

ASTENE

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

BULLETIN



NOTES AND QUERIES

NUMBER 46 : WINTER 2010-11

Bulletin : Notes and Queries

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Submissions for the next *Bulletin* must be received by **15 March 2011**. We welcome articles, queries, replies and other related matters from members and interested readers. Please send contributions to the Editor.

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Payment must be in pounds sterling. Please see the ASTENE website for application forms and further details: www.astene.org.uk.

Please send all membership correspondence to ASTENE Treasurer
The Studio
30 College Lane
London NW5 1BJ
or by email to astene@dsl.pipex.com .

ASTENE NEWS AND EVENTS

Ninth Biennial ASTENE Conference, 15–18 July 2011

This summer's conference will be held at St Anne's College, Woodstock Road, Oxford, UK. A Registration Form is enclosed with this *Bulletin*. The Call for Papers was sent out with *Bulletin 45* and is on the ASTENE website. Submissions for papers are already coming in, so please send 100-word abstracts to Deborah Manley at deb@dmanley.plus.com as soon as possible.

Conference Bursaries

There are four bursaries available to members of ASTENE (and students joining ASTENE) for the biennial conference to be held this year in Oxford. A bursary covers full conference costs. Recipients should offer a paper on historic travel in Egypt or the Near East—see our Call for Papers—and will have roles within the conference organization, for instance helping with registration, technical support to papers, helping with the bookstall, supporting the timetable etc. Those wishing to apply should send a 100-word abstract and title of the paper they wish to offer to deb@dmanley.plus.com.

2010 Day Schools at Rewley House, Oxford

ASTENE collaborated with the Oxford University Department of Continuing Education to produce a day school entitled *Eastern Monasteries and Western Travellers* on 3 July 2010. More than 70 people attended. Professor Malcolm Wagstaff introduced the topic with a talk on the significance of monasteries and the monastic life to the Eastern Churches in the past and now. Then Lucy Pollard, a retired teacher and librarian, talked about John Covel's visit to Mt Athos in 1677, one of the earliest by an Englishman.

Dr Emma Loosley, lecturer in Art History at Manchester University, discussed the visits of Gertrude Bell and Richard and Isabel Burton to monasteries on the road from Damascus to Palmyra. Nicholas Al-Jeloo, a PhD candidate in Syriac Studies at the University of Sydney, took the audience to the Eastern Assyrian monasteries of northern Iraq and introduced some of the Western archaeologists and missionaries who

visited them in the nineteenth century. Dr Sebastian Brock, retired lecturer in Syriac Studies at Oxford University, described the monastery in the Wadi Natrun in Egypt, with its valuable collection of Syriac manuscripts. These attracted Western scholars and manuscript hunters from the seventeenth century onwards. Dr Anthony O'Mahony, Director of the Centre for Christianity and Inter-Religious Dialogue at Heythrop College, brought the story up to the present day with an outline of the influence exerted by the Egyptian Desert Fathers, past and present, which draws many Western Christians to these remote places.

In normal ASTENE fashion there was an event the previous evening. The Revd Stephen Platt, General Secretary of the Fellowship of St Alban and St Sergius, spoke on aspects of the relations between the Eastern and Western churches in modern times. This was followed by dinner at a Lebanese restaurant.

The study day on *Byron's Journeys to Greece*, held on 27 November 2010, was not strictly an ASTENE event, though members were involved in the initial planning for the day and were a significant presence in the more than 30-strong audience. The day was actually organized by Dr Peter Cochrane, freelance lecturer and manager of the valuable website of the International Byron Society. He gave three talks: prepared papers on Byron's first Greek journey in 1809–10 and on the second journey in 1823–24 (on which he died). His third presentation was an impromptu



St Catherine's Monastery, Mt Sinai

talk on Greece in Byron's poetry. All three talks were lively and enlightening. Professor Malcolm Wagstaff spoke about Colonel Leake's mission in Greece in 1808–10, during which he organized Byron's visit to Ali Pasha at Tepelene.

The previous evening ASTENE members spent an hour or two in the Sackler Library looking at rare books on Egypt and Egyptology selected by the Griffiths Librarian and ASTENE member, Dr Diane Bergman. The group then adjourned for dinner to the restaurant at the top of the refurbished Ashmolean Museum. Both evening events were organized by Dr Patricia Usick.

New ASTENE Grant

On 25 September 2010 the Executive Committee discussed ASTENE's charitable objectives and the Grants budget. One option under discussion was conservation or wider diffusion of collections of travellers' manuscripts and notebooks. Deborah Manley specifically suggested the sketches, watercolours and notes of George Hoskins, and it was explained to the Committee how this archive

could be digitalized for public viewing and what this would cost. The Committee unanimously agreed that the full sum of £3500 should be granted for this outstanding project, and the Griffiths Institute undertook to carry out the work immediately. The following article explains the importance of the archive and how the documents can now be presented to a wider public.

ASTENE and the Drawings and Watercolours of G.A. Hoskins

George Alexander Hoskins (1802–63) will be known to ASTENE members from his *Travels in Ethiopia, above the Second Cataract of the Nile* (London: Longman etc., 1835), *Visit to the Great Oasis of the Libyan Desert* (London: Longman, etc. 1837) and *A Winter in Upper and Lower Egypt* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1863). Hoskins was a minor figure in a fascinating group of artists who worked in Egypt in the 1820s and 1830s. The leading personalities among them were Robert Hay, James Burton and John Gardner Wilkinson. Hoskins is known to have made a large number of pencil drawings and watercolours, but apart from



Two leaves from the albums of G.A. Hoskins: above, the temple of Amun of Hibis at El-Kharga; right, the colossal limestone statue of Ramesses II at Mit Rahina (Memphis).

those reproduced in his books they have until now remained unpublished.

Three albums containing his works were acquired by Sir Alan Gardiner and donated to the Griffith Institute in Oxford as part of his bequest in 1964. ASTENE has recently most generously sponsored their systematic digital photography which has just been completed. The nearly 400 drawings and watercolours consist of copies of reliefs and paintings from ancient Egyptian temples and tombs, as well as landscape and genre works. In addition to those made by Hoskins there are also some by Luchese Bandoni, his travelling companion in Nubia. The whole of Egypt is covered, and also Nubia well beyond the Third Nile cataract and the oases in the Western Desert. The digital photography has been carried out in the Griffith Institute by Jenni Navratil, assisted by Hana Navrátilová. Jenni Navratil writes about their work as follows:

The drawings and watercolours by George Alexander Hoskins are mounted in three large leather bound albums. These are heavy,

and the pages, when opened, don't lie flat, so it was decided that scanning would not be possible. The images were photographed with a Cannon EOS 450D digital SLR camera connected to a laptop computer, using the 'live window' focusing facility. There is a total of 217 landscape aspect pages, each 575 x 435mm (22.5 x 17.125 in) on which 394 separate images have been mounted, some of them captioned.

A 12-megapixel photograph was made of each entire album page. These were saved in the Camera RAW format, then converted to .tifs using Photoshop CS3. Photoshop was also used to minimize the distortions caused by the curving pages, and colour adjustments were made using 'adjustment layers'. Finally, each image was saved as a separate file in four formats: a layered Photoshop Document (.psd), a high resolution .tif, a web-ready .jpg and a thumbnail .jpg. Where necessary, individual small images were re-photographed and processed in the same way.



The work on the presentation of this material on the internet is about to begin and is planned to be completed in the next six months.

Jaromir Malek

Reminder: Travellers' Drawings from the Eastern Mediterranean, Tuesday, 8 February 2011

This is a unique opportunity for ASTENE members to see highlights of the British Museum's extensive collection of drawings recording objects and sites of Classical antiquity. The drawings are mostly by British artists, or foreign artists working for British patrons. The topographical drawings, part of a collection of some 6000 works on paper, range from the sixteenth century to the present day.

Curators Ian Jenkins and Thomas Kiely have kindly agreed to talk about the significance of the collection in itself and for their work. The Mellon Curator of the British Museum's Greek and Roman drawings, Celeste Farge, currently cataloguing the drawings for the Museum's online database, will demonstrate this new and valuable research resource.

Places are limited, so please contact Patricia Usick to book for this ASTENE event. Email: pusick@btinternet.com ; Tel: 0207 328 2735. Talk starts at 6.00 pm in the Department of Greece and Rome, British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1. Meet at 5.45 pm at the Information desk in the Great Court. Attendees will be asked for a small

donation of £5 each to the BM, as the speakers make no charge for their time.

The evening will end with a chance to converse with the curators over a glass of wine.

