How do we experience time not as something observed within a text but rather as a medium through which it lives? Via a network of media theory, book history, and Maya ts’íib, Martínez draws out the varieties of meaning generated by understanding time as a communicative feature of Maya writing. This involves two scales of temporality: first, the lifespan of an inscribed object, and second, the duration of the reading process. An awareness of the text’s tentative mortality and the ephemeral process of reading enables new layers of kinetic and affective meaning to surface from inscribed objects. Martínez interweaves these newly surfaced meanings with the semantic as transmitted through written language, thus joining the materiality of inscribed objects to their textuality. Interpretations accumulate through the iterative process of reading, traveling along the body and mind of each reader. With the multisensory mode of reading that emerges, Martínez cultivates methodological links between written language and other modalities of Maya recorded knowledge. Thus, time acts as a new compass with which to explore Maya creative production, amplifying the potential of written language while decentering it as an essential mode for communicating knowledge across history.

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