

# ASTENE

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF TRAVEL  
IN EGYPT AND THE NEAR EAST

## BULLETIN



**NOTES AND QUERIES**

**NUMBER 72: SUMMER 2017**

# Bulletin: Notes and Queries

## Number 72: Summer 2017

Editor: Cathy McGlynn

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### Bulletin 73: Summer 2017

Submissions for the next Bulletin must be received by **1 September 2017**. We welcome articles, queries, replies and other related matters from members and interested readers. Please send contributions to the Editor, Cathy McGlynn ([bulletin@astene.org.uk](mailto:bulletin@astene.org.uk)).

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Cover photo: John Thompson's Turkish Embroideries, photo courtesy of Julie Witford

# ASTENE NEWS AND EVENTS

## Annual General Meeting, 23rd July 2017

2.15 pm in the Julian Study Centre at the University of East Anglia

Dear ASTENE Members

With the current issue of the ASTENE Bulletin, you will find the:

- AGM 2017 Agenda
- Minutes of the AGM 2016
- Chairman's Report
- Treasurer's Report
- Membership Secretary's Report
- Signed Audited Accounts for ASTENE for 2016-17.

The hardcopy issue of the Bulletin includes a hardcopy of the materials listed above.

The electronic issue of the Bulletin also has electronic copies of the same materials.

The AGM materials will also be sent again electronically in a dedicated ASTENE Newsletter closer to the meeting date.

We look forward to seeing many of you in Norwich.

*Hana Navratilova (Secretary)*

## ASTENE Conference Update

It is now only a few weeks before the start of the 11th Biennial ASTENE Conference and the organisers are looking forward to welcoming around 80 members to Norwich. Many members will be regular attendees, while a number will be new members attending - with quite a few of them giving papers. Although the Conference Programme is yet to be finalised and e-mailed there are nearly 50 talks for members to enjoy about travellers and travel subjects and these will be accompanied by around 1,000 projected images.

For those members not familiar with the University of East Anglia, it comprises modern buildings set in an open landscape on the outskirts of Norwich. The open campus is suitable for taking a run or going on long walks to follow a sculpture trail. The first buildings on the campus, including the famous ziggurat blocks of student accommodation, were design by the architect Sir Denys Lasdun, who also designed the National Theatre on London's South Bank.

The University of East Anglia is also the location of the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts. This hi-tech 'shed', an early design by the architect Sir Norman Foster, houses the Lord and Lady Sainsbury Collection which includes some wonderful paintings, sculptures and objects from all regions of the world and all periods of time. Entry to view the collection is free.

During the ASTENE Conference the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts will be hosting an exhibition of the paintings by the artist Paul Nash, who worked as a War Artist in both the First and Second World Wars and who is less well known as a Surrealist painter. This exhibition is the first time so many of Nash's paintings and drawings have been brought together. Just prior to this venue it had been the main exhibition at Tate Britain in London. Entry to the Paul Nash exhibition costs £12. To learn more about Paul Nash you can refer to the following websites <http://scva.ac.uk/art-and-artists/exhibitions/paul-nash> or Tate Britain <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/paul-nash>.

So members can network, see a bit more of Norwich and visit the surrounding countryside. The Monday Day-out includes a morning visit to Norwich Castle & Art Gallery for two additional lectures and to view the Colman Collection of Ancient Egyptian artefacts and watercolours made by the Reverend Edward T Daniell during his travels in Egypt and Palestine in the 1840s. This will be followed by a journey on a vintage coach through the countryside to the area of flooded peat diggings commenced in Roman times that are now known as the Norfolk Broads, a vast area of connected rivers, broads, and waterways that are a haven for wildlife and a popular holiday destination for those who enjoy messing about on boats. In the midst of the Broads we will be visiting How Hill for lunch before an afternoon visit to enjoy its its different gardens - and where the wherry Hathor built for the Colman family will be moored on the River Ant for members to visit and view the Egyptian motifs used in its external and internal decoration.

ASTENE looks forward to meeting everybody in Norwich in just a few short weeks from now.

*Neil Cooke (ASTENE Chairman)*

## Travellers in Ottoman Lands: Edinburgh, 13-14 May 2017

The seminar 'Travellers in Ottoman Lands: The Botanical Legacy' was hosted by the Royal Botanical Garden Edinburgh in conjunction with, and support, financial and other, from, the Turkish Consulate General in Edinburgh, the magazine Cornucopia and ASTENE.



Ines Todd (opening address), photo courtesy of Julie Witford

Following welcomes from Dr Sabina Knees on behalf of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, from Semih Lütfü Turgut, Turkish Consul General in Edinburgh, and from ASTENE's Professor Paul Starkey, Chairman of the seminar organising committee, we were given an overview of the history of the Ottoman Empire, from its foundation in the 14th century, through its ever-fluctuating territorial expansion, to its fall at the start of the 20th century, by Ines Aščerić-Todd of Edinburgh University.

Sponsorship of the event included two ASTENE bursaries in addition to the plenary speaker, three people sponsored by the Turkish Government, and one sponsored by Cornucopia. There was plenty of help from RBGE staff and four hard-working stewards.

With thirty five papers and 103 participants over the weekend, it proved a busy two days and if anyone thought the title of the conference might restrict the tenor of the topics examined, they would have been wrong. The papers were as diverse as the interests and expertise of the speakers: very much in the ASTENE tradition! These ranged from botanists to historians of gardens, of textiles, of art, to archaeologists and conservationists. Participants came from many different parts of the world, including several from Turkey but also from Qatar, Israel, Algeria, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Great Britain, Australia and America.



John Thompson's Turkish embroideries, photo courtesy of Julie Witford

The travellers theme covered botanists travelling to the Ottoman area and plants travelling back to gardens and herbarium collections, Ottoman influences in art, garden design, food/drink and dress/ textiles, travelling throughout Europe and recently an Ottoman influenced garden in America.

Several exhibitions had been mounted: a 'scentscape' of Anatolian fragrances, Iznik inspired artworks, Turkish embroidered textiles, a display of posters selected from the pages of the Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanic Gardens book 'Gardens and Flowers of Istanbul' and a poster of the personal diary and photographs of Helen Tomlinson.



Lauren Davis with her installation Scents and the City, photo courtesy of Julie Witford



Sara Choughrey's Iznik-inspired art works, photo courtesy of Julie Witford

Thanks are due to Cornucopia, who made a significant contribution: bringing Laura Davis, the smellscape exhibition from Turkey at their expense, designing and printing the poster and undertaking lots of publicity as well as attending with their exhibitions and bookstall.

Saturday night saw a reception provided by the Turkish Consul General with a delicious array of Turkish dishes, to which he also invited 20 additional guests (some of whom returned to TIOL the next day). He had also arranged for the Turkish Government to pay the travel costs for three of the speakers.

It was obvious from the animated hum of conversation at the reception and between sessions that the seminar was a success and interest was by no means sated, with many keen to continue the event in future. Publisher Brill was enthusiastic about the possibility of publishing some of the papers with Archaeopress. A small editorial committee is being set up to oversee any relevant plans and publications.

In summary this was a very successful event, which also raised ASTENE's profile and recruited at least two new members (and hopefully more!).

#### **Some feedback from participants:**

'I had a wonderful time and the breadth of knowledge and fabulous insights was impressive... such a great opportunity for this event to be held in Edinburgh.'

'What a mesmerising weekend. I am just going through my notes – reams of things that could keep Cornucopia going for years.'

'It was all super-stimulating. I just loved the gardens on wheels and should have asked more about them... Would they be wheeled to the most appropriate window? What lay beneath on the ground? Was it well kept lawn? I saw some were carried by men with poles. Fascinating. Parallels with mediaeval plays and various Mediterranean Christian festivals where things get carried. And



Cornucopia stand, photo courtesy of Julie Witford

Edirne was great. Reminded me of the water gardens of Tivoli. And the cedars of Lebanon. And the conifers... And the Freers.'

'I wanted to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to attend the ASTENE TIOL seminar and also for the award of the bursary. I enjoyed my time at the seminar very much. The paper topics, the gardens and the company were all lovely.'

'It was an absolute pleasure and privilege to be a very small part of (the event). I was enjoying it so much that I may have neglected to help on occasions. The atmosphere was very happy and almost party- like. Janet and Sabina did a wonderful job in putting it together so successfully.'  
 'Thank you very much for including me in such a great event. I really enjoyed and was enlightened with many aspects of the land that I grow up. I wish you all the best and hope to meet up again at another event on the Ottoman lands.'

It has been a pleasure to work with you on TIOL. It was a fantastic event.'

'Huge thanks to everyone from Cornucopia. It was a pleasure to be involved and I'm sure the benefits will be far-reaching.'

'May I add my thanks to you and all of you for engaging me in your superb Ottoman Lands events? Both a privilege and an enriching experience from which I have learned much besides engaging with so many fascinating people and ideas, and besides renewing a number of connections and friendships. Truly one of the best spent weekends ever'

*Carey Cowham and Peta Rée*

**Palestine Exploration Fund Free Lecture Series, jointly with ASTENE, in association with the British Museum Dept. of the Middle East**

'Solomon N. Negima: A Palestinian Dragoman and his Clients (1885-1933)', Rachel Mairs, University of Reading  
 Thursday 14th September 2017, 4 pm

Stevenson Lecture Theatre, Clore Education Centre, British Museum.

In 2014, a collection of papers was found on eBay: a scrapbook, in which was written 'Testimonial Book of Dragoman Solomon N. Negima'. The letters pasted inside bear recommendations of Negima's services as dragoman – a combination of tourist guide and interpreter – in the Holy Land, from travellers of different nationalities, social classes, religions, genders and races.

Using these reference letters, and the first-hand published and unpublished accounts of the travellers themselves, Rachel Mairs tells the stories of several such tourists, including the intrepid Victorian female traveller, Ellen E. Miller, and an African-American minister, Rev. Charles T. Walker, who had been born into slavery. Between the lines of others' letters, Solomon Negima's remarkable life story also emerges: from a German mission school in Jerusalem, to the British army in the Sudan, to a successful career as a dragoman in Palestine and Syria, and finally to comfortable retirement with

his son, Aziz, and daughter, Olinda, at a Mormon mission in Jerusalem.

