

P.O. Brøndsted and his travels in Sicily

by Tobias Fischer-Hansen

“I intend to finish one day my work upon my undertakings in Grecian countries with a survey of Sicily, especially with respect to its ancient locations and monuments. I understood in Sicily itself, that such a thing might be of some consequence in the study of this interesting country.”

These are Peter Oluf Brøndsted’s own words, written in a letter in May 1821 in Naples to his English friend Henry Long,¹ nearly a year after his somewhat unsuccessful stay in Sicily. Apparently Brøndsted had at the time abided by his ambition to undertake a study of the Greek antiquities in Sicily.

Brøndsted had the year before, in letters to Prince Christian Frederik and to Niels Rosenkrantz, the Privy Councillor for Foreign Affairs, laid forth his deliberations over a visit to Sicily. We gather from this correspondence that it was the ambition of Brøndsted to include the Sicilian antiquities in his *opus magnum* – the *Voyages dans la Grèce*. In letters to Prince Christian Frederik and to Rosenkrantz, written in January and February 1820 in Naples, Brøndsted had outlined his plans for a stay of 2-3 months in Sicily – a study tour which, as he explains, will be used to improve his

planned work on Ancient Greece – “apart from the discoveries on Aigina and in the ruins of the Phigaleian temple in Arcadia, I have long wished to obtain the most necessary information about the monuments in Sicily”.² Brøndsted, with his experiences from travelling in Greece and from the archaeological fieldwork in which he had participated, was undoubtedly well qualified to write such an additional chapter on Western Greek archaeology. Due to the circumstances of his stay in Sicily, it was cut short by the uprising in Palermo 1820, such a study came to nothing, but it is noteworthy that Brøndsted had understood the importance of the contribution of Sicilian antiquities to Greek culture, even though his scholarly background was so vested in Greece itself.

Brøndsted’s public lectures on *Magna Graecia*³

Brøndsted’s journey to Sicily was not his first contact with the Greeks of the West; he had travelled through Southern Italy on his way to Greece in 1806, back to Naples from Corfu via Otranto in 1813 and from

1. For Henry Lawes Long of Hampton Lodge, Farnham, Surrey see further below.

2. These and the other letters pertaining to Brøndsted’s Sicilian journey are found in RA (The Danish National Archives/Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen), arkivnr. 202: Kongehuset, Christian 8, Breve fra forskellige, Pakke 128: Bræstrup-Bülöw; RA, arkivnr. 302: Departementet for de udenlandske anliggender, Rom, II, Pakke 2307: Indberetninger 1819-32; and in private letters, above all to his friend J.G. Adler, Prince Christian Frederik’s private secretary, see KB (The Royal Library/Det Kongelige Bibliotek,

Copenhagen), NKS (New Royal Collection/Ny kongelig Samling), 1578 2^o: P. O. Brøndsted, Brevkopibog, 1814-1825. For help with access to Brøndsted’s letters to Baron Rosenkrantz in the above-mentioned archive 302 in RA (Indberetninger no. 14, 15, 17, 18, 19), I am much obliged to Otto Schepele of the Danish Foreign Office.

3. “Great Greece” – the conventional term used since antiquity for the region of Southern Italy, including Campania, with its Greek settlements. Brøndsted employs the Greek term Μεγάλη Ἑλλάς.

Naples to Brindisi on his way to Ithaca in 1819. We do not know much about Brøndsted's scholarly profit from these journeys, but there can be little doubt that already the journeys of 1806 and 1813 had given him some topographical insight and an appetite for historical research into the region. This we can infer from his public lectures held in the period 1815 to 1817 and published in *Rejse i Grækenland*.⁴ Three lectures deal with the Greek colonies in Southern Italy,⁵ and these should be regarded as a valuable supplement to Frederik Münter's seminal *Nachrichten von Neapel und Sicilien* 1790.⁶ The title chosen for the two volumes of Brøndsted's lectures, "Travels in Greece", was thus rather misleading as the author in the first volume gives the first fairly comprehensive presentation of Southern Italian antiquities in Danish.

The chapters cover several aspects of not only the Greek presence in Southern Italy but also of local people, Picentians, Lucanians and Iapygians, with accounts of territories, borders, rural sanctuaries, population size, internal Greek conflicts, regional histories and the later Roman conquests.⁷ The presentation of the ancient political history of the individual cities is not weighty, but the more important Greek foundations with the origins of their colonisers, whether Dorian, Ionian, Euboian, Achaian or Phokaian, are accounted for. Brøndsted's enumeration of twenty Greek colonies in this region is also near enough correct. He includes little known sites such as Temesa, Terina, Pyxos, Hipponion and Medma, the locations of which would have been unknown to him, but which he treated from the ancient sources. Twenty-one colonial Greek city-states are now known and have been investigated in present-day Campania and Southern Italy. The only site not listed as a Greek city by Brøndsted is the little known

foundation of Metauros. However, Brøndsted was acquainted with the smaller Greek sites of Pithekoussai, on the island of Ischia off the coast of Campania, and Skydros and Skyllition, three settlements of which the political status in ancient Greek times is uncertain even today.

The lectures on *Magna Graecia* also include useful overviews of the history of the larger Greek colonies, such as Kyme (Cumae), Poseidonia-Paestum, Hyele, Rhegion, Lokroi, Sybaris-Thourioi, Metapontion and Taras. Brøndsted is familiar with the ancient sources, although he provides no critical treatment of these, and mythical legends are often accepted out of hand. Even so, some of the dates given for the colonial foundations – the 8th century – are correct, while others are far too early due to the influence of the epic traditions to which Brøndsted was rather susceptible. Some of the important incidents in the history of Southern Italy, for instance the conflicts between the Etruscans and Hieron I of Syracuse at Kyme in Campania in the first part of the 5th century BC, are correctly dated. There is also an awareness of the phenomenon of Hellenisation, the influence of Greek culture on local customs and mores, with evidence taken from architecture and coins, but also of the power struggles between Greeks and non-Greeks and the successes of the latter. The activities of the Western Greek philosophers and law-givers, for instance Parmenides and Zenon, Charondas, and Zaleukos, are accounted for.

The lack of archaeological investigations in most of the Greek cities at the time of Brøndsted's travels, explains the very limited presentation of urban monuments in his lectures. However, there is as a good general introduction to the site of Poseidonia-Paestum, with an account of the topography, the temples and the

4. See the article by Jørgen Mejer in this publication.

5. Chapters 3-5, pp. 56-129.

6. First edition in Danish, Münter 1788-1790.

7. The main secondary sources used by Brøndsted are the works of

Ph. Clüver, Th. Major, Cl. R. de Saint Non, J.H. von Riedesel and F. Münter. For the discovery of *Magna Graecia* and the early investigations here see Ampolo 1985.

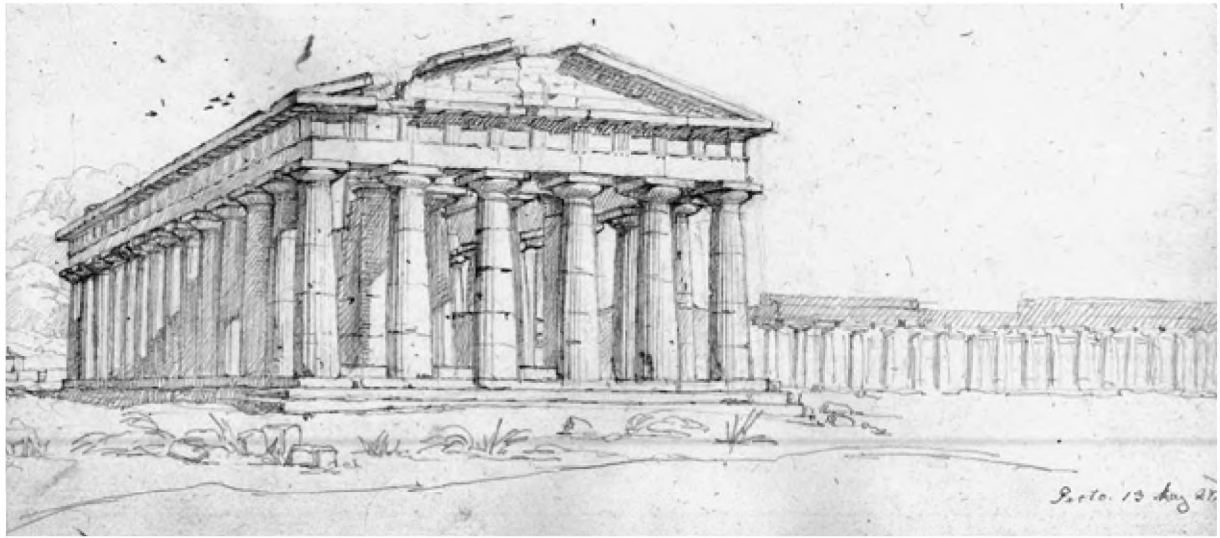


Fig. 1: The Doric temples at Paestum. Drawing by H.W. Bissen 1827. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Copenhagen, (BZ XVII, 23).

city-walls. The temples are described with good use of the technical terminology, and the problems of interpretation are presented. Although Brøndsted finds the Poseidonian temples technically second to those of the Greek homeland, primarily because of the use of local stone, inferior to Greek marble, they are in their “purity of the Doric style” seen as far from inferior even to the Athenian Parthenon itself, and for a comparison of the early Doric style at Poseidonia, Brøndsted refers to the temple of Apollo at Corinth.