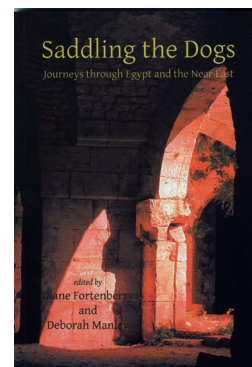
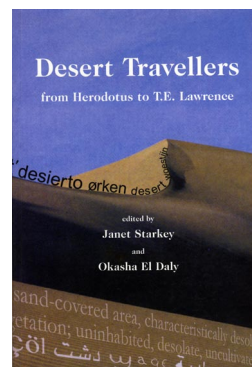
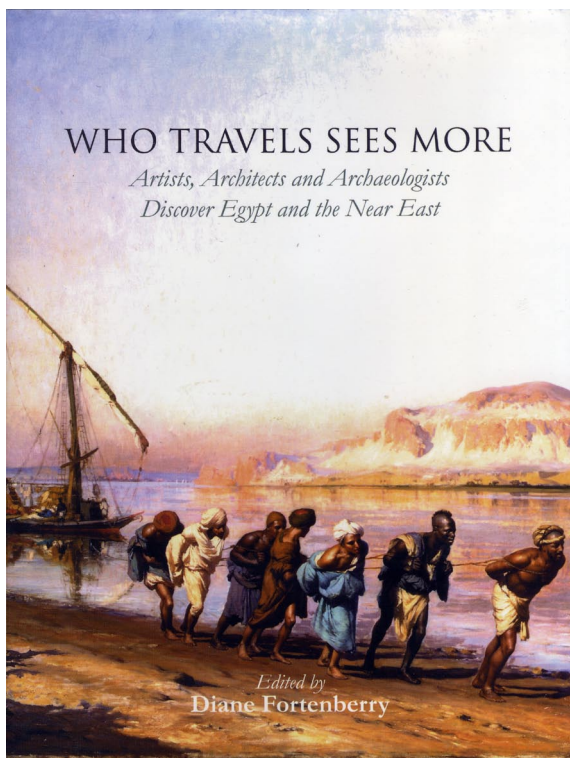
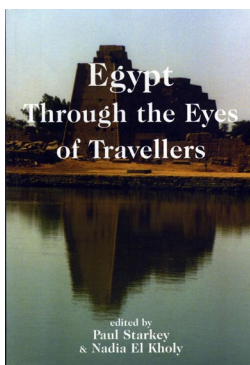
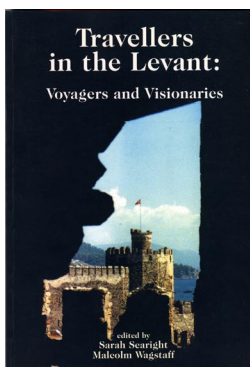
Update: ASTENE Book Sale

Further to the announcement in *Bulletin* 45 of a special sale of ASTENE books, here is a revised listing:

Travellers in the Levant: Voyagers and Visionaries – £6.50, 98 copies left
Egypt through the Eyes of Travellers – £6.50, 176 copies left
Desert Travellers from Herodotus to T.E. Lawrence – £6.50, but as there were only three copies left, Oxbow thinks these may already have been snapped up
Who Travels Sees More – £9.95, 115 copies left.

The latest ASTENE book, *Saddling the Dogs: Journeys through Egypt and the Near East*, is still available at the ASTENE members' price of £14.95.

There was an error in the Oxbow printed catalogue regarding their 'Bargain' books, and the mistake is also in the Oxbow website (www.oxbowbooks.com). ASTENE members taking advantage of this special offer should clearly mark their orders 'ASTENE member' in the additional comments field to receive the prices listed above.



OTHER NEWS AND EVENTS

PBFA Book Fair

The next PBFA Book Fair in London devoted to Travel and Exploration will be held Sunday, 3 April 2011, at the Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, SW7. Admission free for RGS members, £2 for all others. The fair is open from 11.00 am until 5.00 pm.

Research Grant

Hali, the publication highlighting carpets, textiles and Islamic art, and *Cornucopia* magazine announce the seventh (2011) annual research project grant of £1500, to be awarded to a candidate aged less than twenty-five years or over sixty years. The runner-up will be awarded the Godfrey Goodwin Prize of £500, in honour of Godfrey Goodwin (1921–2005), distinguished Ottoman scholar. The project should relate to any of the subject areas covered by the sponsoring journals. *Hali* and *Cornucopia* reserve the right to publish the results of the winning research project, and the winner must submit a printable article for publication within a year.

Applications should be short, outlining the project in no more than 500 words, accompanied by your age, anticipated results and contact address. The award, which is also sponsored by Bonhams, Christies and Sotheby's, can be used for travel, material expenses and sustenance while the research is underway. Priority will be given to projects which would not easily find funding and which display originality.

Applications should be submitted to The Honorary Secretary, Ancient & Modern, 109 Blenheim Crescent, London W11 2EQ, UK. For more information visit www.ancientandmodern.co.uk, where the submission deadline will be listed shortly.

Museums and Exhibitions

Saudi Archaeological Masterpieces through the Ages. La Caixa Foundation, Barcelona, until 27 February 2011. This exhibition has moved from the Louvre to Barcelona, from where it will travel to Berlin. It contains a number of rare antiquities, including 320 artefacts shown for the first time outside the kingdom. The period

covered extends from the Old Stone Age, through the Delmun period, the early Arab kingdoms, the intermediate Arab kingdoms, the time of the Prophet, the Umayyads and Abbasids, the mid- and late Islamic era, up to the unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Organized as a series of points along trade and pilgrimage routes, the exhibition focuses on the region's history as a major centre of commercial and cultural exchange, provides both chronological and geographical information about the discoveries made during recent excavations, and emphasizes the important role played by this region as a trading centre during the past 6000 years.

By Camel and Car: Desert Exploration. Royal Geographical Society, London, 7 and 14 February 2011. This Royal Geographical Society showcase looks at European exploration of three of the world's great deserts—the Taklamakan Desert of Central Asia, the Arabian Desert and the Western or Libyan Desert of North Africa. The period covered is roughly 1870 to 1950. Free to members; non-members £5. Booking essential (showcase@rgs.org). Events, in the Foyle Reading Room, RGS, start at 2.30 pm and last approximately two hours.

Tutankhamun: His Tomb and Treasures. Museum of Museums, Trafford Centre, Manchester, until 27 February 2011. An exhibition showcasing over 1000 items in a vast 4000-square metre exhibition space. It has toured Europe (Zurich, Munich, Barcelona, Brno, Hamburg, Madrid, Cologne), and Manchester is its only planned UK stop before going to America.

The exhibition features expertly crafted replicas of the young Pharaoh's tomb, providing visitors with a unique experience: entering Tutankhamun's tomb as it was discovered. The crafting of the replicas spanned over six years, under the gaze of Egyptologists and scientists, and the exhibition is perhaps a forerunner of things to come: there have long been worries about visitors destroying the ancient tombs due to flash photography, body heat and other problems, and Visual Tombs may be the answer.

See www.tutankhamunmanchester.com for further details. In conjunction with the exhibition Dr Zahi Hawass, Secretary General of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, will give a public lecture in Manchester's Bridgewater Hall on 4

February 2011 at 7.30 pm. Tickets from www.bridgewater-hall.co.uk, www.ticketmaster.co.uk, or call 0161 907 9000.

In Search of Biblical Lands: from Jerusalem to Jordan in 19th-century Photography. Getty Villa (Malibu), Los Angeles, CA, 2 March–12 September 2011. The photographs on view in this exhibition reveal what the travellers of the 1800s discovered on their journey: a landscape of belief, at once familiar yet still mysterious. It features rare, early daguerreotypes, salted-paper prints, and albumen silver prints, created between the 1840s and early 1900s by the leading photographers of the time, including Felice Beato, Maxime Du Camp, Auguste Salzmann, James Graham, Louis Vignes, Frank Mason Good and Frederic Goupil-Fesquet. Highlights are photographs from the Getty Museum collection by English photographer Francis Frith (1822–98), whose compelling images were made during three trips to the Holy Land in the late 1850s, and daguerreotypes by French photographer Joseph-Philibert Girault de Prangey (1804–92) from his three-year tour of the Near East (see *Bulletin* 45). Significant also are photographs from the Duc de Luynes' subsidized expedition to the Dead Sea and beyond, including views of ruined Crusader castles in Jordan, and of Petra, first visited by Europeans in 1828. These rare images come from the Getty Research Institute's acquisition of the entire publication of the Duc de Luynes voyage.

Due to the delicate nature of photographic materials, which cannot be displayed for long periods, this exhibition features more than 100 photographs in total, but divided into two installments, each on view for three months. More information at www.getty.edu.

Conferences, Lectures and Talks

William Wey: the King's Pilgrim? Bodleian Library, Oxford, 8 March 2011. Francis Davey will be talking on this subject at 1.00 pm, Tuesday, 8 March, in the Convocation House, Bodleian Library, Oxford. William Wey was the 15th-century priest and Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, who went on pilgrimage to Compostela, Rome and Jerusalem between 1456 and 1462. Francis Davey has recently translated Wey's *Itineraries* (see ASTENE review in *Bulletin* 45). He will examine possible reasons for Wey's extensive journeys across Europe and beyond.

Egypt and Austria Society Meeting, Vienna, 21–24 September 2010. A meeting of the Egypt and Austria Society (whose inter-relationship with ASTENE was explained in *Bulletin* 45) took place in the Kunsthistorisches [Art History] Museum

in Vienna this past September. The meeting was opened with a keynote lecture by Dr Jaromir Malek, President of ASTENE, entitled 'Das alte Ägypten, das wir verloren haben' [The Ancient Egypt We Have Lost]. First-day sessions included studies concerned with public interest in and presentation of Egypt—exhibitions, guided tours, museum collections etc.—as well as contributions on individual travellers and residents in Egypt and the Levant. A large number of Austrian, later Austro-Hungarian and, still later, successor states' subjects travelled to Egypt to earn a living and build a career there, including engineers and physicians as well as itinerant workers.

