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tiempo suficiente*

Ensayos y narraciones mesoamericanistas  
en homenaje a Alfonso Lacadena García-Gallo

editado por

Harri Kettunen  
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# New Glyphic Appellatives of the Rain God

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**Abstract:** In this paper we present evidence for previously unknown appellatives of the Rain God: *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Chaahk*, *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat* and *K'ahk' Mison Chaahk*. These names describe aspects of the Rain God related to meteorological phenomena, such as lightning and hurricanes. We also provide arguments for the readings of two new logograms **HOP** ('burn') and **KAMIS** ('centipede').

**Resumen:** En este trabajo se presentan evidencias sobre ciertos apelativos, antes desconocidos, del dios de la lluvia: *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Chaahk*, *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat* y *K'ahk' Mison Chaahk*. Estos nombres describen aspectos del dios de la lluvia relacionados con fenómenos meteorológicos como relámpagos y huracanes. Además, planteamos propuestas para leer dos nuevos logogramas, **HOP** ('quemar') y **KAMIS** ('escolopendra, ciempiés').

During the 5<sup>th</sup> European Maya Conference in Bonn in December of 2000, Alfonso Lacadena presented a paper dedicated to the analysis of two glyphic appellatives of the Maya Rain God *Chaahk*: *Yax Ha'al Chaahk* and *Uk'uw Chan Chaahk* (Lacadena 2004). It was part of a broader discussion of the Classic Maya royal names initiated by Stephen Houston and David Stuart (1996) and continued by Nikolai Grube (2002). Houston and Stuart noted that in complex names like “*Chaak* is born from the sun”, “*K'inich* is born in the sky”, “*K'awil* is conjured” or “*K'awil* is born” “preceding glyphs simply provide subtle, adjectival modifications of the god name” (Houston and Stuart 1996: 295). Grube also examined names that include verbal phrases and observed that their structure corresponds to the

basic word order in Mayan languages. He also mentioned a specific subcategory of royal names wherein nouns like *k'ahk'*, 'fire', precede verbs as a part of an emphasizing or topicalizing strategy. Grube considered those verbs suffixed by *-Vw* to be transitive active (see his analysis of "*K'ak' Tiliw Chan Chaak*"; Grube 2002: 329).

Alfonso was the first to suggest that these names in fact include antipassive verbs: "[t]heonyms of this class take the shape of sentences formed by three basic elements: a verb, the noun 'sky' and the name of a god (VERB-SKY-GOD). These appellatives describe actions performed in the sky by the god mentioned. Some of the verbs involved in these actions are suffixed by *-VV<sub>1</sub>w* (in later times shortened as *-V<sub>1</sub>w*), like **ja-sa-wa**, **TIL-wi/ti-li-wi**, **jo-po-wo**. This suffix could be an antipassive morpheme" (Lacadena 2004: 94). Later on, the list of these names was expanded and analyzed in detail by Pierre Robert Colas (2004: 103–112). More or less at the same time, Marc Zender analyzed verbs ending in *-laj* in the same class of theonyms. He suggested that they should be interpreted as affectives (Zender 2001; summarized in Zender 2010), including the verbs *bahlaj/ba[h]laj*, *joplaj* and *yuklaj*.

One of these verbs remained opaque. It appeared in several theonyms with the names of various gods in the monumental and ceramic inscriptions of Xultun, Caracol, Uaxactun, Naranjo and the still unidentified Yootz site. The central sign of the glyphic collocation looks identical to the syllabic sign T559 **tzu** (Knorozov 1952: 113–114). Therefore, it was initially believed to be read **tzu-la-ja** or **tzu-la** and to represent a verb *tzuulaj* (Colas 2004: 115–116) or an affective verb derived from *tzu'-/tzuh-/tzuj-* (Zender 2010: n. 24; Krempel and Matteo 2013: 12). Variation in spelling is not unusual in affective verbs (see, e.g., **BAJ / BAJ-la** and **ba-la-ja / ba-la** in renderings of the name of Bajlaj Chan K'awiil from Dos Pilas; Zender 2010: 2). Later on, Simon Martin noted that on Altar 2 from Naranjo this name is written with a sign that is practically identical to **tzu** but includes a sun element (**K'IN**) (cited in Zender 2010: 13, n. 24). This grapheme was recognized by David Stuart as the logogram **TAAK** (Stuart et al. 1999: II-25). Thus, Marc Zender (2010: n. 24) concluded that the reading could well be *taklaj*.

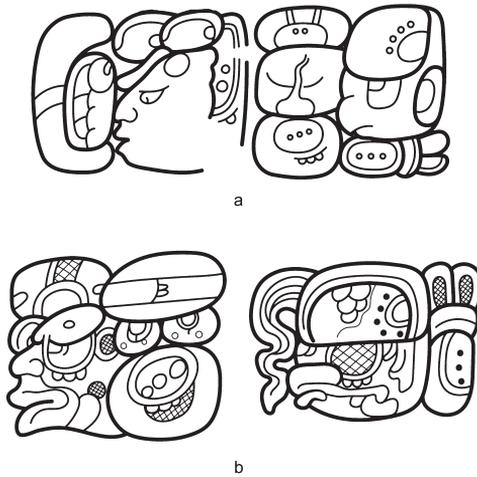


Figure 1. The appellative *Chak Hoplay Kamis* at La Corona: a) Element 33, Hieroglyphic Stairway 2 (drawing by Philipp Galeev), b) Element 56, pE1–pF2 (drawing by Sergei Vepretskii).

