

MANCHESTER CONFERENCE

The first conference paper at Manchester told how eight Danish travellers set out together, one bought arsenic and only one returned a mystery plot not unlike Agatha Christie's famous novel with the naughty name. The next was about a piece of clever artistic plagiarism. And the third paper recalled how Thomas Legh (whose great house, Lyme Park near Manchester, now owned by the National Trust, a group visited on Saturday morning) was almost assassinated by an Albanian soldier firing from one Nile boat to another. Dull ASTENE conferences aren't.

The crime rate did diminish during the five conference days, though we had gun battles, several deaths from cholera, a stabbing and a plane crash. And it has to be said that most of the criminals were European travellers rather than the people among whom they journeyed.

Not that it was all criminous. We had buffaloes and giraffes, dogs and crocodiles, and chaps who, like Shakespeare, might have been themselves or possibly someone else of the same name. Picking out the plums in such a feast of entertainment and instruction is well-nigh impossible, and to name names at all risks serious discourtesy to all the others. For there were no discreditable performances, and the general level both of content and of presentation of the 49 papers was higher than I remember at previous conferences. (See the summary of the programme below.)

Still, it would also be invidious not to pick out Cassandra Vivian's hilarious account of George Gliddon's time in the USA, or to note the excellence of the three Czechs (among the many speakers from eleven countries represented), whose mastery of English was only exceeded by their mastery of PowerPoint, an arcane mystery even to some American scholars. And on the subject of technology, it would be churlish not to mention the aplomb shown by Jennifer Scarce when the slide projector failed until after she had got through both paper and questions, or the insouciance of Robert Morkot, who declared that his slides were purely decorative, and as it was so hot he wouldn't object if we preferred the windows open.

Which brings us to the weather. It might be said that not many of our well-travelled company had ever experienced anything so unlikely as a five-day heat wave in Manchester, yet that is what we enjoyed, with just a light shower after the closing session to remind us how privileged we were.

Then there was the accommodation and the food. It is fair to say that Manchester did us proud on both parts. The rooms were better than most student accommodation, and the food was of excellent quality. And the caterers really pulled the stops out for formal dinner, causing mild discomfort to sensitive stomachs when it was followed by Professor Rosalie David discoursing most interestingly on the pathology of Egyptian mummies.

In short, it was a splendid occasion, a great conference, and we owe a considerable debt to the small army of members, led by Priscilla Frost, who were responsible for its planning and organisation. Those who were there will undoubtedly already have Southampton in their diaries for July 2007: for those who weren't I strongly recommend you to make a note of it now.

September 05
Charles Plouviez

MANCHESTER CONFERENCE PROGRAMME Thursday 14 - Monday 18 July

Session 1: *Journeys in the 18th and early 19th centuries*

Nigel Hepper: The Royal Danish Expedition in Egypt, 1761-62
William Peck: Pococke and Norden: Ships that passed in the Night?
Brenda Moon: Thomas Legh of Lyme Park, Disley (a preparation for Saturday's ASTENE visit)

Session 2: *An Architect, the Khedive and Engineers*

Caroline Williams: A Post-humus Candidate for ASTENE?: Pascal Coste
Dr Alix Wilkinson: Ezbekieh in the 19th century
Deborah Manley: An Engineer - or two - in Egypt (1857-8)

Session 3: Keynote address:

Professor John Williams, William and Mary College, Williamsburg: "Cairo Rules..."

Session 4: *Collectors and Excavators*

Dr Gottfried Hamernik: Anton J. Laurin: Diplomat, Collector and Excavator
Cassandra Vivian: George Gliddon in Egypt
Rosalind Janssen: Mary Brodrick: A pioneer Egyptologist

Session 5: *Pilgrims and Travellers with a Mission*

Tomislav Kajfez: Ignacij Knoblehar (1819-1858): A Missionary and Explorer of the Nile
Dr Jakob Eisler: Aspects of Templar History
Dr Haim Goren: Irish Explorers at the Dead Sea: Science, adventure and imperialism
Paul Robertson: A Pilgrim's Progress? : The travel writing and photography of Colonel Muhammad Sadiq