The discovery of this unique scrapbook allows us an insight into the lives of individuals whose histories would otherwise be lost to us, and a new perspective on the history of travel in the Middle East.

Rachel Mairs is Lecturer in Classics at the University of Reading. She has published widely on the archaeology and culture of the near east and Egypt, including *Archaeologists, Tourists, Interpreters: Exploring Egypt and the Near East in the late 19th – early 20th Centuries (with Maya Muratov, Bloomsbury, 2015)* and *From Khartoum to Jerusalem: The Dragoman Solomon Negima and his Clients (1885 – 1933)*, (Bloomsbury, 2016).

To book, contact the British Museum Box Office: 020 7323 8181 or [www.britishmuseum.org](http://www.britishmuseum.org)

## OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

### Seminars and Talks

#### 'Egyptian Museums: Past, Present and Future'

Thursday 13 July 2017  
18.30–19.30  
BP Lecture Theatre  
Free, booking essential

As the Egyptian Museum in Cairo – which houses the treasures of Tutankhamun – reaches its 115th birthday, this lecture will provide insights into the history of the museum. Former director Mohamed Saleh will present the history of the collection and displays, and an insight into day-to-day work of the museum and its staff. Together with Fathi Saleh, founder of CULTNAT, he will continue by showcasing the ways in which new technologies are being used to enhance the museum experience, including in new museums in Cairo and beyond.

The lecture will be followed by a reception, including demonstration of virtual reality interfaces to the tomb of Tutankhamun.

Presented in collaboration with the Egyptian Bureau for Educational and Cultural Affairs, under the auspices of HE Ambassador Nasser Kamel, and with the generous support of Dr Ahmed el-Mokadem, patron and founder of the British Egyptian Society.

#### Seminar for Arabian Studies 2017

Friday 4 August 2017, 10.00–17.00  
Saturday 5 August 2017, 10.00–17.00  
Sunday 6 August 2017, 10.00–17.00  
*Clore Centre for Education*  
*The British Museum*

The Seminar for Arabian Studies is the only international forum that meets annually for the presentation of the latest academic research in the humanities on the Arabian Peninsula from the earliest times to the present day or, in the case of political and social history, to the end of the Ottoman Empire (1922).

Tickets £100  
All three days £100, concessions £75, full-time students £50 Each day £40, concessions £30, full-

time students £20 Concessions are Members and members of the British Foundation for the Study of Arabia

<https://www.thebfsa.org/seminar/the-latest-seminar/>

## Exhibitions

### Petrie Museum

#### **Different Perspectives: Archaeology and the Middle East in World War One Exhibition**

16th May 2017 13:00 - 30th Sep 2017 17:00  
Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology,  
Malet Place, University College London, WC1E 6BT

World War One had a profound impact in and on the Middle East, the repercussions of which are still felt today. This exhibition touches on the significant, and often emotive, events and issues that took place. It was based on the idea that at the age of 61 Flinders Petrie tried to enlist for service but could only watch as those around him put on military uniforms and as battles were fought near to or in the places he knew so well In Egypt and Palestine. Petrie was based in London throughout the war, opening a museum of Egyptian Archaeology at University College in 1915 shortly after major Zeppelin bombing raids.

The exhibition is made up of a series of panels exploring aspects of the war in the Middle East and its legacy, including a timeline of events. The panels include:

- Ways of Seeing considers how technical advancements in map making and aviation changed the war
- Petrie's Pups explores what four of Petrie's students did during the war, including becoming some of the first 'monuments men'
- Voices from the Region considers the use of Arab and Egyptian archaeological workforces and the impact of the war on people in the Middle East
- The Role of Women sketches how women were involved, such as the intelligence agent Gertrude Bell and fundraiser Hilda Petrie
- Gathering Intelligence details the exploits of some of the intelligence agents, such as T. E. Lawrence, and technical innovations
- Petrie's War gives an overview of Petrie's experience of the war on the home front and his involvement in the politics of archaeology in the region
- A map and display of connections drawing together objects, people and archive material

stresses the personal networks that Flinders Petrie was a part of in World War One.

*Different Perspectives* is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund with additional support from UCL Culture

### **The Library and Museum of Freemasonry Exhibition**

#### **'Brethren beyond the Seas'**

April 24, 2017 - February 23, 2018  
Freemasons' Hall, 60 Great Queen Street, London, WC2B 5AZ  
Phone: +44 (0)20 7395 9257

Following ASTENE's successful collaboration last year with the Library and Museum of Freemasonry, some members may be interested in this exhibition.

In June 1917, in the midst of the 1914-1918 War, the United Grand Lodge of England celebrated its 200th anniversary. The War had undermined the original ambition to stage a major imperial and international event but the celebrations were attended by a number of overseas freemasons and the Grand Master thanked "Brethren Beyond the Seas", praising their support for Britain in the war effort.

After the formation of the first Grand Lodge in the world in London in 1717, freemasonry spread from Britain into Europe and then, following trade and expanding empires, across the world. As countries within the British Empire gained their independence from the late 1700s, they established their own masonic jurisdiction or Grand Lodge.

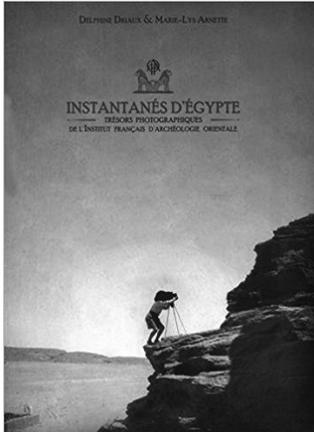
In the period of the First World War, the relationship between the English Grand Lodge and these overseas "daughter" grand lodges developed and strengthened. For the individual countries the experience of fighting in the war was often a landmark in the creation of their national identity. For the individual fighting men the experience of travelling to foreign countries, the comradeship and the trauma of war were significant in their personal development.

This exhibition explores the development of many of the Grand Lodges within the British Empire and marks the contribution of their forces to the First World War. It features objects, books and documents from across the world.

Admission to the exhibition is free of charge

# BOOKS AND REVIEWS

Driaux, Delphine, and Arnette, Marie-Lys, *Instantanés d'Égypte : trésors photographiques de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale*, IFAO, Bibliothèque Générale 50, Le Caire 2016, 368 pp., €39 (557 EGP), ISBN 9782724706956.



Photography has been an essential tool for archaeology ever since its inception. François Arago promoted the daguerreotype in 1839 as the critical new instrument in epigraphy, destined to replace dozens of toiling draughtsmen. Although the reality of photographing at excavations, and using photography as part of epigraphic as well as excavation documentation, is of course much more complex than Arago could have envisaged, the records of Egyptian archaeology and epigraphy would have had a very different character, had the photographic techniques never appeared. However, the focus of archaeological photography has been usually on the monument, not so often on people working at the dig. As the opening motto by the French Egyptologist - and a leader in archaeological photography at the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology (IFAO) - Serge Sauneron suggests, archaeologists are not often seen revealing the toils of their craft. So much so, that recently they have been deemed responsible for a putative 'airbrushing' of their local colleagues from the historical picture.

However, this book shows a very different view in the backstage of an excavation in Egypt. The "snapshots" of Egypt come presented as a handsome volume of photographs dated from the 1910s to the 1960s. It is not archaeological photography exemplified by illustrations of excavation reports or by artistic arrangements of artefacts destined

for catalogue volumes. Such photography was by definition selective, not least so because of the costly large glass plates that were also difficult to manipulate.

The protagonist here is the vernacular side of archaeological photography. There are some large glass negative plates of artfully composed and comparatively well-lit finds or elements of architecture, but mostly, this is a portrait of an everyday at the dig and in the dig house, often made on a celluloid film.

The book is divided into two main parts. The first - and the visual core of the book - consists of large reproductions of a number of photographs. These capture the 1910s life in the Mounira headquarters of the institute, the everyday life in the Deir el-Medina dig house in the 1930s, details from various excavations across Egypt from the first half of the 20th century, or well as the return of French expedition to Deir el Medina in full in 1946 after the break caused by Second World War (last wartime expedition concluded in 1940). The Egyptologists are part of the picture, but just as often as their Egyptian team members, and indeed the material side of an excavation and documentation in Egypt, such as the scaffolding, and other practicalities.

The central character is consequently everyone who took part in the life at the dig. Workmen, their foremen, Egyptologists, their family members, visitors, pets and other animals, indeed 'portraits' of the interior of the excavation houses or of the library in Cairo. This is a lived environment - from still-life with books in a library to moments of leisure on the veranda in Deir el-Medina. The visual narrative turns into a metanarrative about books and book production with a view of the printing presses of the IFAO in Cairo.

The sense of urgency of the archaeological work transpires from many snapshots, whereas others have the characteristics of a slightly staged, frozen moment - mainly these in which the subjects portrayed were asked to look in the camera. That view gave them their unmistakable personal identity, but took away the impression of immediacy. It is an element that reminds us of the sometimes illusive qualities of photographic eye witnessing. Again, both

Egyptians and non-Egyptians appear in both types of photography.

The second half of the book consists of commented catalogue entries for each photograph - date, photographer, size, technology and subject matter are given in a succinct heading alongside IFAO archive call number. The entries then give historical information on both the persons in front and, whenever possible, behind the camera. The Egyptologists' gaze often targeted fellow Egyptologists, alongside the workmen, but quite often the workmen and their mastery of skills are in the forefront. One of the members of the IFAO mission to Esna, Serge Sauneron, was particularly skilled behind the camera - and in spite of his abovementioned words provided a chronicle of scaffolding set-ups or lighting arrangements. Neither was he the only one - from the 1930s to the 1960s, all excavation participants were captured on celluloid quite regularly.