The lack of artistic monuments, such as sculpture and vases, from the Greek cities of South Italy in this early period of research, was compensated for by a presentation of the numismatic evidence from each of the cities – where known. It is surely a fair reward for this contribution that he was able to acquire, in Naples, May 1821, the so-called Siris bronzes – the two mag-

nificent 4th century relief-decorated shoulder pieces of a cuirass from a Lucanian site near Grumentum in South Italy, later acquired by the British Museum.⁸

Brøndsted’s interest in the Greek cities of *Magna Graecia* and his, perhaps, more distant consciousness of the Etruscan civilization, may explain his rather infelicitous reading of the Greek dedication on the Etruscan helmet found at Olympia in 1817.⁹ The helmet, which carries an inscribed dedication of Hieron I of Syracuse, was part of the spoils taken from the Etruscans by the Syracusans at the battle of Kyme in 474 BC.¹⁰ Brøndsted prepared a study of the inscription during his stay on the island of Ithaca, and later sent a reworked edition to the learned Bishop Frederik Münter in Copenhagen from Syracuse, implying some work on the treatise there. The study was published in Naples in 1820 and apart from the political problems

8. Cf. letter to Henry Long, the 2nd of May 1821, KB, NKS, 1578 2^o: P. O. Brøndsted, Brevkopibog, 1814-1825; Brøndsted 1837. For fuller treatment see the article by Bodil Bundgaard Rasmussen in this publication.

9. Brøndsted 1820.

10. The helmet, now in the British Museum, was presented by the then owner, Sir Patrick Ross, to King George IV; Walters 1899, 27 cat. 250. For the inscription see Brodersen 1992, no. 49. The correct reading was seen by the epigraphist August Boeckh already in 1820 and was presented in Boeckh 1828-1877, I, no. 16.

created by his preface,¹¹ the inscription was misread and misunderstood by Brøndsted. The inscription reads: *Hieron, son of Deinomenes, and the Syracusans [dedicated the helmet to Zeus as spoil taken] from the Tyrrhenians (Etruscans) at Kyme (Cumae)*. Hieron had broken the sea power of the Etruscans in a naval battle off the coast of Kyme and thereby their influence in Campania. Brøndsted, misdating the campaigns of Hieron I in Southern Italy by about 30 years, understood the reference to the Tyrrhenians as a reference to the pan-Hellenic colony of Thourioi founded in 444/3 BC. The misinterpretation of the inscription is rather strange considering that Brøndsted had been lecturing in Copenhagen on these very same events with correct chronology only a few years previously.¹² However, the study was apparently well received at the time. Also by the numismatist Domenico Sestini, though the scholar rejected Brøndsted's interpretation of the coin he had acquired in Cefalù, and which he had assigned to the reign of Hieron as part of his arguments, even though the coin was Roman, as shown by Sestini.¹³

The journey to Sicily

During his sojourn in Naples in 1820, Brøndsted had understood the desirability of including a survey of Sicilian antiquities in his *Voyages dans la Grèce*. Such an investigation was ambitious considering the great number of archaeological sites and the outstanding monuments known in the island. Brøndsted cannot have been ignorant of this. Although Sicily had not yet in the early 19th century become an established goal for

northern European travellers, the island had from the latter part of the 18th century been visited by numerous learned travellers, of whom several had published scholarly accounts of the Greek cities and their monuments, with catalogues also of the contents of museums in Syracuse and Catania.¹⁴ Antiquarian and archaeological research had since the middle of the 18th century flourished in the milieu of brilliant Sicilian scholars, above all members of the nobility, resulting not only in a plethora of publications, but also in antiquarian legislation aimed at protection of ancient monuments, archaeological sites and the establishment of public and private museums.¹⁵ Learned academies and libraries, long established in Catania and Palermo, were well used by visiting scholars, as also by Brøndsted.

Brøndsted's library¹⁶ contained at least: Biscari 1817, Kephallides 1818 and Swinburne 1783-1785, but Brøndsted had undoubtedly prepared his trip by reading also Münter 1788-1790. He often cites Münter in his lectures (together with Clüver, de Saint Non and others (see above)), and in the letters written during his journey.

Scholarly research was undoubtedly the main objective of Brøndsted's journey to Sicily, but he also had another agenda. One of his arguments in the requests for permission to go to Sicily, forwarded to the Privy Councillor Niels Rosenkrantz and to Prince Christian Frederik, was the task entrusted him in 1818 by Adam Wilhelm Hauch, the director of the Royal Collections, and by Christian Ramus, the curator of the Royal Coin Cabinet in Copenhagen, to acquire coins.¹⁷ Brøndsted

11. See the article by Otto Schepelern in this publication.

12. Brøndsted 1844b, 67 (Kyme), 103 (Thourioi).

13. Sestini, in fact, asked for more copies to be forwarded to him in Florence after receiving a copy of the treatise: KB, NKS, 1546.2^o: Breve til P. O. Brøndsted fra Udlændinge, no. 365-368. Sestini's good contacts with Danish scholars apart from Brøndsted included F. Münter and Prince Christian Frederik, see Kromann 1991. For Sestini as scholar see Salmeri 2001b.

14. For the period and the foreign travellers in Sicily see the surveys by Tuzet 1955 and Cometa 1999.

15. G. Salmeri, A.L. D'Agata and A.M. Iozzia in Iachello 1998; Fischer-Hansen 2001; Salmeri 2001a; idem 2001b, esp. 19-42. A

recent survey of the early history of museums in Sicily is found in Abbate 2001.

16. Due to Brøndsted's strained financial circumstances several of his books came into the possession of Bertel Thorvaldsen, and are therefore now to be found in Thorvaldsen's library in The Thorvaldsen Museum

17. From the letters to Brøndsted from Ramus (the 2nd of September and the 31st of October 1818, KB, NKS, 1546.2^o: Breve til P. O. Brøndsted fra Udlændinge), we gather that it was Brøndsted who had offered to undertake commissions for the Coin Cabinet, rather than an assignment prescribed to him – as he seems to imply in his letters to Rosenkrantz and Christian Frederik.



Fig. 2: Early 19th century map of Sicily. The full-drawn line show Brøndsted's journey May-July 1820, the broken line his later, planned, but not carried through, itinerary.

feared that this task was threatened by the coin-buying trip to Sicily planned by the Comte de Forbin, “director of the Paris-Museum”, who – “also at Royal French expense prepares himself for a journey to Sicily this spring ... and therefore will have bought all of the best

of this type of monument which can be found in that restricted Island ... a good harvest will hardly be possible if the chevalier Forbin with his compagnons have searched through all the secret coin compartments of the Island.”¹⁸ The correspondence with the authorities

18. Letter to Prince Christian Frederik from Brøndsted, Naples the 27th of January 1820, “Sildigere frygter jeg at Pariser Museés Director Chev. Forbin som reder sig til en Rejse i Sicilien for Kongel. fransk Regning i dette Foraar vil have opkjøbt det Allerbedste af dette slags Monumenter som [paa] hiin classiske men indskrænkede Ö ere at findes. ikkun naar jeg nu snart benyt-

tede de Anbefalinger, som især Hertugen af Berwick (le Duc d’Alba) hvem jeg her har lært at kjende, er saa god at give mig, kunde jeg næsten være vis paa en god Höst. Hvilket næppe blev Tilfældet naar Chev. Forbin og hans Compagnons nyeligen have gennemledt et hvert myntgjemme paa den hele Ö.”

in Copenhagen reveals the weight of the rather comprehensive duties, which Brøndsted felt rested upon his shoulders even before he had set foot on the island – which he did in Syracuse!