The second day opened with a session on artists, including Austrian singers and musicians travelling to Egypt, who made a prominent contribution to the culture and arts life of cosmopolitan Cairo. The sessions continued with detailed introductions to the lives and works of scholars and travellers 'proper', i.e. personalities, who made travelling to Egypt and the Levant their central interest and occupation. Several 'globetrotters' who undertook round-the-world trips that included Egypt, the Middle East and other ASTENE countries were also included.

The third day was dedicated to another interesting topic: history and the study of music between Egypt and Austria, from Egyptian motifs in baroque operas to an international meeting of musicians in Cairo in 1932.

Papers throughout the conference included many details about travels and sojourns in ASTENE territory, as well as references to ASTENE travellers (including 'permanent fixtures' such as E.W. Lane and H. Salt). There was also an interesting contribution to the programme—visits to three very different institutions, all interconnected via their relations to Egypt and the Levant. The first event was hosted by the Director of the Austrian Mint, home to the Maria Theresa *thalers* (see *Bulletin* 43); the second took place in the Josephinum—the Institute of Medical History, associated with several Austrian physicians with ties to Egypt and Egyptian physicians studying in Austria; and the third in the Phonogrammarchiv of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, the oldest sound archive in the world, home to numerous records of language and music samples, including those from research travels to Egypt and the Levant.

Hana Navrátilová

A Journey into the World of the Ottomans, Doha, Qatar, 28–29 November 2010. Briony Llewellyn and I were travelers to and presenters at the exhibition/conference, *A Journey into the World of the Ottomans* in Doha, Qatar, in November. Olga Nefedova, the Collections Director

and Chief Curator of the Orientalist Museum in Doha, organized both events, which were held at the new Museum of Islamic Art. The events celebrated Doha's status as a modern Cultural Capital of the Middle East.

The exhibition displayed sixty-one works: nineteen paintings from the Doha Orientalist Collection (numbering almost 1000 paintings, watercolours, drawings and prints assembled by the Emir of Qatar Shaykh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani and his family but currently in storage pending the building of a museum of Orientalist Art to open in approximately five years); twelve paintings by the 18th-century Dutch artist Jean-Baptiste Vanmour on loan from the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam; twenty prints by the British artist Vanessa Hodgkinson inspired by engravings based on Vanmour's depictions of Ottoman courtiers and citizens; and five urban views of Istanbul by the Dutch photographer Bas Princen. The handsome catalogue has texts by Olga Nefedova and Eveline Sint Nicolaas, Curator at the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, who writes about the Vanmour paintings. The exhibition is featured at www.qma.com.qa/om-exhibition/ .

At the conference, seventeen multi-national speakers—museum curators, academic scholars and independent art historians—examined aspects of the almost 500 years of artistic interchange between the Ottoman world of the East and Europe in the West. Topics included paintings made by artists brought to the Ottoman court by foreign ambassadors, artists who traveled and lived in Ottoman lands in the 17th to 19th centuries, Ottoman imperial patronage of the arts, and artistic views of Istanbul and Cairo. The subject material was presented in a chronological arrangement—from first portraits of the Sultans by Venetian Renaissance artists to

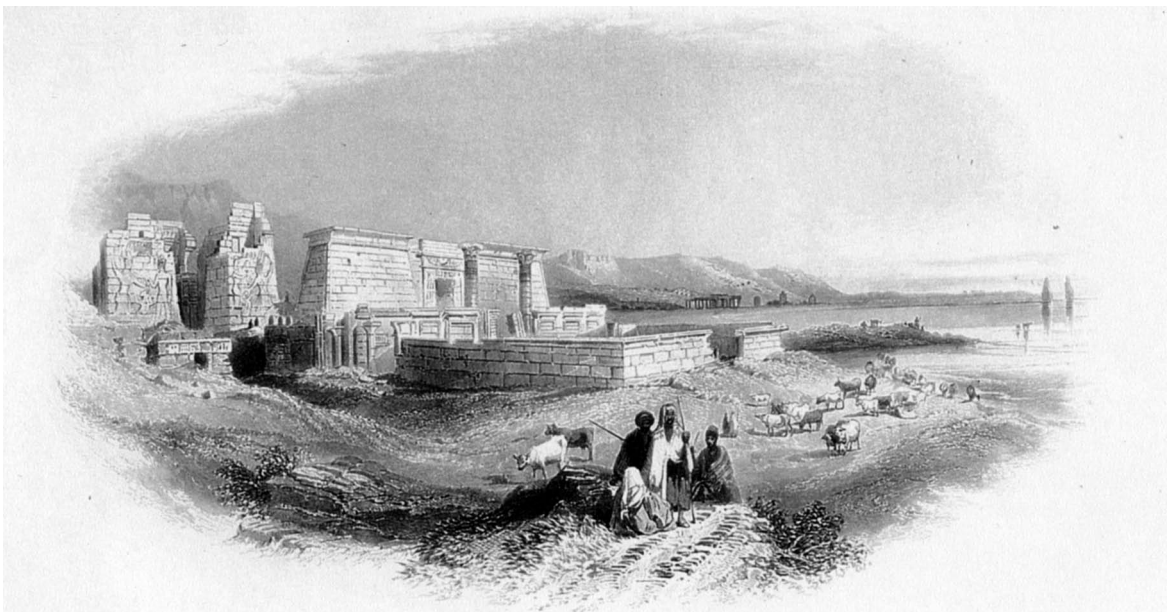
the contemporary rendering of Ottoman citizens—and the impact was engrossing and cumulative. Details of the program and speakers are at www.qma.com.qa/om/index.html .

In viewing the exhibition and listening to the papers, the words of Shaykha al-Mayassa bin Hamad bint Khalifa al-Thani, the chairperson of the Qatar Museum Authority, were especially relevant. '... the importance of this European art movement [Orientalism] lies in the fact that it recorded major historical events, people, customs and culture. One may debate the composition of the works and question its accuracy, but one cannot deny the historical overview it gives us, nor the opportunity for discussion and reflection.'

The exhibition and conference are also fitting companions to the current reassessment and display of Orientalist art currently taking place: the exhibition devoted to the Orientalist artist J.L. Gérôme, which moves from the Musée D'Orsay in Paris (www.musee-orsay.fr) to open at the Museo de arte Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid on 1 March 2011 (to 22 May; www.museothyssen.org), and the exhibition which opened in Brussels, *From Delacroix to Kandinsky: Orientalism in Europe*, which opened in Brussels and will move to Munich on 28 January 2011 (until 1 May) and Marseilles from 27 May to 28 August (www.expo-orientalisme.be) .

After the Doha extravaganza, Briony and I spent a week in Cairo's medieval core looking at sites and monuments that British Orientalists had painted there. The two experiences were complete contrasts: Doha was new, wealthy, global and imported, while Cairo was dusty, decaying, dynastic, crowded and colorful.

Caroline Williams



BOOKS AND REVIEWS

ASTENE's Bulletin Reviews Editor is Myra Green. If you would like to suggest a book for review, or if you are interested in reviewing books for the Bulletin, please contact her on mg@myragreen.f9.co.uk .

Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean, by Philip Mansel. London, John Murray, 2010. 480 pp, ISBN 978-0-7195-6707-0. £25.

Philip Mansel's other fans—who must be legion and certainly include many ASTENE members—ought to find his latest book as thrilling as I do. The fruit of several decades of research, a substantial part of which was necessarily conducted during residences in the places about which he writes, *Levant* concentrates on the histories of three cities of the eastern Mediterranean—Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut, with an incidental glance at Salonica: their wealth and cosmopolitanism, and their similar fates as victims of nationalism, sectarian strife, or Euro-American colonialism and imperialism.

Brilliantly organized along both chronological and geographical lines, Mansel's narrative thus also becomes an incidental exploration of the century-long dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. Stretching at its greatest extent from Budapest and Tunis to Baku and Baghdad, from Polish Galicia and Podolia to the Yemen and the Sudan, the Empire likewise dominated both the eastern and the western Mediterranean, the famous defeat at Lepanto in 1571 most certainly notwithstanding.

More importantly, however, *Levant* is a social history of the folk we could most conveniently call metics—the long-term-resident foreigners, generally engaged in business, who typified the populace of the great ports of the Eastern Mediterranean between the sixteenth century and the present day. (NB: The word 'metic' is equally neutral in English and in its ancient Greek root. As a result of decades of propaganda issuing from Charles Maurras and *Action française*, however, it has taken a pejorative turn in France, where the word *métèque* now generally suggests a shiftless foreign resident of tawny hue. Too bad on several counts.)

From 1535 or thereabouts until 1798, the Empire was closely allied with France. Both realms faced

the unremitting hostility of the Habsburgs, who threatened the Empire along the entirety of its long western and northwestern frontier, and France from both the north and the south. It was therefore natural, as Mansel points out, that the merchants of France should have pioneered the mercantilist connections that created the wealth of Smyrna and thus made it, until 1922, a great cosmopolitan city. They were to be followed by the Dutch, the British, the Venetians and, less officially, miscellaneous Greeks and Spanish-speaking Sephardic Jews.

After a brief introduction centred on Pera and the first 'capitulations', Mansel devotes the next two chapters to Smyrna, where the pattern he sees in the history of other eastern Mediterranean mercantile cities emerged early and strikingly. The pair of chapters following is devoted to Alexandria, which eventually will claim, quite rightly, primary attention throughout a third of the book. The sixth chapter introduces Beirut, which has somehow survived its trials—at least for the moment—better than either Smyrna or Alexandria and which, likewise, accounts for a third of the book. A final chapter brings the histories of Beirut and Alexandria up to date and offers reflections on the ideas they necessarily generate. Mansel's conclusions are drawn from myriad facts. Every sentence bristles with them. His generalizations are few and thoroughly earned.