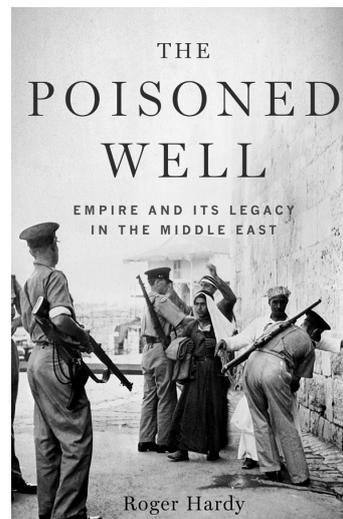
The commentaries also provide insights into history of each campaign, often plagued by having too much to do and very little time to do it in. Some of the most important finds from the village of Deir el-Medina are captured here from an unexpected angle and text and photography work together remarkably well here. Apart from Deir el-Medina, the visual chronicle accompanies the reader across sites of Esna, Edfu, the Memphire region and so on.

Finally a few words about the series. Bibliothèque Générale is a comprehensive series of historically oriented publications of high quality of contents, and is an excellent accompaniment to the archaeological series of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology. Previous volumes included studies on the history of the Suez Canal, of the French presence in Cairo, Orientalizing architecture or histories of excavation and research on Egyptian sites frequented by French archaeological teams. Many of its volumes are well within the ASTENE interest and also well worth having.

To sum up, this is a valuable contribution to the history of study of ancient Near East and the encounters that accompanied it. This book offers a comprehensive view and alerts us to a more complex historical narrative.

*Hana Navratilova*

**Hardy, Roger, *The Poisoned Well: Empire and its Legacy in the Middle East*, London, Hurst & Company, 2016, ISBN 978-1849046398, £20.**



Elizabeth Monroe's *Britain's moment in the Middle East 1914-1956*, published in 1972, was a crucial introduction to the area for both newcomers such as myself as well as old hands. Roger Hardy's equally valuable survey, from the demise of the Ottoman Empire to the British departure from southern Arabia in 1967, is very different, however, taking in a wider region - from North Africa right through to Iran - and reflecting the deep-seated changes in our attitudes to that region and more especially the region's attitude to us as outsiders. It is also more appropriately internationalist. As he states in his introduction, his focus is 'on the struggle for independence in ten countries from north Africa to south Arabia' - independence from Europe.

In both Monroe's and Hardy's cases this is a world travelled by many Astene members as well as by so many of the historical personalities we study. How crucial is that comprehension of the region both then and now. One significant difference stems from Hardy's enormous range of indigenous sources. Hardy worked as a Middle East analyst with the BBC World Service for 25 years. This led amongst other concerns to a radio series that was the precursor to the book. As a result he accumulated an impressive collection of indigenous informants whose diaries, letters, memoirs, novels create a vast post-imperialist panorama of a part of the world which has changed so radically, as have our attitudes to it, over the years since Monroe's

book. As far as possible Hardy has drawn on eye-witness testimony.

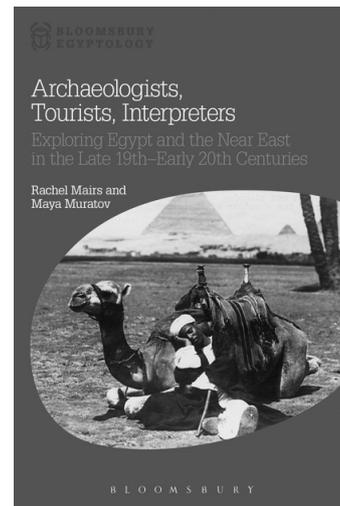
The organisation of *Poisoned Well* is also unusual. A lengthy and useful bibliography is followed by a list of 'Dramatis personae' of all nationalities: European, Turkish, Arab, Jewish and Iranian. And then the Index! Under geographical headings – Algeria for example, France, Ottoman Empire – comes a chronology; the author has had the good fortune to find a publisher (Hurst) to accommodate his concern for giving the reader a better sense of time. Chapter headings caught my eye, especially 'Pigeons of Denshawai' for his chapter on Egypt, which concludes with a quote from distinguished Egyptian journalist Muhammad Heikal in the aftermath of Suez, that the pigeons of Denshawai (cause of a particularly vicious shooting incident in the Egyptian delta in 1906 regarded by Harding as the origin of Egyptian nationalism) had come home to roost with Nasser's triumph over the foreign invaders of their country.

The chapter on the Levant – Syria, Palestine and Israel – is in many ways the most poignant, partly due to the book's publication in 2016 coinciding (or timed to do so?) with the centenary of the Sykes-Picot agreement. Harding draws on a rich range of indigenous material for those who want to read further; for me the autobiography of Wadad Makdisi Cortas *A world I loved* has proved a revelation, also Anbar Salam Khalidi's *Early Arab Feminist*. Their insights add a refreshing dimension to more familiar, often outside authorities.

I finished *The Poisoned Well* with a strong sense of guilt and also a greater appreciation of the bitterness throughout the region for how outsiders had misused their lands. I have only one slight quibble: while the picture painted by Hardy of the Middle East today is tragically true to life, I am not quite sure where the 'poisoned well' actually is; there are so many possibilities. Or is it the whole region? It well could be.

*Sarah Searight*

**Mairs, Rachel, & Muratov, Maya, *Archaeologists, Tourists, Interpreters: Exploring Egypt and the Near East in the Late 19th-early 20th Centuries*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015, 160pp, ISBN 9781472588807, £19.99.**



This Bloomsbury Egyptology publication, written by Dr. Rachel Mairs (lecturer in Classics at Reading University) and Dr. Maya Muratov (associate professor in Art and Art History at Alephi University) presents information on the social history of the dragomans, interpreters and local guides who catered to Western tourists as they travelled through Egypt and the Near East in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The authors have previously conducted research on the role of interpreters in Egypt and the Near East which will prove of particular interest to ASTENE members, and have since published an additional work on the contents of a scrapbook containing the testimony of the dragoman and interpreter, Solomon Negima ('From Khartoum to Jerusalem: the dragoman Solomon Negima and his clients (1885-1933)') which forms the focus of the final chapter of this book and which would prove an ideal accompaniment to the work under review.

*Archaeologists, Tourists, Interpreters* presents a focused study on the role of interpreters in Egypt and the East in late 19th and early 20th centuries, and is part of a much wider project on multiculturalism and the complex roles of interpreters in antiquity. In reconsidering the importance and scope of their role in the age of early travel and in using the rare testimony of the dragomans Solomon Negima and Daniel Z. Noorian, this work offers an insight into the life and work of the guides, interpreters and dragomans who aided early travellers in their adventures in the East, and allows the reader to appreciate their role in influencing how the West came to experience and interpret the exotic lands of Egypt and the Near East.

Though a slim volume, this book is formed of seven well-written and informative chapters providing a unique insight into the lives and personalities of these individuals and the authors use various (often under-utilised) sources, including rare first-hand testimony, in order to describe the various roles these guides held.

The authors raise several interesting and important issues, both in considering how early travellers interpreted the Orient and the role interpreters and dragomans played in conveying the East to Western travellers. For instance, that the act of travel was in itself an act of 'conspicuous consumption,' and that the dragoman was not only responsible for guiding, caring for and even enlightening his clientele to the culture and history of their native land, but was also charged with the responsibility of shielding them from certain aspects of the East which would be considered 'undesirable' to Western sensibilities. Their role of introducing the tourist to the 'exoticism' of the East was balanced with a need to censor their interaction with the sights and scenes they encountered; thus, essentially only an illusion of engagement was on offer; the dragoman commonly took on the role of an 'autoethnographer' when interpreting elements of their own ethnic group for Western travellers.

Mairs and Muratov also consider the 'usefulness' of these guides, and how they were perceived and valued for instance by early archaeologists working in the East. The famed early archaeologist Flinders Petrie (1853-1942) for instance, subscribed to the view that these 'guides' were not always to be trusted and advocated travellers to become more self-reliant (for instance by learning Arabic). Petrie's distrust was perhaps influenced by his own unfortunate experience in 1881, when he was assaulted and robbed by some soldiers in Cairo. For many travellers however, whose sojourn in the East was perhaps too brief to allow them to become as independent as Petrie advised, these guides were indispensable. We are reminded that the role of dragoman, guide or interpreter garnered greater respect and consideration through the work of men such as Giovanni Finati (1786-1829?) (a.k.a. 'Mohamet') and Giovanni D'Athanasi (a.k.a. 'Yanni') (1798-1854) who though not native to the country in which they worked (being Italian and Greek respectively) adopted the 'native' language and culture of those around them in order to provide the service and experience which was expected by Western travellers. The authors consider how these

men were trapped between two worlds, where they neither represented the East nor the West. Reconsideration and reinterpretation of even the most well-known accounts of guides such as Finati and D'Athanasi, raises the important point that there is still a great deal to be discovered and learnt from the study of such individuals.

Further discussion of other well-known characters' interactions with these guides, such as T. E. Lawrence (1888-1935) and Leonard Woolley (1880-1952) provide an interesting insight into the role of the dragoman and interpreter for those Western visitors who worked and lived in the East for considerable lengths of time. These guides were often taken for granted or perceived as a rapacious 'nuisance' by early travellers, but this ignores the skill and expertise they had to offer to even the most 'knowledgeable' and 'independent' traveller. These individuals were after all often proficient in several languages, possessed an in-depth knowledge of both the local geography and history of the land in which they guided their visitors, and were able to 'interpret' the 'otherness' of the Orient for clients who often viewed themselves as having travelled from countries which were far superior in terms of their civility and culture.

The book's most interesting contribution however, is the presentation and discussion of previously unpublished and exceedingly rare material which provides an insight into the lives of the dragomans Daniel Z. Noorian and Soloman Negima.

Daniel Zado Noorian (d. 1929) who worked as an interpreter for both the Wolfe Expedition (1884-1885) and the two Babylonian Campaigns undertaken by the University of Pennsylvania (1888-1890) began his career as a dragoman. Unlike many of his colleagues whose stories may remain forever unknown, Noorian's interaction with American archaeologists and his post-interpreter 'afterlife' as an art dealer when he later moved to America, has made it possible to trace the course of his life which the authors accomplish via the use of archival material, contemporary newspaper articles etc. Noorian appears to have made his way to the U.S. under the care of Rev. William H. Ward (director of the Wolfe expedition), and to have attended Rutgers Preparatory School in New Brunswick (New Jersey) before returning to Nippur with the University of Pennsylvania Expedition in 1888.

