

**CLASSIC MAYA VESSEL CLASSIFICATION: RARE VESSEL TYPE
COLLOCATIONS CONTAINING THE NOUN *CHEB* "QUILL"**

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RESUMEN: Análisis de algunas expresiones poco usuales en ciertas Secuencias Primarias Estándar de los textos glíficos sobre recipientes cerámicos del período Clásico maya. Tales expresiones son leídas y traducidas por el autor como *pokol* "lavado"/"pintado" y *che'(e)b* "píncel". Las piezas cerámicas que presentan estas expresiones podrían haber sido fabricadas para servir a los escribas y pintores mayas en sus actividades específicas.

ABSTRACT: An analysis of certain unusual expressions in a few PSS's hieroglyphic texts of Classic Maya ceramics. The author reads these expressions as *pokol*, and *che'(e)b*, and suggests its translation as "washed"/"painted", and "quill". The vessels which present these examples would belong to a class or category of ceramic retainers pertaining to scribes and painters.

Early archaeological research in the Maya area focussed on the reconstruction of architectural sequences that primarily were dated through the construction of elaborate ceramic sequences (e.g. Smith 1955). The ceramics found, fragments or complete vessels, were analyzed and categorized according to paste composition, vessel shape, surface treatment, and decoration; each separately defined period in the ceramic sequence ultimately obtained an arbitrary Maya name (Figure 1). In the mid-fifties already a large sample of Maya ceramics was known that not only was intricately decorated, but also contained short or long hieroglyphic texts. However, at that time no real effort was made in analyzing the hieroglyphic texts, only a distinction was made between functional and decorative glyphs:

Hieroglyphs may be painted, incised or carved. Thompson (1950: 27) believes that the hieroglyphs on pottery are largely decorative. In this report the possible functional glyph bands are those that contain different hieroglyphs; the purely decorative are those with one or more repeated hieroglyphs, and the simplified are

¹ In this essay highcase **BOLD** type face letters refer to logographic signs and lowcase **bold** type face letters to syllabic sign in the transcription of Maya hieroglyphic writing. Transliterations and dictionary glosses are placed in *italics*. So-called T-numbers refer to the hieroglyphic signs cataloged by Thompson (1962). In my transcription and transliteration I follow the alphabet as developed for the "Diccionario Maya Cordemex" (1980), in stead of the alphabet of the Guatemalan Academia de las Lenguas Mayas, preferred by some epigraphers. A shorter and differently titled version of this essay was distributed among fellow epigraphers in July 1997 as "Notes on Maya Hieroglyphic Writing 14".

those which degenerate into semigeometric compositions or empty cartouches.

By functional is not meant that the band always has a definitive meaning in the Maya written language, but that the glyphs themselves being legitimate or variants may serve a purpose above the purely decorative, whether functional repetitious, or simplified. Some arrangements have been called purely decorative because of their repetitious character (Smith 1955: comment to Figure 80).

Because of these kinds of comments not much attention was given to the hieroglyphic sequences on ceramics (Boot 1985: 7). The first elaborate comment on these glyphs came from Thompson, who first thought the glyphs were largely decorative:

Inclusion in the catalog of glyphs painted, carved, or stamped on pottery presented certain difficulties principally because of the doubt as to how many of such texts had any meaning (...) Certain glyphs were much favored by the decorators of pottery and are repeated over and over again (...) It is surely significant that among the glyphs particularly favored by potters and apparently copied from one pot to the other are those of a monkey, a fish and a bird, glyphs easily recognized by the illiterate (Thompson 1962: 14-18).

More vessels with hieroglyphic texts became known in the following years, mostly through the international art market and apparently robbed from their original funerary context. In 1973 the above rather demeaning attitude to hieroglyphs painted, carved, or stamped on ceramics was replaced once and for all by Coe. After carefully analyzing the texts on 49 vessels, mainly of Classic Maya (circa 300 to 900 A.D.) origin, he presented his findings in the catalog entitled "The Maya Scribe and His World" and introduced the concept of the Primary Standard Sequence (henceforth P.S.S.). The structural and syntactic integrity of the P.S.S. as introduced and described by Coe was destined to become a gateway to decipherment.