However, this was far from the usual city of arrival for travellers from the North, who would normally arrive at Palermo from Naples. The most famous of Palermitan arrivals, was that of Goethe Monday afternoon 3 o'clock, the 2nd of April 1787 – “Die Stadt gegen Norden gekehrt, am Fuß hoher Berge liegend; über ihr, der Tageszeit gemäß, die Sonne herüberscheinend. Die klaren Schattenseiten aller Gebäude sahen uns an, vom Widerschein erleuchtet. Monte Pellegrino rechts, seine zierlichen Formen im vollkommensten Lichte, links das weit hingestreckte Ufer mit Buchten, Landzungen und Vorgebirgen. Was ferner eine allerliebste Wirkung hervorbrachte, war das junge Grün zierlicher Bäume, deren Gipfel, von hinten erleuchtet, wie große Massen vegetabilischer Johanniswürmer vor den dunkeln Gebäuden hin und wieder wogten. Ein klarer Duft blaute alle Schatten. ... Durch die wunderbare, aus zwei ungeheuern Pfeilern bestehende Pforte, die oben nicht geschlossen sein darf, damit der turmhohe Wagen der heiligen Rosalia an dem berühmten Feste durchfahren könne, führte uns in die Stadt und sogleich links in einen großen Gasthof.”¹⁹ – which could hardly find a more brilliant contrast to that of Brøndsted’s sulking imprisonment on a boat in the harbour of Syracuse. Though, as we shall see, he later had his taste of Palermitan experiences.

Brøndsted’s arrival in Syracuse

After attending to the problems concerning his collection of marble sculptures in Valetta on Malta,²⁰ Brøndsted set sail for Syracuse on the 17th of May 1820. With him on this journey was Henry Lawes Long whom he had met on Corfu and who had accompanied him to Malta. Henry Long of Farnham Lodge, Surrey, had undertaken his Grand Tour in July 1818 travelling through Switzerland to Italy, where he visited Lord Byron in Bologna. After sojourns in Florence, Venice, Rome and Naples he chose the by then prevalent route to Greece from Italy crossing from Otranto to the Ionian Islands in December 1819.²¹

On their arrival in Syracuse the two travellers were constrained to remain on board the ship for 13 days due to quarantine measures. The circumstances were unpleasant, and Brøndsted wrote a number of unhappy letters to the local authorities, invoking also his friendship with the Duke of Berwick (duc d’Alba).²² However, these were of little avail as the measures were imposed by the “supremo magistrato di salute” on the authority of His Majesty.²³ Apparently Brøndsted and Long were also reproached for leaving the ship for swims in the harbour. However, from Henry Long’s Syracusan dissertation (see below), we know that at least on one occasion permission was given to leave the ship, in the words of Long – “Every morning during our tedious quarantine we gazed up on the two remaining columns of the temple of Jupiter Olympius, which stand at no great distance from the sea, on the right, south of the Anapus, and on one occasion while our boats’ crew were taking in water, we were permitted throu’ the courtesy of our guardians, to land and

19. Goethe 1952, 214f., Palermo, the 2nd of April 1787.

20. See the article by John Lund in this publication.

21. The main stages of Henry Long’s Grand Tour and the friendships established on the journey, also of that with Brøndsted, is accounted for by Howard 1925, 420-424. The biography of Brøndsted given by Howard, *loc. cit.* is apparently based upon an obituary in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for August 1842.

22. Fitz-James-Stuart, 7th Duke of Berwick, Duque de Alba de Tormes, of Jacobite descent and Spanish nobility, whom Brøndsted had met in Naples.

23. KB, NKS, 1546.2^o: Breve til P. O. Brøndsted fra Udlændinge,

no. 427-428. The imposing of health quarantines (*cautela sanitaria*) at border crossings, especially in the case of arrivals from Greece, was widely practised at the time and had already been experienced by Brøndsted in Otranto on his way back from Greece in 1813 – though here in more congenial circumstances, as he was allowed to stay in the local convent. The measures were not popular with Brøndsted, as they also prevented him from undertaking a short visit to the Liparian Islands, during his stay at Milazzo (ancient Mylai). But, as he himself points out, one of the great calamities of Messina had been the plague of 1743.



Fig. 3: Plan of the major districts of ancient Syracuse.

examine the position of the ancient temple. During the last century 7 columns were said to have been standing of this edifice – 5 of these have utterly disappeared, the remaining pair are so much mutilated and disfigured, that were it not for the most ancient sanctity & celebrity they would be approached without interest.”

The time spent on board, and perhaps explorations undertaken during the illegal swim, gave Brøndsted the opportunity for reflections on the topography of the harbour – “... The southern of the city’s two harbours, the Great Harbour, is still today the same, grandiose harbour as in Antiquity, probably one of Europe’s most beautiful docks. This wonderful harbour, which I suppose I ought to know well after 13 days quarantine on

board ship, is oval in form and somewhat over one Danish mile in circumference. It is a fallacy among modern travellers, as for instance our Münter [professor, later Bishop Frederik Münter], professor Kephallides, and others, that this harbour so famous in Antiquity, should have become shallow and useless for larger boats owing to sedimentation. In the year 1798 Lord Nelson was at anchor here twice – when he sailed to Egypt looking for the French fleet, and again after he had been victorious at Abukir and returned with the captured French ships. And recently, that is in the year 1818, the North Americans have seriously attempted to move the King of the Two Sicilies to relinquish the harbour to their government for use as a station for their ships in the Mediterranean, in return for quite a substantial duty. The deal was obstructed by the English government in all confidentiality.”²⁴

Finally Brøndsted and Long were allowed on land, with opportunities for antiquarian excursions – “The ruins of ancient Syracuse consist probably of Sicily’s most extraordinary monuments; the elevated and beautiful terrain, which took up this enormous city²⁵ is the most extensive of any Greek city I have seen. Even the walls of ancient Athens have a much smaller extent than those of Syracuse. However, the comparison between the ancient and modern culture, which will be apparent to everyone from these ruins, is not gratifying. Everywhere one walks on the remains of buildings of the ancient state, which inside the walls housed 1,200,000 people, that is a population nearly as large as all of Sicily today. Thucycides, among the ancient

24. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, “Derimod er den sydligste af Stadens tvende Havne, den store, endnu stedse den samme grandiose Golf som i Oldtiden; vistnok et af Europas skjønneste Havnebassins. Denne skjønne Havn som jeg vel, efter 13 dages Quarantine paa Skibet, maa have lært at kjende, er af ovalrund Form og har noget over en dansk Miil i Omkreds. Det er ligefrem en Vildfarelse af moderne Rejsende som f:ex af vor Münter, af Prof. Kefalides og andre, at denne i Oldtiden berømte Havn ved Sandskud og Opdyngning fra Havet, skulle være bleven lavgrundet og ubrugelig for store Skibe. I Aaret 1798 laae Lord Nelson her for Anker med sin hele Flaade tvende Gange; da han drog til Ægypten for at opsøge den franske Flaade, og da

han igjen, efter vundet Slag ved Abukir, kom tilbage med de erobrede franske Skibe; og nyeligen – det var i Aaret 1818 – bestræbte den Nordamericanske Regjæring sig alvorligen for at bevæge Kongen af Sicilierne til at afstaae den, imod betydelig Afgift, denne havn som Station for deres Skibe i Middelhavet, en Forhandling som vel holdtes hemmelig, men som dog under Haanden forhindrede af det Engelske Gouvenement.”

25. Here Brøndsted is obviously under the misconception ruling at the time, that the ancient city of Syracuse comprised also the vast upper plateau of Epipolai. However Epipolai was never part of the habitation quarter of the city, as clarified in Fabricius 1932.



Fig. 4: Syracuse in a painting by Philip Hackert 1793. View of Ortygia from the upper city. Caserta, Royal Palace.

writers, has an account in his Histories, Books 6 and 7, of the Athenians' strenuous and unfortunate expedition against Syracuse during the Peloponnesian War – the best guide to the localities of Syracuse. The most interesting of these still extant are: the temple of Minerva on the island of Ortygia (which is now turned into the main cathedral of modern Syracuse), and in the quarters of the upper town: the theatre, the amphitheatre, the extensive and very picturesque quarries (latomies)

26. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, "Det gamle Syracusa Ruiner afgive vist en af Siciliens mærkeligste Gjenstande; det ophøjede og ved sin beliggenhed kjønne Terrain som denne umaadelige Stad har indtaget, er det vidtløftigste jeg hidtil saae af nogen antik græsk By. Selv det gamle Athens mure vige betydeligt Syracusas i Omfang. Men den Sammenligning, som disse Ruiner maae paanøde Enhver, imellem den antike og moderne Kultur, er ikke glædelig. Man vandrer her paa nedstyrkede lemmer af en antik Statsbygning som inden for disse Mure omfattede over 1.2000.000 Mennesker, det eer: en Population næsten saa talrig som hele Siciliens Befolkning nu om tide. Af de gamle Forfattere afgiver Thucydides' Beskrivelse, i hans historiske Værks 6te og 7de Bog, af Atheniernes anstrængte men uheldige Expedition

and several remains of the well built city wall which Dionysios the Elder (according to Diodoros' 14th book) raised in the short span of 20 days with 60.000 men and 12.000 oxen, used for the transport of stone. The modern city of Siracusa, narrowed to the island of Ortygia with a scanty castle and habitation for 16 or 18,000 souls, forms a strange contrast to the stupendous remains of that ancient city."²⁶