Due in part to his connection with Ward, Noorian appears in several newspaper articles of the time in the context of the progress of the expedition's work at the site of ancient Babylonia. Following the expedition, he returned to Newark where he would reside for the rest of his life, purchasing a house close to his mentor and developing an interest in selling antiquities, something which may have been influenced by Ward's own efforts to procure Near Eastern artefacts for North American collections. The authors note that he appears to have had a great eye for beautiful objects and that many American museums now have artefacts in their collections which were sourced by Noorian. Through analysis of correspondence between Noorian and various museum directors and other dealers, Mairs and Muratov are able to shed light on the relationship between those who wanted to acquire artefacts and those who were able to acquire them; one notable acquisition made possible by Noorian (via Ward) was a sizable collection of cuneiform tablets obtained by the Metropolitan Museum in 1886, the first American museum to acquire such a large and important collection. Noorian became so well-respected in his expertise that he was later employed by the Museum to determine whether potential acquisitions were genuine or forgeries. Noorian also built up his own sizeable collection of antiquities containing Egyptian, Syrio-Roman, Phoenician and Near Eastern objects (642 objects in total) which were sold at auction through the Anderson Galleries after his death in 1931.

As the authors state, Noorian who was proficient in at least four languages by the age of 19 (Armenian, Turkish, Arabic and English) was far more than an interpreter: 'his work as interpreter was not simply to translate but also to arrange, appease, moderate, negotiate, compromise and communicate or to facilitate communication.' He, like many others of his profession, was indispensable and invaluable to both tourists and professional archaeologists working in East in the age of early travel.

Our understanding of the experiences of Solomon N. Negima are easier to piece together as we are fortunate enough to have access to his own personal testimony. His life spent as a dragoman and an interpreter was recorded in his own testimonial book (acquired by happenstance by Mairs in 2014). Formed of c.80 articles, including letters from clients, photographs and additional memoranda, this testimony makes it possible for the authors to shed light on the experiences of one guide from his

own perspective, ensuring that Negima's voice is heard and that he does not remain one of the many 'invisible' interpreters who aided early travellers but unfortunately, whose experiences we don't have access to.

Evidently a popular dragoman (he kept clippings of his former clients' recommendations of his capable service), Negima appears mostly to have been employed by British, American, Australian and New Zealand travellers. Most of these were clergymen or missionaries who wished to tour the biblical sites, however he keeps note of a few military men, 'independent women' and politicians amongst others. His letters are written mostly in English but also in German and Arabic and this 'scrapbook' (if you will) of his correspondence and dealings with his clients, contains endearing flourishes such as places where he has practised writing his name (and that of his daughter Lulu) in the margins, using the handwriting of his clients as a guide.

Negima has labelled the book 'Testimonial Book of Dragoman Solomon N. Negima' and inside the back cover are two photographs of him taken and sent to him by clients. He was obviously proud of his profession and he appears to have been popular amongst the travellers he worked with as he can be attested in the travelogues of Rev. Joseph Llewellyn Thomas (1853-1940) and of Miss Ellen E. Miller, who came to use his services whilst in the East. Both accounts have helped the authors piece together a more complete picture of Negima's life, including important biographical details.

Negima also later worked as an interpreter, starting his career by working for the British Army in Egypt and the Sudan, when he entered their service in 1885, aiding them during the expedition to relieve General Gordon and his garrison at Khartoum. Later (sometime between 1885-1888) he worked once again as a dragoman in Palestine, often in the company of another American dragoman, Rolla Floyd. From 1889 he appears to have often worked for one of the large tour agencies catering to travellers in the late 19th century. It is interesting to consider that Noorian's return to his role as a dragoman, one in which he appears to have not had as much opportunity to work independently, coincides with general changes to the profession by this time. Evidenced in protests led by dragomans (from as early as 1874) against the monopoly which these foreign-owned agencies had over their profession (which made it difficult for them to

remain independent agents), they argued, (quite rightly), that independent, local dragomans could offer a customised itinerary for travellers, were cheaper and contributed invaluable local knowledge. Negima worked at times for Thomas Cook and others, whilst Floyd was known to both cater for tour agencies and to poach business from them. He evidently valued dragomans who he could train and were trustworthy. Perhaps Negima's training under Floyd led him to appreciate the importance of self-promotion and might explain why he kept his letters of recommendation; these not only provided a testimony to his skill and likeability but also showed an appreciation for his profession which was perhaps under threat by large commercial tourist companies at this time.

Negima's story is only presented here in taster form. His experiences are discussed in detail by Mairs in the aforementioned book dedicated to his life: 'From Khartoum to Jerusalem' (2016). However, in the context of interpreters and their role in introducing their clients (whether travellers or archaeologists) to the wonders of the East, his testimony provides insight into how dragomans viewed their profession, the enjoyment they took from it as well as demonstrating how valued they were by those hired them; as one of Negima's clients, D. Ford Goddard informed him by letter: 'I hope I shall see you and have a hubble-bubble together. How I should like to ride again through the country, it was splendid.'

Consideration of the lives of these men through examination of their own testimony, not only allows us to experience the world of early travel from a different perspective but also emphasises the need for further research into unpublished material of all those involved in this realm, if we are to pursue a more nuanced understanding of travellers' experiences in the Egypt and the Near East in the age of early travel. The importance of such research and the need for its dissemination is something which I am sure is not lost on ASTENE members, and this book is an important contribution to this field of study.

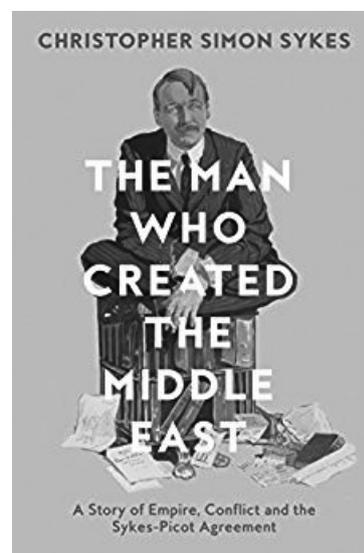
Enriched with several interesting and many previously unpublished photographs and illustrations (though these could be of a more superior quality) and with useful references throughout, this book offers an insight into an area of early travel which often eludes us; as the authors state: 'many of these dragomans will remain forever invisible and unknown.' However, Mairs and

Muratov have demonstrated that with passion and research it is possible to shed light on characters who formed an important part of early travellers' experiences in the East, in allowing them to tell their part of the story for themselves.

In short, a highly recommended read for those seeking further insight into the importance of the many-faceted role of the dragoman, guide and interpreter in the age of early travel.

*Tessa Baber*

**Sykes, Christopher Simon, *The Man Who Created the Middle East: A Story of Empire, Conflict and the Sykes-Picot Agreement*. William Collins, London, 2016, 368 pp. £25. ISBN: 978 000812190 7**



This biography of Sir Mark Sykes was published in the 100th anniversary year of the signing of the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Sykes has been maligned for his role in the creation of the modern Middle East after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, with a line drawn on the map 'from the "e" in Acre to the last "k" in Kirkuk'. T.E. Lawrence had to cope with the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement and how it undermined other British loyalties, promises and agreements at the heart of the Arab Revolt. In the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence made clear his view of Mark Sykes as 'the imaginative advocate of unconvincing world-movements... a bundle of prejudices, intuitions, half-sciences. He would take an aspect of the truth, detach it from its circumstances, inflate it, twist and model it... His instincts lay in parody: by choice he was a caricaturist rather than an artist, even in statesmanship.'

Written by his grandson, this biography aims to present a more balanced view of Mark Sykes. Christopher Sykes started with inside knowledge about his grandfather beyond his involvement with the division of the Ottoman Empire. The biography was not meant to be a history of the Middle East, although there are elements of this as part of the complicated account. The author decided to present much of the story through his grandfather's writings, and largely the extensive correspondence with his wife Edith, written from the time they met until the year before his death in 1919. Many of the letters to Edith were illustrated with his drawings and cartoons, a great number of which are reproduced in the book.

Mark Sykes (1879-1919) was the only son of Sir Tatton Sykes, whom he succeeded in 1913, and Jessie Cavendish-Bentinck. Both parents are described as being 'damaged by their upbringing'. Mark's mother was much younger than his father. They were not happy together, and there were implications for Mark within this dysfunctional family. Young Mark was raised at Sledmere House, Yorkshire, and his earliest education took advantage of the books in its library. He was fascinated from an early age with military history and fortifications, and used the grounds of Sledmere for military themed games and exercises.

In 1882 Jessie converted to Catholicism, and brought Mark along into the faith. In the mid 1880s she took her first lover. Sir Tatton travelled extensively, having a particular interest in Ottoman lands, and he took Mark with him from an early age. Mark's first trip abroad was to Egypt in 1888, at the age of nine. In 1890, after a trip to Lebanon, Mark was enrolled at Beaumont College, known as the 'Catholic Eton'.

In Spring 1895, Mark was sent to an Italian Jesuit school in Monaco. Shortly before that, he had an affair with the daughter of his father's coachman, which resulted in her pregnancy. Mark was unaware of the pregnancy, and never learned of the birth of his illegitimate child, for whom his own father took financial responsibility. Sir Tatton was so angry he considered disinheritance, but he punished Mark cruelly by having his favourite dogs hanged.

Mark's mother became involved with gambling, further affairs, and alcohol. She ran into serious debt, and in 1896 her husband published his intention not to be responsible for the debts of

his wife. It unfolded in a nasty way, including a trial where Jessie was found to have forged her husband's name on promissory notes to money-lenders. According to the author, it was starting at Jesus College, Cambridge, in Spring 1897 that kept Mark from being overwhelmed by the extraordinary family events.

While at Cambridge, Mark wrote his first book, *Through Five Turkish Provinces*. Mark corresponded with his fiancée Edith Gorst from 1899, initially addressing her as 'Honourable and Well-Beloved Co-Religionist' (they married in 1903). After Cambridge, Mark served in the Boer War (1899-1902). He was put in command of Kitchener's Horse Regiment. Sykes made use of his knowledge of fortifications and came to the notice of senior army commanders. During this time he wrote his first book under the pseudonym of Major Gen. George D'Ordel: a spoof about military training.