Major breakthroughs were made in the middle of the eighties; Stuart presented his decipherment *u-ts'ib* "his writing/painting" for a certain collocation in the P.S.S. in 1986, elaborated upon in his study "Ten Phonetic Syllables" (Stuart 1987). In the same year, Houston and Taube identified a compound which they transliterated *u-lak* "his plate"; their study identified this compound to be in complementary distribution with another compound (nick-named "wing-quincunx" by Coe). The former exclusively appeared on plates and dishes, while the latter was restricted to vases and bowls. This led to the hypothesis that the latter compound, the most common in the P.S.S., actually meant "cylindrical vase" (Houston and Taube 1987). A further study by Grube, presented at the 1986 Palenque Round Table, indicated that the P.S.S. contained specific syllabic sequences and internal substitutions important to the decipherment and further understanding of the P.S.S., but at that moment only some were readable and others were not (Grube 1991). In 1987 Macleod and Stross came to analyze the compound identified by Houston and Taube to refer to "cylindrical vase" and in this manuscript Stross forwarded the suggestion to transcribe this compound as **yu-wich'-ib** to lead to *y-uch'ib* "cup" (Macleod and Stross 1987). Later Macleod also favored this reading but reanalyzed it as **yu-ch'i-bi** to lead to *y-uch'ib*, a reading also independently reached by Houston (Macleod 1990). In 1989 another

substitution was noted between the *u-lak* compound and a compound which was transcribed **u-ha-wa-te** to lead to *u-hawa(n)-te*, paraphrased as "his wide dish" (Houston, Stuart and Taube 1989). In those and ensuing years other compounds were identified and deciphered which has led to the general accepted view that the P.S.S. contains an introductory section that refers to the making and dedication of the vessel, a section that refers to writing on the vessel (either painted or carved), a section that refers to the vessel type, and a section that refers to the content of the vessel type. Importantly, in this last section a compound has been identified to be transcribed **ka-ka-wa** or "cacao" (Stuart 1988), while also references to *ul* and *sakhá* "atole, maize gruel" have been identified (Houston, Stuart, and Taube 1989). Hieroglyphs following the P.S.S. also contained a vast number of regular compounds, most of which now have been identified as titles possibly referring to the patron, owner or maker of the vessel (Grube 1990; Macleod 1990).

With the high degree of (syllabic) decipherment of compounds in the P.S.S. and the structural analysis of the meaning of those compounds it became possible to study the functionality of these vessels again. But now the hieroglyphic sequences, in stead of being considered decorative, were found to be structurally functional to describe vessel type and content in connection to vessel shape.

Thus in 1989 Houston, Stuart, and Taube published a short paper on the reconstruction of the (folk) classifications of Maya vessel types in which they distinguished:

- (1) *u lak* ('**u-la-ka**) "his dish" ;
- (2) *u hawa(n)te*' ('**u-ha-wa-te**') "his wide dish";
- (3) *y-uch'ib* (**yu-ch'i?-bi**) "his drinking vessel":
 - (a) for *kakaw* (**ka-ka-wa**) "cacao";
 - (b) for *ul* ('**u-lu**) or *sakha*' (**SAK-HA'**) for "atole, maize gruel"
 (Houston, Stuart, and Taube 1989: 722-724, Fig. 2).

These important classifications (Figure 2) have been generally accepted and have been elaborated on in recent studies by Macleod (1990: 298-421) and Reents-Budet (1994: 72-105), especially in the recognition of specific food stuffs associated with these vessel types. At the moment a transliteration *y-uk'ab* is generally favored for "his drinking vessel"².