Henry Long, Brøndsted's travel companion ("a cul-

imod Syracusa i den peloponnesiske Krigs Tid, den bedste Vejledning for Syracusas Localiteter, af hvilke de interessanteste endnu forhaanden ere: Minervatemplet paa Øen Ortygia (hvilket nu er forvandlet til det moderne Syracusas Hovedkirke); og paa de højere Stadsquarterer: Theatret, Amphitheatret, de overordentlig store og maleriske Steenbrud eller Latomier (carrières) og mange Levninger af den fameuse og fortreffelige konstruerede Stadmur som Dionysius den Ældre (i følge Diodor, i 14de Bog af hans Værk) opførte i den korte Periode af 20 Dage med 60000de Arbejdere og 12000 Oxen til Steentransporten. Den moderne Stad Syracusa, indkneben paa Øen Ortygia til en snæver Fæstning og Opholdssted for 16 eller 18,000 Mennesker, stikker underligt af mod hine pragtfulde Levninger af den gamle Stad."

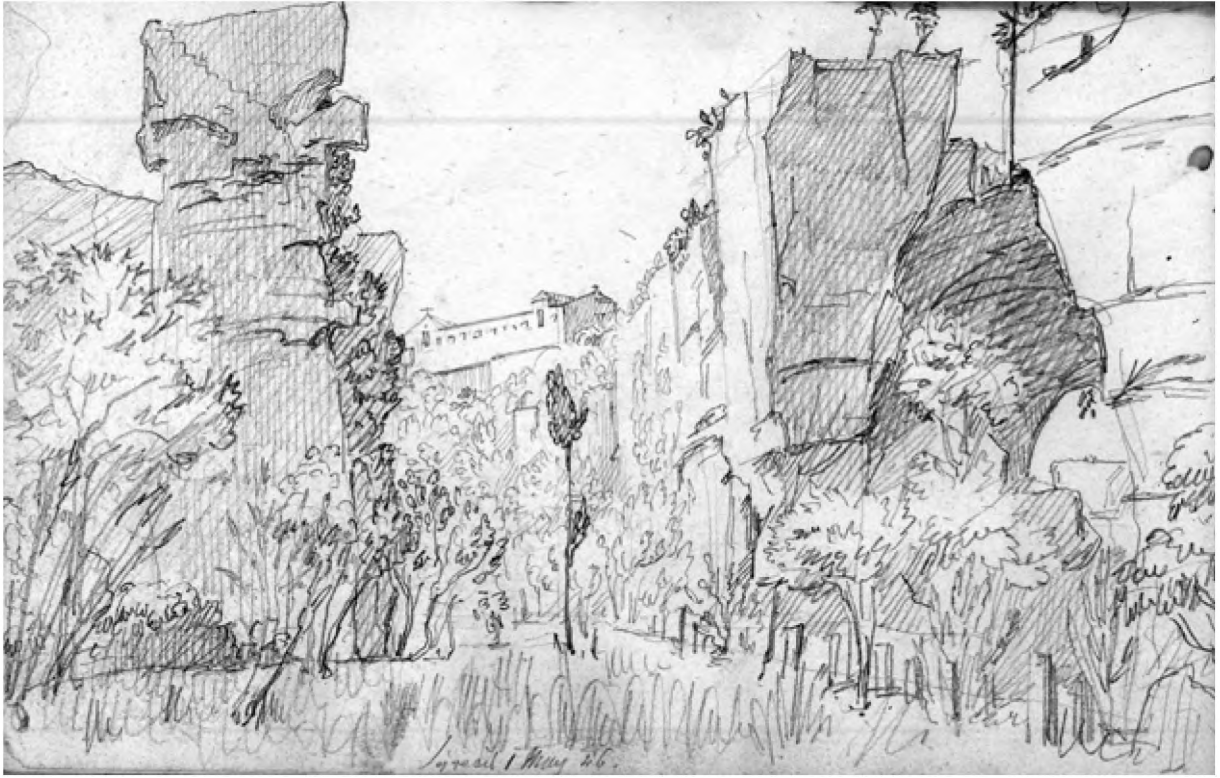


Fig. 5: Syracuse. The quarries, “Latomie”. Drawing by H.W. Bissen 1827. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Copenhagen, (BZ XVII, 52).

tured and amiable Englishman” – as he is described by Brøndsted), was likewise strongly committed to the historical and topographical problems of Syracuse, as is evident from Long’s correspondence with Brøndsted and with others. The then 25 year old Long used his short stay in Syracuse to undertake a most detailed and comprehensive study of the topography of the city, especially in regard to the description found in Thucydides of the Athenian expedition and siege of Syracuse in 413 BC. It is apparent that Long covered just about every corner of that immense city on his walking tours, and his enthusiasm is unmistakable – “On the first day of this month, one of the finest I ever beheld, we ascended on horseback to Epipolae and following the line of the southern walls, arrived at fort Euryalus, now called Monte Gibellisi, after contemplating the magnificence of the view from this point, I began to exam-

ine that part of the scene which lay more immediately about me. We were standing on what may be termed the citadel of ancient Syracuse, & with the exception of the Capitol at Rome and the acropolis of Athens I know of no spot, which can excite more interest. To the right of Epipolae descended the celebrated walls of Dionysius the Elder; between them, where once stood the finest of ancient cities, waved yellow fields of corn, varied towards the sea with the shade of a few olive trees. The city itself dwindled down to the primitive isle of Ortygia and to a population of 13000 souls, seemed in the words of Swinburne ‘Afloat upon the surface of the waters, guarding the entrance of its noble harbour’. It was a view that could not be contemplated without emotion.”

Long describes and analyses the overall morphology and topography of the city, with the roads and the



Fig. 6: Portrait of Henry Lawes Long. Print. Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, (P. 3082-R).

rivers of the hinterland that connected the city south to the ancient city of Helorus and north to Catania (ancient Katane). The famous and infamous localities, some known from the ancient sources – the Euryalos

and Labdalum fortresses, Mount Belvedere, the city walls, the lowland swamps of the Anapus are all analysed in relation to the relevant passages in Thucydides, Diodoros Sikulos, Plutarch and Livius, and modern writers, for instance Clüver, are critically reviewed.

This minor dissertation, comprising 19 closely written foolscap pages, was forwarded by Long to Brøndsted in Palermo in June 1820, with a request for his judicious opinion of it.²⁷ Brøndsted's response came a year later, while he was still in Naples²⁸ (after a reminder from Long, back in England) – “I have read your dissertation upon the Athenian expedition against Syracuse with a great deal of interest. Exactly because I understand it will become an excellent opusculum. I would engage you not to publish it in its present *state*. I believe it would become of influence on your dissertation to read Thucydides over still once with that assistance of modern erudition which libraries in so cultivated a country as England easily may supply”.

Apart from this rather unqualified opinion, Brøndsted does refer Long to books on the subject, which he had seen in the library in Palermo.²⁹ But the response seems to reveal little interest for the problems treated by his young travel companion, and may also show that Brøndsted himself had had little scholarly benefit from his sojourn in Syracuse.

Catania, Etna, Taormina

After their short stay in Syracuse Brøndsted and Henry Long travelled north to Catania and Etna, and Brøndsted has a fine description³⁰: “Catania ... which on se-

27. KB; NKS, 1546.2^o: Breve til P. O. Brøndsted fra Udlændinge, no. 257. The dissertation formed the basis of a book published in 1854 (*non vidi*) – cited by Howard 1925, 422. Long also corresponded with Colonel Napier (afterwards General Sir Charles), Corfu, in July of 1820 about the antiquities of Syracuse, cf. Howard 1925, 423. An abstract of this correspondence was forwarded also to Brøndsted.