In 1902 Mark made his second trip across the Ottoman Empire, from Damascus to Tiflis (Tbilisi) with John Hugh Smith. After he returned, he served as the private secretary to George Wyndham, Chief Secretary to Ireland.

From 1905-7, Sykes was the hon. Attaché at the British embassy, Constantinople, under Ambassador Sir Nicholas O'Connor. His Report on the Petroliferous Districts of the Vilayets of Baghdad, Mosul and Bitilis, illustrated by his own maps, reported oil concessions the Germans were taking advantage of, at the expense of Britain. Sykes was very frustrated that this report and others he produced were not taken seriously.

Before his return to England, the Ambassador approved a last journey that would take Sykes from Constantinople to the borders of Persia and then back to Aleppo, with the objective of research for a proposed book. He encountered Gertrude Bell, and described her as a 'silly chattering windbag of a conceited gushing flat-chested man-woman globetrotting rump-wagging blethering ass!'

Sykes had become something of an authority on the Middle East, and felt he had views to share in Parliament. Once he became a Conservative MP for Hull in 1911, he thought that he finally had a career worthy of his talents, and sat on numerous committees. His career in politics allowed him to focus on Middle Eastern affairs. In 1913 Mark

thought the Ottoman Empire should be protected and preserved, but his view changed once Turkey sided with Germany in the war.

Mark was the most junior member of the Bunsen Committee, organised in 1915 to consider 'the nature of British desiderata in Turkey', as Kitchener's personal representative. Four possible solutions proposed by Mark were reviewed. The fourth plan was eventually recommended by the Committee: 'devolution, where the Ottoman Empire was preserved, but had imposed upon it a decentralised system of administration' for five historic-ethnographic provinces – Anatolia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine and Iraq. The report of the Bunsen Committee was submitted in July 1915. Although it never received official approval from the Government, nor were its suggestions fully implemented, it sowed the seeds of future British policy in the Middle East. In preparation for the next steps, Kitchener asked Sykes to do a six-month fact-finding tour of the Middle East and India.

Charles François Georges-Picot, the former French Consul-General in Beirut, was designated as the man to negotiate the Middle Eastern partition with Britain. Negotiations began in November 1915. Mark returned from his mission in December and reported to Downing Street. He presented evidence about the Arab situation and recommended securing an agreement with France as soon as possible. At this meeting he famously drew his finger across the map on the table to indicate his recommended division of the Ottoman territories with France. Sykes joined the negotiating team, and worked closely with Picot at the French Embassy. The Sykes-Picot Agreement was approved on 3 Jan 1916. A small and scarcely readable reproduction of the map that documented the Agreement is provided.

Mark Sykes helped draw up the Balfour Declaration, which promised a National Home in Palestine for the Jews. By 1918, Mark Sykes reconsidered his views of the Middle East expressed in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, and realised that it was out of keeping with new nationalist idealism expressed by Lloyd George and Woodrow Wilson. He admitted to Sir Reginald Wingate, the British High Commissioner in Egypt, that the Agreement was 'dead and gone, and the sooner scrapped the better'. Lawrence commented in *Seven Pillars* that at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, Sykes 'tried to atone. He had returned from a period in Syria, after

his awful realization of the true shape of his dreams, to say gallantly, "I was wrong: here is the truth". His former friends would not see his new earnestness, and thought him fickle and in error; very soon he died. It was a tragedy of tragedies, for the Arab sake'. But for his sudden and tragic death, perhaps Sykes might have effectively influenced changes to the agreed division.

Christopher Sykes is a journalist, writer and photographer. He has written many books, including biographies, and his work has appeared in a variety of magazines. It must have been difficult to undertake writing this biography of his grandfather, when even his publisher suggested the title of the book should be "The Man Who F\*\*\*ed Up the Middle East.

This reviewer believes that the contents of the book live up to its title and, in the last six chapters, its subtitle. The book succeeds as a sympathetic review of the life Mark Sykes and shows his depth of character beyond the stereotype of an aristocratic, deceptive British imperialist with connections in high places. As promised in the introduction, the author makes us aware of the multi-dimensional man long before the four years he was involved as a junior official with the creation of the modern Middle East. Mark Sykes's private writings and correspondence work well in this special biography to reveal his family circumstances and problems, his intelligence and great enthusiasm for the Middle East, his travels and travel writing, his failures, doubts and triumphs, and his love for Edith and his family. The biography, however, cannot restore the tarnished reputation of Mark Sykes for his inept role in the carve-up of the Middle East through the Agreement that is synonymous with his name.

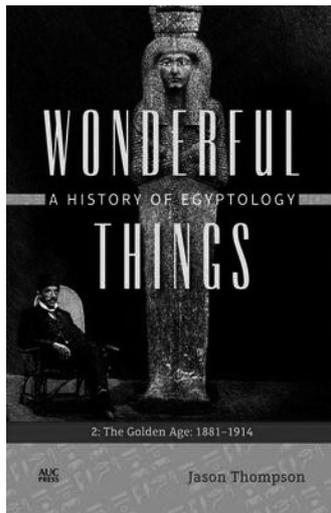
For a truly rounded view of the man, some critical views of Mark Sykes could have been included. A mixed view by General Allenby, who met Sykes briefly right after the war, is a rare example: 'a good fellow, but cracked and his blessed Sykes-Picot Agreement must be torn up somehow'. T.E. Lawrence's disparaging view of Sykes appeared earlier in this review. Lawrence himself is scarcely mentioned in the biography.

A map of the Middle East within the Ottoman Empire and a clear, legible map showing the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916 would have been welcome. I had to turn to such maps in biographies of T.E. Lawrence. A chronology table for Sykes's life and

key relevant dates in the history of the Middle East would have been useful. Dates were not always included within the narrative, and I resorted to turning to the notes for dates of the source letters. The book is well footnoted and has a good index.

*Cathie Bryan*

**Thompson, Jason, *Wonderful Things: A History of Egyptology, The Golden Age: 1881–1914*, American University in Cairo Press 2016, 374 pp, ISBN 978 977 416 692 1, £24.95.**



The second volume in Jason Thompson's history of Egyptology is a wonderful thing indeed. This work builds on the considerable merits of the initial installment in what aims to be the first comprehensive history of the study of ancient Egypt. It represents a colossal achievement: a masterful synthesis of extensive archival and secondary sources that succeeds in being both scholarly and eminently readable. The first volume addresses a period stretching from antiquity to the late 19th century, while the next will extend to the present day. This volume concentrates on a shorter period of just over 30 years, coinciding with Gaston Maspero's director-generalship of the Egyptian Antiquities Service. It is convincingly presented as the Golden Age of Egyptology that would come to define the discipline and provide the foundations for its subsequent achievements.

The book is broadly chronological in arrangement, but its success lies in weaving a compelling thematic narrative around aspects of Egyptological history, such as fascination with Amarna and the so-called heretic king, and the long-neglected study

of Greco-Roman Egypt, in which even Alexandria was initially dismissed. Thompson largely focusses on the personalities that propelled the subject, but also illuminates more obscure figures. While these cannot be exhaustive, arguably a minor omission is Charles Trick Currelly, who excavated with Petrie, dealt antiquities, and was founding director of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto. Incisive characterisations elucidate even already familiar Egyptological figures and demonstrate their influence. For example, Flinders Petrie's introductory professorial lecture in 1893 proposed a direction for British Egyptology focussing on material culture, referencing the legacy of Wilkinson's Manners and Customs.

The ambitions and achievements of early Egyptology are celebrated with enthusiasm. For the Wörterbuch dictionary project under Adolf Erman, an astounding more than 80 collaborators from ten nations compiled words and examples of their use on Zettel (note slips) eventually numbering more than 1.5 million. Thompson's writing conveys the excitement of archaeological endeavour, highlighting the urgency of Georges Legrain's work at Karnak, when eleven columns in the Hypostyle Hall collapsed in 1899 with five more threatening to follow, and the thrill of discovery, when the cachette of over 700 stone statues and 17,000 bronzes 'seemed to sprout among the men as fast as they picked them out'. Despite vivid descriptions, the author himself acknowledges the lack of accompanying illustrations and states his intention to compose a pictorial volume, as well as videos. One can only hope that the series' success will prompt a new edition in the future that will integrate these images within the narrative.

Egyptological failures and set-backs are acknowledged; how much effort and knowledge was lost to nationalist rivalries, the creation of false divisions and boundaries within disciplines, and to pride and personal animosity? For example, Émile Chassinat established the French Institute as a publishing powerhouse, but was forced to resign because of an article despairing France's loss of supremacy in Egyptology. Thompson ponders how much more could have been accomplished if British institutions, lacking in government support and often competing, had worked together more effectively.

Early travellers feature extensively; according to Thompson, in the first decade of the 20th

century, at least 56 American travelogues were published. Historical accounts are enlivened by amusing anecdotes and entertaining quotations. Arthur Weigall persuaded Alan Gardiner to assist in recording Theban tombs by writing: 'What's the use of your smuggling away over books in Berlin when the material indispensable for your studies is perishing in Egypt itself in double quick time?'. Outdated opinions occasionally surface, such as the perception of Roman mummification as 'cruder', but the author largely offers welcome critical evaluations of historic methodology, for example critiquing Egyptology's detachment from the broader study of Egypt, and its ambiguous relationship with the antiquities trade. The drawbacks of the distribution system are examined, noting that Weigall regarded such acquisitions, bereft of context, as 'stray cats and dogs'. Unfortunately, Petrie's advocacy of eugenics is glossed over, although Egyptology's problematic relationship with race is still addressed in the chapters on Nubia and American Egyptology. Samuel George Morton, a father of American physical anthropology, is a particularly disturbing example, in which his study of 170 Egyptian skulls concluded that Egyptians were Caucasian, though 'Negroes' were present as 'servants and slaves'.