² At the moment there is a growing debate on the syllabic value of T77 and its allographs in the "winged quincunx" collocation for the vessel type *y-uk'ab* (and other collocations containing T77 or its allographs). Early on syllabic values **k'i** and

ch'i have been proposed (as such *y-uch'ib*), while since of late a syllabic value **k'a** is preferred due to specific syllabic substitutions (cf. Schele and Looper 1996: 18-22a), in the vessel type collocation leading to *y-uk'ab*. Several epigraphers have objections to the syllabic value **k'a** and now contemplate other values as **k'o**, and again, **k'i** and **ch'i**. As a very tentative option I am now considering the fact that the T77 substitution set is "restricted" and not "free". Within this option I am now testing the possibility that T77 and T669a are syllabic **k'a**, while T128 and its "half head" variant are syllabic **k'aa**. Interestingly, this tentative "restricted substitution" can be attested within the vessel type collocation itself (over 200 P.S.S.'s scanned): **yu-T77-bi** alternates with **yu-T128/half head-ba**, thus possibly a dysharmonic versus synharmonic spelling, leading to *y-uk'ab* and *y-uk'aab* (cf. also Boot 1997c).

Recently specific containers, both of conch shell and ceramic, have been recognized to have been paint containers for Maya scribes (Grube 1994: 1; Valdés, Fahsen, and Escobedo 1994: 60; Reents-Budet 1994: 36-38, Fig. 2.8-2.10).

In this essay I will present two elaborate hieroglyphic spellings which refer to the functional quality of the vessel type and identify them as ceramic containers for writing implements. These vessel types have not been identified previously and fall outside the three categories in the above cited (folk) classification. The first example can be found on Kerr #4022, a "Chocholá" style ceramic vessel (Figure 3a-b). Its hieroglyphic caption opens (A1) with the collocation *u-hay* ('**u-ha-yi**') "his thin/clay bowl" (Grube 1990: 322; Macleod 1990: 363-64, *u-hay* actually is an additional category to the above classification), followed by a collocation (A2) that begins with the pronoun *u* "his (her, its)", and seems to provide the syllabic signs for **chu**, **ba** or **ma**, and **la**³. Possibly these syllables lead to the transliteration of the compound as **u-chu-bal(a)** or *u chu-bal* in which *chu* can be identified as:

Yucatec:

- chu** (1) calabaza para agua;
 (2) galleta, frasca para vino o agua u otro licor (Barrera Vásquez et. al. 1980: 108).

Proto-Tzeltal-Tsotsil:

- *chuh** tecomate, pumpo, calabazo (Kaufman 1972: 97).

The part *-bal* might tentatively be interpreted as an abstractive or derivational suffix; it might be related to Yucatec *ba'al* "alguna cosa" (Barrera Vásquez et. al. 1980: 31) or *bail/bal*, derived from *ba* "pronombre recíproco/reflexivo" (Barrera Vásquez et. al. 1980: 21), a suffix which can be found in for example the compounds *hochbal* "retrato; pintura o imagen (i.e. "image-thing/self")" and *winbail/wimbal* "imagen; retrato (i.e. "portrait-thing/self")" (Barrera Vásquez et. al. 1980: 215, 357, 923; cf. also Boot 1997c). Alternatively, with a syllable **ma**, the transliteration might lead to **u-chum-al(a)** or *u chum-al*, in which *-al* might be a relational or abstractive suffix (cf. Bricker 1986: Table 19 and 20) while the root *chum* can be found as:

Yucatec:

- chum** árbol de corteza muy fuerte con que se hacían cubos antiguamente;
chu'um (ibid)

³ Three syllabic signs do make up the collocation after the pronoun *u*, namely **chu**, the infix **ba** or **ma**, and the suffix **la**. The infix seems to combine qualities of both T501 **ba** and T502(var) **ma**; an infix is considered to be read either first (e.g. ¹l(infixed)-ts'a-ti for *its'at*) or second (e.g. ts'a-pa(infixed)-ha for *ts'apah*, correctly transliterated as *ts'ap-Ø-ah-Ø*). I have considered the transliterations *u-bach-ul(a)* and *u-mach-ul(a)*, but have not found any convincing proof for the respective roots *bach* and *mach* to be connected with possible vessel types or otherwise being related.

