, one starts at the side toward which the glyphs face. However, the content of the inscription forced the scribe to abandon this rule. The inscription must be read from right to left.

There is so much information packed into the large glyph on the right I call it the "super glyph." The lower portions of this glyph have already been explained in Figures 3 and 4, where we are told that the sun's path leaves the sign of Gemini and enters the sign of Cancer.

Starting at the top of Figure 9, the first glyph encountered is the hieratic sign for mountain. From the beginning I had read it that way, but had been puzzled by the odd angles used to make the sides of the figure. When Maui used the same sign in the Santiago inscription he made the sides perpendicular to the base. Again, it took me a long time to recognize the full significance of the figure. For the time being we will stay with the obvious readings and their immediate inferences. As stated before, when I began this decipherment I didn' t even know in which direction the inscription faced.

From the site one can see a range of mountains. It may be inferred that they are east of the site by the glyph immediately below the mountain sign which is very close in phonetic value to the word for East.The glyph means broad, spacious, wide; a good description of the valley separating the site from the mountains. This sign, taken with the curved line below, suggests the glyph for sunrise. The same sign also forms the eyelid of the staring eye. A single eye is the glyph for see, behold. The pupil and iris form the glyph for the Sun god Rā, while the long oval around them suggests both the sign for mouth--*r, ra*--and the glyph for the horizon. The "eyelashes" beneath the eye are both the same in number and follow the same curve as the radiants in the sign for gold. This leads to another reference for gold, which leads eventually to a reference to Thoth.

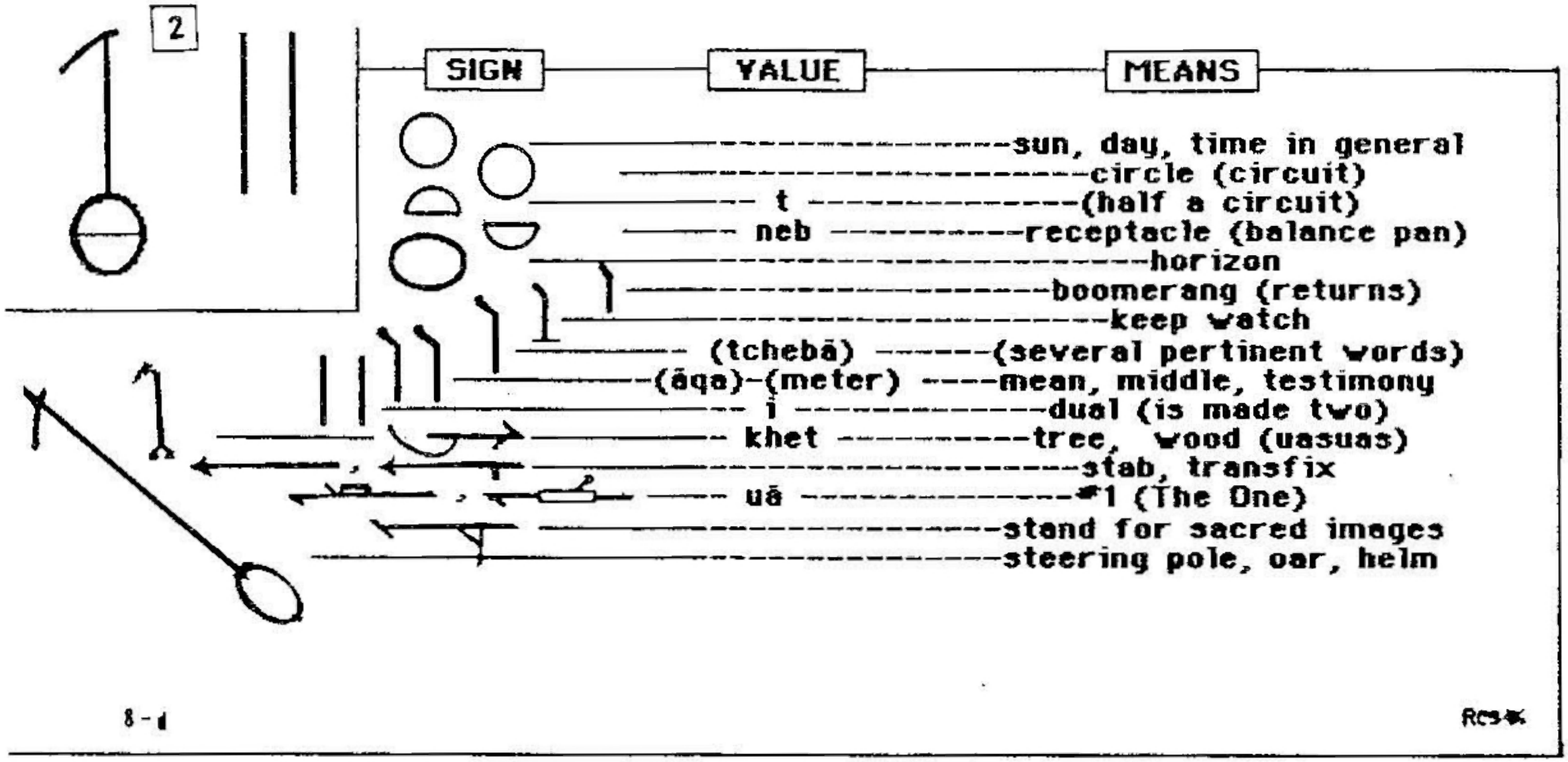
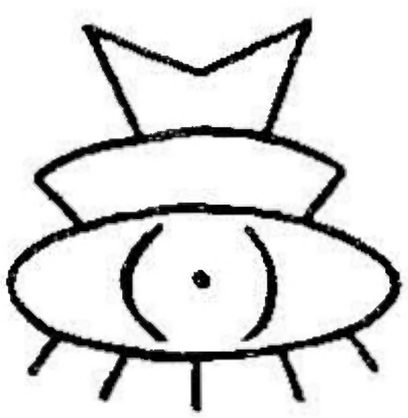