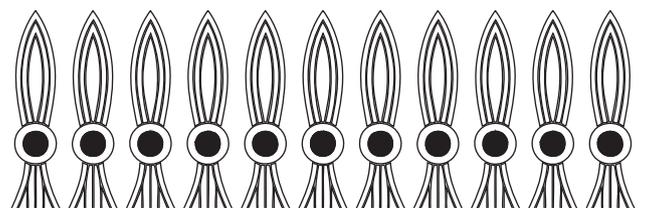
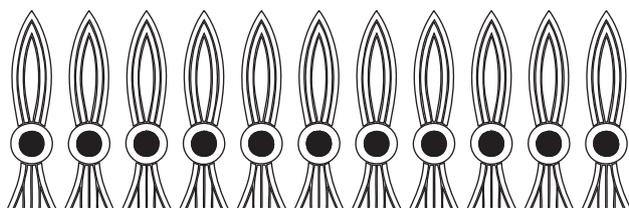
The oft-unsung work of women is acknowledged, including less well-known figures such as Medea Norsa, who became director of the Istituto Papirologico, Florence, and Winnifred Blackman, who worked on modern Egyptian anthropology. Other are conspicuous by their absence, such as Hilda Petrie and Margaret Benson. Annie A. Quibell, née Pirie, is characterised as a helpful artistic wife, although she initially studied at UCL

with Petrie. The author corrects her name to Anne, despite her being occasionally published and buried under the name Annie. The lack of reference in this instance and sparing use of endnotes elsewhere leave a more purposeful reader wanting.

Some attention is devoted to Egyptians in Egyptology, such as the scholar Rifa'a al-Tahtawi and the proficient Qufti workmen. The author highlights the limitations placed on Egyptians' training and advancement by European powers jealously guarding their control of the Antiquities Service. Heinrich Brugsch directed a school of Egyptology, but Mariette refused to employ the graduates, even ordering that 'no native be allowed to copy hieroglyphic inscriptions'. When the groundbreaking and talented archaeologist Ahmed Kamal, who was continually passed over for promotion, started another school decades later, his students were also refused. Pierre Lacau would later claim that Egyptians showed no interest in their antiquities, to which Kamal responded: 'what opportunities have you given us?'

Ultimately, Thompson delivers both a comprehensive overview and detailed scrutiny, providing a thought-provoking and self-reflective examination of the Egyptological discipline. In shining a light on less well-known characters and issues, Thompson provides hugely stimulating reading that will surely provide starting points for areas of future research. Everyone who has an interest in Egypt should have a copy of this invaluable and enlightening history.

*Margaret Maitland*



# ARTICLES

We are continuing our publication of selected papers from the 2015 ASTENE conference at Exeter. In this issue, Daniele Salvoldi gives an extensive account on Sinai Travel in the 19th and 20th century. As the article is substantial in length, part 1 is below, and part 2 will be published in the Autumn Bulletin.

## **Pilgrims to Tourists: Evolution of Travel in South Sinai in the 19th and 20th Century**

### **Part 1**

#### Introduction

Since Late Antiquity, South Sinai has been an attraction for travellers. For centuries, the fortune of the region had laid in its holy character for both Christianity and Islam. It is only in the 19th century that other motivations arose and what was a traditional pilgrimage turned often into leisure travel. In the words of Joseph Hobbs: "All who travelled overland to Mount Sinai emphasized the hazards along the way. From the early 19th century such obstacles became an attraction in themselves, a reason to travel."<sup>1</sup>

The main difference between pilgrims and travellers was the motivation: "Pilgrimage for most was necessity, penance, exile, suffering in unpleasant lands; travel for most was choice, leisure, participation, and acceptable discomfort in enchanting places."<sup>2</sup> According to this definition, travellers and tourist were not very different either, but "tourism is a mass phenomenon while nineteenth- and early twentieth-century travel involved movement of small numbers of people."<sup>3</sup>

Since the 1973 Arab-Israeli conflict, tourism in Sinai has completely changed: Jabal Musa still being an attraction for a Sinai journey, the seaside locations on the east coast such as Nuwayba, Taba, Dahab, and Sharm al-Shaykh have become among the most successful vacation destinations in the world. One travels to South Sinai for its sandy beaches and pristine coral reefs, and only as a second instance gets a chance to visit the holy places on a one-day trip.

#### Explorers

Changes at the turn of the century were instrumental in the shift of interests: the Napoleonic campaign of Egypt (1798-1801) opened the way for more travellers in the country, while there is no doubt that the rise of Mehmed 'Ali Pasha as *wali* of Egypt in 1805 gave a greater impulse for further travel and exploration. From this period on, political control of Cairo over Sinai increased significantly, as the Pasha signed a series of deals with the Sinai tribes: exemption from military service was exchanged for Bedouin responsibility over the security of the peninsula.<sup>4</sup>

Pilgrims were now joined by men with specific scientific interests. Nevertheless, the monastery of St. Catherine remained the focus of all Sinai travels and the travellers always performed the devotions required from pilgrims.<sup>5</sup> In any case, even scholars well into the 20th century were particularly interested in Biblical history, which received new impulse by the introduction of scientific methodology in archaeology.

Among the most important scientific accounts of the Peninsula we certainly number those by Coutelle and De Rozière, who in 1800 were the first to publish within the *Déscription de l'Égypte* the results of their observations on Sinai. The German geographer Seetzen visited shortly after in 1807. Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, who visited in 1816, produced one the most interesting accounts. His work was regarded as an indispensable tool for a visit to Sinai along with the works of Seetzen and Niebhur.<sup>6</sup> Burckhardt also inspired the travel of British traveller William J. Bankes, who was interested in Nabataean inscriptions and Greek manuscripts, particularly from the library of St. Catherine's monastery, whence he took a few volumes.<sup>7</sup> Bankes later funded the journey of John Hyde (1819) and Alessandro Ricci with Linant de Bellefonds (1820). Linant's map of Sinai, unfortunately unpublished, is the first relatively precise map of the region.<sup>8</sup> Only in 1826, Eduard Rüppel finally published a precise map of Sinai, correcting the widespread idea that the Gulf of Aqaba had two bays.<sup>9</sup> After the one drawn by Leon Delaborde, a new detailed map of the peninsula was

published by C.W. Wilson and H.S. Palmer only in 1868-69.

In the following years, Egyptological research concentrated its efforts on ancient Egyptian sites such as Maghara and Sarabit al-Khadim (Lepsius in 1843, Petrie in 1905-06), while Biblical research focused on the route of the Exodus (Robinson and Smith, 1841; Palmer, 1871).<sup>10</sup> Geographical, geological, and botanical expeditions were carried out during the whole 19th century and first quarter of the 20th. As pointed out by Hobbs, following Batanouny and Said, “there were darker unstated motives for travel and research in Sinai. The peninsula’s global crossroads location made it a focus of strategic, commercial, and ideological interests.”<sup>11</sup>

The importance of these early explorations for the history of tourism is multiple. In the first instance, the published accounts would serve as guides for subsequent travellers. Secondly, the discoveries and scientific achievements of the first explorers enriched the chapters of later tourist guidebooks with correct historical and environmental information. The first Baedeker guide to Egypt and Sinai was published in 1878 with the help of Egyptologist Georg Ebers; in the paragraph dedicated to Maghara, for example, he included the recent research of Egyptologist Richard Lepsius and geologist Carl F.H. Credner.

### Travel guidebooks

The first guidebook of Egypt, published in 1830 by Jean-Jacques Rifaud, included a chapter about Sinai. For the peninsula it was still a time when, in the author’s words, “l’apparition d’un étranger est un accident qui étonne.”<sup>12</sup>

In the space of a century, around two hundred guides about Egypt (mostly including Sinai) were to be published, at a rate of two every year. A hundred more guides were published in the following thirty years only. Among the guidebooks of Egypt considered by Volkoff for the period 1830-1964, only ten mention Sinai directly in the title; nevertheless, most of the guides dedicate a chapter to the travel in the peninsula.<sup>13</sup> All of them were published in the period 1858-1909: this must reflect a cultural shift as the peninsula was more and more considered part of Egypt.

The first guide entirely dedicated to Sinai was Dumas’ in 1951,<sup>14</sup> followed a few years later by Bassili’s (1957).<sup>15</sup> The prolonged period of war and political instability in the region in the 1960s prevented tourists from reaching Sinai; thus, no guidebooks were apparently published in those years. After the region returned to Egypt in 1982 and the Egyptian government implemented its plans for development, specific guidebooks reappeared.

### Journey Organisation

In the early phase of Sinai touring, a traveller was required to engage a Bedouin shaykh and his camels for the entire trip directly at Cairo; the Tuwara Bedouins had a base in the capital, where a traveller could easily reach them.<sup>16</sup> Before the 19th century, the Bedouins of Sinai had complete control over the peninsula and its routes, and, according to Burckhardt (1822), “enjoyed the exclusive privilege of transporting goods, provisions and passengers from Cairo to Suez,”<sup>17</sup> whose they were considered the protectors. The situation changed quickly in the first quarter of the 19th century: “Since the increased power of the Pasha of Egypt, it [i.e. the route] has been thrown open to camel-drivers of all descriptions, Egyptian peasants, as well as Syrian and Arabian Bedouins; [...] the Bedouins of Mount Sinai have lost the greater part of their custom, and the transport trade in this route is now almost wholly in the hands of the Egyptian carriers.”<sup>18</sup>

Later on, when Suez became reachable by train, the camels could be engaged thence; still, as Baedeker warns: “All the preliminaries must be arranged at Cairo, where alone are to be found the necessary dragomans and the Shékhs of the Tâwara Bedouins, who act as guides and let camels during the travelling season. The first thing is to engage a good dragoman, who provides camels, tents, bedding, blankets, and provisions.”<sup>19</sup>

Murray’s guide, which was published only three years after (1888), offers another possibility: “Unless the traveller is anxious to spend a few days in crossing the desert from Cairo to Suez, [...] he will save a good deal of expense by telegraphing or writing to the manager of the Suez Hotel a few days before he intends leaving Cairo, and requesting him to have some camels and guides ready by a certain date. If there should be none at Suez, three or four days will suffice to bring in any number from the desert.”<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, it warns the traveller against venturing as far as al-Tur by water on the

Red Sea and engaging camels directly there, “as once there, the Arabs will ask what they like.”<sup>21</sup>

Baedeker provides a contract sample for the use of travellers, specifying the many duties of a dragoman: “The Dragoman Y. shall provide a good cook, and a sufficient number of servants, and shall take care that they are always polite and obliging to Mr. X. and his party, and that they are quiet at night so as not to prevent the travellers from sleeping, and he shall also maintain order among the camel drivers, as well as the other attendants.”<sup>22</sup>

The dragoman, then, was much more than a mere translator. Being in charge of the success of the travel, superintending all members of the caravan, managing meals and camping, making all arrangements according to the instructions received and paying all fees with the money the travellers entrusted him with, he was more like a modern travel agent.