(Barrera Vásquez et al.1980: 114).

Cholti:

chum ayote; calabaza
(Morán 1695 [Hopkins & Hopkins n.d.:16]).

Tsotsil:

ch'um calabaza amarilla
(Delgaty 1973: 18).

Tzeltal:

ch'um calabaza
(Slocum & Gerdel 1971: 137).

Although the entries *ch'um* in Tzotzil and Tzeltal contain a glottalization, it is recorded without in Yucatec, while the entry for Cholti might be questionable. The Yucatec entry which refers to the material used for *cubos* "buckets" is intriguing, although it has to be noted that the ceramic bowl itself is just 10.6 cm. high and has a diameter of only 15 cm.

The collocation '**u-chu-ba/ma?-la**, although a transliteration is still not secure, might refer to the original shape and material of a vessel type already identified as *hay*. The compound *hay* itself possibly finds its origin in the colonial Tsotsil gloss *hay* for "tortilla gourd" (Laughlin 1975: 148; Macleod 1990: 363). This ceramic vessel category might thus have been based in the form of the original material, either a gourd or calabash. The part *hay* might substantiate the fact that the root of the following collocation (either *chu* or *chum?*) indeed refers to a kind of gourd/calabash after which the vessel was modelled.

The information on this specific vessel type continues in the next collocation (A3) with the compound **che-bu** for *cheb*, to be identified with:

Yucatec:

cheb pluma para escribir; puntero para apuntar; pluma o péndola con que se escribe;

cheeb pluma o péndola, aderezada para escribir y pincel [de pintura] de pintor
(Barrera Vásquez et.al., 1980: 86).

This rather unique collocation (also identified independently by Grube, personal communication, May 1997) provides the reference for the most important writing implement of the Maya scribe, the quill or paint brush itself (cf. Reents-Budet 1994: 38-41, 216-221). The complete opening hieroglyphic phrase transliterated as **u-hay, u-chu-b/m-al cheb** thus might inform us about a specific ceramic container for the storage of the quill or paint brush. The pair *u hay, u chu-b/m-al* might be considered the complete description of a vessel type, which before being made ceramically, originally was made of "gourds" or "calabashes".

The hieroglyphic text continues with the name of a female (A4), possibly to be transliterated *ixik wi' balam*, "Lady Root-Jaguar"⁴, the owner of this specific vessel. Her portrait might also be found on the same vessel as the iconography provides a picture of a lady, holding in her right hand a paint container, her face being decorated by a "court attendant". This "court attendant" himself is marked by spots on his body and face, since long recognized as attributes of Hunahpú, and might actually be a representation of one of the (Quiché Maya) hero twins and one of the patrons of the arts and writing in particular (cf. Coe 1977, 1989).

Recently a new Naranjo area Primary Standard Sequence came to my attention (cf. Boot 1997b), which also provides a rare substitution for the vessel type (Figure 4a-b). The P.S.S.⁵ opens with a dedicatory formula (A-D), tentatively to be transliterated as ay-Ø, hoy-Ø, *u-ts'ib-n-ah-al* "he manifests, dedicates/blesses, paint-written is (the vessel type)". The rare vessel type is defined in two collocations (E-F); the first collocation can be transcribed '**u-po-ko-lo**', while the second collocation can be transcribed **che-'e-bu**. For a second time a vessel type substitution provides the name for the most important writing implement, the *cheb*, quill or paint brush. The actual transliteration here might be *che'b* or *che'eb* in which the separately incorporated syllable 'e might provide a pre-consonantal glottal stop or an intermediate (long) vowel stop (cf. Boot 1997a: 4 for another possible

⁴ The name of the female contains the collocation *wi-i*, possibly leading to *wi'*, which in Yucatec Maya is recorded as "raíz como de cebolla, batatas, jícamas y raíz de bejuco, lo grueso de ella que es de comer", but also as "cogollo o renuevo de árbol (como de plátano)" (Barrera Vázquez et.al. 1980: 921-22). It is also the word for "root" in other Maya languages as *Itsá (wi')*, Chortí (*wi'r, wir*), Chol (*witjé, gui-tic/wi-tik, and ul*), and Chontal (*wi te*) (cf. Dienhart 1989: 533-34).