2
SIGN
VALUE
MEANS
sun, day, time in general
circle (circuit)
t
(half a circuit)
neb
receptacle (balance pan)
horizon
boomerang (returns)
keep watch
(tchebā)
(several pertinent words)
(āqa)-(meter)
mean, middle, testimony
i
dual (is made two)
khet
tree, wood (uasuas)
stab, transfix
uā
#1 (The One)
stand for sacred images
steering pole, oar, helm
8-d
RCS#

Figure 8-d



SUPER-GLYPH

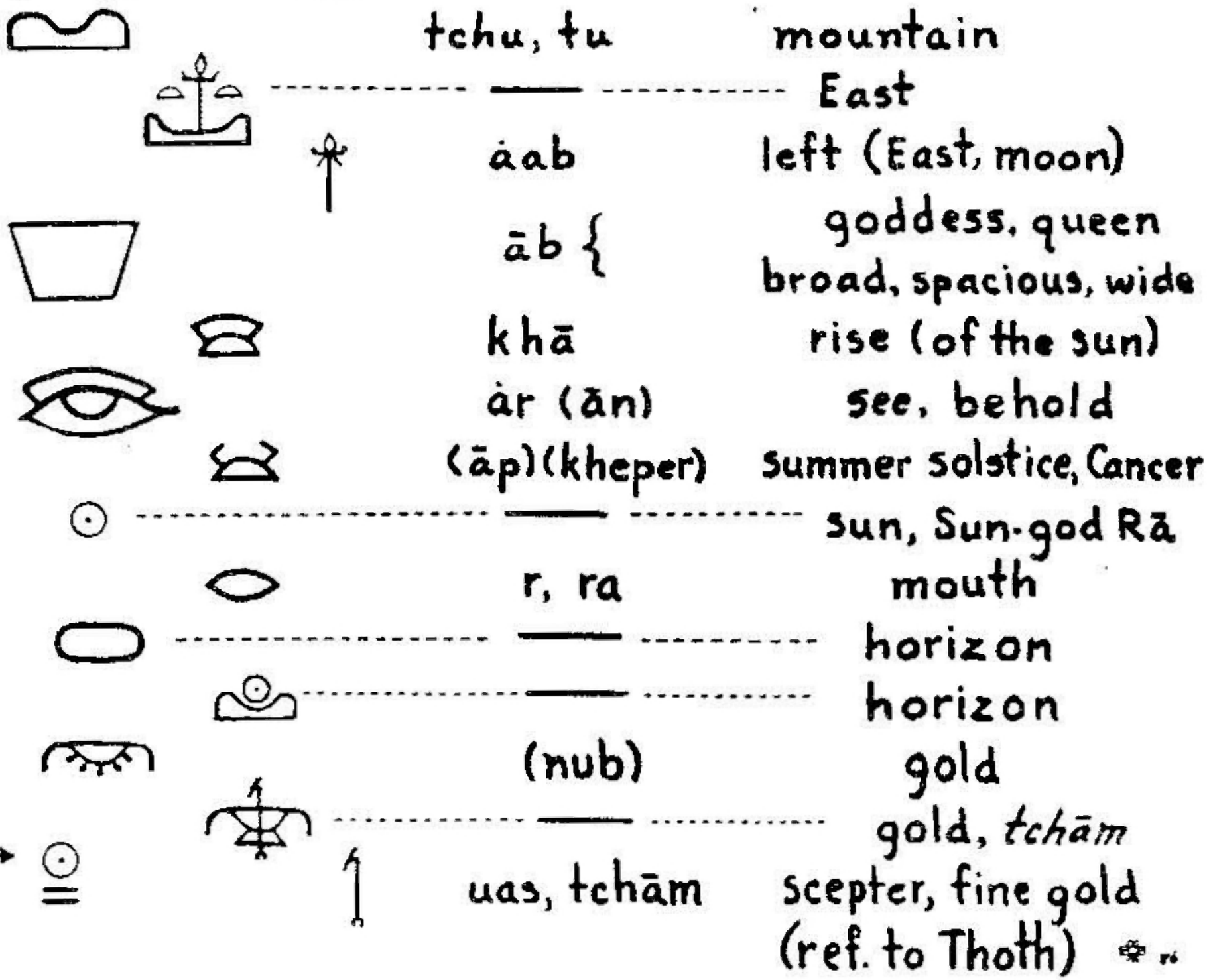


Figure 9

The sign for Rā combined with the two horizontal lines are used in a number of dawn-related words, including the morning star and the planet Venus. (It is easy to see how the equal lines came to be associated with the dawn. At that time day and night, light and dark are the same.) As has already been demonstrated, the two lines also mean leave, pass by, transit Gemini, and pave the way for the sun to enter the sign of Cancer.

Returning to the top of the super glyph, in Figure 9-a the curious configuration of the mountain sign is explained.Note how the sides are canted to the angle required to form the glyph for land. This gives a fairly good cross-section representation of the site, as shown in Figure 1. If the triangular "land" signs are completed, their overlapping bases yield the diamond centered in the glyph meaning festival. A line dropped from either point of the "mountain" glyph yields the much slimmer glyph which means triangle, as well as prepared, ready and Septit. Taken together, this suggests that one should watch from the site on one side of the valley for the heliacal rising of Sirius and/or the sunrise over a triangular mountain on the other side of the valley which would signal the beginning of the New Year festival.

The staring eye has other connotations, too. Since the iris and pupil are enclosed in a symmetrical oval, there is no telling which eye is meant; therefore, both eyes may be intended. This can mean either see, behold, or refer to the sun and moon.

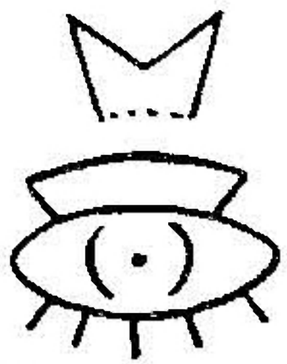