## Evidence for the reading HOP

Two recently discovered inscriptions from La Corona provide clues to a different reading of this verb. One of the most famous rulers of La Corona, whose reign began in 689 is best known by his common name, which was recently read as *Chak 'Ak' Paat Kuy* (Houston et al. 2017). On two occasions he bears extended theophoric appellatives.

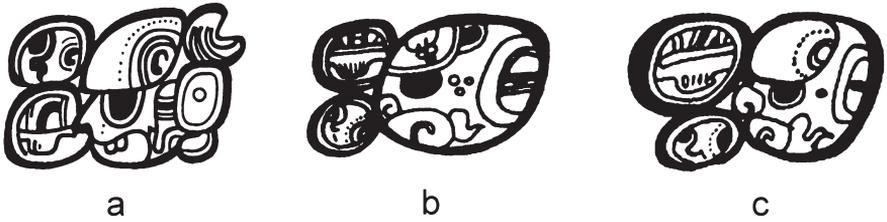
The first example can be found on Element 33 from La Corona found in 2012 (Stuart et al. 2014: 446, fig. 6b). It is a part of the secondary phrase that describes the visit of Kaanul king *Yuhkno'm Yich'aahk K'ahk'* to La Corona in 9.13.3.16.17 8 Kaban 10 Kumk'u (February 1, 696) (Ibid: 440) and ballgame event:

(C5) ?i-HUL-li ha-?i (D5) 18-?u-BAAH-KAN-nu (C6) yu[ku]-no-YICH'AAHK-ki-K'AHK' (D6) K'UH-KAN[?AJAW]-wa (C7) yi-ta-pi-tzi-ja (D7) CHAK-T559-ja-  
“STONE-HEADED CREATURE”-si (E1) CHAK-?AK'-ku[yu] (F1) SAK-WAYIS-si

?i-huli ha?i? Waxaklaju'n ?Ubaah Kaan[u?] Yuhkno[?m] Yich'aahk K'ahk' k'uh[ul]  
Kaan[u?] ?ajaw yita-pitzij Chak ...[l]aj ...is Chak ?Ak' Kuy [Paat] sak wayis

'and then he arrived here, Waxaklaju'n ?Ubaah Kaanu? Yuhkno'm Yich'aahk K'ahk', divine king of Kaanul. He played ball together with ... *Chak ?Ak' Kuy Paat, sak wayis.*'

The theophoric appellative of *Chak ?Ak' Paat Kuy* consists of two parts (Figure 1a). The first one includes the **CHAK** sign above the eroded main sign and a **ja** sign below. Our examination of the inscription in



**Figure 2.** The “Stone-Headed Creature” in the nominal clause of “Animal Skull” of Tikal: a) Vase K772, b) Vase K 1261, c) Vase MT-217 (drawings by Dmitri Beliaev after photographs by Justin Kerr and the Epigraphic Atlas of Peten Project, CEMYK).

the bodega of the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala showed that additional vegetation-like elements are part of the internal elements of T559. The second part contains a sign in the form of a zoomorphic creature with a large eye, a stone-like element in the forehead and a “celt” element on the right side, accompanied by a **si** syllabogram below it.

In 2015 a new sculpted block (Element 56) was found during the excavations of the La Corona palace (Barrientos et al. 2016: 119, fig. 10). It is an all-glyphic block, similar in dimensions, format and style to Element 33. It was probably part of a longer text because the initial date and phrases are missing. The inscription mentions *Chak Ak’ Paat Kuy*’s accession to kingship on 9.12.17.8.1 12 Imix 4 Zac (September 9, 689) (pD6b–pC7a). The king’s name phrase again includes additional theonyms. The common rendering **CHAK-<sup>2</sup>AK’-PAAT-[ku]yu** is found at pF2–pE3, preceded by the same name we saw in the inscription on Element 33 but written in a different way (Figure 1b). Block pE2 consists of the stone-headed creature followed by a **si** syllabogram, but in this case, the details are much clearer and we observe skeletal traits and a large hatched (i.e. black) eye.

Until now, the “Stone-Headed Creature” sign did not have a reading. Although this sign is not very frequent, it appears in several other contexts. One of them is the theophoric appellative of “Animal Skull” (*K’ihnich Waaw?*) from Tikal. The 22<sup>nd</sup> king of Tikal nicknamed “Animal Skull” (Martin and Grube 2000: 40–41) is known from numerous inscriptions on plates and vases. Several of them, including K772 (Kerr 1989: 118), K1261 (Martin and Grube 2000: 40) and MT-218 (Culbert 1993: fig. 50e), contain the “Stone-Headed Creature” glyph. In the majority of the examples it forms part of the



a

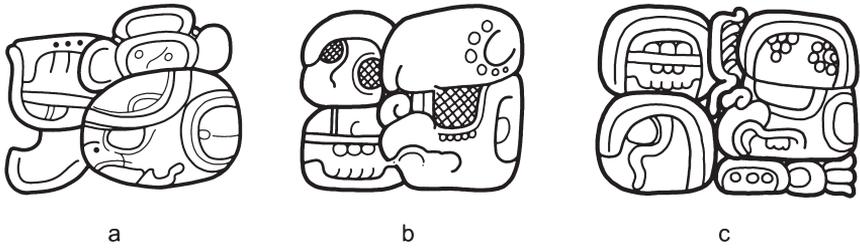


b

**Figure 3.** Vase MT-218: *a)* The sequence *Chan Kab ?Akuuy Kamis*, *b)* the spelling *ka-KAMIS* (photographs by the Epigraphic Atlas of Peten Project, CEMYK).

sequence **CHAN-KAB**–“STONE-HEADED CREATURE” (Figure 2), but on the fragment of the vase MT-218, which was recovered in Tikal Burial 196, **KAB-CHAN** is followed by the syllabic sequence **?a-ku-yi** (Figure 3a).