⁵ This Primary Standard Sequence, written on a small ceramic container (cf. note 8) which recently became part of a private collection in the United States, provides several interesting substitutions, which I will describe in detail at another occasion (Boot 1997d). The P.S.S. can be transcribed and transliterated as follows:

A	'a-AY?-ya	ay-Ø	(he) manifests.
B	HOY?-yi	hoy-Ø	blesses.
C	'u-ts'i-bi-		
D	na-ha-la	<i>u-ts'ib-n-ah-al</i>	paint-written is
E	'u-po-ko-lo-		
F	che-'e-bu	<i>u-pokol-che'(e)b</i>	the quill retainer (of)
G	'a-ku-		
H	NIK-TE'	<i>ak-nikte'</i>	Ak Nikte',
I	ya-k'u-HUN-na	<i>y-ah-k'u-hun</i>	the divine book keeper/maker (of)
J	K'AK'-OL-la	<i>k'ak'-ol</i>	K'ak' Ol,
K	K'UL-yo-tsi-		
L	AHAW-wa	<i>k'ul-yots-ahaw</i>	Divine Lord of Yots.

Some short epigraphic comments: The scribe has employed a rare sign for the initial syllable 'a at position A, a hieroglyphic sign which at the moment I have been able to identify only in two other hieroglyphic texts in the whole corpus, namely in the inscriptions of Machaquilá Stone F: C (also independently identified by Christian Prager, personal communication, September 1995) and Seibal Stela 7: B6.

example)⁶.

What about the collocation *u pokol*? The root of the expression *pokol* is *pok* (-*ol* probably is a -*VI* relational suffix, cf. Bricker 1986: Table 20) and might be related to the following entries:

Yucatec:

<i>pok</i> (1)	tizne u hollín;
<i>u pokil kum</i>	tizne de la olla;
<i>u pokmal kum</i>	tizne de la olla;
<i>u sabakil kum</i>	tizne de olla;
<i>pok</i> (2)	pronunciado breve, lavar fregando o fregar lavando así como platos, escudillas, jarros, y cualquier vasija y loza, piedras, maderos, suelo, pies, piernas, cuerpo, manos, y cualquier otra cosa, como no sea ropa ni cabellos;
<i>pokol</i>	las lavasas o aguas que han servido para el aseo de los bancos de moler la masa del pan; las aguas sucias que han servido para el aseo de la vajilla con los restos de la comida que suelen tener (Barrera Vásquez et.al. 1980: 662-664, 707).

Cholti:

<i>poco</i>	lavar (genérico);
<i>pocol</i>	hermoso;
<i>pocolil</i>	hermusura (Morán 1695 [Hopkins & Hopkins n.d.: 35]).

Chorti:

<i>pok</i>	lavar (raíz);
<i>pokb'ir</i>	lavado (participio perfecto) (Pérez Martínez 1994: 72).
<i>pok</i>	wash, rinse, medicinal wash;

