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INTRODUCTION

Dr Jim Hammerton, Head of School

This is the second edition of the Journal of Historical and European Studies, a refereed publication devoted to publishing the work of postgraduate students in the School of Historical and European Studies at La Trobe University.

The papers included in this edition were first delivered at the School's postgraduate conference on Friday, 28 November, 2008, organised around the theme 'Past and Present'. They were refereed and selected for inclusion by a distinguished external and independent panel. The quality and diversity of the papers in this edition reflects the range of research interests being pursued in the School, from photo-Archaeology in Mexico, ritual among the Maya elite and Natufian culture in Jordan to Brigadistas in 1980s Nicaragua, economic crisis in 1840s Port Phillip, irrigation history in Mildura and Anzacs at Tobruk. Postgraduates recently embarked upon their studies should find much inspiration in these fine contributions, the product of intense research, close supervision and the School's tradition of dedicated and collegial scholarship.

A measure of the quality represented in these papers is the recent award by the Australian Historical Association of the Ken Inglis prize for the best postgraduate article of 2008 to Janine Rizzetti for a different essay based on work from her thesis. Many of our students go on to achieve similar distinction, and the conference and this journal are designed to nurture the fine talent evident among the School's postgraduates.

Postgraduate students - Jacqui Tumney (Archaeology) and Dymtro Ostapenko (History) - deserve special thanks for organising the conference. The School is grateful to all the students and staff who participated and supported and supervised the presenters. The success of the Conference and the quality of the journal augurs well for the future and we anticipate similar excellence from the 2009 event.

The dedicated work of School staff has been vital to the production of this edition. We thank in particular Wei Ming (for cover design), Judy Ram and Donna Bisset (desktop publishing) and Deborah Hewitt, the School's Executive Officer, for overall management.

'PHOTO ARCHAEOLOGY' AND THE RESTORATION OF THE PALENQUE HOUSE E PAINTED TEXT

Carl D Callaway

This report provides a new photo composite of Mexico's Palenque House E Painted Text by merging photographs taken by Alfred P. Maudslay in 1891 and photos by Linda Schele in 1973. The text itself is located in House E of Palenque's palace complex and sits above the Oval Tablet. It consists of two horizontal bands of glyphs that were painted to commemorate the reign of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Naab III (721-736 AD). The report describes how adjustments were made digitally to the Maudslay and Schele photos in order to reconstruct and improve the at-a-glance readability of the passage.

Location and Present Condition

The Palenque House E painted text is situated on the rear wall of the western corridor just above the Oval Tablet and below the vault spring (figure 1 and 2). It consists of two horizontal rows of glyphs roughly three meters long. Today, sections of the text are badly damaged or completely effaced (figure 28). Fortunately photographs taken by Alfred P. Maudslay in 1891 (figure 3–5) and Linda Schele in 1973 (figure 6–25), record many details now lost. The photos reveal four distinct passages (each separated by dates and intervening distance numbers) that were written in commemoration of the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Naab III in 721 AD¹. Figure 26–27 shows a modern photo composite of the entire text with a preliminary number and lettering system.

Previous References to the Text

It was Alfred P. Maudslay who was the first to record and comment upon the text.² He took three photographs (figure 3–5) of the painting yet published only one of these plates (Plate XLII., b in his *Biologia Centrali-Americana Vol. IV*).³ Here is Maudslay's short description of the painting:

Extending along the wall just beneath the spring of the roof, a long double line of glyphs had been painted in black on plaster. This inscription had subsequently been covered over by another layer of plaster which had fallen away in small patches. By carefully chipping away this top layer more of the glyphs were brought to light, and a photograph of part of the inscription is given . . .⁴

Eduard Seler and his wife visited Palenque in 1911. Seler published a hand sketch of the painted text in his work *Beobachtungen und Studien in den Ruinen von Palenque*.⁵ Importantly, his drawing records portions of the opening Long Count date (see figure 29), a section that Maudslay unfortunately did not photograph (or if he did the photos were subsequently lost). Speaking of these glyphs as well as those along the north side of the second door, Seler wrote:

►Figure 1. Palenque Palace House E photographed on the west side from the tower courtyard. The painted text panel is situated on the wall above the Oval Tablet directly through the central doorway and is currently protected from public access by a steel grating. -*Elaine Schele photo.*



▼Figure 2. Photo illustration showing the location of the painted text panel above the Oval Tablet. This image was composited from several photos taken through openings in the doorway grating since direct access to the wall was not possible at the time of photography. Proportions and scale are only approximate. -*Elaine Schele photo.*



These glyphs are unfortunately not preserved in complete rows anywhere, but it is clear that they are closely related in style and type of writing to certain Maya manuscripts, namely the Dresden Codex and the Paris Codex Perez . . . The glyphs forming the frieze on the rear wall in the west wall clearly concern dates and time periods. Besides dates of days, like bolon ik, “nine wind”, at the right side of the lower row in Figure 123d, particularly the glyph tun, representing the period of 360 days occurs frequently in combination with bars and dots meaning five and one. But a few glyphs can be determined, such as, for instance, the glyph in the lower row of Figure 123e of the dog falling from the sky (the lightning animal).