Another context is Glyph X5 of the Lunar Series (see a recent overview in Grube 2018: 9–10). In the early examples it is often combined with a **mi** sign (Figure 4a). Another small sign that can be attached to the “Stone-Headed Creature” sign consists of an element that looks like a **pu** sign and a scroll element. In several Late Classic inscriptions (Quirigua Stela F, Ceibal Hieroglyphic Stairway and Yaxchilan Hieroglyphic Stairway 3, Step 3) it is preceded by the **CHAN-KAB** combination we saw earlier (Figure 4b–c). The most complex form of Glyph X5 can be found on Stela U from Pusilha and includes the **?a-ku-yi** sequence that is identical to the one on MT-218.



**Figure 4.** Glyph X5 of the Lunar Series: a) Brussels Stela, A13, b) Ceibal, Hieroglyphic Stairway, Tablet 1, E2, c) Quirigua, Stela F, west side, D7 (drawings by Nikolai Grube 2018: 10, fig. 17).

Several examples of the “Stone-Headed Creature” glyph include phonetic complements that provide a key to its reading. Four examples (two from La Corona, Quirigua Stela F and Yaxchilan Hieroglyphic Stairway 3, Step 3) feature a syllabic sign **si** below (Figure 4c). Grube suggested that it marks the glyph as referring to an inalienable body part (Grube 2018: 9). However, if **si** is optional—and in the majority of the cases we do not see it—it should be a final phonetic complement.

The inscription on the ceramic fragment MT-218 from Tikal includes a clear example of the syllabogram **ka** preceding the “Stone-Headed Creature” sign (Figure 3b). We suggest that the comb-like element attached to its forehead on Stela F from Quirigua is also a **ka** syllabogram (Figure 4c). One more possible example of a preceding **ka** sign might be found on Stela 35 from Piedras Negras, although its preservation is not as good.

What creature could be represented by the “Stone-Headed” sign? It is always marked by the “shiner” (**?LE?M**) element at the back of its head. Sometimes it looks like a bird, similar to the logogram **TZ’IKIN**, but variants from La Corona Element 56 and the vase K772 show a distinct motif. Both instances include skeletal traits, particularly a large black eye, fleshless jaw and pitted lines typical of bone (Figure 1b, 2a). In Maya writing, these traits are associated not only with the underworld and dead beings, but also with centipedes and insects (Stone and Zender 2011: 179, 189).

Initial complementation with **ka** and final complementation with **si** give us a logogram **KA...S**. Various dictionaries of Ch’orti’ include entries for *kamis* ‘centipede’ (Pérez Martínez et al. 1996: 92; Ojronerob’ Ch’orti’ 2000: 41; Hull 2016: 188–189). Kerry Hull

provides two separate entries for *kamis* / *kames*. One is translated as ‘comalío, ciempiés (de la tierra), a kind of centipede’ (Hull 2016: 188) and the other as ‘rosquillo, a kind of centipede’ (Ibid: 189). He further explains that “[t]here are two kinds of *kamis*, one that eats the cornfield and one that does not” (Ibid: 188).

We suggest that the “Stone-Headed Creature” sign is a logogram **KAMIS**. The main term for centipede in the Maya inscriptions is **CHAPAHT** (Grube and Nahm 1994: 702; Boot 2000: 191–193; Kettunen and Davis 2004: 2–15) and **KAMIS** may refer to a distinct kind or species. It is worth noting that in Charles Wisdom’s dictionary we do not find the term *kamis*, but there is an entry for *chapaht* (Wisdom n.d.: 694).

Going back to the theophoric appellative of *Chak ’Ak’ Paat Kuy* on Element 56, its first part also starts with a **CHAK** logogram, but thereafter we see a sequence of syllabic signs: a “Thick-Lipped Head” or **ho**<sup>1</sup> followed by the syllabograms **la** and **ja**, providing a spelling **CHAK-ho-po-la-ja**, *Chak Hoplaj* (Figure 1b). As Sergei Vepretskii noted, this is a clear substitution pattern that implies that in this context the sign T559 has to be read **HOP**. Thus, the theophoric appellative of *Chak ’Ak’ Paat Kuy* is based on the affective verb *hoplaj* and is read *Chak Hoplaj Kamis*. It refers to the aspect of a specific mythical centipede.