⁶ I suggested these possibilities (preconsonantal stop and intermediate [long] vowel stop) in a short discussion of the gloss *mo'l* or *mo'ol* (**mo-'o-la**), part of the name and title expression of a certain individual mentioned at Yaxchilán (Boot 1997a). Recently Stephen Houston (personal communication, June 3 1997) informed me that he, David Stuart and Richard Johnson are working on a paper in which dysharmonic syllabic spelling might lead to vowel length, i.e. **ba-ki** to *baak* (or *ba:k*) and **mu-ti** to *muut* (or *mu:t*). The collocations for *cheb* might provide an interesting parallel: **che-bu** and **che-'e-bu** are both "dysharmonic" and possibly provide both a singular as well as a doubled vowel transliteration *cheb* and *cheeb*. Note in this case the specific entries for Yucatec Maya, in which both a short and a long vowel variant are recorded. Also compare this view to the tentative transliterations *y-uk'ab* (with dysharmonic **bi**) and *y-uk'aab* (with synharmonic **ba**) I have proposed in note 2. More research in this interesting and intriguing phonological area is in need.

<i>pokbir</i>	washed, cleaned, rinsed; (Wisdom 1950: 569).
Tsotsil:	
<i>poquel</i>	lavar (manos, mesa, etc.);
<i>ta j'poc jc'ob</i>	lavo mis manos (Delgaty 1973: 40).
Tseltal:	
<i>poco'abal</i>	agua para lavar manos;
<i>poquel</i>	lavar;
<i>poquet</i>	(la) olla (boca grande) (Slocum & Gerdel 1971: 174).
Proto-Cholan:	
<i>*pok</i>	lavar manos/platos // wash (Chl, Chn, Cht, Chr) (Kaufman & Norman 1984: 129, entry 419).

These entries make it clear that the root *pok* in general can be glossed as "wash"⁷ and in our example combined with *cheb*, the complete phrase *u pokol che'b* might refer to a bowl in which quills or paint brushes were washed and cleaned. Note in this case the Tseltal entry *poquet* for "olla". The Yucatec Maya entry for *pok* as "tizne, hollín" might actually be a derived meaning (a *cheb* became "washed" when dipped in paint, as *pok* substitutes for *sabak* "tinta negra de humo de cierto árbol", Barrera Vásquez et. al. 1980: 707). Special attention should be directed to the Cholti glosses *pocol* "hermoso" and *pocolil* "hermosura", both possibly derived from *poco* "wash". These glosses might indicate that this container might actually be involved not only in "washing" the quill or paint brush, but also in making objects or the body (parts) beautiful ("washing" as "painting")⁸. It is in this sense that the iconography of Kerr #4022 in Figure 1 is of importance; here the face of the lady is "painted" or, if correctly semantically deduced, "washed". To conclude, the vessel type *pokol che'(e)b* clearly falls outside the classifications described by Houston, Stuart and

⁷ Several Maya languages also provide the root *p'o'* for "wash", also Yucatec which defines *p'o'* as "lavar ropa, también es por lavar los cabellos". This definition sets it semantically apart from the root *pok*, which apparently is used for "wash", but specifically not of clothes and hair. The paint brush *che'b/che'eb* could very well be considered a semantically valid instrument to be "washed" as it is neither "clothes" nor "hair". However, in Chorti *pok* is used indiscriminately for both semantic domains (cf. Wisdom 1950: 569).

⁸ Kerr #4669, #5164 (illustrated in Reents-Budet 1994: Fig. 1.3), and the vessel containing the new P.S.S. were more than probably painted by one and the same master painter, possibly Ak Nikte' himself (Boot 1997d). At the moment I lack any information on the dimensions of this ceramic, although I was informed that it was bowl-like and quite small (Marianne Huber, personal communication, March 1997). If the measurements of the *hawa(n)te'* are any indication (relative glyph size), this ceramic possibly might have a diameter of about 12.0 cm. and a height of about 5.0 cm.

Taube and might thus belong to a separate class or category of ceramic retainers, in this case pertaining to scribes and painters.