History of this kind hangs on the trajectories of scores of eminent families and the lives of a multitude of individuals within them. Especially in the Middle East, moreover, the fastest and most reliable medium of information has always been gossip, which is transmitted, of course, among people. It is, therefore, of particular importance for a serious historian of the region to know people and to name names. The broad extent to which Philip Mansel has made use of interviews and his generous understanding of identity fulfil this requirement amply. I am delighted, for example, that the story of the Baltazzi clan is allowed to include that of poor Marie Vetsera, and that my old Alexandrian friend Bernard de Zogheb is given something like his due. And on the story of the breathtakingly beautiful Asmahan, who broke many hearts and whose recordings of sixty years ago are still played with joy, Mansel is surely now the world expert.

Probably the only relevant and significant Egyptian name omitted by Mansel is that of Huda Shaarawi (1879–1947), the feminist leader most famous for removing her veil at a Cairo railway station in 1923, thus initiating a new norm. Photographs of the anti-British marches of 1919 record the fact that until that gesture both Muslim and Christian women wore the face veil, which was understood as an indicator of social status, not religion. A definitive biography by Huda Shaarawi's granddaughter, Sania Shaarawi-Lanfranchi, will be published next year by I.B. Tauris.

This book is a major achievement by a social historian who knows his ground thoroughly and has already proven his mettle in two splendid biographies and half a dozen other important studies. What gives it special virtue, to my mind, are the author's verve and his attention to detail, to the personal dimension. Likewise to be commended are the illustrations, all but one of which are photographs and all of which make their points succinctly and poetically.

John Rodenbeck

An Ottoman Traveller: Selections from the Book of Travels of Evliya Çelebi, selections and commentary by Robert Dankoff and Sooyong Kim. London, Eland Publishing, 2010. 482 pp, ISBN 978 1906011444. £25.

Evliya Çelebi was born in Istanbul in 1611 and died at Cairo around 1684. Most of what is known about him comes from his great book, the *Seyahatname*, or *Travel Book*, which he was editing when he died. From this we learn that he was well educated, able to recite the whole of the Koran from memory, and obsessed with travel and a desire to see as much of the world as possible. Family and court connections, as well as inherited wealth, made travel possible.

Evliya Çelebi (the name is a pseudonym), usually travelled in the suite of an ambassador or governor to whom he acted as secretary, courier, imam and muezzin, but he also led two

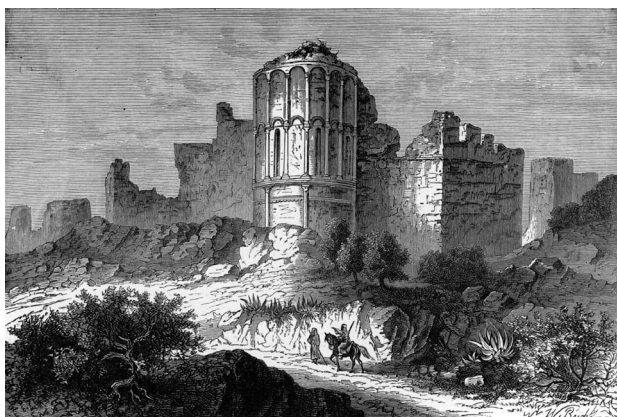
missions to Persia. He ranged widely across the Ottoman world, between the Caucasus in the north and the Sudan in the south, Tabriz in the east and Vienna in the west. He made notes as he travelled, often using a checklist to standardize his information. From these, he compiled his ten-volume work. With the exception of volume one, which is devoted to Istanbul, each volume covers a particular region visited, sometimes more than once in his forty-year career.

Robert Dankoff is an international authority on Ottoman literary texts and especially the *Seyahatname*. With the assistance of Sooyong Kim, also an Ottoman specialist, he has made a selection of seventy-six passages from the great book. Their aims are to provide extracts from each volume, to illustrate the author's descriptive and narrative styles, and to provide examples of the range of material included in the whole work. An overall introduction outlines Evliya Çelebi's life and career, as well as the history of publishing and translating his book. Extracts from each volume are given a page of introduction. A separate section explains some of the numerous literary allusions which are such a feature of the *Seyahatname*. This is followed by a helpful glossary of administrative and religious terms, weights and measures. Importantly, a reasonably full index has been provided.

The selection of extracts includes descriptions of monuments (churches, as well as mosques), the oil wells of Baku, some parts of the procession of Istanbul's forty-seven guilds, and a number of individual towns and cities (for example, Diyarbakir and Athens). The text is illustrated with maps and pictures, including ten colour plates, one of which is a map of the upper Nile attributed to Evliya Çelebi and mentioned briefly in one of the extracts.

Most of the English translations are new, but earlier ones have been consulted so that, for example, some of the characteristic phraseology of the Austrian orientalist Freiherr Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856) occur from time to time. He worked as a translator for the British expeditionary force to Egypt in 1801–02, and his translations were the earliest into English (starting in 1834). Some ASTENE readers may be familiar with Alexander Pallis's *In the Days of the Janissaries* (1951), which quotes von Hammer's translation.

In view of expeditions past and future, ASTENE members may be particularly interested in Evliya Çelebi's description of the Süleymaniye mosque in Istanbul, St Catherine's Monastery on Mt Sinai, his exciting encounter with brigands at the Alman Pass near ancient Ephesus, and the Cairo underworld. I was particularly pleased to see



included Evliya Çelebi's description of Balibadra (Patras) in the Peloponnese, an encounter with a female Muslim slave in the Mani, and part of his account of the final phase of the long siege of Candia (Iraklion) in Crete, at which he was present. All are delightful quotes, but they confirm my impression that you cannot read this collection straight through. It is to be dipped into and your own delicious plums pulled forth.

Malcolm Wagstaff

Malta: A Traveller's Anthology, edited by Deborah Manley. Oxford, Signal Books, 2010. Pb, 256 pp, ISBN 1 904955 70 3. £12.99.

This tour de force by Deborah Manley is a treat for those of us with a lively interest in Malta but with still a lot to learn about its history and its cultural life. A judiciously picked selection from no less than eighty-one different visitors or residents, as well as respected local authors, provides a varied and extensive account. The author's appreciation of the islands, and her keen observations from her own short visits, make this a particularly pleasurable anthology.

There are few quotable sources for the early history of the archipelago—Malta, Gozo and a couple of smaller islands. The story comes to life with the arrival of the Knights Hospitaller of St John, who settled in Malta in 1530. In 1531 one of several Turkish invasions of the island was seen off by an English Knight, Nicholas Upton, leading thirty Knights and 400 Maltese horsemen. Although gallant, he is described by F.N. Weston, a later British resident, as very corpulent. As soon as the fighting was over, the exertions of the day in the saddle under a July sun in heavy armour became too much for him, and he died a few hours later.

A foot soldier of the Knights' Army, Francisco Balbi di Correggio, records that the number of



St Paul's Bay, Malta

Turkish troops in their armada of 1565 sent by Suleiman the Magnificent included 28,000 fighting men. Excerpts from his journal cover the most significant events of the very hard-fought Great Siege. Ernle Bradford, author of *The Great Siege of Malta*, noted that church bells rang out all over Europe, including Protestant London, at the news that Malta had been relieved and the Sultan defeated.

In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte entered Valletta en route to Egypt and left a garrison of 5000, 'carrying off an equal number of natives'. The tyranny of the Knights, expelled by Napoleon, was replaced by another. When the soldiers plundered the churches, the Maltese besieged them in Valletta. Sir Themistocles Zammit, a Maltese historian and archaeologist writing in the 1920s, noted that after the departure of the French in 1800, Sir Ralph Abercrombie was influential in the Maltese choosing to opt for the protection of the British. Admiral Nelson and Samuel Taylor Coleridge both recognized the strategic importance of the island in the early 19th century.

The most striking visual heritage left by the Knights is that of their beautiful palaces, today housing, inter alia, the offices of the President, the Prime Minister and the Archaeological Museum. Malcolm Billings, broadcaster and author of books on the crusades, walking in the villages south of Grand Harbour in the year 2000, reminds us that the English *auberge* from before the Great Siege is still standing, as is Dockyard Creek, where the war galleys of the Knights tied up.

The Second Siege followed heavy bombardment by the Italians and Germans. Convoys to relieve the island suffered heavy losses, and by early 1942 the Maltese, showing great fortitude, were facing starvation. Manley does not dwell on this period, which is familiar to British readers. Instead she moves on to provide us with descriptions of Valletta, including Malcolm Billings's 'a superb example of a living renaissance city in the middle of the Mediterranean', and a comment by Edward Lear: 'The harbours are very interesting, but I don't love the water well enough to portray such scenes characteristically'.

A section on Gozo includes a description by Joseph Attard Tabone, a local historian, of life in the villages, each with its patron saint carried shoulder high on the day of the *festa* and with churches embellished by rich works of art. David Trump, the former Curator of Archaeology at the National Museum of Malta, gives a short description of the Ggantija temple, the earliest freestanding stone building in the world. The anthology concludes with Byron's *Farewell to Malta*.