Another substitution pattern can be found in the extended name of *Kokaaj? K’awiil* who ruled at Naranjo from 784 to 810, previously known as Itzamnaaj K’awil. The full chain of theophoric appellatives of *Kokaaj? K’awiil* was recorded on Naranjo Stela 35 (Graham 1978: 92) and consists of three elements. The first occupies blocks E3 and F3. Its closing part (**CHAN-na-YOPAAT-ti**) is a reference to *Yopaat*, a specific aspect of the Rain God. The reading *Yopaat* was suggested by David Stuart in 1999 (Martin and Grube 2000: 231). Iconographic evidence from San Bartolo (Taube et al. 2010: 70–71) provides a basis for a straightforward interpretation of the theonymic appellative *Yopaat* as consisting of the nouns *yop[ol]* ‘leaf’ and *’aat* ‘penis’, given that the deity who holds the infant maize baby in his hands (individual P15) appears adorned with an oversized leaf hanging from his belt. The **YOPAAT** logogram is represented by a penis sign topped by

<sup>1</sup> Evidence for the reading of “Thick-Lipped Head” as **ho** (with glottal spirant) and not **jo** (with velar spirant) will be presented in a forthcoming paper (Davletshin n.d.).

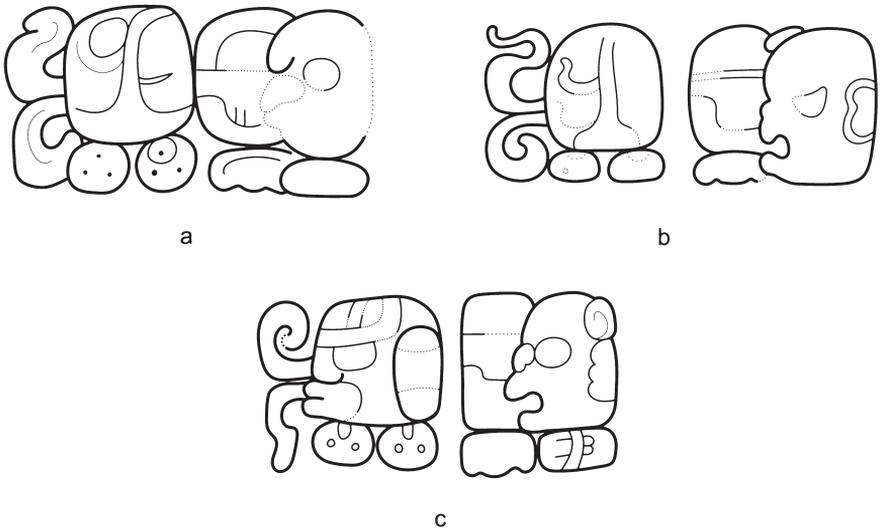


Figure 5. The appellative *K'ahk' Hoplay Chan Chaahk* in Naranjo inscriptions: a) Stela 35, E4–F4, b) Stela 12, G13–F14, c) Stela 14, D11–C12 (drawings by Sergei Vepretskii).

cloudy scrolls.<sup>2</sup> The initial part of the name phrase of *Kokaaj? K'awiil* on Stela 35 includes three graphemes: the logogram **NAAH**, an eroded sign and the specific sign which is similar to the syllabogram **lu**, but has three dots inside. It is used as a main sign of the royal title at Uxul (Grube 2005: 94, 96, fig. 6). Phonetic substitution in the titles of the sculptors on Calakmul stelae 51 and 52 indicates that the **lu**-like sign in question should be read **KUUM** or **KU<sup>2</sup>M** (Martin et al. 2015).<sup>3</sup> The second appellative from Stela 35 (E4–F4; Figure 5a) starts with the collocation **K'AHK'-HOP-la** followed by a reference to the rain god *Chaahk* (**CHAN-na-CHAAHK-ki**). The third part of this long sequence (E5–F5) is the common **?KOKAAJ K'AWIIL**.

<sup>2</sup> In the present paper we abstain from the discussion whether *Chaahk* and *Yopaat* are two aspects of the same deity or different entities and unite them under the general category “Rain God”.

<sup>3</sup> This identification is confirmed by the text of the Naranjo Stela 8, commissioned by *Kokaaj? K'awiil* (Graham and von Euv 1975: 28), where the same theophoric appellative was recorded in a slightly different way (blocks C10–D10, E1). C10 opens with the head of the Tonsured Maize God, a syllabic sign **na** (Zender 2014: 6–7). It is followed by a well-preserved **ku** syllabogram placed on top of a supposed **KU<sup>2</sup>M** sign. The theonym *Yopaat* is found in a separate position (E1) and depicts the head of the rain deity with cloud scrolls on his head and holding an eccentric in his hand (Stone and Zender 2011: 159). The sky sign in D10 is written with the head of a celestial bird.

The same chain can also be found on Naranjo Stela 14 (Graham and von Euw 1975: 38) after the reference to the accession of *Kokaaj? K'awiil*, whose common name can be found in D12 (Figure 6). D10 is rather unclear in Ian Graham's drawing, but our photos taken in the bodega of the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala City in 2016 show that the glyph block starts with the logogram **NAAH** followed by a possible **KU<sup>2</sup>M** sign and, in final position, with a syllabogram **ma** (again providing support for the reading **KU<sup>2</sup>M**). It is followed by **CHAN-na-YOPAAT** in C11 (**YOPAAT** written with the head sign). The theophoric appellation is read *Naah Ku<sup>2</sup>m Chan Yopaat* 'Yopaat is the First Egg(?) in the Sky'.<sup>4</sup>



Figure 6. Theophoric names of *Kokaaj? K'awiil* on Naranjo Stela 14 (photograph by the Epigraphic Atlas of Peten Project, CEMYK).