As mentioned before, the long oval of the eye and the "eyelashes" suggest the glyphs for mouth and gold. The mouth is composed of two lips. One of the signs for lip has rays similar to those depending from the gold sign. The lip sign is used in one of the words meaning rim of a lake or marsh. Encountering a number of words pertaining to rivers, lakes and marshes made me wonder if there was a connection with this inscription.

Eight thousand years ago--give or take a year or two--the valley below the inscription site was filled with a lake 45 miles long and 300 feet deep. Gradually, over the centuries, the lake diminished, leaving much smaller lakes behind in depressions in the valley floor. Eventually, all that was left was the body of water called Lake Owens. That, too, disappeared in 1936 when it suffered the final indignity of becoming part of the Los Angeles water supply.

Now there is only desert. But in years when there is sufficient moisture old lake beds become marshes again, and green fingers reach into the mountains along the old water courses.

On either side of the line-of-sight between the mountains and the inscriptions are vestiges of old lakes, and a triangular notch marks an old stream bed. It seems likely that at the time the inscriptions were made a lake or lakes existed, and a bright green arrow pointed to the base of the Mount of Sunrise.

1



"KEEP WATCH HERE FOR..."

= COMPOUND GLYPH

- land (site)

- prepared, ready; the Dog-star Septit

OBVIOUS - INFER	VALUE	MEANS
	(renp-t)	festival
	(peter)	see, behold
	(utchatti)	Divine eyes of Rā, i.e. Sun & Moon
	(rem)	weep
	----	shine
	ar	death, destruction
	----	lip*
	(sept-ti)	the two lips
	----	the two lips
	----	moon, month
		(two months?)

Netherit one of the 75 forms of Rā.

nether-god

netherit-goddess

Netherit-eye of Rā

netherit-eyes

* - sept-rim, edge, of a lake

- Septit-(Sothis)(Sirius)
septit - morning star
sept-t - triangular (mountain)

Figure 9-a

Reference to one lip brought us to the rim of a lake. The two lips give another reference to Sirius, the morning star and a triangular shape.

Another glyph for the two lips uses shapes remarkably like the ones for moon and month. Since two months are involved in these inscriptions could this be another reference to Gemini and Cancer?

