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**Text and Context:  
Yucatec Maya Literature  
in a Diachronic Perspective**

**Texto y Contexto:  
La Literatura Maya Yucateca  
en Perspectiva Diacrónica**

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## Preface

The history of this book could be described to be as diverse as its content because it was developed over many years. It started with a symposium entitled “Analizando los textos mayas coloniales: sociedad maya yucateca bajo el dominio español” (“Analyzing Colonial Maya Texts: Yucatec Maya Society under Spanish Dominance”), which was organized by Tsubasa Okoshi Harada within the framework of the 5th International Congress of Mayanists (22th to 28th of July 2001 in Jalapa, Mexico). The main objective of the symposium was to discuss various characteristics of colonial Yucatec Maya society based on an analysis of their texts. In addition, new contributions to the field often arise in isolation, so the symposium offered a forum for scholars to meet for discussion.

The participants registered for the symposium were Bodil Liljefors Persson, Antje Gunsenheimer, Ruth Gubler, Patricia Martel, María Isabel López Rosas, Tsubasa Okoshi Harada, John F. Chuchiak, Shigeto Yoshida and Isaura Inés Ortiz Yam (in order of presentation). There was lively discussion among the participants, beginning during the meeting and continuing in a more relaxed atmosphere later on. Therefore, we felt it would be enriching to publish the lectures. It was our goal to present the results of various philological investigations conducted in the field up to that moment. Another aim of publication was to highlight the diversity of topics and methods in the analysis of colonial Maya documents.

Initially, our main interest was to combine those studies that focused on the reconstruction of elite Maya life under Spanish control and that were based on historic, linguistic and philological analysis of indigenous texts. However, we soon noticed that each contribution on its own could also be considered a valuable example of different methodological approaches to the study of colonial Maya documents. Thus, we decided to ask colleagues that had not participated in the congress to contribute with an additional thematic and/or methodological approach, using other types of text sources, in order to round out the working perspectives. Our invited contributors are: Ortwin Smailus, Armin Hinz, Annette Kern, Karl Kramer y Christiane Müller (all from the University of Hamburg), Alfonso Lacadena García Gallo (Universidad Complutense, Madrid), Gabrielle Vail (New College of Florida, Sarasota), and Valentina Vapnarsky (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris).

Because the book contains additional work not originally presented at the symposium in Jalapa in 2001, we decided to make this clear with a different title. “Text and Context: Yucatec Maya Literature in a Diachronic Perspective” comprises all those aspects which we deem important to demonstrating the span of this volume in terms of subject matter, applied methods and chronological range from pre-colonial to colonial to the present.

Antje Gunsenheimer proposed publication within the series of “Bonn Americanist Studies” (BAS) and took on the role of coordinating organization of the volume, technical administration and communications with the publishing house. Tsubasa Okoshi Harada assumed responsibility for collecting and revising the final versions of the Mexican participants. All the articles were revised and updated by the authors between 2005 and 2007. The editor’s work consisted of standardizing each presentation in terms of layout, bibliographic references, tables, drawings and photographs. Responsibility for the content of each contribution lies with its author.

#### Acknowledgements

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Antje Gunsenheimer  
Tsubasa Okoshi Harada  
John F. Chuchiak

Bonn, June 2009

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