28. KB, NKS; 1578 2^o: P. O. Brøndsted, Brevkopibog, 1814-1825.

29. Amico 1757-1760; Ortolani 1819.

30. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, “Catanea ... som flere Gange

baade ældre og nyere Tid ødelagdes af Ætnas Ildstømme og stede igjen hævede sig af sine Ruiner. De fleste antike Monumenter, hvis Udgravning (hidtil ikkun tildeels udført) skyldes især den ældre Prinds Biscaris Talenter og Virksomhed, have været tillokkende, som Herculaneum og Pompeji under Vesuven ... Paa flere Steder, i eller nær ved Catanea, kan man uden at grave dybt, tælle indtil sex Lag af Lava, det ene paa det andet, fra meget forskjellige Perioder. Dog manglede aldrig Indvaanere paa dette smukke men farlige Jordstrøg. ... Det nu blomstrende Catanea er vel saa smuk en By som rimeligvis nogen af de tidligere og undergangne, og den nærværende Generation om-



Fig. 7: Catania with a view towards Etna. Drawing by H.W. Bissen 1827. Private Collection. After: From the Collections of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, III, 1942, 335, fig. 13.

veral occasions in recent and in earlier times was destroyed by the fire flows of Etna, and which every time raised itself from the ruins. Most of its ancient monuments, the excavation of which (until now only partly carried out) is due to the talents and activities of the older prince Biscari, will have been as alluring as Herculanium and Pompeji under Vesuv. ... On more locations, in and near Catania, one can count up to six layers of lava, the one upon the other from different periods. But even so there have always been inhabitants on this beautiful but dangerous land. ... The now blooming Catania is I think as beautiful a city as in all likeli-

hood any of the previous and ruined, and the present generation speak of their ancestral destruction not as just another legend in history or epic tradition. One of the most violent lava flows during the later centuries was that of 1669 which found its way to the sea in close proximity to Catania creating enormous terraces! But nature has covered even this continuous fire flow with a crest of earth and with kind greenness, and with, here and there, the most lovely vegetation. ... The rich museum of the Benedictians and that which belongs to prince Biscari are the best collections of ancient monuments now present in Catania, but they are not used

taler Fædrenes Undergang ikkun som ethvert andet Sagn i Historien eller Traditionen. En af de voldsomste Lavastrømme som de senere Aarhundreder søgte sin Vej, Catanea tæt forbi, til Havet, er den af 1669 – enormes entassements ! – men selv denne udbrudte Ildstrøm har Naturen for det Meste overklædt med en Jordskorpe og venligt Grønt, hist og her med den yndigste Vegetation. – De rige Benedictineres Museum og det som tilhører Prinds Biscari ere de bedste Samlinger af antike mindesmærker nu forhaanden i Catanea, men de forøges og benyttes ikke tilbørligen. Det første af disse Museer skyldes et Par for-

tjente Mænd af denne Orden i forrige Aarhundrede sin Tilblivelse, men de nuværende yderst bemidlede og alt for vel plejede Brødre synes ikke at have Sands uden for legemlig gode Ting, og hiin ædle Prinds Biscari hvis Skrift “viaggio per le antichità della Sicilia” er den bedste Haandbog jeg kjender, og hvis udmærkede personlige Egenskaber baade Baron Riedesel og Swinburne have rejst et værdigt Minde i deres Skrifter, har en nu levende Sønnesøn som ikkun er Arving af hans Formue, desværre ikke af hans Fortjenester. At kjende vel en Hest er denne unge



Fig. 8: View of Etna with the house of Mario Gemmellaro in the foreground. Acquatinta by G. Reeve 1824 (After: Etna, mito d'Europa, Catania 1997, 129).

and are not enriched properly. The first museum owes its origin in the previous century to a couple of well-deserved members of this order, whereas the present well-to-do and far too well-groomed brothers seem to have inclinations only to the good things of life. And that noble prince Biscari, whose book « viaggio per le antichità della Sicilia » is the best handbook I know, and to whose superior character both Baron Riedesel

Patriciers Videnskab og Bestræbelses højeste Formaal.”

31. A somewhat similar opinion, though of nobility in general, is found in Frederik Münter's letter (the 1st of July 1792) to his Syracusan friend Saverio Landolina [in Biblioteca Alagoniana, Siracusa]: "... principi siciliani che, come fanno pres'a poco tutti li principi del mondo, più si curano de' cavalli, cani e donne che di libri e d'antichità." Although Count de Forbin, Forbin 1823,

and Swinburne have raised a memorial in their writings, has a living grandson, who is only heir to his fortune, sadly not to his merits. To know a horse is apparently this young patrician's scholarship and the highest goal of his endeavour.”³¹

The collection created, primarily, by Prince Ignazio Paternò Castello di Biscari in the family palace in Catania, was one of the most splendid antiquarian col-

158-160, had a higher opinion of the young prince Biscari, he

had a low opinion of the nobility in Catania – “plus de don Basile que de conte Almaviva”. (In all fairness it ought, perhaps, to be pointed out that Brøndsted himself was very partial to horse riding, his favourite sport according to his biographer; he rode often in Copenhagen, and on a riding tour, June 1842, he fell off his horse, sustaining mortal injuries.)

lections in Italy of the time, and a great attraction for visitors in Sicily.³² It was visited by many travellers from northern Europe already from the middle of the 18th century; one of the more illustrious guests was Wolfgang Goethe. A catalogue of Biscari's collections had been written by the numismatist Domenico Sestini, and short descriptions of the museum and its ancient sculpture were included in contemporary books about Sicily – also in the *Nachrichten* by Frederik Münter.

Brøndsted mentions a visit to the Biscari collection, and he is appreciative of Ignazio Biscari's antiquarian investigations and of his guide to the antiquities of Sicily, the *Viaggio per tutte le antichità della Sicilia*, but we find no descriptions, no critical evaluations and no scholarly comments.

In fact, Brøndsted mentions no scholarly contacts during his sojourn in the two important cities of Syracuse and Catania. Both cities would have offered him plenty of opportunities to discuss local topographical and archaeological problems with well-informed antiquarians, an opportunity which had been so richly rewarding for Frederik Münter 30 years earlier.³³

But Etna impressed Brøndsted. After 10 hours, at times very hard walking, the highest part of the crater was reached – "... However, one can, apart from some difficult places, ride both the wood belt and the snow belt, right to the hut, most welcome for the exhausted traveller, which was put up at the foot of the highest part of the mountain and only one hour south of the crater itself. This house, which is perhaps the highest situated in Europe, is called *casa di Gemmellaro* after

the worthy and very knowledgeable *Mario Gemmellaro* (who lives in Nicolesi a sizeable village on the southern slope of Etna), who after many investigations knows this volcano better perhaps than any living being.³⁴ ... It is really profitable to take pains climbing this enormous chasm of fire, against which the Vesuvius is just a hill, and about which there has not been said too much, neither by ancestral nor living writers. I believe that the pinnacle of this mountain, seen at dawn on a cloudless sky, affords one of our globe's most imposing scenes. The first object which above all astonishes at sunrise, is the shadow cast by the 10,000 feet high mountainous height, at first seen as an enormous cone that rests with its point in the western Horizon, for subsequently to change form, as it shortens and rises, in accordance with the rise in the East of that mighty star that governs the surface of Etna, of the globe, and of so many other planets. The *second* object, which no less astonishes, is the enormous extent of the horizon, since two-thirds of this island, all the Liparian Islands, nearly all of Calabria and the extensive sea lie unfolded as on a map at the foot of the spectator. The volcano threw forth on the 7th of June columns of sulphurous smoke from the upper and largest crater and from numerous lower fire chasms, of which that opened last year, about 3 miles south east of the large crater, is at the present time the most interesting eruption point. If Etna is wondrous as a grandiose, natural phenomenon, the ancient theatre of Taormina, a day's journey northwards in the most enchanting location, offers a precious and noble delight, though of a wholly different kind. All of the coast road, from Jaci,

32. Pafumi 2006.

33. However, Brøndsted did pay a visit to Mario Landolina, the son of the deceased, prominent Syracusan antiquarian Saverio Landolina. This visit, and that of a number of other Danes in the

early 1820s, is mentioned by Mario Landolina in a letter to Frederik Münter, KB, NKS, 1698, 2°, IX.