These glyphs, as I mentioned, were brought to light by Maudslay’s removal of a surface stucco layer that apparently bore no figure and glyph paintings. But apart from this covering coat, the layer with the glyphs seems to be the most recent wall covering⁶.

Hermann Beyer visited Palenque in 1926 where he inspected the House E Painted Band.⁷ Beyer was the first to point out that the published Maudslay’s photograph omitted passages and that this photograph represented only the middle of the hieroglyphic band. About the painting he wrote:

I made sketches of some hieroglyphs, but, unfortunately I did not undertake a detailed study of the whole visible inscription (part of it is still covered in a visible slip). I thought Seler had copied the whole available text and I just drew specimens whose details seemed clear and interesting to me.⁸

Beyer made his own drawing of the text (figure 32) to which he describes as being ‘After Seler, with slight amendments’ and he adds that this sketch was made when ‘I had no axe to grind’.⁹ Does this mean he traced Seler’s drawing and then added missing details from his field sketch? Regardless, the dates and time periods in Beyer’s drawing contain far more details of the bar and dot coefficients; the opening LC shows a very clear 10 PIKTUN, 2-3 KATUN, 13 TUN, and a single dot (still visible in the Schele photos) connected to the K’IN period. With this new data in hand, Beyer attempted the first reconstruction of the Long Count dates and Distance Numbers in the text.

Merle Greene Robertson made a drawing of the painted text in 1971¹⁰ of which she later published (figure 30) in *The Sculpture Of Palenque Vol. II: The Early Buildings Of The Palace And Wall Paintings*.¹¹ She noted that Schele and Mathews believed that the text recorded data concerning Ahkal Mo’ Naab II (then known as Chacal II). In 1973, Linda Schele photographed (figure 6–25) portions of the painted text. Linda Schele also made sketches (the date of which are unknown) of the painting (figure 31).¹² By 1973, the original stucco surface that held the glyphs was falling off the wall and the glyphs were covered with mold and grime. Yet despite the weathering, the Schele photos show details not captured by any drawing. In 1991, Karl Herbert Mayer took a photograph of a portion of the text showing glyph blocks pL1–pR2.¹³ During May 13–14, 2002, multi-spectral photos of portions of the text were taken by Gene A. Aware.¹⁴ These photos remain unpublished.

Recently, David Stuart published all three of Maudslay’s original photos of the text.¹⁵ In the same work, he added a partial drawing illustrating the name of the Triad Progenitor (glyph blocks pQ2–pS1).¹⁶ Also in 2006, Stuart published a second sketch of glyph blocks pF1–pI1 while commenting:

One of the most important mythological texts at Palenque is the painted band of glyphs in House E, running above the Oval Palace Tablet. Much of it is damaged, but it once recorded at least one event of the deep past, falling several hundred thousand years after the Temple XIV narrative. None of the dates can be reconstructed as of yet but one participant looks to be the Sun God, or some aspect of him. The distant event is then linked to the accession of the Triad Progenitor and ultimately to the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Nahb who commissioned the text.¹⁷

Most recently Elaine Schele in 2007 took photos of the painting from which a modern composite was made of the existing fragments (figure 28). Undoubtedly, more unpublished photos and drawings were made of the painted text by a visitor or scholar. The author hopes that future research will reveal new sources for comparison and study.

A New Composite Photo of the House E Painted Text

A composite image to accompany this report has been made from the known photographic studies of the House E Painted Text in order to provide a continuous view of nearly the entire glyph panel. Linkage of the incomplete records of the Maudslay and Schele photos was initially determined with the aid of Merle Greene Robertson's 1971 drawing and later confirmed by detailed comparison study of the photos. The composite is included in a single page segmented format as figure 27 in this report. The composite also provides a preliminary number and lettering system ranging from pA1–pD'2.