Josey Eldred

***Dawn of Discovery. The Early British Travellers to Crete: Richard Pococke, Robert Pashley and Thomas Spratt, and their Contribution to the Island's Bronze Age Archaeological Heritage*, by Dudley Moore. Oxford, British Archaeological Reports, International Series 2053 (2010). Pb, 174 pp, ISBN 978-1-4073-0542-4. £46.**

Daniel Boorstin, who was Librarian of the US Congress for a dozen years to 1987, suggested in his book *The Discoverers* that if a traveller did not return to tell those at home about his discoveries, then his voyage was wasted, a dead end. Moore's argument in *Dawn of Discovery* is that the three travellers under discussion—Pococke, Pashley and Spratt—did reveal the existence of Bronze Age remains on Crete in their subsequent books, and so should be given credit for their discovery, whereas Sir Arthur Evans is almost universally considered the father of Bronze Age Cretan archaeology, based on his work at Knossos and at the expense of earlier explorers on the island. The matter, however, is not necessarily as straightforward as Moore would have it.

In his research for *Dawn of Discovery*, which is based on his D.Phil. thesis for Sussex University, Moore retraced the steps of the three early travellers, using their books as guides. His summary of their journeys across the island will be of interest to ASTENE members, perhaps more for what those expeditions reveal of 18th- and 19th-century views of and life on the island than for their archaeological details. He devotes a chapter to Pococke and three each to Pashley and Spratt, beginning with a short biography of each man and then looking carefully at their published discussions of what they may have believed to be pre-Classical ruins, in each case comparing their descriptions with existing remains, most of which are illustrated with the author's photographs. Interesting primary research that reveals such information as Spratt's correspondence with Charles Darwin on the matter of an early civilization on Crete is also included. In a short detour, Moore devotes a chapter to the legend of Daidalos' labyrinth, in which all three travellers were interested and which Spratt believed derived from the network of underground passages at Gortyns, a site in the Messara plain in central Crete.

Apart from the main discussion concerning the three travellers, an introductory chapter on Bronze Age Cretan archaeology provides a basic background to those unfamiliar with the period, and another summarizes early British travel in the region, including a short history of the establishment of the British learned societies in the 18th and 19th centuries and their role in the exploration of Greek lands. A few somewhat



Richard Pococke, by Jean-Étienne Liotard, c.1738–39 (top); Vice-Admiral T.A.B. Spratt (bottom). From the book under review.

sweeping statements and unfortunate errors made this reviewer pause ('The Ottoman Empire was basically an Islamic war machine', for example, or the misnaming of The Geological Society as the 'Royal Geological Society', and the reference to UCLA as 'University College Los Angeles', rather than the University of California at Los Angeles), but that is not to deny that these overview chapters are highly useful. A round-up chapter discussing some dozen other British travellers to Crete and Greece, from William Lithgow and George Sandys in the early 17th century to Edward Lear and William Clark in the late 19th, is also of interest.

Moore's premise, and the conclusion he draws at the end of his research, is that although Pocock's contribution to the discovery of the Bronze Age civilization of Crete was small, that of Pashley and Spratt was not. He believes that all three should be credited with the development of pre-Classical archaeology on the island, and that Sir Arthur Evans' achievements, while remarkable, should be seen as building on the work of these earlier travellers, whose accounts Evans must have read. Fair enough. One cannot disagree with his argument that these men were the first to mention in print sites that have subsequently been recognized as dating to the Bronze Age, or with his assertion that Pashley and Spratt, at least, were probably aware that the ruins dated to some period before that of Classical Greece, based on their use of terms such as 'Cyclopean' to describe the masonry, or 'heroic age' to refer to the likely time of construction. Nevertheless, this reviewer found herself wondering how much this limited understanding is worth—whether, in Boorstin's sense, these travellers really did return home to tell others of what they had seen, when they didn't actually understand what they had seen at all.

Diane Fortenberry

Travellers' Graffiti at The Ramesseum, Luxor, by Roger de Keersmacher. Self-published, 2010. €15 + p&p.

Since 1965, founder-member of ASTENE Roger de Keersmacher has been recording travellers' graffiti along the Nile—and discovering who they were. Gradually he has published the results of this mammoth task as a series of more than a dozen ring-bound A4 illustrated books. His latest publication covers the Ramesseum at Thebes on the West Bank at Luxor; earlier volumes are listed below. For further biographical or bibliographical information, visit his website: www.egypt-sudan-graffiti.be.

My first recognition of a traveller's graffiti was that of John Gordon, high, high up on a column of the pillared hall at Karnak. I began to be on

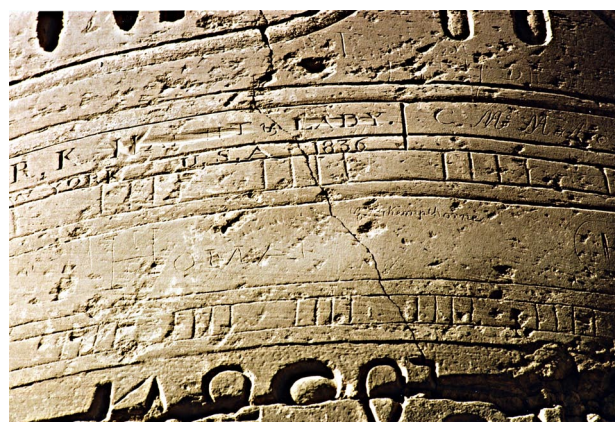
the look-out for graffiti, but it was often created by little-known travellers. However, Roger's researches over the last nearly five decades have resurrected many of them from obscurity.

His latest book has colour photographs and black-and-white reproductions of the graffiti and includes a four-page bibliography of books and journals, including this *Bulletin*, leading one to the travellers.

Among the graffiti-makers—although some unskilled stone-cutters got someone else to carve their names—that same John Gordon appears frequently. Thanks to Roger we now know that he was a Scottish gentleman 'above the middle-size, of stout athletic build and possessed of a hearty constitution'. There are many more familiar travellers. Henry Salt I like to think would not have carved his own name, but perhaps someone carved it for him—and, of course, Byron wrote his everywhere!

Frediani wanders *distract* through other travellers' accounts and recorded his presence. Giovanni Finati carved his name as AGIMVAMET. Irby and Mangles left their names everywhere, and it said that their fellow naval officer, Armer Corry, had his name carved by his British sailors. Belzoni's name is in many places—but not Sarah's. Often the elusive John Madox carved his. But there are many, many more travellers of whom even Roger de Keersmacher has found nothing, so only their name and the fact that they travelled remains.

Here at the Ramesseum is Wm. Boggis 1820; Hovzine told us that he came from St Petersburg in 1832. F. Iung (or Jung) came from Vienna, and Dixon visited from Boston, USA, on 29 January 1843. Count Puckler Muskau disgracefully carved his name on the very breast of one of the colossi at Abu Simbel—to the disgust of Lady Duff Gordon. He also, Roger tells us, purchased his very own Abyssinian girl as a travel companion.



Graffiti on great column no. 1 in the Hypostyle at Karnak: R.K. Haight and Lady / New York USA 1836 (photo © Roger de Keersmacher (1153))

Perhaps ASTENE members will be able to supply further backgrounds to Roger. We are asking him to bring copies of all his books to the conference in Oxford next summer.

Deborah Manley

From the Sahara to Samarkand: Selected Travel Writings of Rosita Forbes (1919–1937), edited and introduced by Margaret Bald. Edinburg, VA, Axios Press, 2009. Pb, 369 pp, ISBN 978-1-60419-030-4. \$13.50 (currently reduced from \$15.00).

In her splendid *Wayward Women: a Guide to Women Travellers* (Oxford University Press, 1990), Jane Robinson starts Forbes's entry thus: 'Rosita Forbes went everywhere, saw everything' – and, moreover, published two autobiographies and a dozen books about her travels in the Pacific, the Sahara, Abyssinia, Afghanistan, South America, Samarkand, India and the Bahamas.

Here, selections bring her span of travels together in one book. ASTENE readers may turn first to her Saharan travels in *The Secret of the Sahara: Kufara* (1921), her attempted Mecca pilgrimage a year later, her *Odyssey in Yemen and Asir* (1923) and *A Thousand Miles of Abyssinia* (1925), and, in 1931, her travels in Iraq and Turkey. In the Sahara, Forbes travelled (in some intimacy) with Cairo aristocrat and Balliol graduate Hassanein Bey, who also wrote of the journey. She brought history, description and geography into her account, and it would be interesting to read their two books together. (Hassanein Bey's is published as *The Lost Oases* by the American University in Cairo Press, 2005.)

Forbes has some wonderfully sensitive, and sometimes funny, scenes and quotes. Mohammed, their guide, pleaded for an extra spurt: 'Let us put that star out,' he urged, pointing to the brightest point in the west. She makes one want to read on and on.

Lady Evelyn Cobbold (1867–1963) went on pilgrimage to Mecca in the 1930s, but she was a Muslim. Rosita was inspired by her desert life to make her pilgrimage. She found problems with the communal women's life but learned the complete rites of the pilgrimage from them, and the possibility of being 'discovered' lent much adventure. Veiled again, she landed in Yemen, where, though she had introductions, it was still a great adventure. Indeed, this book is a series of adventures—many of them in ASTENE-land—and I was delighted to be introduced to it.