34. For Mario Gemmellaro, his Etnean research and the house 3.000 m. above sea level see Salmeri 1997, 129-130.

past Taormina to Messina passes through a truly paradisiac country”.³⁵

Brøndsted found little of antiquarian interest in Messina, though he admired several splendid paintings of the Sicilian masters in private dwellings and churches, and after a brief sojourn he continued along the north coast of Sicily on foot and horseback, now on his own as Henry Long travelled to Naples from Messina. It was a difficult journey; as Brøndsted points out, none of the travellers, whose books he has read, Riedesel, Swinburne and Münter, had undertaken this route to Messina “... after carrying out what I had intended I travelled to Faro and Monte Peloro, the north eastern mountainous coast of Sicily, and further on to Milazzo, St Stephano, Tusa, Cefalù, Termine, etc. It is most strange that none of the modern travellers pass by

this singularly beautiful part of Sicily; however, the terrible state of the mountain road and the dangers of the numerous mountain streams, especially during winter and spring, about which the inhabitants have so many narratives, frighten off strangers. Although I had the use of a horse from morning till evening, I had to spend 6 days on this road, including the excursions I undertook to the interesting ruins of the old cities Tyn-daris,³⁶ Alosa³⁷ and Soluntum.³⁸ I had also planned to make an excursion from Milazzo³⁹ to the Liparian (previously the Aiolian) Island, but was prevented in this by the tiresome circumstance that recently a quarantine of 7 days is prescribed for anyone arriving from these islands to Sicily ...”⁴⁰

The route was arduous, not least the crossing of several rivers and torrents causing great difficulties, and

35. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, “Man kan imidlertid – enkelte meget slemme Steder undtagne – tilhøst bestige baade Skovregionen og Sneregionen, lige indtil den, for den udmattede yderst velkomne Hytte som for faa Aar siden blev Bygt ved selve den överste Bjergkoppes Fod og ikkun een Times sydlig for den store Crater. Man benævner dette Huus, som maaske er det höjst beliggende i Europa, *casa di Gemmellaro* efter den brave og meget kyndige *Mario Gemmellaro* (som boer i Nicolesi en anseelig Landsby paa Ætnas sydlige Afhang) som efter mange Aars undersøgelser kjender denne Vulcan bedre maaske end noget andet nulevende Menneske, ... Men det lønner tilvisse umagen at bestige dette enorme Ildsvælg, imod hvilket Vesuven ikkun er at anse som en Höj, og om hvilket ikke er sagt for meget hverken af Forfædrene eller af nogen nulevende Forfatter. Jeg mener vist at dette Bjergs Tinde, seet ved Solens Opgang paa skyfri Himmel, frembyder et af vor Jords meest imponante Skuespil. Den første Gjendstand som ved Solens Opgang især overrasker er det, 10.000 Fod over Havet ophøjede Bjergs *egen Skygge*, der först som en uhyrlig Kegel hviler med sin Spids i den vestlige Horizont og siden forandrer Skikkelse, forkorter og hæver sig, eftersom hiin mægtie Stjerne, der behersker Ætnas som hele Jordens og saa mange andre Planeters Overflade, hæver sig paa den östlige Himmel. Den *anden* Gjendstand som ej mindre forbavser, er Synkredsens umaadelige Omfang, da to Trediedele af denne store Ø, alle de Lipariske Øer, fast hele Calabrien og det vidtstrakte Hav ligger udbredt som et Kaart for den Beskuendes Fod. Vulcanen selv udkastede den 7de Junij ikkun Kolonner af Svolvrög fra den störste överste Crater iidelig, og nu og da fra de mangfoldigere lavere Ildsvælg, af hvilke den Munding som Vulcanen aabnede sig i fjor, omtrent 3

Miglier sydöstlig for den store Crater, er en af for nærværende Tid interessanteste Eruptionspunkter. Er Ætna herlig som grandióst Naturphænomen, da afgiver vist ogsaa gamle *Taormenias* [Taormina] antik-græske Theater, en Dagrejse nordligere, i den meest fortryllende Beliggenhed, höj og ædel Nydelse, skjönt af ganske forskjellig Art. Hele Kystvejen fra Jassy [Jaci Reale] af, over Taormenia, indtil Messina gaaer igjennem et i Sandhed paradisk Land.”

36. A Greek colony situated on the coast.

37. Alaisa, a little known ancient settlement near Tusa. It minted coins and was probably therefore known to Brøndsted.

38. A Phoenician colony near Palermo.

39. The Greek colony of Mylai.

40. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, “Efter at have udfört Hvad jeg her havde foresat mig at udrette, gik jeg til Faro og Monte Peloro (Siciliens nordöstlige Kystbjerger) og siden videre over Milazzo, St. Stephano, Tusa, Cefalu, Termini, etc, det er: den nordlige Kystvej hid til Palermo. Det er höjst besynderligt at slet Ingen af de moderne Rejsende besøger denne overordentlige skjønne Deel af Sicilien; men Bjergvejenes horrible Tilstand og de de hyppige Bjergstrømmes Farlighed, især om Vinteren og Foraaret, hvorom Indvaanerne fortælle saa meget, afskrækkede de Fremmede. Skjönt til Hest fra Morgen til Aften, maatte jeg dog henbringe 6 Dage paa denne Vej, iberegne de Udflugter jeg foretog til de mærkelige Ruiner af de gamle Byer Tyndaris, Alosa og Soluntum. Jeg havde ogsaa foresat mig at gjöre en Udflugt fra Milazzo til de Lipariske (fordum Æoliske) Øer, men hindredes heri ved den fatale Omstændighed at paa senere Tid en Quarantaine af 7 Dage er befalet for Enhver som kommer fra disse Øer til Sicilien.”

Brøndsted begs that – “those of His Sicilian Majesty’s ministers who are responsible for roads should, ‘point de tout, mal culottes’, be pulled over a couple of the worst fiumare – as warning and instruction – because I believe yet, notwithstanding all respect for Kant and his philosophy, that the conviction *a posteriori* at times is most beneficial.”⁴¹

Although the main routes joining the larger cities were often practicable for coaches and carriages, some roads, even between larger cities, were still in the early 19th century the so-called *trazzere* (*tratturi*), primitive country roads not suitable for carriage-traffic. Most sections of the routes joining Messina and Palermo, both the inland and the coastal routes, consisted of such *trazzere*.⁴² Johann Gotfried Seume also used this northern route on his walking tour of 1802, but he was a very experienced traveller having walked all the way to Sicily from Leipzig, as recounted in his renowned *Spaziergang nach Syrakus im Jahre 1802*. But even he found this trip the most laborious of his tour in Sicily, though, as he writes, it held its rewards. The difficulties, the strenuous mountain climbs, the dangerous crossings of swollen and rapid river torrents, the unhappy and complaining mule guides, and the wondrous landscapes, described so vividly in his book,⁴³ were experiences that were no different to those of Brøndsted 20 years later.

We are told in Brøndsted’s letters to Prince Christian Frederik and to Henry Long, that he took the trouble to look for other ancient sites, for instance Kale Akte, a Sikel, non-Greek settlement, which at the time had not been identified, but which he knew of from Herodotos

or Diodoros Sikulos, and Himera, the last Greek colony on the north coast near Termini, bordering on Phoenician territory. The ancient sites in this part of Sicily had, with a few exceptions,⁴⁴ not been described in any detail in scholarly works of the time, and it would have been most interesting to have had observations from the hand of Brøndsted. There can be little doubt that he had ambitions to investigate and analyse, as we gather from a letter to Henry Long,⁴⁵ where he enumerated the cities he had visited – “... Soluntum which I examined very well, are even of importance in ancient topography and history of this beautiful country.” The sites were undoubtedly investigated and not passed by, but unfortunately we have no notes or descriptions from his hand. On his journey lay also the splendid town of Cefalù, the site of ancient Kephaloí-dion, a little known Greek settlement of unknown status, but with a very interesting coinage. In the same letter to Long Brøndsted mentions that he made an acquisition here of 400 coins, which he later ceded to Prince Christian Frederik.

Palermo

After a few days stay in Palermo it was the intention of Brøndsted to travel south and west, and to the central parts of Sicily, to continue his study tour of modern and ancient sites – Calatafimi, Segesta,⁴⁶ Trapani, Eryx,⁴⁷ Marsala, Mazzara, Selinunte,⁴⁸ Girgenti⁴⁹, and from here across central Sicily to Enna,⁵⁰ with the intention of finally returning to Syracuse, where he wanted to undertake further archaeological studies, be-

41. Letter to Prince Christian Frederik from Brøndsted, Palermo the 5th of July 1820, “at et Par af h-s Sicilianske Majesæts Ministre som have Vejvæsenet under Opsigt, maatte point de tous, ou mal culotte’s, blive trukne over et Par af de værste Fiumarer – til Advarsel og Belærelse – thi jeg troer endnu, uagtet af Respect for Kant og hans *Philosophie*, at Overbevisning *a posteriori* stundom er meget gavnlig.”