The most interesting are blocks D11 and C12 (Figure 5b). The latter is clearly read **CHAN-na-CHAAHK-ki**. D11 starts with the fire sign **K'AHK'** and ends with **la**, but the central sign does not seem to be the **HOP** logogram, but a head sign. The inspection of the fragments of the original monument preserved in the bodega of the National Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology in Guatemala City in 2016 showed that this head is the syllabic sign **ho**. It is marked by thick elongated lips, a large eye and a "celt" element on the forehead. Another ovoid sign with two out curved lines is inscribed into the back part of the **ho** head. There is no doubt that it is a **po** sign, thus providing a syllabic spelling **ho-po** that substitutes for the **HOP** logogram.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Ch'orti' *ku'm* 'egg' (Hull 2016: 215), 'egg, testicle, any round or ovoid fruit' (Wisdom n.d.: 604); Ch'ol <*ajcum*> 'camote' (Aulie and Aulie 2009: 4).



**Figure 7.** Theophoric appellatives including *Hoplaj* in inscriptions on ceramic vessels: a) Vase K4572, b) Vase K9271, c) Plate K4669, d) Vase K4997 (drawings by Sergei Vepretskii after photographs by Justin Kerr).

The full sequence of titles of *Kokaaj? K'awiil* is read *Naah Ku'm Chan Yopaat K'ahk' Hopla[j] Chan Chaahk Kokaaj? K'awiil* and can be spelt in two different ways:

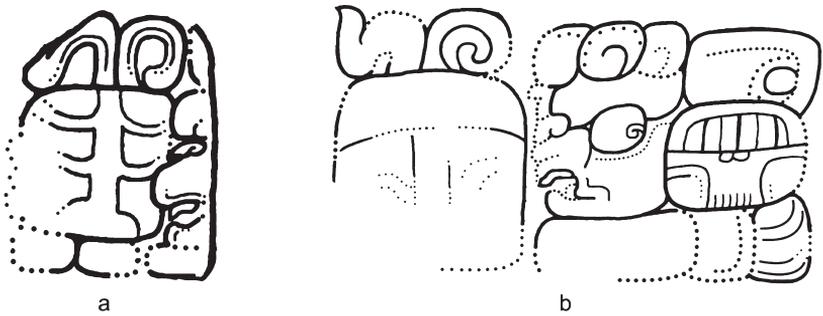
- (1) NAAH-ku-KU'M CHAN-na-YOPAAT-ti K'AHK'-HOP-la CHAN-na-CHAAHK-ki ?KOKAAJ K'AWIIL (Stela 35) and
- (2) NAAH-KU'M-ma CHAN-na-YOPAAT K'AHK'-ho-po-la CHAN-na-CHAAHK-ki ?KOKAAJ-K'AWIIL (Stela 14).

Stela 12, bearing another important text of *Kokaaj? K'awiil* (Graham and von Euw 1975: 36), mentions the appellative *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Chaahk* twice (C13-B14a and G13-F14). In both cases it is written using the **HOP** logogram (Figure 5b).

Another version of the same appellative is recorded on Naranjo Altar 2 (Grube 2004: 208, fig. 13). The last date in the text is 1 Imix 19 Suutz' (9.17.19.9.1 or April 9, 790) (Grube 2004: 207–209). Surprisingly, the sign that should be read **HOP** looks exactly like the logogram **TAAK** (T559 with an infixed **K'IN** element).

### Other theophoric appellatives with the verb *hoplaj*

Another aspect of the Rain God—*Yopaat*—is also associated with the affective verb *hoplaj*. Two tall cylindrical vases (Zacatel Cream Polychrome, Panela variety) K4572 (Kerr 1994: 555) and K9271 (Kerr n.d.: No. 9271) were created in the workshop of *Baaxwitz* (Xultun) king *Yax We'en Chan K'ihnich* (Matteo and Krempel 2011; Krempel and Matteo



**Figure 8.** The name *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat* in the inscriptions from Uaxactun: a) Stela 7, pB12, b) Stela 13, A9 (drawings by Alexandr Safronov).

2013). His extended name phrase includes an additional theonym, *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat*, written as **K'AHK'-HOP-la CHAN-na yo-YOPAAT-ti** (K4572; Figure 7a) and **K'AHK'-HOP[CHAN]-la yo-YOPAAT-ti** (K9271; Figure 7b, note unusual ligature of the **HOP** and **SKY** logograms). In both cases, the final **ja** syllable is omitted due to either underspelling or possible phonological changes.

Another example is found at Uaxactun. Working on the drawing and analysis of the Uaxactun monumental inscriptions, Dmitri Beliaev and Alexandr Safronov reconstructed the dates of birth and accession of a previously unknown Uaxactun king. He is the protagonist of Stela 7 (Graham 1986: 151–152) and events from his life were described in a lengthy but fragmented inscription on the sides of this sculpture (Beliaev and Safronov 2018). On the right side, where his birth date, 8 Ix 7 Wo (9.17.0.1.14, February 23, 771), is found, the name is not preserved. The left side, where the Period Ending of 9.19.0.0.0 is described, contains the nominal glyphs **K'AHK'-HOP-la** (pB12a) and the rests of the sign that represents the name of the Rain God (pB12b) (Figure 8a). Remains of the same sequence, **K'AHK'-HOP-la**, can be seen on the right side, after the inauguration date 9.18.1.16.0 2 Ajaw 8 Sak (August 21, 792).