A man travelling to Sinai was asked to bring everything from Cairo, as nothing could be purchased in Suez, al-Tur or in the Holy Monastery, except for (common) food. The list comprises tents, blankets, mattresses, umbrellas, scientific instruments, and books. The contract suggested in Baedeker lists even the menu: “The traveller’s breakfast shall consist daily of eggs, with tea, coffee, or chocolate; lunch shall consist of cold meat (roast-meat, fowls, etc.), and fruit; dinner, at the end of the day, shall consist of ... courses. The travellers shall be provided with oranges and dates whenever they desire. [...] The dinner hour should always be fixed for the evening, after the day’s journey is over.”<sup>23</sup> Among the food provisions are also listed “good cocoa [...] a supply of Liebig’s extract of meat.”<sup>24</sup> Wines and spirits were also to be supplied by the traveller prior to departure, even if some – of a lesser quality – could be found at the monastery.

A supply of tobacco and coffee would also prove useful to distribute to the members of the caravan as tips or to other Bedouins as presents of hospitality. Burckhardt states: “Trinkets and similar articles are little esteemed by the Bedouins; but coffee is in great request all over the desert; and sweetmeats and sugar are preferred to money, which, though it will sometimes be accepted, always creates a sense of humiliation, and consequently of dislike towards the giver.”<sup>25</sup>

The relationship between the traveller and his Bedouin guides would be formalized under the term ‘protection’ and with the characteristics of an honour deal. If the times of plunder and assassination of caravan members of the early pilgrims were probably far, still venturing out of the territory of a certain tribe without proper guides could end up with some bloodshed, as it happened to Burckhardt on his way back from an attempted trip to Aqaba. Arundale warns: “The facility of travelling in Europe is daily increasing; every imaginable convenience is adopted to render a journey less fatiguing to the traveller, and cause his motion or rest to be attended with luxury and ease. [...] It is not so in the East; [...]. The traveller, therefore, would do well to conform entirely to the manners and usages of a people and country, the unvarying nature of whose habits, during so many centuries, will alone be sufficient proof of the necessity. [...] It is only by doing that he can gain the friendship of those under whose protection he places himself.”<sup>26</sup>

Part of the idea of “conforming entirely to the manners” was dressing the ‘Oriental way.’ This was absolutely required in 1830, according to Rifaud. In 1850, it was suggested as a possible option, but not a requirement. In 1870, it was advised against, unless the traveller would speak Arabic. Burckhardt, who converted to Islam, was known under the name of shaykh Ibrahim and spoke fluent Arabic, used to wear the Turkish dress. This allowed him to travel with more ease, but forced him to hide while taking notes, because “wishing to penetrate into a part of the country occupied by other tribes, it became of importance to conceal my pursuits, lest I should be thought a necromancer or in search of treasures.”<sup>27</sup>

#### Itinerary, infrastructure, superstructure and time

Travellers heading to the monastery of St. Catherine would usually come from Cairo via Suez or from Jerusalem via Gaza. The first route was more common, as a traveller would habitually proceed from Egypt to Syria-Palestine. Baedeker recommends in the contract with the dragoman “to lay down the whole route very precisely, mentioning also the valleys which have to be traversed, but the stages must of course depend on the situation of the [water] springs.”<sup>28</sup>

The typical pilgrim route would have been from Cairo to Suez with a first stop at Matariyya, now in the district of Heliopolis, northeast of Cairo. A stop to ‘Ayun Musa is referred to for the first time

already in 1349. Then the traveller would proceed to Firan (probably as early as Egeria, and later undoubtedly in the Piacenza Pilgrim's account, mid-6th century). Despite not being on the way to the monastery, a stop to al-Tur is recorded as early as 1470, and a working Greek monastery there is mentioned in 1556. The nearby spring of Hammam Musa is referred as the Biblical Elim already in 1335. In the first half of the 19th century travellers would typically follow this route: Cairo (stopping not far from the city for the night), Agruda, Suez, 'Ayun Musa, Wadi Gharandal, Wadi Nasb, Wadi Firan, Wadi 'Aliyat, Wadi al-Shaykh, St. Catherine's Monastery.<sup>29</sup> A visit to Sarabit al-Khadim, and sometimes Maghara and Mukattab, was paid on the way back to Suez. Baedeker suggests two routes, one by land through Maghara, Mukattab, Firan, the monastery and back via Wadi al-Shaykh and Sarabit; the other route by sea, from Suez to al-Tur, and then back by land.<sup>30</sup> This second option was already picked by Henniker as early as 1820.

After the railway between Cairo and Suez opened in 1859, the journey speeded up and camels were required only from Suez on. The train journey would take only five hours and a half. Ten years later, in 1869, the construction of the Suez Canal forced travellers to take a boat and join the caravan on the other side of the canal or, more comfortably, directly at 'Ayun Musa.

Only in 1926 the camel was replaced, for the first time, by a car.<sup>31</sup> The roads available were only two: a main axis from Suez to al-Tur, and an offshoot to Firan and the monastery; no fuel could be found in the entire peninsula at the time.<sup>32</sup> In the 1950s, a truck from Suez would carry passenger to St. Catherine as a regular service. The road network was improved only much later: in 1971 the Israeli administration opened a paved road from Eilat to Sharm al-Shaykh, while a branch leading up to the monastery was added in 1977.<sup>33</sup> In 1980, a tunnel was built under the Suez Canal and the Egyptian government paved the road through Wadi Firan and Wadi al-Shaykh. This changed the traditional access road to the monastery, which used to be through a southernmost path in Wadi 'Aliyat and al-Raha plain. Buses would run from Cairo to St. Catherine four times a week in 1982 and daily already in 1986.<sup>34</sup>

The Israeli administration built a military airbase right after the occupation, adding a passenger terminal in 1976; according to Hobbs "in the late

1980s Air Sinai began to carry passengers between the St. Katherine and Cairo airports twice weekly."<sup>35</sup> In the last thirty years, with the development of coastal resorts, especially on the East side of the peninsula, people would reach the monastery from there. The International Airport of Sharm al-Shaykh – originally an Israeli air base built in 1968 – in a way disconnected Sinai from Egypt and international tourists can reach the peninsula without seeing Cairo.

It seems a couple of hotels were running in Suez even before the railway reached the city. *The Handbook for India and Egypt* (1841) lists M. Hill & M. Raven's, with a limited number of rooms, and M. Waghorn's hotels.<sup>36</sup> Accommodations in St. Catherine were first built in the late 1960s and grew over time to a lodging capacity of more than a thousand beds in 1993.<sup>37</sup>

Travelling on camels, the journey from Cairo to St. Catherine would typically last about ten days,<sup>38</sup> plus a period of stay at the Holy Monastery of around three days.<sup>39</sup> After the train line between Cairo and Suez was built, the journey would take seventeen to twenty days. With the improvement of carriageways in the 1950s, a car would have joined St. Catherine from Cairo via al-Tur in fifteen hours only. In Bassili's *Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine* (1957) "mention is made of a five-day excursion to Sinai offering travel from Cairo and return, with three days in the desert."<sup>40</sup>

(Continued in Bulletin 73)

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## Footnotes

- 1 Joseph J. Hobbs, *Mount Sinai* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), 251.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 241.
- 3 *Ibid.*, 242.
- 4 George W. Murray, *Sons of Ishmael. A Study of the Egyptian Bedouin* (Cairo: Farid Atiya Press, 2012), 41.
- 5 Frederick Henniker, *Notes during a visit to Egypt, Nubia, the Oasis, Mount Sinai, and Jerusalem* (London: John Murray, 1823), 229.
- 6 Francis Arundale, *Illustrations of Jerusalem and Mount Sinai* (London: Henry Colbrun, 1837), 18.
- 7 Patricia Usick, *Adventures in Egypt and Nubia. The Travels of William John Bankes (1786-1855)* (London: The British Museum Press, 2002), 29-30.
- 8 Dorset History Center, D/BKL, XXI.C.5.
- 9 How this belief came into being is hard to assess; ancient geographers such as Claudius Ptolemy perfectly knew about the real shape of the Gulf of Aqaba.
- 10 Edward Robinson, and Eli Smith, *Biblical Research in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea* (London: Palestine Exploration Fund, 1841); Edward H. Palmer, *The Desert of the Exodus: Journeys on Foot in the Wilderness of the Forty Years' Wanderings: Undertaken in Connexion with the Ordnance Survey of Sinai, and the Palestine Exploration Fund* (Cambridge: Deighton, 1871).