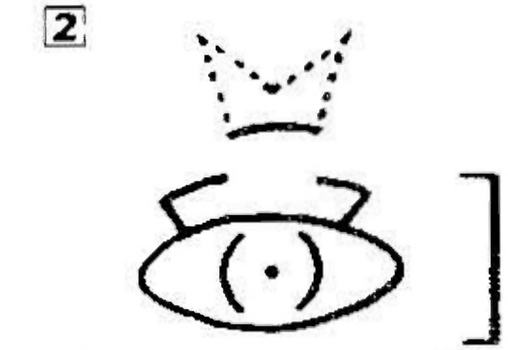
Figure 9-b shows more information found in the super glyph. When the mountain sign is removed, the distinctive foreparts of Cancer the crab and Kheper the scarab are revealed. If one can see the crescents on either side of the sun sign as wings, then one can see Àpi, "The Flier." The sun was called The Flier on the morning of the summer solstice. (Our "June bugs," members of *Scarabaeidae,* are flying at that time of year. Do Egyptian scarab beetles fly then, too?) The crescents may also refer to Thoth and Isis, "Queen of Heaven," both of whom were associated with the moon. If the moon were seen to rise just before the sun it would, of course, be seen as a crescent or half moon. Near the solstice is about the only time when the horns of the moon seem to point down.

Figure 10 is another compound glyph. It is one of the few signs that made the transfer intact in both sense and form, into the ideographic script of the Amerindians. Only the name of the Supreme Deity changed with the passage of time. For this reason and the fact that the path sign is included in the other inscription reported with these in ESOP Vol. 15, I suspect that it also marks an astronomical site. The sign which Fell identified as the head of Christ would appropriately equate with this one. Among the Yuchis the heart shape is equated with the Father Creator.

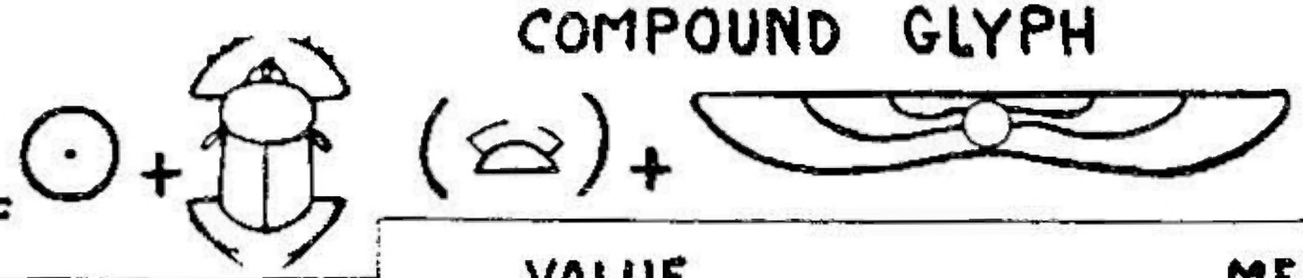
In Figure 10 I see the magical boat of Rā equipped with the four rudders of heaven (one for each quadrant) making its annual journey around the sky. There is a connection, I think, between the four rudders and four pillars of heaven, but that will have to be the subject of another paper. For the Yuchis, the dot centered circle has the connotation of the power of the Creator

Figure 11 makes my point about the significance of curved lines carved in hard granite. If the scribe had simply wanted to make the glyph for child, it would have been much easier to use the conventional Palace Script which uses straight lines for the arms. "Child" was a title of Rā at sunrise and of the sun on the first day of the New Year. But here the scribe wanted to show that this was a turning point. Note how the S curve of the arms echoes the shape found in the explanatory notes, in both the yin yang and the ☯

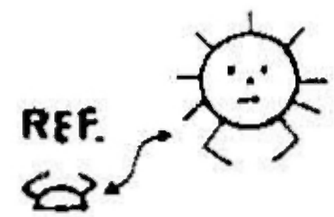
2



"The Flier"



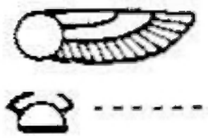
COMPOUND GLYPH



REF.

VALUE

MEANS



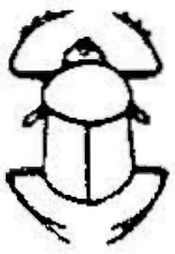
(per)

sunrise

Cancer, summer solstice

to fly, the summer solstice

Cancer



(ãp)

(Kheper)

(huṭ-ṭ, Heṭi)

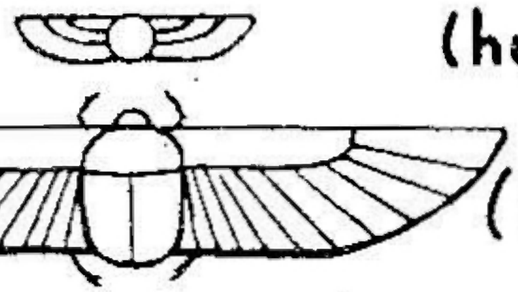
(Ãpi)