This ruler was responsible for the production of Stela 13 dated to AD 830 (Graham 1986: 163), where his full name was recorded. The erosion and unusual format of the inscription did not permit its proper understanding until 2015 when, while working with the originals of the rubbings of the monument during the Bratislava

Maya Meeting in the Comenius Bratislava University, Dmitri Beliaev identified the name of the local ruler in position A9 (Figure 8b). It consists of the fire logogram **K'AHK'** on top of an eroded rectangular sign. The analysis of night-time photos by Carlos Pallán as well as a personal inspection of the stela in the field (August, 2018) showed that this rectangular sign features vegetation elements, just like those found in other instances of the **HOP** sign. To the right, we see the head of the rain deity with scrolls on its head, complemented by a **ti** syllabogram, thus pointing out the reading **YOPAAT**. Usually, this variant of the logogram **YOPAAT** has a hand holding a stone or axe, but in this case the hand is covered by a **CHAN** logogram in the lower left corner, so the stone element seems to be placed on top of the sky sign. Hence, the text on Stela 13 is read:

(A1) 7-<sup>2</sup>AJAW (A2) ...-CHAK-<sup>2</sup>AT-ta (A3) <sup>2</sup>u-10-PIK (A4) yi-<sup>2</sup>ILA-la-ja  
 (A5) <sup>2</sup>o-[lo]mo (A6) ka-...-... (A7) <sup>2</sup>OCH-K'IN-ni KAL-TE<sup>2</sup> (A8) <sup>2</sup>u-K'AL-TUN-ni  
 (A9) K'AHK'-HOP-... [CHAN]YOPAAT-ti (A10) <sup>2</sup>u-...-... (A11) <sup>2</sup>AJ-...-...-ma

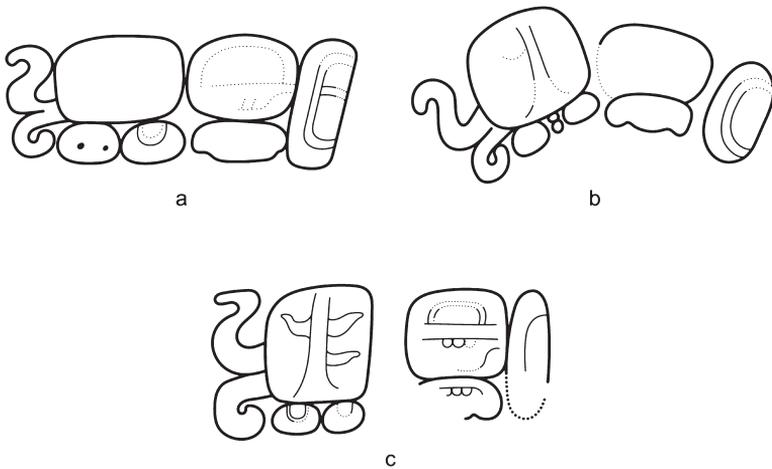
*huk* <sup>2</sup>Ajaw [huuxlaju<sup>2</sup>n] Chakat <sup>2</sup>u-laju<sup>2</sup>n-pik y-ilaj <sup>2</sup>Olom Ka... <sup>2</sup>ochk'in kal[o<sup>2</sup>m]te<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>2</sup>u-k'altuun K'ahk' Hop[laj] Chan Yopaat <sup>2</sup>u-... <sup>2</sup>Aj ...m

'On the day 7 Ajaw 13 Sip, tenth *baktun*, he saw it, *Olom Ka...*, the western emperor. He presented the stone, *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat*, ... he from ...'

A similar theophoric appellative including the name *Yopaat* appears on the plate K4669 (Kerr 1994: 582). This *jawte'* plate belonged to <sup>2</sup>Ahk Nikte<sup>2</sup>, a court official (<sup>2</sup>ahk'uhu<sup>2</sup>n) of *K'ahk' Yohl K'ihnich*, king of *Yootz* (Boot 1999: 40). The long nominal clause of the ruler also includes **CHAK-HOP-la-ja CHAN-na-YOPAT-ta** (Figure 7c). In this case we see the same reference to the action of *Yopaat* in the sky, but it is preceded by a *chak* qualifier like in the case of *Kamis* at La Corona.

A rare example of the names of this type can be observed on the vase K4997 (Kerr 1994: 639), an unprovenanced ceramic bowl. Its short inscription describes it as a clay vessel (<sup>2</sup>u-jaay) of an otherwise unknown lord named **K'AHK'-HOP-la CHAN-na-K'IHNICH**, *Kahk' Hopla[j] Chan K'ihnich* (Figure 7d). It is remarkable that the actor of this phrase is not a centipede or one of the storm deities, but the sun god *K'ihnich* <sup>2</sup>Ajaw.