42. For the Sicilian road system of the time and its negotiability see Santagatti 2006, esp. 11-12, n. 4.

43. Seume 1805, 271-279.

44. For instance Torremuzza 1753.

45. KB, NKS, 1578 2^o: P. O. Brøndsted, Brevkopibog, 1814-1825.

46. Elymian city with a singularly well preserved Doric temple.

47. Elymian city on the coast near Trapani with a famous temple of Aphrodite.

48. Selinous, Greek colony on the south coast with extensive urban remains.

49. Akragas, Greek colony on the south coast with extensive urban remains.

50. Greek / Sikel town in central Sicily.

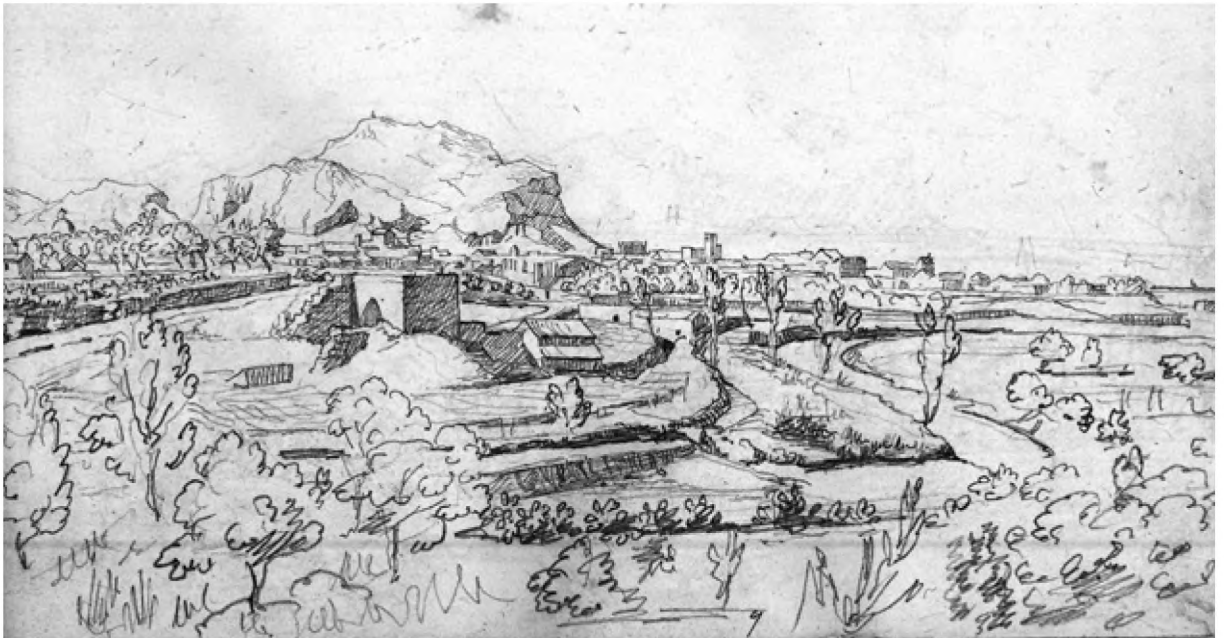


Fig. 9: View towards Palermo and Monte Pellegrino. Drawing by H.W. Bissen 1827. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Copenhagen, (BZ XVII, 31).

fore returning to Messina, via Modica, Noto⁵¹ and Bronte,⁵² setting sail from Messina to Naples.

Brøndsted prepared himself for the journey by frequenting the libraries of the city – “... this city has undoubtedly far greater scholarly resources than any other Sicilian town. The botanical garden and the astronomical observatory are fine establishments. The two libraries: that of the Jesuit College and that of the Senate, though not very rich, are indeed very serviceable; and a couple of miles from the city the splendid library and museum in the magnificent Benedictian monastery offers very helpful resources. I have never

seen a more beautiful, healthier or cleaner convent than St Martino. Though, as everything in life, it [San Martino] has its sunshine and its shadow, such is the situation here also ...”⁵³ Brøndsted has a digression about the lonely and futile life of the large number of sons of nobility in the convent. He finds their intellectual life wasted, which, with the economic costs (the yearly income of the convent is estimated at 80,000 piasters), is detrimental to the progress of the country. The splendour of San Martino had been described by Frederik Münter 30 years before. The convent, or rather magnificent palace, intended for sons of nobility

51. Historic baroque city near Syracuse.

52. Small town on the western slope of Etna, the seat of the duchy and domain given to Lord Horatio Nelson by the grateful Ferdinand III in 1799.

53. Letter to Niels Rosenkrantz from Brøndsted, Palermo the 9th of July 1820, indberetning nr. 18, “Ogsaa har denne Stad unægteligen langt større videnskabelige Ressourcer end nogen anden Siciliansk By. Den botaniske Have og det astronomiske

Observatorium ere gode Indretninger. De tvende Biblioteker : Jesuitercollegiets og Senatets ere vel ikke særdeles rige men dog meget brugbare; og et Par Miil fra Staden tilbyder det prægtige Benedictinerkloster St Martino's skjønnne Bibliotek og Museum meget gode Hjælpemidler. jeg har aldrig seet en skjønnere, sundere og reenligere Klosterbygning end St Martino. Men som enhver Ting i Livet ikke allene har sit Lys men og sin Skygge, saa gaar det ogsaa her”.

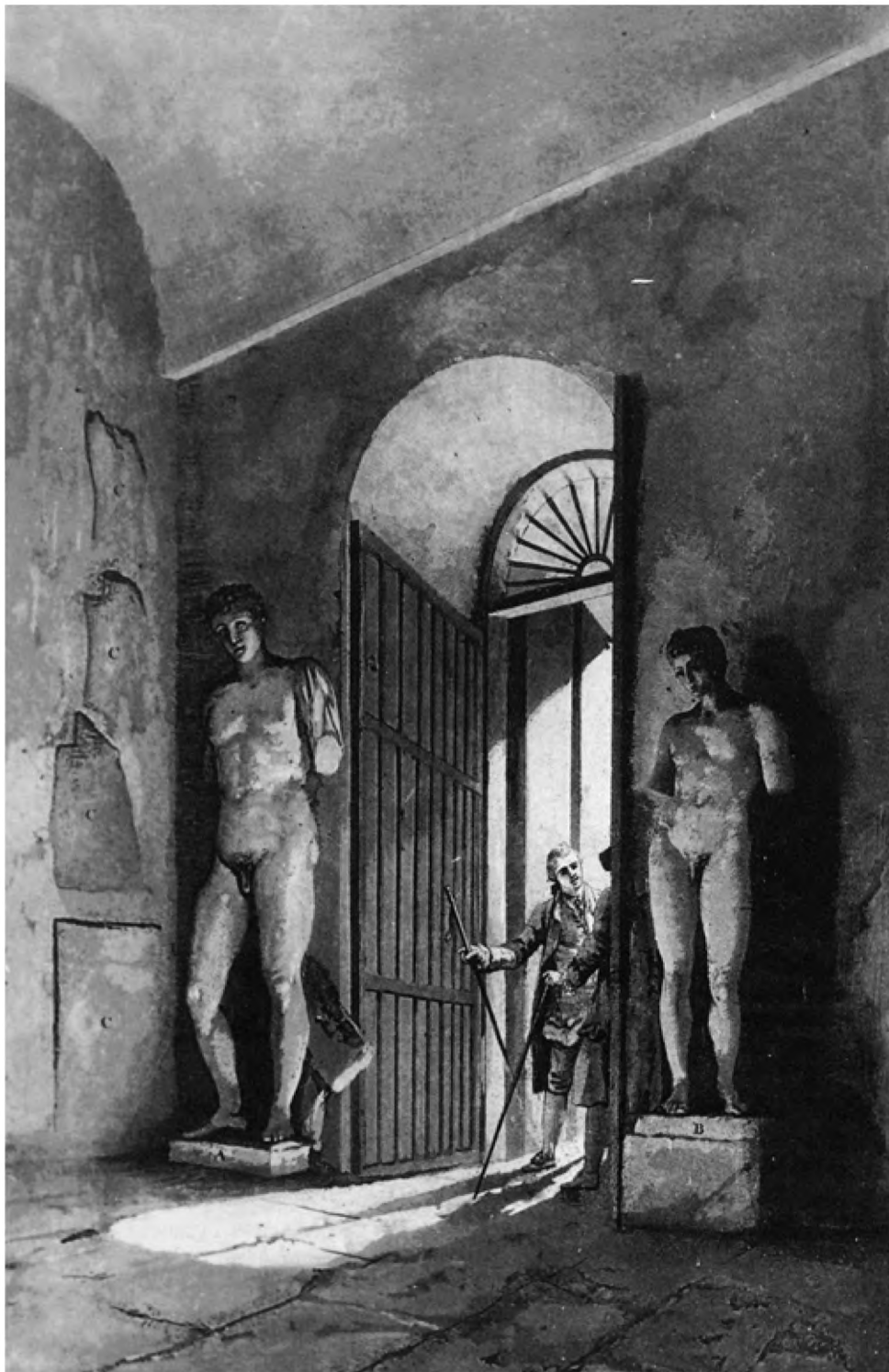


Fig. 10: Ancient sculpture in the courtyard of the Senate (Palazzo Senatorio), Palermo. Drawing by Jean Houel 1782.

destined for the monastic order, was not yet completed when visited by Münter, who suggested that another 30 years were needed to finish the structure, but we are not told whether it was completed when visited by Brøndsted. The contents of the museum, with its “Sicilian vases with Greek drawings” and its coin collection “in disarray”, were described by Münter, who also acknowledged the merits of the learned antiquarian, and prior of the convent, Salvatore Di Blasi.⁵⁴ However, Brøndsted has no antiquarian deliberations in regard to his visit.

