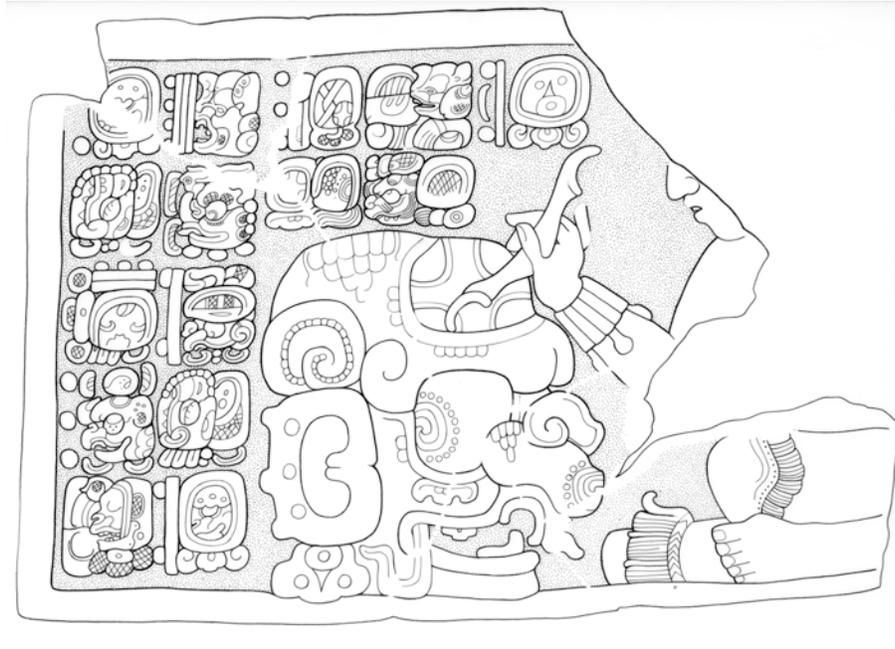


2012 Maya Meetings Symposium Beyond Glyphs: Ancient Maya Inscription as Literature



The 2012 Maya Meetings in Antigua will be the first international conference devoted to the topic of ancient Maya literature. After decades of hard work at deciphering Maya hieroglyphs from ca 300-900 AD, we are left with thousands of texts written in Classic Mayan. How do we go about studying these sources as true texts? What were the different genres of writing, and how did they vary over time and space? How did scribes design their texts rhetorically and visually to convey and highlight information? How does the ancient Maya literary tradition relate to later literary expressions from the early colonial period and after?

Please join us in Antigua, Guatemala for what will be a compelling series of workshops and lectures on the cutting edge of Maya research.

**Thursday, March 15
Casa Santo Domingo
Business Conference Center**

**2012 Maya Meetings Symposium
Beyond Glyphs: Ancient Maya Inscription as Literature**

**8:30-9:00 am
Registration**

**9:00 am
Welcome Remarks Dr. David Stuart
2012 Schele Award Presentation to Arquitecto Federico Fahsen**

**9:30-10:15 am
Dr. Federico Fahsen
Keynote Speaker**

Federico Fahsen holds a BA in architecture and a Master in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Southern California. He is an accomplished professor in both Universidad del Valle and Francisco Marroquín, a business consultant and a former diplomat. He has been director of the Guatemalan Institute of Tourism (INGUAT), Vice-minister of External Relations, and Ambassador of Guatemala in the United States. Amidst all these activities, Federico Fahsen has found time to dedicate himself to the study of Mayan hieroglyphic texts. His contributions to Mayan epigraphy include works on the early inscriptions of Tikal and Uaxactún, texts of Quiriguá and the preclassic sculptures of Kaminaljuyú. He has received the Order of Pop from Francisco Marroquín University and the National Cultural Patrimony Award from the Government of Guatemala in 2003. The Mesoamerica Center is honored to have Federico Fahsen as the recipient of the 2012 Schele Award for his immense contributions to the field of Mesoamerican Studies.

10:15-11:00 am

Exploring Ancient Maya Textscape

Dr. Simon Martin

University of Pennsylvania Museum

Most complex societies, throughout the world, have sought to preserve the ephemera of their ideas and actions in durable and replicable form. They have developed mark-making into systems of encoding, ranging from art traditions rich in iconic representation to fully conventional forms of writing, each fulfilling this desire to capture thought and language. Narrative—the expressive form that encapsulates the relationship between of time and human experience—is one of their most important subjects. This talk will set narrative communication within a wider theoretical context and investigates how the ancient Maya exploited the differing potential of art and writing to produce and reproduce stories. It is argued that what we perceive through modern iconographic and epigraphic study are portions of an ancient “textscape”—here defined as the collective repository of stories, and knowledge about stories, that helps to define any cultural community.