Nikolai Grube identified the sequence *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan* as a part of the name of Caracol lord *K'ihnich Tobil Yopaat* (Grube 2002: 344). He considered it to be read **#tzu-la**, spelling the word *tzuul* 'dog',



**Figure 9.** The appellative *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Le'm* in inscriptions from Caracol: a) Altar 13, E–F, b) Altar 13, W–X, c) Stela 19, H7–G8 (drawings by Sergei Vepretskii).

and suggested that it was a reference to the ‘Fire Dog’ that is represented in the Dresden Codex. However, a careful examination of the photos of these two inscriptions demonstrated that we are dealing with an extended theophoric appellative, whose structure is similar to the previously analyzed compounds. The unusual thing is that the actor of the phrase was not a supernatural being. The photos of the first passage containing this name on Altar 13 (E–F) shows traces of the sign for “Celt” or  $?LE^?M^5$  (Figure 9a). Therefore, we transliterate this name as **K'AHK'-HOP-la CHAN-na- $?LE^?M$** . This sequence can be found again in the same inscription (W–X; Figure 9b) and on Stela 19 (H7–G8; Figure 9c).

### Lightning aspects of the Rain God

The names *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Chaahk*, *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Yopaat* and the less frequent *Chak Hoplaj Chan Yopaat*, *Chak Hoplaj Chan K'ihnich* and *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan Le'm* belong to a group that also includes the name of Ruler 14 of Copan, who is commonly referred to as *K'ahk' Hoplaj Chan K'awiil*. Simon Martin and Nikolai Grube (2000: 206) were the first to relate his name to that of one of the rain gods or “*chaacs*” of the Yucatec Maya recorded by Villa Rojas in the 1930s. However,

<sup>5</sup> The reading  $?LE^?M$  was proposed by David Stuart (2010: 291–294) but is still under discussion. Another possible value is  $?SAS$  as proposed by Alexandre Tokovinine.

they relied on an erroneous transcription of the name as *Hopop Caan Chac* (Thompson 1970: 255). Based on this, Marc Zender proposed that “[t]he -VC<sub>2</sub> reduplication in Hopop Kaan Chak (< \**jop-op ká’an cháak*) suggests an affective derivation” (Zender 2010: 10). The revised Mexican edition of the work by Villa Rojas includes this name as “*hohop-caan-chac* (el relampagueante-chac-celestial) el que ocasiona el relampagueo” (Villa Rojas 1978: 293). The form *hohop* is a typical example of Yucatec affective derivation; compare *hohopáankil* ‘flicker (light)’; *hohopkil* ‘flammable’ (Bricker et al. 1998: 111).

In his discussion of the root #*jop*, Zender commented that “there are no relevant Ch’olan-Tzeltalan cognates beyond (possibly) Ch’olti’ *hopmez*”. However, Chontal preserved this root with a very similar meaning (*jop* ‘picante’; *Tä’ jop ni ich jini* ‘Ese chili es muy picante’. *Jop tan cä jut* ‘Me arden los ojos’ [Keller and Luciano 1997: 139]; *hop* ‘peppery’ [Knowles 1984: 424]). Close semantic connections between Chontal and Yukatecan words can be seen if we compare it not only with contemporary Yucatec, Mopan, Itzaj and Lacandon cognates (Yucatec *hop* ‘revive fire’ [Bricker et al. 1998: 111]; Mopan *jop* ‘prender / light’ [Hofling 2011: 221], *joop* ‘arder, soplar, sonar (fuego), burn, sound (fire)’ [Hofling 2011: 223]); Itzaj *jop* ‘prender, hacer llama, light, make flame’ [Hofling and Tesucún 1997: 320]; Lacandon *jo’par* ‘prenderlo, be lit’ [Hofling 2014: 160]) but also include Colonial Yucatec glosses from the “Calepino de Motul” <*hoplac*> ‘cosa que se escuece o quema como ají, mostaza etc.’ / ‘thing that stings and burns as chili, mustard, etc.’, <*hoplancil*> ‘escocer así la boca o la lengua con chile, etc.’ / ‘to burn in this manner the tongue with chili, etc.’ (Ciudad Real 1995: 351).

In our opinion, the best translation of the appellatives that feature the sequence *K’ahk’ Hoplaj Chan Chaahk / Yopaat* is ‘As for Fire, *Yopaat / Chaahk* is Burning in the Sky’ We consider that the majority of appellatives involving the verb *hoplaj* represent various aspects of the Rain God and related phenomena. The meaning of *Chak Hoplaj Chan Yopaat* (literally ‘*Yopaat* is burning red in the Sky’) probably refers to an association of lightning with the color red, which is attested among various Mayan groups. Based on contemporary folklore, Staller and Stross indicated that the red lightning is considered to be the most powerful of the lightning deities. For example, in Bachajon Tzeltal tales, Red Lightning Bolt was successful in opening

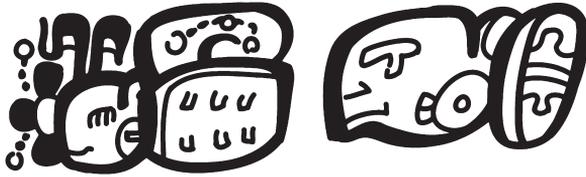


Figure 10. Name glyph of *K'ahk' Mison Chaahk* in the Dresden Codex, page 67a (drawing by Albert Davletshin after a digital photograph by the Saxon State and University Library Dresden; <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/werkansicht/dlf/2967/71/0/>).

the rock mountain in which maize was hidden while others failed. Red lightning is stronger than green lightning among the Cancuc Tzeltal, Ch'ol and Pokomchi' (Staller and Stross 2013: 186–189).