(Her-Beḥuṭeṭ)

winged disc, Sun-god

"The Flier" (Sun-god)

Horus of Edfu



Khemsu-Teḥuti

"Thoth, Twice Great"

used here instead of

khā, khāi

khākhā

khāit

khāut

(khau-t)

rise like the sun

manifestation

chamber in which the god appears

ascend, shine, appear

(pan of scales)

Figure 9-b

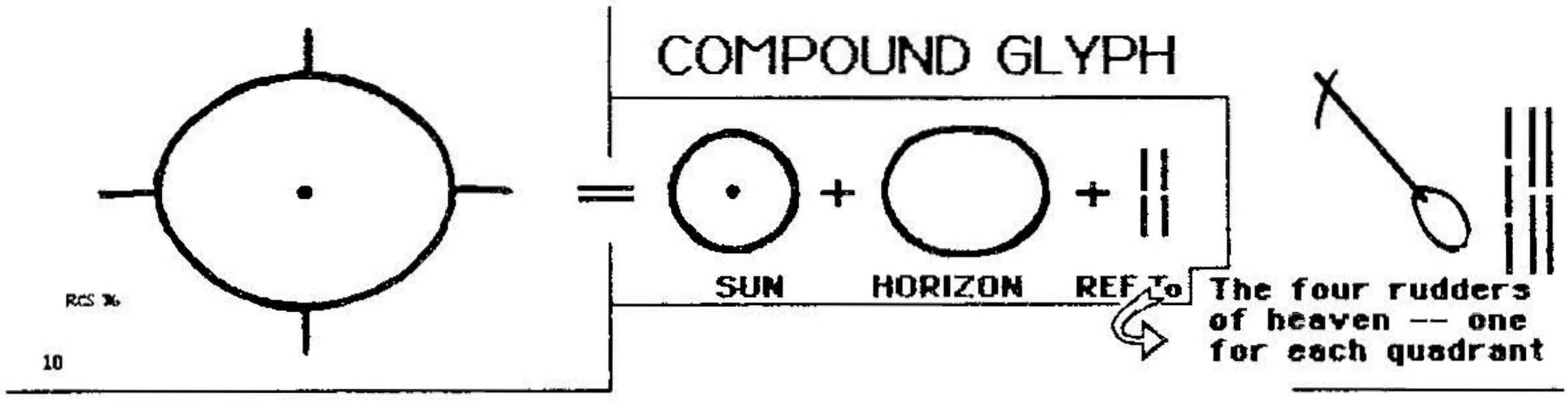

COMPOUND GLYPH
SUN
HORIZON
REF To
The four rudders of heaven -- one for each quadrant
RCS 96
10

