

Save Ancient Studies Alliance

Summer 2022 Texts-in-Translation Reading Group

Communicating Power in the Ancient Maya World: A Study of Glyphic Text, Monumental Art, and Architecture



Ancient Maya queens and kings worked hard to establish, maintain, and communicate their power. They commissioned complex hieroglyphic texts, dedicated luxurious monumental art, and erected imposing architecture to build a legacy to their name. In this 8-week reading group, we will study the ways in which Maya rulers demonstrated their power to their courts, rivals, and subjects. As a participant in this reading group, you will hear stories of political intrigue, warfare,

and complex dynasties. You will also learn to identify key hieroglyphic phrases, visual elements in royal costume, and types of architecture. Each week will focus on a different case study including well-known sites such as Palenque, Tikal, and Copán, and lesser-known sites like Dos Pilas and Piedras Negras. Our readings will include translations of hieroglyphic texts, scholarly publications, and excerpts from introductory textbooks. I invite you to join us as we study representations of Maya power together this summer.

Your SASA Educational Ambassador:

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Dates (8-weeks):

Thursdays at 2pm EST

-Session 1: June 2nd

-Session 2: June 9th

-Session 3: June 16th

-Session 5: June 30th

-Session 6: July 7th

-Session 7: July 14th

-Session 8: July 21st

-Session 4: June 23rd

Location:(Provided by SASA)

Zoom Meeting Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86003013235?pwd=cndCeGdLMzhKaUVKWng5bUtOeGNpUT09>

Zoom Meeting ID

860 0301 3235

Zoom Meeting Password

325801

Reading Group Google Folder: (Session Recordings)

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/160ChIjDcm_Lf0TIC4-3UR2WrTRajU_uv?usp=sharing

→ You can access the readings for each week here ←

Week 1: Introduction to Ancient Maya Culture, Writing, and Art; Representations of Power [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Introduction"
- Sanchez, Julia L. J. "Ancient Maya Royal Strategies: Creating Power and Identity through Art." *Ancient Mesoamerica* 16, no. 2 (July 2005): 261–75.
- Stone, Andrea and Marc Zender. *Reading Maya Art* (2011): pp. 7-28 (Introduction), 34-37 (Lady and Lord), 62-63 (CHUM), 70-81 (Ritual Regalia and Implements)

Week 2: Yaxchilán and the Reign of Ix K'abal Xook [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Brittenham, Claudia. "Architecture, Vision, and Ritual: Seeing Maya Lintels at Yaxchilan Structure 23." *The Art Bulletin* 101, no. 3 (July 3, 2019): 8–36.
- Tate, Carolyn Elaine. *Yaxchilan: The Design of a Maya Ceremonial City*. University of Texas Press, 1992, p. 276 (page 14 of PDF)
- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Yaxchilán" p. 123-126.

Optional recommended readings:

- Kettunen, Harri, and Christophe Helmke. *Introduction to Maya Hieroglyphs*. 17th ed. Wayeb, 2020, p. 47-59
- "The Maya Long Count." <https://mesoamericanstudiesonline.blog/2019/04/28/why-did-we-think-the-maya-predicted-the-end-of-the-world/>
- "The Maya Calendar Round." <https://mesoamericanstudiesonline.blog/2019/06/02/the-maya-calendar-round/>

Week 3: The Cross Group at Palenque [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Bassie-Sweet, Karen, and Nicholas A. Hopkins. "The Palenque Cross Group Narrative." In *Maya Narrative Arts*, 228–68. University Press of Colorado, 2018.
- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Palenque" p. 162-170.

Week 4: Palenque's Tablet of the 96 Glyphs [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Porter, James B. "The Palace Intaglios: A Composite Stairway Throne at Palenque." *Seventh Palenque Round Table*, 1989, 11–18.
- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Palenque" p. 171-175.

Week 5: Hieroglyphic Stairways at Naranjo, Dos Pilas, and Caracol [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Guenter, Stanley Paul. "The Inscriptions of Dos Pilas Associated with B'ajlaj Chan K'awiil." *Mesoweb*, 2003.
- [Martin, Simon. "The Caracol Hieroglyphic Stairway." *Maya Decipherment*, 2017.](#)
- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) p. 55-67, 72-73, 92.

Week 6: Copán and Quiriguá, part 1 [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Copán" p. 191-213.
- Stuart, David. "The Arrival of Strangers" p. **490-498**, but you can read more if you like!
- Copan Altar Q reading

Week 7: Copán and Quiriguá, part 2 [\[Access Slides Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Stuart, "A foreign past"
- Martin, Simon and Nikolai Grube. *Chronicle of the Maya Kings and Queens* (2008) "Quiriguá" p. 215-225.

Week 8: Summary, Open Discussion [\[Access Slide Here\]](#)

Readings:

- Martin 2021, "Classic Maya Networks" from
- Martin, Simon. "Hieroglyphs from the Painted Pyramid: The Epigraphy of Chiik Nahb Structure Sub 1-4, Calakmul, Mexico." *Maya Archaeology*. 2 (2012): 61–81.
- Carrasco Vargas, Ramón, and María Cordeiro Baqueiro. "The Murals of Chiik Nahb Structure Sub 1-4, Calakmul, Mexico." *Maya Archaeology*. 2 (2012): 9–59.

Additional Optional Readings

- Stuart, "The Arrival of Strangers." 2001.
- Sharer et al., "Early Classic Royal Power in Copan." *Copan: The History of An Ancient Maya Kingdom* (2005): 139-199.
- Stone, Andrea and Marc Zender. *Reading Maya Art* (2011): pp. 56-57 (CH'AK), 66-69 (JATZ', CHOK), 82-87 (Implements of Warfare)
- Martin, Simon, and Erik Velásquez García. "Politics and Places: Tracing the Toponyms of the Snake Dynasty." *The PARI Journal* 17, no. 2 (2016): 23-33.
- Stone, Andrea. "Disconnection, foreign insignia, and political expansion: Teotihuacan and the warrior stelae of Piedras Negras." *Mesoamerica after the Decline of Teotihuacan, AD 700-900* (1989): 153-172.
- Stuart, David. "A foreign past: The writing and representation of history on a royal ancestral shrine at Cópán." *Copan: The History of An Ancient Maya Kingdom* (2005): 373-394
- Looper, Matthew. *Lightning Warrior: Maya Art and Kingship at Quirigua*, (2003) excerpt TBD.