Deborah Manley

Wheels Across the Desert, by Andrew Goudie. London, Silphium Press, 2008. Pb, 205 pp, ISBN 978-1-900971-07-2. £12.

In 2005 the Society for Libyan Studies published, under the Silphium label, *Travellers in Libya*, an anthology of writings by visitors to Libya from Leo Africanus in the early sixteenth century up to the arrival of the Italians at the beginning of the twentieth century. The Society has followed this by producing *Wheels Across the Desert*, by Andrew Goudie, in a similar format, covering the first half of the twentieth century but with particular emphasis on the introduction of the motor car to desert travel.

This volume differs from its predecessor in that the author defines the physical characteristics of the desert from the western borders of Libya eastwards towards the Nile and follows this with a review of all the relevant accounts of the motorised exploration of the desert. It begins with the use of Model T Fords by the Light Car Patrols based in Egypt during the First World War and ends with the use of Chevrolets by the Long Range Desert Group in the Second World War. This period of some twenty-five years heralds the almost complete transformation of desert travel from the reliance on beasts of burden to that of the internal combustion engine. After some limited experience in the First World War, there followed years of exploration, surveying, mapping and archaeology. Many of the participants in these activities took their experiences into the second World War—Ralph Bagnold, Pat Clayton and W.B.K Shaw made use of their considerable abilities in the L.R.D.G, and Count László Almásy proved of service to General Rommel. New methods of navigating using a sun compass were devised, and 'dune driving' became a desirable accomplishment.

Almost anything you might wish to know about explorers in this period in the Western Desert is contained within this modest volume—a veritable *vade-mecum* for future students. There are relevant maps, portrait photographs of the main characters and suitably nostalgic snaps of dusty, open-topped vehicles up to their axles in sand. The book concludes with a comprehensive bibliography of 150 references, which includes the recommended and relevant book by the joint editor of this *Bulletin*, Russell McGuirk, *The Sanusi's Little War* (Arabian Publishing Ltd., 2007).

George Hutcheson

Lapis Lazuli: In Pursuit of a Celestial Stone, by Sarah Searight. London, East and West Publishing Ltd, 2010. 272 pp, 168 colour illustrations, ISBN 978 1 907318 030. £18.95.

Your upper part is lapis lazuli ... Your eyebrows are the two sisterly serpents, and Horus has

inlaid them with lapis lazuli ... Your eyelashes are firm everyday, being coloured with real lapis lazuli ...

This arresting quotation is not from the working notes of a professional make-up artist commissioned to create a range of looks to accompany the idiosyncratic garments of a contemporary fashion show, but from the far more serious *Book of the Dead* (chapter 172), which guided the ancient Egyptians through the underworld. An additional precaution was the profusion of amulets and scarabs, preferably of lapis lazuli, enfolded within the mummy wrappings of upper class Egyptians. This luminous blue stone, mined principally in the Badakshan region of Afghanistan and the Altai mountains of Siberia, has been valued for both protective and ornamental qualities and traded worldwide from the 4th millennium BC to the present day.

Sarah Searight traces lapis lazuli in an ambitious survey that has taken her through Central Asia, India, the Middle East, and eastern and western Europe on a journey of many years of resourceful travel, research, encounters and interviews with miners, traders, dealers, craftsmen, archaeologists and museum curators. Her narrative is picaresque and very personal, with definite opinions and preferences, underwritten by an unflagging enthusiasm for lapis lazuli and a willingness to tackle a wide range of supporting literature listed in an extensive bibliography. As the text, while broadly following a chronological treatment, interweaves anecdote with hard, informed fact, the most rewarding approach is to treat it as a quarry for the exploration of lapis lazuli—carved as stone into figures, amulets and jewellery, or ground and worked into pigment. Browse freely or choose an object from the excellent colour photographs and track it through the index and text. Here are a few suggested points of entry.

1. Initial from the Dover Bible, Christ Church, Canterbury, mid-12th century. Plate XXII, 114. Here two craftsmen are at work, one grinding lapis pigment, the other painting it on to a wall of intense blue. The techniques of extraction and preparation of lapis are dangerous and laborious, as the stone is still hacked in great jagged boulders from the mines in the mountains of Badakshan before journeying through bazaars and workshops to world markets to be carved into objects or transformed into the brilliant ultramarine pigment of manuscript illustration and painting following the principles of the tried and tested recipe developed by the Italian Cennino Cennini during the 14th/15th century.

2. Portrait bust of a Sassanian figure, Iran, 3rd–6th century AD. Plate X, 58.

The ancient Middle East, especially Iran of the Achaemenids (6th–4th centuries BC) and the Sassanids (3rd–7th centuries AD), treasured lapis lazuli as a medium for portrait sculpture, jewellery and interior decoration. The spectacular reliefs depicting the procession of tribute bearers at the Achaemenids' spring palace of Persepolis include Sogdians bearing lapis lazuli from Bactria. Later, the portrait of a Sassanian ruler carved in lapis records his regalia in meticulously carved detail.

3. *The Doge Loredano* by Giovanni Bellini, 1501. Plate XXVII, 136.

By the 15th century, Venice—centre of international trade with the East—had become the most important market for lapis lazuli, readily available as raw stone and pigment from apothecaries, who were dealers in drugs, spices and artists' supplies. Lapis blue—ultramarine—became the dominant colour in Venetian painting, e.g. as a rich background to the Doge's portrait, for the robes of the Madonna, and for the varied hues of sky. Artists such as Bellini and Leonardo included lapis in their experiments with the new medium of oil paint to create a varied range of blues.

4. Medallion showing the Piazza della Signoria with Cosimo dei Medici on a lapis plinth, 1599–1600. Plate XXVIII, 147.

The Italian mastery of lapis lazuli techniques continued with *pietra dura*, practised in Rome and especially Florence under Medici patronage at the Opificio delle Pietre Dure, which still flourishes today. Here, finely cut sections of lapis are integrated with other stones into delicate foliate patterns and complex pictorial designs. *Pietra dura*'s reputation travelled as far as Mughal India, where Italian craftsmen worked on the sumptuous buildings of Shahjahan's palace at Delhi.

There are many alternative themes to be explored through lapis lazuli—its role in alchemy, its presence in Tutankhamun's treasure, its flamboyance in Tsarist Russia. Enjoy them all.

Jennifer M. Scarce

***The Berlin–Baghdad Express: The Ottoman Empire and Germany's Bid for World Power*, by Sean McMeekin. London, Allen Lane, 2010. 461 pp, ISBN 978-1846-14323-6. £25.**

This wide-ranging book is about Germany's relations with the Ottoman Empire from 1888 (the year of Kaiser Wilhelm's accession) to 1918, with the main theme being the German–Ottoman attempt to win the First World War by fomenting a jihadist uprising in the East against the British Empire. You may already be thinking of *Greenmantle* and Richard Hannay hurrying *incognito* to Constantinople to save the civilized world. In fact, American author Sean McMeekin

openly acknowledges being influenced by John Buchan's novel, as well as Peter Hopkirk's *On Secret Service East of Constantinople*, which aimed to be 'the true story' behind Buchan's work of fiction. Hopkirk is a journalist turned popular historian. McMeekin is a specialist in modern German and Russian history who teaches at Bilkent University in Turkey. Apparently he also has good enough German and Turkish to have used relevant archives in those languages and consequently was well positioned to expand the story with new and interesting detail.

The story of the actual 'Berlin-to-Baghdad Railway'—a small part of the book, despite its title—is well told. It was interesting to learn that the British and French, Turkey's supporters during the Crimean War, were also in the running to build the railroad across Anatolia, and indeed did build some stretches of it but then forfeited their influence with the Sultan—the British by encroaching on such Ottoman territory as Cyprus (annexed in 1878) and Egypt (occupied in 1882); the French by concluding a defence treaty with the Russians, Turkey's long-standing enemy, in 1894. The way was thus left open to the Germans, whose influence was predominant when the Baghdad Railway concession was signed in 1903.

Construction was slow, due to financing problems but also because of the meddling of a paranoid Sultan, who feared his restive subjects might use the railway to loosen his control over them. Years passed, and the Young Turks came to power in Constantinople; with the rising of war fever Germany increasingly considered the railway's strategic potential against future enemies. In fact, the line was not finished in time for that potential to be fully realized. McMeekin suggests that if the line had been completed by 1915, the threat to British-occupied Egypt would have been far greater than it was. The Turkish attack against the Canal in February 1915 failed miserably, although their soldiers' march across Sinai was in itself a remarkable feat. Would a fully-functioning railway to the Levant have made a difference then or later? One might argue that the highly defended Canal would still have been a formidable obstacle, and that without the massive Egyptian uprising called for in Germany's war plan, Turkish success was extremely unlikely.

McMeekin goes further than Hopkirk in retelling the tales of German agents sent to the East to win support among local leaders and throw the allies' war efforts into confusion: anthropologist Leo Frobenius sent to the Red Sea Coast; explorer and biblical scholar Alois Musil to the Bedouin of northern Arabia; industrialist Otto Mannesman to the Sanusi of eastern Libya; similar missions travelling overland to Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan,

headed by the likes of Wilhelm Wassmuss and Oskar von Niedermayer. They are all quite amazing tales of adventure, even if most of the missions failed.

An interesting theme running right through the book is the unexpected volatility of German-Turkish relations. This is evident even before the outbreak of war, during the construction of the railway; ultimately it led to a complete breakdown of the alliance in June 1918, when, in the Caucasus, troops of the Ottoman 3rd Army exchanged fire with a local German force under the famous Kress von Kressenstein.