Figure 10

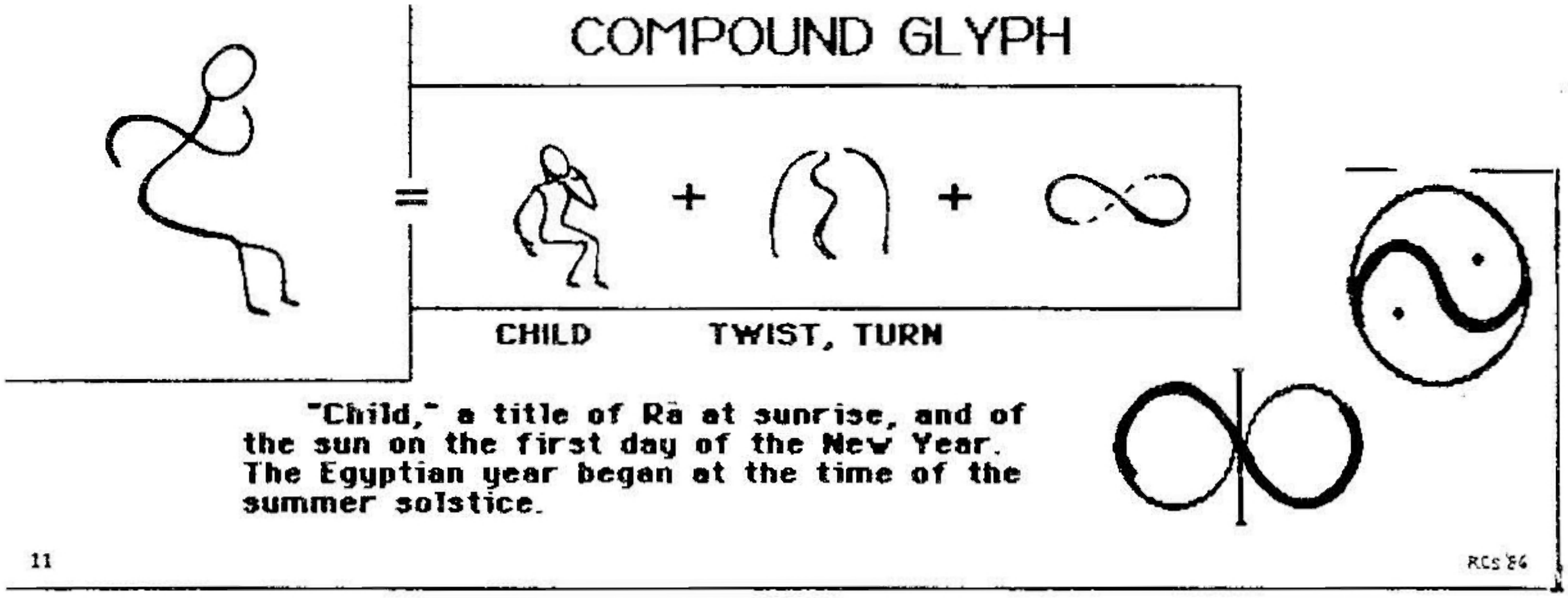

COMPOUND GLYPH
=
+
+
CHILD
TWIST, TURN
"Child," a title of Rà at sunrise, and of the sun on the first day of the New Year. The Egyptian year began at the time of the summer solstice.
11
RCS '86

Figure 11

In this figure I see more similarities with Yuchi symbolism. The "child" seems to combine three of their signs. The S of the arms resembles the curved arms of the symbol representing the Father Creator, the Master of Breath, while the head and body resemble the twisting symbol of Mother Earth and the manner of their crossing suggests the Yuchi's origin as descendants of the Children of the Sun.

Figure 12, the path sign, is another that made its way into the Amerindian picture script. However, this one suffered a bit in translation. As it is used here, the sign clearly comes from the Egyptian glyph meaning way, road, remote. Its reversed use in this inscription simply means the sun's path "goes the other way," i. e., South. But the connotations of bad, evil, illness and death placed on the sign by the Ojibways may have been derived from the ideas expressed in this inscription. Surely it is a bad thing to have the sun go away, for evil, illness and death might ensue during the winter. Besides, the sun might not come back.

Reversed signs were not unknown in Egyptian hieroglyphs. several examples have already been given. Another is shown in the illustration. The meaning of that reversed sign is calamity or disaster. Beneath the "disaster" sign are several for which Budge gives mundane meanings. However, upon seeing them hereafter, I, for one, will look for a more esoteric connotation.

After the yin yang, the signs in Figure 13 have caused more confusion than the rest put together. This is another compound glyph. I call it the "celestial house." Part of the confusion has come from reading the embracing arms, which mean event, happening, transit, as a negation sign. The rest comes from trying to figure out why the sign is reversed, elongated and turned on its side. The difficulty of the medium forced the scribe to do this because he also wanted to: 1) convey the idea of revolve, return; 2) allude to a palace or mansion; and 3) needed to show the direction of the sun's path. Note that, as directed to do in the super glyph, the reader must pass by the first celestial house (Gemini) in order to follow the path to the second celestial house (Cancer), where the placement of the yin yang conveys the idea of the sun turning away.

Budge gives a phonetic value of h to the simple, uncurved glyph which is the basis of the "celestial house." By choosing it and reversing it, the scribe has made his only direct reference to the Giant Step and the God of the Ecleptic. Note how cleverly he has implied the word HEP in all its ramifications by means of the repetition of the "celestial house" sign. (See Figure 6 again.) Several gods besides those shown in Figure 6 were called Ḥep. It was one of the names of the Nile god, and of one of the sons of Horus, as well as the name of the god of the northern cardinal point. It would be perfectly in keeping to refer to all of them in this inscription.