Session 6: *Architects and Monuments*

Dr Kathryn Ferry: Asia Minor with Charles Texier
Dr Annat Almog: The grim consequences of an aesthetic approach: C.R. Ashbee and the Pro-Jerusalem Society, 1918-22
Janet Starkey, Celebrating Islamic Burials within Communities: A selection of vignettes

Women Travellers through the Near East

Dr Johanna Holaubek: Ida Pfeiffer and her First Journey to Palestine and Egypt
Jeane-Marie Warzeski: 'Stranded on a Scientific Sandbank': US Women as ancillary travellers and amateur Egyptologists, 1880-1912
Hana Havtujova: From the Czechoslovak Republic to the Near East; Three Czech Women Travellers in 1920/30s

Reception by *The Journal of Semitic Studies and Middle East Studies*, Manchester University to launch ASTENE's *Women Travellers in the Near East* edited by Sarah Searight

Saturday visits: Thomas Legh's home Lyme Park, Disley or Manchester University Museum, Department of Egyptology with Dr Christina Riggs

Session 8A: *The Literature and Art of Travel*

Marie-Paule van Lathem: Portraits of Cleopatra Faredah Al-Murahhem: An Arab Woman within the Arab Hall
Dr Hana Navratilova: 'Book worm' travellers in Bohemia in the early 19th century
Professor Richard Lobban: The Tremaux Re-publication Project

Session 8B: "The Desert and the Fruitful Lands": Visiting and Promoting Egypt

Claire Malleson: The Landscape of the Egyptian Fayoum as described by Travellers

Dr Robert Morkot: Fuller and Fuller

Cassandra Vivian: George Gliddon in America

Session 9: Starting from and coming to Manchester

Peta Ree: John Hyde of Manchester

Dr Philip Sadgrove: A Mission from Egypt visits Manchester :

Brenda Moon: 'A Fearful Outbreak of Egyptology': in the North

Conference Dinner

After dinner speaker Professor Rosalie David

Session 10A: Scholar Travellers

Carl Phillips: Dr Andrew Mackell and the earliest discoveries of ancient south Arabian inscriptions in Yemen

Huw Owen Jones: Travels in Palmyra and Zenobia: Dr William Wright in Damascus (1867-1875)

Edwin Aiken: Placing Prophetic Voices in Victorian Scotland: George Adam Smith and a Question of Context

Session 10B: Travellers, Tourists and Cameras

Dr Elaine Evans: The Grand Tour: Postcards and Travellers to Egypt

Bob Partridge: Photographing Ancient Egypt

Dr Sahar Abdel-Hakim: Towards a Destination: Travel in three Arab Cinematic Narratives

Session 11: Research Resources

Filling in the Background: What can you discover about your traveller from his/her will? Peta Ree

Update on the Research Resources Project Dr Patricia Usick

The Unexpurgated record: the ASTENE Journal Project Lorien Pilling

Travellers' Graffiti with Roger de Keersmaecker

Session 12: Gentlemen and Other Travellers

Bart Ooghe: European Travellers in Mesopotamia (1500-1900): An Overview

Kai Kaniuth: Some remarks on Robert Ker Porter's travels in Mesopotamia

Charles Plouviez: 'A Pleasant Occupation' Christopher Wordsworth's *Greece*

Session 13: Exploration of Self, Organisations and Places

John Ruffle (with Bryony Llewelyn): "I shall go on until I drop": the IV Viscount Castlereagh's account of his travels in Egypt and the Levant

Prof. Ruth Kark and Dr Haim Goren: Pioneering British-Holy Land Exploration: The Palestine Association, The RGS and the PEF

Session 14 : Through Turkey and Asia Minor

Tom Rees: Some British Diplomatic Travellers in Turkey

Jennifer Scarce: Dr Robert Wilson (1787- 1871): Travels with a Wandering Scot

Dr Elizabeth French: Murray's Itineraries for Eastern Turkey 1854-1878

Session 15: The Recent Past; Looking Forward

Adela Mackova: Czech Travellers in Egypt in the 1920s and 1930s

Dr Susan J. Allen: The Lighter Side: Satire, Humour and a Traveller in Egypt

Dr Jacke Phillips: Some Things *don't* Change