On the whole, McMeekin's book is well researched, informative and well written. A minor weakness, perhaps, is the author's penchant for clichés—X is 'on the money', Y is 'the rarest of birds', and X, Y and Z together are 'too many cooks spoiling the broth'. Another is the author's occasional lapse into lurid exaggeration. A case in point is his depiction of, and his value judgements concerning, Baron Max von Oppenheim. A few words cannot do this German orientalist-archaeologist-diplomat justice, but it is relevant here that he worked at his country's embassy in Cairo from 1896 to 1909 as an attaché, a sort of 'oriental secretary'—the counterpart and contemporary of Britain's Harry Boyle and Ronald Storrs; and in 1914 he devised a scheme to harness Islam to turn the East against Germany's foes.

Peter Hopkirk, writing in the early 1990s, correctly identifies Oppenheim as the mastermind behind Germany's eastern strategy at the start of the war, but his book contains little information about him. Since then a wealth of detail about Oppenheim has become available. The Oppenheims were a wealthy banking family from Cologne—the bank, the Sal. Oppenheim Jr. & Cie, still exists—and there is now a marvellous library there with a large archive of documents by and about Max von Oppenheim. Moreover, the principal archivist and other German historians have written an excellent book entitled *Faszination Orient: Max von Oppenheim, Forscher, Sammler, Diplomat*. McMeekin has availed himself of this new material, but his depiction of Oppenheim is not flattering. For McMeekin, Oppenheim's report-writing at the Cairo embassy was obsessive and unoriginal 'hack work'; Oppenheim and the Kaiser were 'pursued by demons only they understood', and they 'would make the world pay for its failure to recognize [Germany's] greatness'. Oppenheim, whose mother was Catholic and father a Catholic-convert, is called 'self-loathing' because his heritage was Jewish on his father's side, while later he was against further Jewish immigration into Palestine; and, finally, because Oppenheim sought to stir up *jihadi* sentiment

over nine decades ago, he made 'a breathtaking error in judgement, and we are all living with the consequences today' [!!!]. In the light of these and other accusations, it's somewhat surprising to read in the author's Acknowledgements, as he thanks the Oppenheim archivists for their help, that he finds Max von Oppenheim to be 'by no means unsympathetic as a character'.

This reviewer has also worked in the archives and came away with the impression that Oppenheim was colourful, complex and highly talented; that it was inconsistent of him to be vehemently against British and French colonialism in the East but to remain silent about German East Africa, for example. As for his writing, T.E. Lawrence thought Oppenheim's *Vom Mittelmeer zum Persischen Golf* [*From the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf*] was 'the best book on the area I know'. As an archaeologist, Oppenheim did outstanding work at Tell Halaf in northeastern Syria and founded the Tell Halaf Museum in Berlin (destroyed in the bombing of that city in the 1940s). Irrelevant to this assessment but perhaps interesting, Agatha Christie and her archaeologist husband Max Mallowan knew Oppenheim personally, spending a day with him when they visited the Museum in the 1930s.

Has McMeekin made his case against Oppenheim? Readers of *The Berlin-Baghdad Express* will judge for themselves. A book like this can scarcely avoid being controversial, and certainly ASTENE members interested in what was happening in our area during the First World War should find it intriguing.

Russell McQuirk

***A History of Egypt from the Earliest Times to the Present*, by Jason Thompson. London, Haus Publishing, 382pp, ISBN 977 416 0916. £17.99**

Anyone undertaking the immense task of writing Egypt's history should start by reminding themselves of the warning that the outgoing King Farouk gave to General Naguib: 'Your task will be difficult.' For historians, there are at least three major obstacles to overcome. The first is the extent of the project: the dwellers on the Nile have more than 5000 years of recorded history and a couple of millennia of predynastic society. The second hurdle is the number of people who have already attempted the task, although this has not daunted the author of this latest work. The third is the interests of the reader: Egyptian history attracts both scholars and interested holidaymakers. The historian Jason Thompson's latest work attempts to present some serious history in a book intended to please the general reader.

Thompson tells the story of dynastic Egypt, starting with the unification of the upper and lower lands c.3100 BC. He makes up for the paucity of historical detail in the lives of early kings by considering the nature of early Egyptian kingship. Later, with the New Kingdom monarchs for instance, there is more detail—he gives a good sense of the lives and motives of characters such as Hatshepsut, the regent who seized power, and Amenhotep IV, who moved the capital from Thebes to Amarna and worshiped the god Aten.

Egypt's history touches on many parts of the story of Western civilization, and to tell it successfully one needs to synthesize. In his works on the 19th century Egyptophiles Sir Gardiner Wilkinson and Edward Lane, Thompson proved his ability to handle vast amounts of material, and he has been similarly skillful here. The ancient and Classical periods, up to the defeat of the Byzantines, are covered in 150 pages. The modern period, from Muhammad Ali to the present day, is given similar coverage. Both of these sections read well and provide an excellent overview of the periods. If there is a weakness, it is in the 1300 years between the key invasions of the Arabs under Amr in 639 and the French under Napoleon in 1798. The period that saw the arrival of the Tulunids, the Fatimids, Ayyubids and Mamluks is one of the most fascinating of all Egypt's long history, and yet here the material is overly synthesized, the reigns pass too quickly, the details of lives that were lived in short supply.

Thompson's account of the modern period is more successful. He is on familiar territory with the reign of Muhammad Ali, against which his recent biography of Edward Lane is set. There is also much to say, for the Albanian had an impact on all aspects of Egyptian life. So too did the British, about whose rule Thompson is even-handed, recognizing the advances made by the occupiers while also condemning the less-appealing aspects of colonialism. He is similarly even-handed when considering the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser and his successors, presidents Sadat and Mubarak, although he is perhaps too generous in his assessment of the current regime's achievements, as he is too soft on the way the regime has suppressed the population's democratic and human rights in its attempts to stay in power.

A History of Egypt starts and ends, appropriately, with the Nile. Herodotus called the country the gift of the river. Thompson reminds us that the country has long been making impossible demands on the thin thread of water that runs through its middle. But if this history teaches us anything, it is that Egyptians have two particular skills, one being the ability of confound dire predictions, the other to survive calamities.

Anthony Sattin

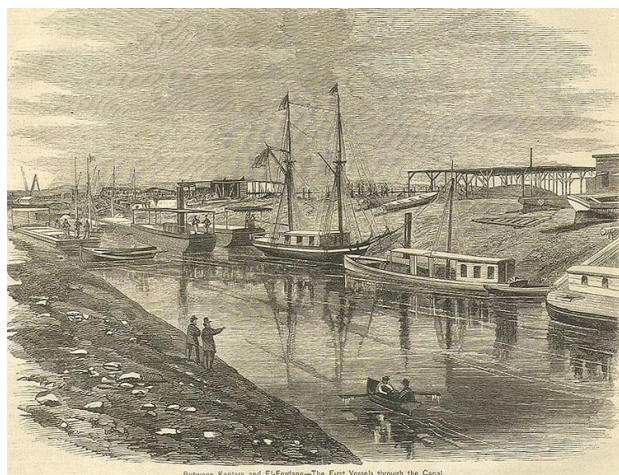
RESEARCH RESOURCES

Narcisse Berchère on the Suez Canal

George Huxley has drawn our attention to the recently re-issued work of Narcisse Berchère, *Le Désert de Suez: cinq mois dans l'Isthme*, edited by Barbara Wright, in the Modern Humanities Research Association Critical Texts series, vol. 24, ISBN 978-1-907322-10-5, www.criticaltexts.mhra.org.uk.

Berchère was commissioned by Ferdinand de Lesseps to make a visual record of the first phase of the construction of the Suez Canal. To this end, he spent five months in the Isthmus, from November 1861 to March 1862. He is said by his first biographer, Bernard Prost, to have completed an 'album' containing sixty-eight plans, drawings and watercolours. This album was given by Berchère to Ferdinand de Lesseps, who then presented it to Emperor Napoleon III, via the Duc de Bassano. It was held at the Palais des Tuileries in Paris, where it is believed to have been lost when the Palace was burned down in 1871, at the time of the Commune. Fortunately, Berchère also gave a verbal account of his experiences in a book, published by Jules Hetzel in 1863, *Le Désert de Suez: cinq mois dans l'Isthme*, of which this is the first new edition.

Professor Wright is Fellow Emeritus of Trinity College, Dublin.



More on Surfing and E-Books

In the electronic age disentangling what is new when you surf the net chasing your favourite

traveller and what is vaguely familiar is becoming more and more circular and incestuous. Thus Peta Rée reports that when she runs searches on certain travellers, much of the best information that pops up is actually drawn from ASTENE *Bulletins* available on our website! Similarly, Deb Manley writes that her bookseller reports on titles requested by customers with quotes from ASTENE's reviews of such books.

In *Bulletin* 43, Cassandra Vivian regaled us with tales of how to handle your Kindle, or perhaps by now your iPad. The free e-book download is a great resource but not always easy to carry out. For journals on the Ancient Near East there is a list of open-access materials on the Ancient World Online site, <http://ancientworldonline.blogspot.com/>. Now Cassandra reports on yet another modern miracle of the digital world: KirtasBooks.com. Kirtas has contracted with a number of libraries in the United States and Canada (including McGill University and the New York Public Library) to reprint or digitize books on demand. They will use their vast collections to create a hard or a digitized copy of a book, including rare and hard-to-find editions that are not on the Google digitized list. Kirtas will recreate the book for you for about \$20.