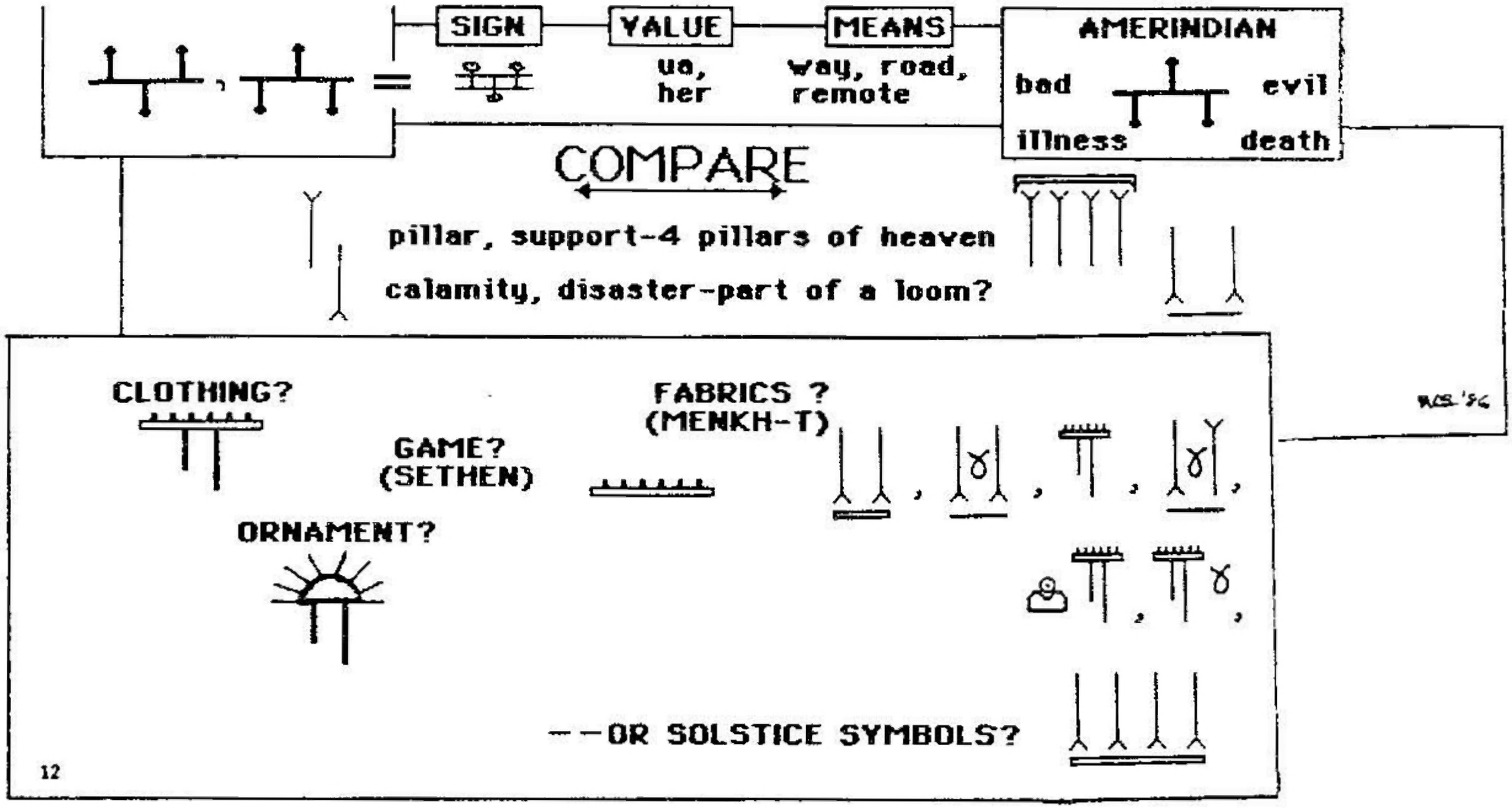

SIGN
VALUE
MEANS
AMERINDIAN
ua, her
way, road, remote
bad
evil
illness
death
COMPARE
pillar, support-4 pillars of heaven
calamity, disaster-part of a loom?
CLOTHING?
FABRICS ? (MENKH-T)
GAME? (SETHEN)
ORNAMENT?
--OR SOLSTICE SYMBOLS?
12