A Short Summary of the Painted Text¹⁸

Passage I (glyph blocks pA1– pI2) begins with a Long Count set deep into the mythic past (by a few hundred thousand years) of the previous era. This is one two deep time texts before the era base day that is accompanied by a full long count date (the other being La Corona glyphic panels 1 and 9). The event associated with the Long Count is unfortunately lost. As noted above (see note 17), a participant in the event may be the Sun God or an aspect of him as the HUK TZ'IKIN CHAPAT AJAW¹⁹ (God of the night sun). Passage II (glyph blocks pJ1–pS2) records a distance number leading from the opening Long Count to the accession of the Triad Progenitor on 2.0.0.10.2. 9 Ik' Seating of Sak (7 September 2325 BC). Passage III (glyph blocks pT1–pU2) may record a conjuring event by the Triad Progenitor one WINAL (twenty days) before or after his accession. Passage IV (glyph blocks pU2–pD'2) records a long distance number of 1,112,280 days leading from the accession of the Triad Progenitor on the day 9 IK' Seating of SAK to the accession of K'inich Ahkal Mo' Naab III on 9.14.10.4.2. 9 IK' 5 K'ayab (3 January 722 AD).²⁰

The Photo Composite

The photo composite of the House E Painted Text was created for illustrative purposes to give an overall view of the complete glyph passage. However, the composite is not intended to be taken as a precise archaeological recording since it was made from several photos taken at different times and angles without onsite measurements or reference points. The individual photos have been squared, skewed, stretched and squeezed as necessary to fit them together into a reasonably accurate recreation of the original glyph text on the wall. Although the average height of the glyph panel is known to be about 24 cm, the width is only estimated here to be about 3.05 m wide, roughly corresponding to the width of the doorway lintel across the hallway. This is based on the scale of Maudslay's elevation drawing of House E, Merle Greene Robertson's drawing of the Oval Tablet wall, and an onsite measurement by Elaine Schele of 2.4 m square for the doorway (a steel grating blocking the doorway bars access to the oval tablet wall for an accurate measurement).

The composite was made from three photos taken by Alfred Maudslay in 1891 combined with two photos taken by Linda Schele in 1973. Although the glyph panel has irregularities in height and would not conform to a horizontal laser line, for practical presentation purposes the component photos of this composite have been squared, skewed, and leveled to varying degrees so some glyphs may appear slightly more perpendicular than in actuality. Without accurate reference measurements to work from, the width-to-height ratios of sections of glyphs had to be determined by personal judgment. The merge point where the Maudslay and Schele photos match up was determined from the few surviving glyph fragments visible in the Schele photos common to both, as well as by comparing the shapes of clumps of plaster layers in the Maudslay photo to corresponding plaster vacancies in the Schele photos. This was confirmed by comparison to the few surviving reference features still visible in recent photos taken by Elaine Schele. The photos were joined precisely with a photo-merging function of Adobe Photoshop so no information was lost or added at the joints, but further scaling and skewing had to be done by personal judgment. Tonal and color adjustments were made digitally to the Maudslay and Schele photos in an attempt to improve the at-a-glance readability of the entire glyph passage. Individual photos were first adjusted for an overall balance of lights and darks before merging them together where they overlapped. Regional adjustments were then made to dark and light areas of the composite image with digital techniques analogous to the dodging and burning process used in traditional darkroom photography. This compensates for the problems caused where an overall brightening of the dark sections of a photo causes the lighter areas to get too bright and lose information. Care was taken to only attempt to bolster and enhance subtle areas of the image and not to alter the information subjectively. Color adjustments were made to the Schele photos to diminish the heavy dark green cast the original slides now have. This also could only be done by personal judgment. Before making any conclusions or judgments of glyph information from this composite image, it would be important to compare the elements of study to their appearance in the original unaltered photos.

Conclusions

It is a loss that archaeologists and conservators were unable to save the House E Painted Band. Yet, through the aid of existing photos, drawings and computer technology we have been able to reconstruct this painted monument to Palenque's mythic origins and royal history and return it to the House E throne room. Back in its rightful place above the Oval Tablet, we see how the text was part of a strategic effort of legitimacy by Ahkal Mo' Naab III to source his accession on the day 9 IK' to the Maize God's accession on the day 9 IK'. The king further wanted to show continuity between his reign and those of his uncles and famous grandfather Pakal by painting the inscription so it was directly centered and above the Oval Tablet (Pakal's accession monument) and a throne (the now removed Del Rio Throne) recording three generations of Palenque kings.²¹ As elsewhere at Palenque politics and myth are intertwined, and rulers continually sought to source their power in a mythic charter of rulership established by the gods. Finally, the New Composite of the House E Painted Text offers the researcher the ability view the painting as Maudslay would have seen it back in 1891. Placing the painting back into the House E will allow future scholars to compare the painting to other House E monuments and to understand more fully relationships between written text and the surrounding imagery.

Acknowledgments

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Paul Johnson for his excellent work in rendering the photo composites and photographs used in this paper. Also I would like to thank Harry Persaud, the Curator of Library Collections at the British Museum, Department of Africa, Oceania and the Americas, Centre for Anthropology, for helping me track down and obtain the digital photos of the Maudslay House E Painted Text. Many thanks also go to Dr. Colin McEwan, Assistant Keeper, Central and South America in the Department of Ethnography at the British Museum, for referring me to the right people and securing me permission to publish the Maudslay photos. I render special thanks to David and Elaine Schele, for