Another potentially powerful tool offered by Google is the email-alert, but it is hard to get right. You can imagine what a flood of travel agents' blurb and blogs you get if the information you request is on 'Travellers to the Near East' or 'Travellers to Egypt'. Nevertheless, a recent Google alert I received referred me to arabnews.com and a review of *Travelling Through the Deserts of Egypt*, edited by Sahar Abdel-Hakim and Deborah Manley. If you persevere with the way in which your Google alert is defined, some pearls are sure to surface from the mass of irrelevancies.

S. McGuirk

Travellers' Graffiti from Egypt and the Sudan

Roger de Keersmaecker reports that he has just completed an update of *Travellers' Graffiti from Egypt and the Sudan*, volumes VIII and IX (see review in this *Bulletin*). As far as possible, biographical and bibliographical information is given, and the individual scribbler's graffiti found

in other places. The format is A4 size with spiral binding, and the publication is priced at €15 (excluding P&P). Available from: roger.de.keersmaecker@skynet.be .

Following is the complete list of the series volumes, available from the same source:

- I: *The Kiosk of Qertassi* (2001)
- II: *The Temples of Semna and Kumma* (2003)
- III: *Philae, The Kiosk of Trajan* (2004)
- IV: *Elkab, The Rock Tombs* (2005)
- V: *Thebes, The Temples of Medinet Habu* (2006)
- VI: *Thebes, The Mortuary Temple of Sethos I (Qurna); The Temple of Hathor (Deir el-Medina)* (2008)
- VII: *Karnak, Great Temple of Amun; Festival Temple, Pillared Hall (Tuthmosis III); Hypostyle, Great Columns 1–12 in central aisle (Ramesses III and IV); Smaller Columns 75 and 76 (Ramesses II and IV, Sethos I)* (2009)
- VIII: *Elkab, The Temple of Amenophis III* (2010) (1)
- IX: *Thebes, The Ramesseum* (2010) (2)

- X: *The Temple of Kalabsha; The Temple of Beit el-Wali* (March 2011)
- XI: *Gebel el-Silsila, Great Speos of Harenhab, Quarry and Rock Stelae* (September 2011)
- XII: *The Luxor Temple* (2012)

For additional biographical and bibliographical information on this project, visit www.egypt-sudan-graffiti.be .

Library at All Saints Cathedral in Cairo

Visitors to Cairo may like to know of the growing library located at the Cathedral: 5 Michel Lutfallah Street, Zamalek, Cairo. Telephone +20 (2) 27380821/3/9 for opening times.

Sarah Wood



QUERIES AND REPLIES

Sharing knowledge is a basic purpose of ASTENE. If you have a query, or can answer one published here, please reply both to the person who asked the question and to the Editors of the Bulletin so the knowledge can be more widely shared.

Austrian Graves

Writer M.L.M. Carey recorded in her book *Four Months in a Dahabeeh: Narrative of a Winter's Cruise on the Nile, 1860-1* (1863), that on arrival at Korosko they passed the graves of three Austrians 'lying in the wild ravine'. One of them had a headstone inscribed 'The Reverend Wurnitz, Mission Central Africa, died Feb. 4th, 1856'. The graves, Mrs Carey wrote, 'were as much respected as they could have been in a Christian land, though surrounded only by small bits of stone to mark the spot, just like the Moslem graves'.

Who were these men, and what is their story?
Answers to the *Bulletin* Editors please.

Walker's Map

Andrew Beeston asks if anyone knows of a walker's map of the hills behind KV in Luxor, or can suggest where one should look for one. Egyptian friends have failed to come up with anything, but they probably don't walk as much as ASTENE members. Replies to the *Bulletin* Editors, please.

Waynman Dixon and General Gordon's Fish

In *Bulletin* 43, Ian Pearce replied to a query from Robert Morkot (*Bulletin* 40). Mr Pearce raised a supplementary query on the 'Curious Case of General Gordon and the Fish'. As a result of this we now know that ASTENE member Dr Robert Briar purchased the bulk of the Waynman Dixon archives. He even has Waynman's fez! Briar and colleagues at the University of Long Island are working through the collection and transcribing letters. We hope to report further on this work in our next *Bulletin*.

In the meantime, Mr Pearce has been in touch with a few people who knew Waynman's grandson, and he now understands why this important collection was dispersed through two

auctions. Ian Stubbs of the Dorman Museum in Middlesbrough and June Holmes of the Hancock Museum in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, together with Mr Pearce, are considering mounting an exhibition about Waynman Dixon. They have even found a bit more correspondence about the fish in the Hancock Museum archives. We will keep members advised of any news on this front also.

Painting on the Nile

Deborah Manley asks about the artist E.M. Merrick, who in 1898 reported in her book *With a Palette in Eastern Palaces* that she had met Lord Carlisle and a Mr Newman at Philae 'making most careful and elaborate pictures, spending months on one small painting ...'. Does any reader know more about this?

Also, does anybody know about 'Mr Walton, a clever young English artist' at Cairo in the early 1860s, 'from whom beautiful watercolour sketches of the river scenery and the magical effects of colouring' might be purchased, according to G.A. Hoskins (1802-63) in his *A Winter in Upper and Lower Egypt* (1863)?

Editor's note: visitors to Roger de Keersmaecker's website (www.egypt-sudan-graffiti.be) will find there a photograph of Hoskins' graffito at Abu Simbel, a defacement which apparently Hoskins much regretted.

Things to See and Do in Oxford

On 1 January 2011 the Ashmolean's Ancient Egyptian galleries closed for renovation and expansion. The new galleries are due to open a year later, so will be closed during the ASTENE Conference. But there will be much else of interest to ASTENE members to see in the Ashmolean, in Oxford's fascinating Pitt Rivers Museum of Anthropology, and in the History of Science Museum. In the meantime, the *Bulletin* Editors would be grateful if members could send information on travellers who studied at an Oxford College, so that a list can be made for members attending the conference.



FOOTPRINTS

Encounters

Commenting on 'What did they say about ...?' in the Queries and Replies section of Bulletin 43, John Rodenbeck writes:

I'd never have thought of Jane Digby as a mere traveller. Like her friend and fellow Damascene the great Abd el Kader, and like Hester Stanhope a generation earlier, she was a Syrian celebrity, one of those monuments that serious travellers with the appropriate interests and credentials hoped to meet.

Among instances of unexpected meetings between real travellers, the most famous must be the encounter in the desert southwest of Gaza described by Kinglake in *Eothen*:

At first there was a mere moving speck on the horizon. My party, of course, became all alive with excitement, and there were many surmises. Soon it appeared that three laden camels were approaching, and that two of them carried riders; in a little while we saw that one of the riders wore European dress, and at last the riders were pronounced to be an English gentleman and his servant. By their side were a couple of Arabs on foot, and this, if I rightly remember, was the whole party. ... As we approached each other, it became with me a question whether we should speak. I thought it likely that the stranger would accost me and in the event of his doing so I was quite ready to be as sociable and chatty as I could be, according to my nature; but still I could not think of anything particular that I had to say to him. Of course, among civilized people, the not having anything to say is no excuse at all for not speaking, but I was shy and indolent, and felt no great wish to stop and chat like a morning visitor in the midst of those broad solitudes. The traveller, perhaps, felt as I did, for, except that we lifted our hands to our caps and waved our arms in courtesy, we passed each other quite as distantly as if we had passed in Pall Mall.

A New ASTENE Traveller

Deborah Manley writes: I came by chance upon a traveller who would have been an ASTENE luminary had she lived even longer. Ethel May

Stefana Drower (née Stevens) first came to my attention through her book on a journey through the Sudan (to parts now much in the news) in 1911. There she met and later married a lawyer who spent his working life in Iraq, becoming adviser to the Minister of Justice in Baghdad. Despite being an 'official wife' and having three children, Mrs (later Lady) Drower continued to travel, research and write—partly novels and partly about the minor religious groups of the Near East—and to qualify in her own right for entry in the new *Dictionary of National Biography*. As an Arabic speaking woman she had access to the women's quarters, and her *Folk Tales of Iraq* (1931) brought together the folk and fairy tales of Baghdad, just before the cinema and then television swept them out of the harems. Later she studied and wrote books, articles and a dictionary related to the Mandeans between 1949 and 1963. Her papers are in the Bodleian Library.

Perhaps we should make her an honorary after-life member! Certainly a paper on her would be very welcome at the ASTENE conference in July.

And Finally...

... via Deborah Manley, a florid extract from *The Gentleman's Magazine*, October 1837, not quite in the style of ASTENE reviewers:

We do not call the attention of the public to this work for the elegance of its execution, nor will it recommend itself to the favour of the reader by the simplicity of its expression, or the ease and accuracy of its style. The author has lived so long abroad among turbans and trowsers [sic] as to have imbibed insensibly a manner very different from the plain broadcloth expression of his native country. He has talked *Lingua Franca* till he has half forgotten English, and has engrafted the verbiages, the sesquipedial verbs of the Oriental Nations onto our Northern Tongue. His sentences roll forth like the clouds of smoke from his amber chibouque...

From *Turkey, Greece and Malta*, by Adolphus Slade (author of *Travels to The East*).