Since the middle of the 18th century Palermo had been the centre of thriving antiquarian studies and had fostered for instance G. Lancilotto Castelli, Prince of Torremuza who on a scholarly basis had laid the groundwork of Sicilian numismatics, epigraphy and topography, S. Di Blasi, widely recognised for his Sicilian vase studies, and V. Amico e Statella the topographer, whose works *were* consulted by Brøndsted during his stay, as mentioned in his letter to Long (see above). The academies of the city had contacts with several of the more renowned academies of Europe, for instance that of Göttingen. At the time of Brøndsted’s visit new currents and initiatives were in the melting pot – there were archaeological investigations at Selinous and at Akragas (Girgenti), the archaeological museum in Palermo was soon to be inaugurated, and the German architect Jakob Ignaz Hittorf was soon to lay forth his seminal studies of the painted elements in Greek architecture.

Had the times been more fortunate for Brøndsted, he would, at least, have had the opportunity to profit from these currents of enlightenment, and perhaps even to have presented us with a study of Sicilian antiquities, which could have been not only an updated version of Münter’s *Nachrichten* but also an improvement. Brøndsted had, after all, the advantage of his experiences in Greece, with an insight into its ancient sites and monuments, which Münter had not had, and which, in fact, most of the Sicilian antiquarians at the

time had not either. But the sojourn in Palermo – and as a consequence the stay in Sicily – was sadly interrupted by the Palermo revolt of July 1820. The account of it given by Brøndsted in his letters to Lord Guildford, his friend Johan Gunder Adler, to Prince Christian Frederik and, above all, to the Privy Councillor Niels Rosencrantz are very readable, interesting and informative, they are vivid studies of a city in total disarray, if not dissolution. But this chapter of Brøndsted’s Sicilian journey cannot be treated here.⁵⁵

Epilogue

Although Brøndsted had broken off his visit to Sicily, he became involved in the affairs of the island shortly after his return to Napoli. Brøndsted had the year before met the young Danish architect Simon Christian Pontoppidan in Rome. Pontoppidan, a pupil of the Danish architect C.F. Hansen, had won the Academy gold medal in 1819 and had been the travel companion of Thorvaldsen during the artist’s return journey to Rome in 1820. After the obligatory studies in Rome he planned to continue his architectural studies in Sicily, and in this project he was strongly supported by Brøndsted. Apart from recommending the young architect in his letters to Prince Christian Frederik, Brøndsted gave him access to his private library, where Pontoppidan copied plans of Girgenti and Syracuse and drawings of Sicilian monuments. With the help of Brøndsted he was therefore well prepared for his tour in Sicily, where he carried out a number of measured elevations of theatres and temples. Tragically, Pontoppidan became ill during his sojourn in Sicily and died of fever in Naples the 25th of February 1822. Brøndsted had to undertake the sad task of returning his belongings, including the architectural drawings, to Copenhagen, where they today rest in the library of the Royal Academy.⁵⁶

At Girgenti, Pontoppidan drew a reconstruction of the mid-5th century BC temple of Zeus, the Olym-

54. Münter 1790, 209-212; for the history of the San Martino museum and the contributions by Salvatore Di Blasi see Abbate 2001, 165-176.

55. Cf. O.C. Schepelern and J. Isager in this book.

56. Fischer-Hansen 1990, 177-185; cf. Weilbach, VI, 455.

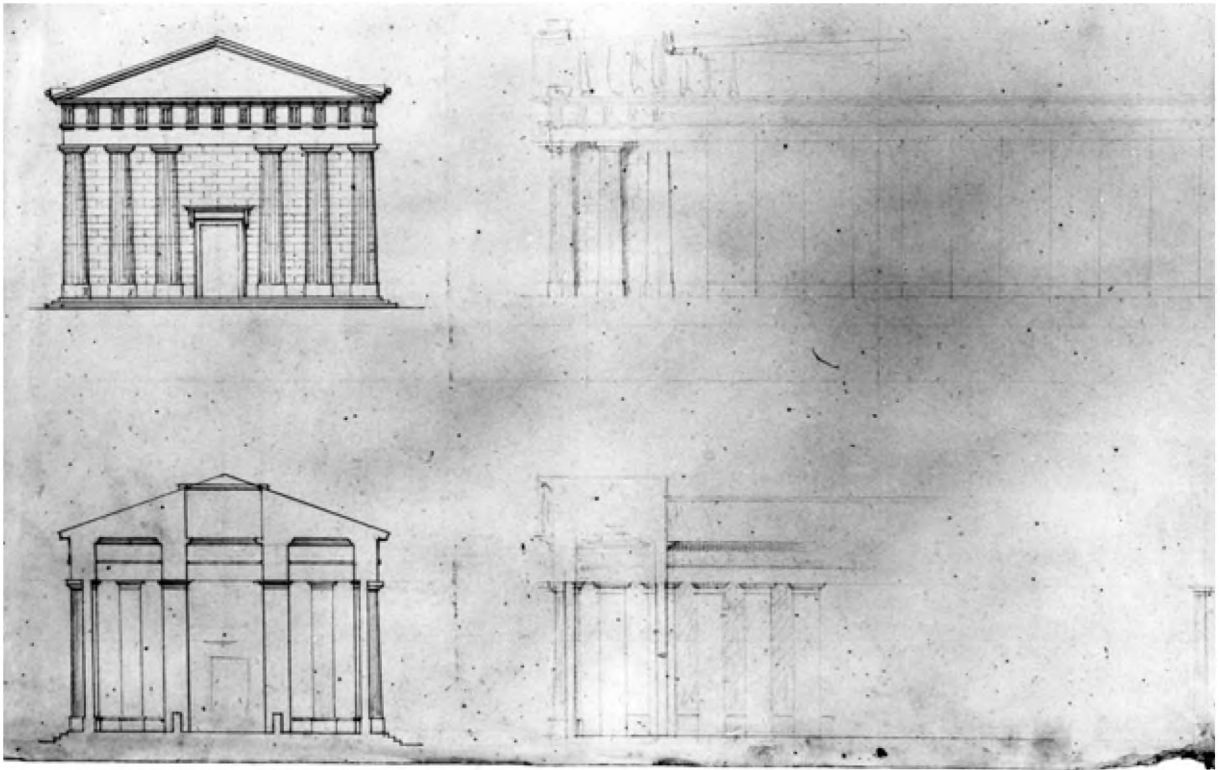


Fig. 11: Simon Christian Pontoppidan. Reconstruction of the Olympieion in Akragas. Royal Academy, Collection of Architectural Drawings. Copenhagen, (A3890A).

pieion. The ruins of the famous and enigmatic structure had at the time roused a marked interest and numerous controversies. Its structural parts are known from ancient sources,⁵⁷ and, as borne out also by its remains, it was an enormous structure with several unusual features, among these probably a cella open to the sky. A number of scholars had in the late 18th and early 19th century attempted reconstructions on the basis of the ruin itself and the ancient texts – for instance Winckelmann (without ever visiting Sicily), the Austrian Baron Haus on the basis of new investigations, the Girgentian scholar Raffaello Politi, the German ar-

chitect Leo von Klenze, who made an architectural study tour of the island in 1823, and – above all of special interest to Brøndsted – Charles Robert Cockerell, his friend and travel companion in Greece, who presented him with his monograph on the temple, *The Temple of Jupiter Olympius* 1830⁵⁸, with the dedication:

London Jan 9. 1831

From the author

*To his excellent Friend and Fellow
Traveller the Chevalier Brøndsted.*

57. Diodoros Sikulos 13.82.1-4; Polybios 9.27.9.

58. Cockerell 1830, the volume is in KB.

We know that Raffaello Politi corresponded with Brøndsted, and that he sent him books, but this correspondence seems to have been lost. Brøndsted probably followed these controversies concerning the reconstruction of the Olympieion in Akragas closely because he knew Cockerell so well.

Brøndsted did keep up an interest in Sicilian archaeology, as is apparent from his acquisition in Paris in

1828 of Hermann Reinganum's *Selinus und sein Gebiet*, 1827.⁵⁹ But the 1820s were above all the years when a new generation of Danish art historians and artists, such as N.L. Høyen and J.M. Thiele, and H.E. Freund and H.W. Bissen, the two latter with their German fellow travellers August Kopisch, Carl Rottman and Ernst Meyer, had Sicily with its ancient cities as their destination and inspiration.⁶⁰

59. Now in KB.

60. For the great number of Danish artists and architects, who visited Sicily in the years 1820-1830s see Christensen 1973.