11:00- 11:45 am

Life is a Maize Plant and Time is a Burden:

Principles of Conceptual Metaphor in Maya Literary Genres

Dr. Frauke Sachse

University of Bonn

Conceptual metaphors are key to understanding patterns of ideology and cultural logic. The expression of one semantic domain in terms of another (e.g. George Lakoff's and Mark Johnson's famous example of 'argument is war') encodes specific views about the world and shapes the way we communicate and interact within society.

Despite its relevance, metaphorical language remains a largely overlooked subject within the field of Maya Studies. While some research has been done on the structure and meaning of diphastic expressions, the function of conceptual metaphors and the guiding principles of ontological mappings across semantic domains in Mayan languages have to date not been systematically studied. The difficulty of identifying metaphorical expressions constitutes a central problem for understanding indigenous texts. All too often, translations of concepts remain literal and hermeneutical interpretations based on these translations have lead to distorted reconstructions of Maya cultural history. This paper will analyse the stylistic devices and discourse

patterns, which encode metaphorical concepts in colonial K'iche'an text sources from Highland Guatemala. Drawing on textual data from the *Popol Vuh*, various *títulos*, divinatory calendars, dance dramas and notarial documents, it will be shown how certain cultural metaphors can be identified across literary genres, languages, and time. The analysis will focus on tropes and semantic concepts that can be demonstrated to have their origin in the literary and narrative traditions of the Classic Maya time.

11:45 am-12:30 pm

When is Glyphic Narrative Poetry?

The Case for Large-Scale Structures in Classic Maya Literature

Dr. Michael Carrasco

This paper posits the importance of large-scale structures to Classic Maya literature and poetics. Building on the verse and discourse analysis of Dell Hymes, Kathryn Josserand, and Nicholas Hopkins, Dr. Carrasco analyzes a selection of narratives, primarily from the site of Palenque, to reveal complex structures that may be divided into stanzas, verses, and framing chiasms based on the internal repetition of parallel structures of greater scale than the couplet or kenning. These features allow for the identification of an aspect of Classic period poetics that has traditionally been understudied, but is nevertheless a critical tool for understanding Classic period literature, verbal art, and potentially how these narratives were viewed anciently.

12:30-2:00 pm

Lunch Break

2:00-2:45 pm

A New Maya Literature in the Making: A Contribution to

Decoloniality

Dr. Arturo Arias

University of Texas at Austin

The most important expression of decoloniality as a response to the exhaustion of testimonio and to the hybrid contradictions of representation of the subaltern subject by the Ladino letrado, is offered in Guatemala by Maya literature. It is a notable effort because of both its bilingualism and its representation of a uniquely different gaze on the Americas as a whole. For example, by introducing into the literary/symbolic process new linguistic and representational challenges, Maya works manage to provincialize Spanish as

an organic vehicle in the constitution of symbolic imaginaries, and they especially succeed in problematizing the nature of the Nation-State itself. Most importantly, it has allowed young Mayas to forge a cultural memory that articulates their views and demands.

2:45-3:30 pm

Authorship and Audience: Investigating genre and register in Classic Maya literature

Dr. Daniel Law

Maya hieroglyphic texts display a variety of linguistic and narrative devices that organize and beautify the language of the inscriptions. How individual texts are organized, what topics they broach, and how that information is expressed are not entirely independent of one another, however. Instead, particular linguistic, and thematic elements, poetic structures, and modalities often occur together. Texts that share bundles of attributes may be categorized according to the subject matter dealt with (a discursive genre), or according to the expected participatory framework of the text—who will be engaging with the text, and where (a register). The identification of discursive genres and social registers in hieroglyphic texts, however, provides us with more than a simple typology of texts. It provides insight into how Classic Maya authors, both those engaged in the composition of texts, and those with the principle social and political responsibility for the message being produced, organized the discursive and social world around them. This lecture will highlight the common features of several dominant genres and registers and consider what these categories tell us about how Classic Maya authors categorized the themes that they wrote about, and how they imagined and framed the future audiences of their work.

3:30-4:15 pm

Designed Texts: A Look at the Visual Display of Classic Maya Literary Structures

Dr. David Stuart

University of Texas at Austin

Maya inscriptions of varying length routinely juxtapose events of past and present in order to highlight continuities and connections between mythology and history. This presentation looks at how the visual design and layouts of many inscriptions played as much a part in the conveyance of narrative as the contents of the texts themselves. Using examples from Palenque and other

sites, Dr. Stuart will show how Maya scribes participated in a creative and unique type of “visual literature,” wherein texts operated in conjunction with imagery and iconography to communicate multi-layered stories, collapsing and relating times, events, and protagonists.

4:15-5:00

Speakers Q&A

6:00-8:00

2012 Maya Meetings Cocktail Reception

Casa Herrera