- 11 Hobbs, *Mount Sinai*, 244.
- 12 Jean-Jacques Rifaud, *Tableau de l'Égypte, de la Nubie et des lieux circonvoisins; ou itinéraire à l'usage des voyageurs qui visitent ces contrées* (Paris: Treuttel et Würz, 1830), III.
- 13 Oleg V. Volkoff, *Comment on visitait la vallée du Nil: "les guides" de l'Égypte* (Le Caire: Imprimerie de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1967).
- 14 Jacques Daumas, *La péninsule du Sinaï* (Cairo: Royal Automobile Club of Egypt, 1951).
- 15 William F. Bassili, *Sinai and the Monastery of St. Catherine: a Practical Guide for Travellers* (Cairo: Costa Tsoumas, 1957).
- 16 Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land* (London: John Murray, 1822), 458.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 459.
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Egypt, handbook for travellers. Pt. 1. Lower Egypt, with the Fayum and the peninsula of Sinai* (Leipzig, London: Karl Baedeker, 1885), 470, accessed January 12, 2013, <http://hdl.handle.net/1911/9163>.
- 20 *A handbook for travellers in Lower and Upper Egypt* (London: John Murray, 1888), 330, accessed January 25, 2014, <http://hdl.handle.net/1911/13077>.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 331.
- 22 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 471.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 472.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 473.
- 25 Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria*, 486.
- 26 Arundale, *Illustrations of Jerusalem*, 1.
- 27 Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria*, 518.
- 28 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 471.
- 29 Burckhardt, *Travels in Syria; Arundale, Illustrations of Jerusalem; Daniele Salvoldi, "Viaggi del dottore Alessandro Ricci di Siena fatti negli anni 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822 in Nubia, al Tempio di Giove Ammone, al Monte Sinai, e al Sennar. Edizione critica e commento"* (PhD diss., Università di Pisa, 2011).
- 30 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 474.
- 31 Armando Serra, *Pellegrinaggio al Monte Sinai dal IV s. al 2001* (Cairo-Jerusalem: The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, 2003), 60.
- 32 Hobbs, *Mount Sinai*, 253.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 264.
- 34 *Ibid.*
- 35 *Ibid.*
- 36 *Handbook for India & Egypt* (London: Allen & Co, 1841), 258.
- 37 Hobbs, *Mount Sinai*, 265.
- 38 Serra, *Pellegrinaggio al Monte Sinai*, 59.
- 39 *Egypt, handbook for travellers*, 477.
- 40 Ragi Halim, "Gabal Musa safaris," *Al-Ahram Weekly On-line*, February 15-21, 2001, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/521/tr2.htm>

## Henry William Beechey

On the forthcoming 200th anniversary of the spectacular opening of the great temple at Abu Simbel by Giovanni Belzoni, on Augustus the first, 1817, I would like to draw special attention to the presence of Henry William Beechey.

Born circa 1789, died 4 August 1862. Beechey was a painter and explorer and a son of Sir William Beechey, RA, (12 December 1753, 28 January 1839). His first marriage was with Mary Ann Jones (1760, died, 1793). Beechey followed his father's profession. Some time before 1816 he had become secretary Henry Salt, the British consul-general in Egypt, and

at the latter's request accompanied Belzoni in that and the following year beyond the second cataract, for the purpose of studying and making designs of the fine monuments existing at Thebes. In the laborious excavation of the temple of Ipsambul, Beechey took his share.

BELZONI  
H.W. BEECHEY  
CL IRBY      JA<sup>s</sup> MANGLES  
AUG 1 1817

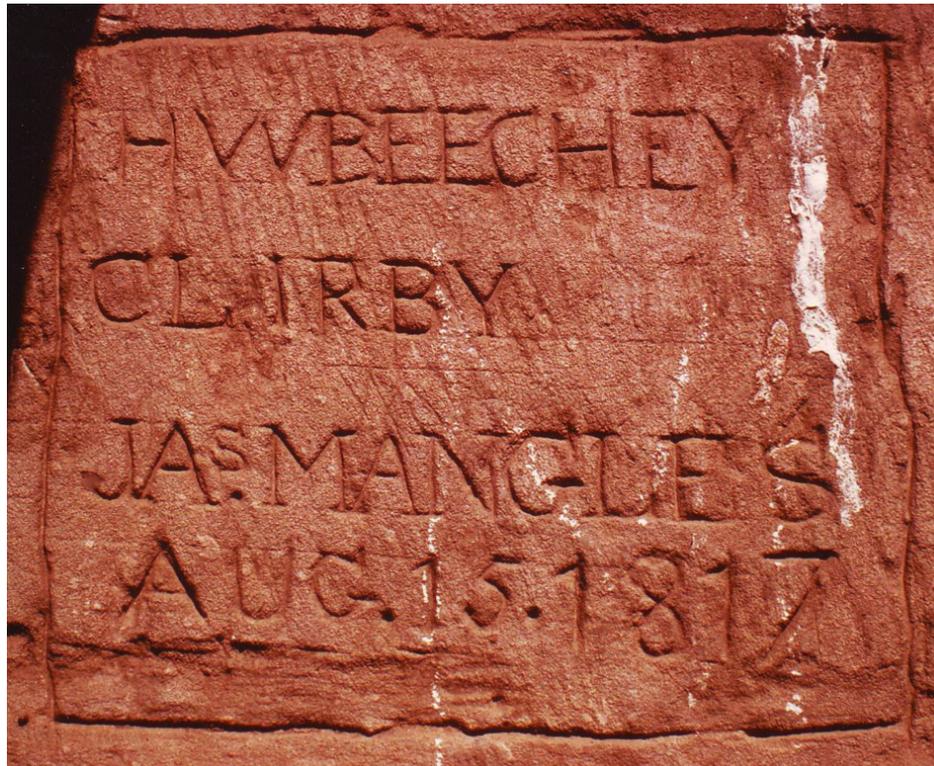
RDK /42

Abu Simbel, great temple, sanctuary

Beechey also copied the paintings, in the king's tombs in the valley of Biban-el-Muluk, which had lately been opened by Belzoni. In common with Salt, Beechey had much to endure from Belzoni's suspicious and jealous nature (see *Life and Correspondence of Henry Salt*, ed. Halls, volume ii.) About 1820 he returned to England, and the next year was appointed by Earl Bathurst, on the part of the colonial office, to examine and report on the antiquities of the Cyrenaica, his brother, Captain Beechey, having been detached to survey the coast-line from Tripoli to Derna. The results of this expedition, which occupied the greater part of the years 1821 and 1822, were chronicled in a journal kept by the brothers, to which Henry Beechey added numerous drawings, illustrative of the art and natural peculiarities of the classic region they were exploring, many of which were left out when the narrative came to be published in 1828.

Giovanni Finati spent time with Belzoni, Beechey and others and writes:

"After a continuance of these exertions and expedients during upwards of three weeks, a corner of the doorway itself at last became visible. At that very moment, while fresh clamours and new disputes were going on with our crew, and the attentions of all distracted, I, being one of the slenderest of the party, without a word said, crept through into the interior, and was thus the first that entered it, perhaps, for a thousand years". (Finati, p. 201)



**RDK 55**  
**Edfu Temple, Pylon**

Of the remainder of Beechey's life there is little record. On 14 November 1824 Beechey married Maria Forst. His wife died, and on 23 August 1834 he married Harriet Eyres (1809/10-1864); there were children from both marriages. At the age of sixty-one and accompanied by Harriet, four of his children, and a daughter-in-law, he emigrated to New Zealand, arriving on 7 February 1851. He took up land and farmed it at Governors Bay, Lyttleton, near Christchurch, where he died of pulmonary congestion on 4 August 1862. He was buried in the cemetery at Lyttleton on 7 August.

**The Graffiti**

**About Simbel: H. W. BEECHEY 1817.**

References to graffiti in other works :

- “Une seule chambre avec un sarcophage en granit, vide. Une inscription au crayon déclare que Belzoni, Stralton (Straton) Beechey et Bennet ont été présents à son ouverture le 11 octobre 1817”. 1849-1851 (from Flaubert's *Voyage en Orient*)
- “Sur la paroi Rocheuse de la façade, entre les têtes des deux colosses du groupe sud”. (Louis A. Christophe, p. 53)

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 “atattf”
- Giovanni D'Athanasi, *A brief account of the researches and discoveries in Upper Egypt, made under the direction of Henry Salt, Esq.* London 1836, p. Mr. Beechey (passim);
- Giovanni Finati, *Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Giovanni Finati*. Vol. II. Murray, 1830.
- Gustave Flaubert, *Voyage en Orient, Paris*, 1925, p. 111.
- Deborah Manley, Peta Rée, *Henry Salt*, Libri Publications, 2002, p. 66.
- Patricia Usick, “Henry William Beechey in Egypt 1816-1819”, in *Egypt Through the Eyes of Travellers*, edited by Paul Starkey & Nadia El Kholy, Durham 2002; pp. 13-24.
- Patrick Richard Carstens, *The Encyclopedia of Egypt during the Reign of the Mehmet Ali Dynasty – 1798-1952*, Canada, Victoria, 2014, p. 94, 96, 350, 448.

Roger O. De Keersmaecker

# QUERIES AND REPLIES

• In Bulletin 71 Roger de Keersmaecker requested a source for an article on Joseph Cook (Reverend) 1791-1825 in Gentleman's Magazine: 95(1825), 90. Below is Nicholas Stanley-Price's impressively prompt reply! The listed source might also prove to be a useful research resource for some ASTENE members:

• An anonymous source is trying to track down the following rare book and would be grateful for any information:

*Recollections of a tour in Syria and Palestine, in the year 1866*, W.D.Seymour, Cork: Henry P. Coghlan, 1867.

I note that in ASTENE Bulletin no. 71 you are looking for an article in Gentleman's Magazine 95 (1825). All the issues of this magazine are digitised and available at <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000542092>

Replies to Bulletin Editor.

# RESEARCH RESOURCES

## Georg August Wallin Skrifter

The Society of Swedish Literature in Finland (SSL) is a scholarly society for the preservation and dissemination of knowledge about Finland-Swedish culture. Their publication project on Finnish explorer and Orientalist Georg August Wallin Skrifter has just been completed and the preserved textual material by the orientalist Wallin is now available in commented and text-critical form. Wallin first visited Egypt in 1843 and from there he travelled to Mecca, Palestine, Syria and Iran, between the years 1845-1849. He delivered *Notes Taken During a Journey Through the Party of Northern Arabia in 1848* for the Royal Geographical Society of London in 1849.

The outcome of the SSL project is seven volumes and one appendix. All volumes are now also available in

digital form, as free open access pdfs. Click the link to reach the homepage of the project and from there the digital volumes: <http://www.sls.fi/en/projekt/georg-august-wallin-skrifter> For now the texts are only available in Swedish, but plans are afoot for future translations into English and Arabic.

## Snapshot Traveller

Snapshot Traveller is the monthly newsletter of the International Society for Travel Writing (ISTW). The Centre for Travel Writing Studies (CTWS) at Nottingham Trent University is now publishing the newsletter on its website. Snapshot is compiled by Dr Rebecca Butler at CTWS, as of Sept 2016. The newsletter lists calls for papers, calls for publications, new publications in the field, and vacancies. See [http://centrefortravelwritingstudies.weebly.com/snapshot\\_traveller\\_istw](http://centrefortravelwritingstudies.weebly.com/snapshot_traveller_istw) for more details.



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