The hieroglyphic text continues with the name (G-H) *ak nikte'*, the probable owner of this vessel, followed by the relational expression (I) *y-ah-k'u-hun* "the divine book keeper/maker of", itself followed by the name of (J-L) *k'ak' ol k'ul yots ahaw*, "K'ak' Ol, the Divine Lord of Yots", the over-lord of Ak Nikte'. Yots is a polity probably in the vicinity of Naranjo (cf. Boot 1997b). The master painter Ak Nikte' is also named on Kerr #4669 (Kerr 1994: 582, cf. also García Campillo 1995: 619-620, Figura 4), on which the hieroglyphic text informs us he is the owner of a *hawa(n)te'* or "wide dish". The new P.S.S. indicates that Ak Nikte' was also the owner of a *pokol che'(e)b*, a ceramic container probably used in his work as *ah-k'u-hun* "divine book keeper/maker" for the royal house of the polity Yots⁹.

The collocations spelling *u hay u chu-b/m-al cheb* and *u pokol che'(e)b* are unique in the corpus of Maya hieroglyphic writing. At the moment I have only found one other collocation spelling *pokol* (**po-ko-lo**) on a fragment of a green stuccoed vessel from a burial at Tikal (Figure 4c), which only partially has survived.

These rare vessel type collocations containing the noun *cheb* might provide us with further classifications of vessel types. Not only were certain vessel types specifically used for food stuffs (*u lak*, *u hawa(n)te'*, *y-uk'ab*), at least two types (*u hay u chu-b/m-al cheb* and *u pokol che'(e)b*) discussed in this essay might be involved in the "retaining" or the "washing" of writing implements. These rare composite noun constructions both refer to the *cheb*, the Yucatec Maya word for "quill, paint brush" and at one occasion even might refer to the vegetal material of which these retainers were once made.

Their specific proper names indicate that these two vessels were never intended to be associated with food stuffs may have been regularly used. This is important, as it has been noted that some ceramics identified as *u-lak*, *u-hawa(n)te'*, and *y-uk'ab* show extensive tear and wear. Thus although many ceramics were primarily prepared to be gifts for the dead filled with food stuffs, at least some served such a purpose for a prolonged period of time prior to being permanently deposited. The two proper names presented in this essay (*u hay u chu-b/m-al cheb* and *u pokol che'eb*) clearly indicate that besides ceramics specifically manufactured to contain food stuffs, other ceramics were manufactured to retain writing implements and maybe were used as such prior to being deposited. To

⁹ The decipherment of Yots was actually only made possible through this P.S.S. Other examples of this "emblem glyph" can be found on Kerr #4996, Naranjo Stela 21: A5 and Naranjo Stela 21: E2. The main sign in those examples, affixed with syllabic signs *yo* and *tsi*, has always been problematic; recently, García Campillo (1995: 619) even contemplated a straightforward transliteration **MUTUL** (the logographic value for the main sign of the emblem glyphs of Tikal and Dos Pilas, a sign which graphically is quite close), however not accounting for the affixes *yo* and *tsi*. This new P.S.S. does not contain the main sign, but only affixes *yo* and *tsi*. As such it is justified to conclude that the formerly unknown main sign is logographic **YOTS** and the affixes were phonetic complements (**yo-YOTS-tsi**), a mechanism not uncommon to Maya hieroglyphic writing. For a complete discussion, cf. Boot 1997b.

conclude, these two ceramics represent a new category within the Classic Maya classification of ceramic vessel types.

Future research may identify yet other collocations describing specific vessel types (cf. Macleod 1993: 5) and their possible utilitarian function. In this essay I have presented two vessel type collocations which fall outside the (folk) classification of vessel types as presented by Houston, Stuart and Taube in 1989. The functional and semantic domain in which these and other vessel types were apparently used can only be ascertained when we analyze their hieroglyphic texts, if present. The functional quality of hieroglyphic texts on Maya ceramics and the ceramics themselves thus have come full circle.