In his description of the beliefs of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Maya of Quintana Roo, Villa Rojas noted that there were other numina responsible for various types of rain and lightning, besides the four major aspects of the Rain God:

Cada uno de estos otros es considerado como responsable de alguna clase de lluvia o de ciertos truenos y relámpagos. Así: el *ah-thoxon-caan-chaac* (“*Chaac* repartidor del cielo”) produce la lluvia fina y persistente; el *bulen-caan chaac* o “*chaac* que causa inundación” es el que trae aguaceros torrenciales”; el *hohop-caan-chaac*, o “*chaac* encendedor del cielo” es el causante de relámpago; el *mizen-caan-chaac*, o “*chaac* barredor del cielo”, es el que se ocupa de limpiar el cielo después de las lluvias. (Villa Rojas 1985: 180)

It is worth mentioning that one more of these variants has his counterpart in the hieroglyphic texts. On page 67 of the Dresden Codex (D67a.3), the Rain God is represented walking armed with spear and shield and holding an unidentified object in his right hand. This object looks like a net or sack, half-painted with blue, and *K'awiil* is depicted inside it. The accompanying text explains the scene: **JOY-ja K'AWIIL mi-K'AHK'-k'a-so-no CHAAHK-ki 'EK'-no-KAN-na ?-?AJAN** (Figure 10).

All other sections of this *t'ol* (D65–69a.1) mention various aspects of Rain God (*'Ehm Kan Chaahk*, *Ha'al 'Ook Chaahk*, *Jo Kan Chaahk*, *'Ek' Xib Chaahk*, *'Ajan Chaahk*, *Bolon 'Okte' Chaahk* etc.). So, **mi-K'AHK'-k'a-so-no CHAAHK-ki** should also describe a particular aspect of his. We suggest that the reading order should be reinterpreted as **K'AHK'-k'a-mi-so-no CHAAHK-ki** and transcribed as *K'ahk' Mison Chaahk* or “Fire Whirlwind Chaahk” (cf. Classic Yucatec <mizon, mozon> ‘remolino o tormelino’ [Ciudad Real 1995: 522], Itzaj *mison* ‘remolino de

viento. whirlwind' [Hofling and Tesucún 1997: 446], Mopan *mison-ʔik'* 'remolino de aire, tornado, whirlwind, tornado' [Hofling 2011: 308], stemming from the root *mis-* that evolved from proto-Mayan *\*mehs* 'broom' [Brown and Wichmann 2004: 174]). Although in the contemporary dictionaries the noun *mison* 'whirlwind, tornado' is limited only to Yucatecan languages, Yuriy Polyukhovych (2009) identified the spelling **mi-so-na**, possibly in the name of a way, in the text on the Late Classic vase K1811, which is now at the de Young Museum in San Francisco.

The fifth block, **ʔIK'-no-KAN-na**, should refer to some meteorological phenomenon. We suggest that the **no** syllable is used to render *nok* with the elision of the final /k/ before *kan* (*\*kaʔan*) 'sky'. The root *nok-* is found in Yucatecan languages with the meaning 'cloudy': Yucatec *nóokoy* 'cloudy' (Bricker et al. 1998: 199), Itzaj *nokoy* 'nublado, oscuro, cloudy, foggy, dark' (Hofling and Tesucún 1997: 476), Mopan *nokoy* 'nublado, cloudy, foggy', *nokoytal* 'nublarse, get cloudy' (Hofling 2011: 326), and especially Lacandon *noʔkar* 'nublarse, get cloudy' (Hofling 2014: 239). Hence, the whole passage could be transcribed as [ʔu]-joyaj *Kʔawiil Kʔahkʔ Mison Chaahk ʔikʔ no[k] kan ʔajan*, 'Fiery Whirlwind *Chaahk* bound *Kʔawiil*, black cloudy sky, [many] young maize cobs'.

## Final comments

The reading of the logogram **HOP** shows that the affective verb *hoplaj* was quite frequent in Classic Maya onomastics. It was used in theonyms related to aspects of the Rain God (*Chaahk* and/or *Yopaat*) as lightning. We believe that *Kʔawiil* (like in Copan) or *Leʔm* (like in Caracol) in the theonyms refer to lightning, too. The association of *Kʔawiil* with lightning and rain is well known (see overview in Taube 1992: 73–79). In Cholan languages, *lem* is also related to lightning (Stuart 2010: 291) like in Choltil *<ulem chahac>* 'relámpago, resplandor de rayo' (Morán 1935[1695]: 56) or Chontal *lemchawäc* 'relámpago, rayo' (Keller and Luciano 1997: 148).

The appellative *Kʔahkʔ Hoplaj Chan Kʔihnich* ('As for Fire, *Kʔihnich* is Burning in the Sky'), although structurally identical to those referring to the Rain God and lightning, shows distinct semantics. It probably describes the powerful heat of the Sun God. It is also quite

likely that the name *Chak Hoplaj Kamis* ('Centipede is Burning Red') is also connected to the Sun God, since Taube (2003: 410–413) demonstrated that among the ancient Maya the centipedes were closely associated with sun.

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