Figure 12

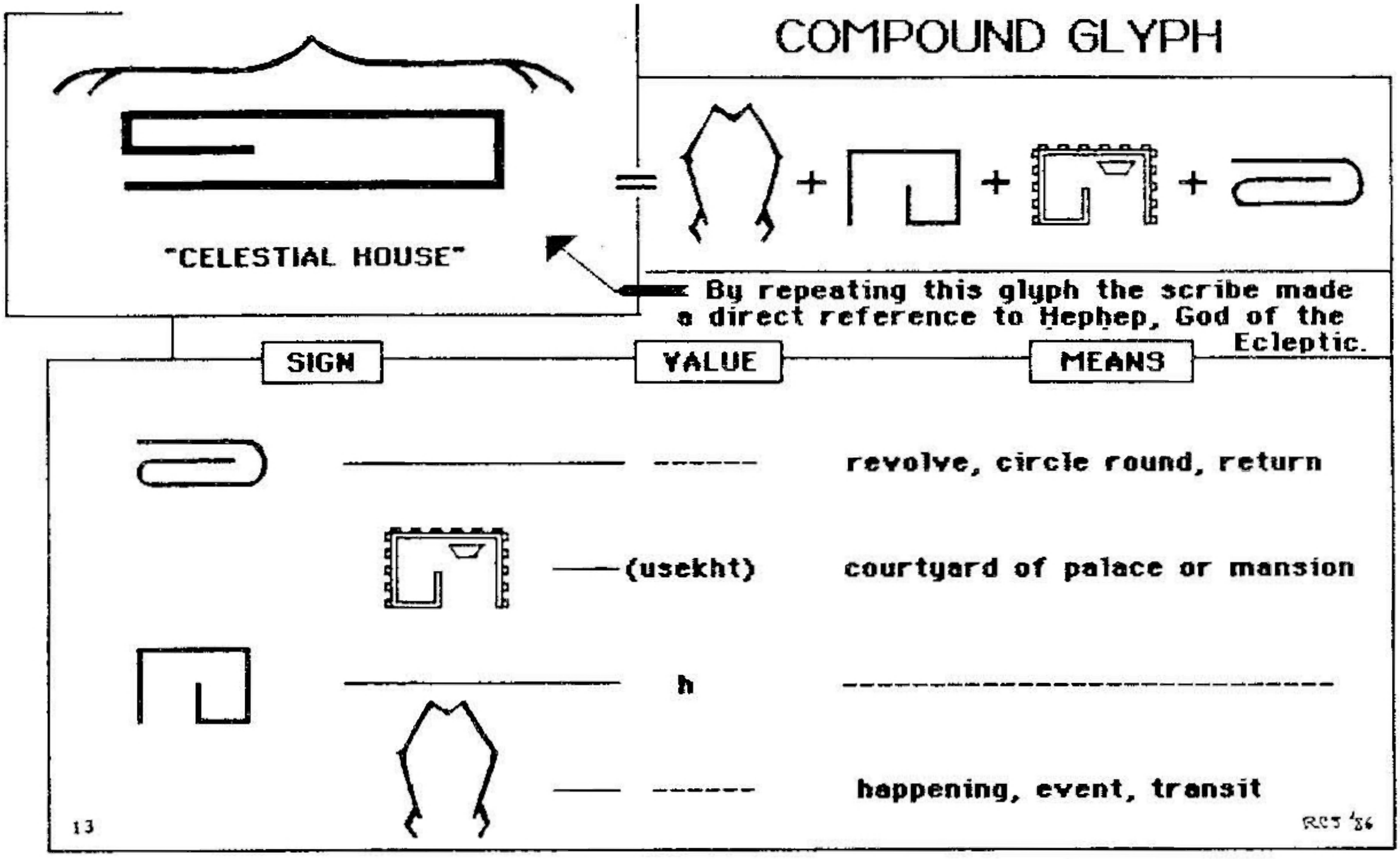

COMPOUND GLYPH
"CELESTIAL HOUSE"
= By repeating this glyph the scribe made a direct reference to Hephep, God of the Ecleptic.
SIGN
VALUE
MEANS
revolve, circle round, return
—(usekht)
courtyard of palace or mansion
h
happening, event, transit
13
RCS '86

Figure 13

The glyphs in Figure 14 were the easiest of all to interpret. They say, "the people." Notice how economically the scribe indicated the plural, by using three strokes for the woman's hair.

Ordinarily one would expect to read Egyptian hieroglyphics from the direction in which these figures are facing. However, as has been demonstrated, the main inscription is read from the right--the direction in which the "child" is facing. These figures had to be made facing left to clarify the idea that at the time of the solstice the sun would begin to go away from the people.

SUGGESTED TRANSLATION--MAIN INSCRIPTION

Behold, on the other side of this wide, spacious valley beyond the rim of the lake, the triangular Mount of Sunrise. To be prepared for the festival of the New Year keep watch here at dawn for the Flier to rise when Rā leaves the Sign of Gemini and enters the Sign of Cancer. When Gemini is passed in the annual circuit of the heavens the Child twists, and his path turns the other way. The Giant Step is made when the path has transited the first celestial house and entered the second. There it turns away from the people.

CONCLUSIONS

The two inscriptions at the Alabama Hills Solar Site seem to be legitimate instructions for determining the time of the summer solstice. It has been demonstrated that all of the signs used in the inscriptions, including the yin yang symbol, derived from Egyptian hieroglyphic determinatives. Using phonetic values associated with the determinatives, long lists of pertinent Egyptian words were compiled.

The inscriptions appear to be very old; however, their precise dating is still problematical. Eventually the problem may be resolved through astronomy, geology or epigraphy. Finding that the yin yang was used in script to indicate the solstices might be of considerable help in this regard.

ADDENDA

When my pursuit of the yin yang began I first consulted the late Julius Staal, then Director of Fernbank Planetarium, and an expert in medieval Chinese navigation. He was unable to answer my specific questions, "But," he said, "they believed that at the time of the winter solstice all nature had intercourse, and the yin (female) element was impregnated, and began to grow and gain the ascendancy."

Dr. Kiang has given me some excellent leads for further pursuit of the yin yang. These still need to be run to ground.

The oft-mentioned word lists, properly documented, will be forthcoming. They are much too long to be included here. From what I have seen, I suspect that readings or incantations of the entire inscription might be made based on each one of the phonetic values of the glyphs used in the inscription.

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