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(Not to scale)

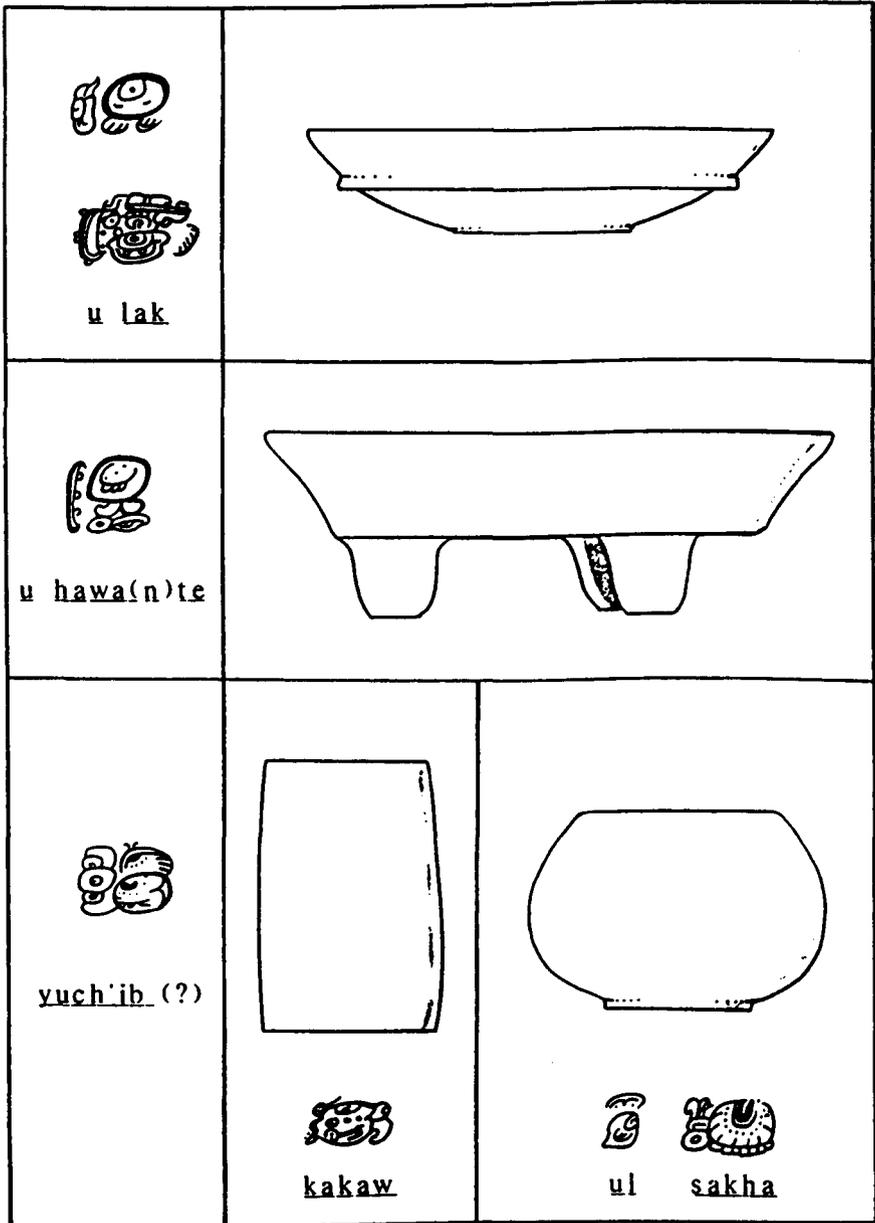


Figure 2: Folk classification of vessel types (after Houston, Stuart, and Taube 1989: Fig. 2).



a



b

Figure 3: *Chocholá vessel containing rare vessel type collocation:* (a) Roll-out photograph of Kerr # 4022 (after Kerr 1990: 303); (b) Drawing of rare vessel type collocation (drawing by the author).



a



b



c

Figure 4: *New Primary Standard Sequence containing rare vessel type collocation:* (a) Roll-out drawing of the P.S.S. (drawing by the author); (b) Enlarged rare vessel type collocation (drawing by the author); (c) Second example of rare vessel type collocation on a green stuccoed vessel, Tikal burial (drawing by the author).