

# Introduction

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This volume contains the proceedings of a symposium held at the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters on the 27<sup>th</sup> and the 28<sup>th</sup> of October, 2011, to mark the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia. The title of the symposium was *World views and local encounters in early scientific expeditions 1750-1850*, and the intention was to place the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia in a broad context of expeditions and scientific travels between 1750 and 1850, and to focus on the world views of the planners and members of the expeditions and their encounters with cultures and nature other than the European.

The symposium was part of a series of events in Denmark and in various places in the Middle East to celebrate the Danish expedition which in the eighteenth century was commonly known as the *Arabian Journey* (from Danish *Den Arabiske Rejse*, also translated as the *Arabian Voyage*) or the *Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia Felix*. Now, however, the expedition is inseparably connected with the name of Carsten Niebuhr,<sup>1</sup> the only survivor of the expedition and its principal chronicler, and it is therefore often referred to as *Carsten Niebuhr's expedition*. The members of the expedition departed from Copenhagen on the Danish naval vessel *Groenland* on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 1761, and that date was taken as the starting point for commemorative events during the entire year of the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary, with support from both the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Danish Ministry of Cultural Affairs, as well as a range of other cultural and academic institutions and funds.

However, although the *Arabian Journey* was one of the most important scientific expeditions in the era of eighteenth-century European scientific exploration and investigation, the reasons for all these celebra-

tions in 2011 were certainly not all academic. One of the motivations for the strong involvement of both the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs was a severe political crisis between Denmark and a number of countries in the Middle East, the so called “cartoon crisis”, which started in the autumn of 2005. In order to mitigate the mood of crisis and tension, which persisted even five years after it first appeared, it was planned that many activities to celebrate Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* during 2011 should take place in the capitals of a series of Near Eastern countries that had been visited by the expedition 250 years ago. In addition a complete translation into Arabic of Carsten Niebuhr's published travel accounts was contemplated at that time.

But due to the political developments in the Middle East, known as the “Arab Spring”, which began in December 2010 and developed into a wave of demonstrations, protests and political changes in the Arab world, many of the plans for commemorations in the Middle East had to be cancelled. In spite of this, the exhibitions, concerts and many other events that were to take place in Denmark were still carried out, including the symposium at the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters of which this volume represents the published proceedings.

The Organising Committee for the symposium consisted of a group of Danish scholars with strong interests in the culture, language, geography and natural history of the Middle East and in scientific expeditions of the eighteenth century: Professor, Fil. dr. et Dr. scient. Ib Friis, Natural History Museum of Denmark; Ph.D.-fellow Anne Haslund Hansen, the National Museum of Denmark; Associate Professor, Dr. phil. Michael Harbsmeier, Department of Culture and Identity, University of Roskilde; Ph.D. Brian Arly Jacobsen, Department of Cross-Cultural and Region-

1. Fig. 1.



Fig. 1. Carsten Niebuhr. Painted 1773 in Copenhagen by unknown artist on the occasion of Niebuhr's marriage in September 1773 with Christiane Sophie Blumenberg. The portrait is private property and it is here reproduced with permission from the owner. It was photographed for *Carsten Niebuhr Biblioteket*, Vol. 1 (Niebuhr 2003); the publishing house Vandkunsten has provided the image and mediated the permission to publish.

al Studies, University of Copenhagen; Ph.D. Philippe Provençal, Natural History Museum Aarhus; Leading librarian and Head of the Oriental Department Stig T. Rasmussen, the Royal Library, National Library of Denmark and Copenhagen University Library; Professor, Dr. phil. Jørgen Bæk Simonsen, and Professor, Dr. phil. Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen, both at the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen.

If the Danish expedition had been as well known in Germany as it is in Denmark, the celebrations might have been held a couple of years before the “cartoon crisis”, namely in the year 2003, and at the Academy of Sciences in Göttingen, rather than the Royal Danish

Academy of Sciences and Letters. The very idea of sending an expedition to Yemen saw the light of day in a speech at the Göttingen Academy delivered by Johann David Michaelis on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 1753.<sup>2</sup> Indeed in many ways the expedition was a Northern European project of the eighteenth-century enlightenment with its principal intellectual influences coming from Göttingen, Copenhagen and Uppsala, its sponsorship from Frederik V, the King of Denmark-Norway 1746-1766, and its leadership and administration from his ministers of state, J.H.E. v. Bernstorff and A.G. v. Moltke. However, the conceptual birth of the idea of the expedition passed unnoticed in 2003.

Nonetheless, in Denmark the year 2003 was significant for the memory of Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* because it was during this year that the first complete Danish translation of Niebuhr's famous account of the expedition, his three volume *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern* came out as the first volume of a series of books in what is called *Carsten Niebuhr Biblioteket* [the Carsten Niebuhr Library], which by now comprises at least 23 volumes concerning the Middle East and the Muslim world, including the first publication, in Danish, of the diary of another member of the expedition, the philologist F.C. von Haven.<sup>3</sup> Of course, even before

2. On that date Göttingen's *Akademie der Wissenschaften*, which had been founded in 1751, celebrated its anniversary. Michaelis was the Academy's first secretary; his post also involved editing and partly writing Academy publications, including *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen* (Michaelis 1793, pp. 43-44). In the issue of that journal from 17<sup>th</sup> November, 1753, 139. Stück, pp. 1241-1244, Michaelis gave a summary of his speech and outlined what should be required of expeditions to the Palestine and Arabia and what such expeditions could achieve. The proposal that such an expedition should be organised and financed from Denmark came only later. See more about the background for the *Arabian Journey* in Lawrence J. Baack's paper in this volume and in Ulrich Hübner, “Johann David Michaelis und die Arabien-Expedition”, in Wiesehöfer and Conermann (2002), pp. 363-402. A portrait of J.D. Michaelis from 1761 is reproduced with the article by Daniel Carey.

3. The three major volumes by Niebuhr now translated into Danish and available in the Carsten Niebuhr Library are:

2003, Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* had been the subject of a range of publications, meetings and exhibitions.

The first and very successful beginning of the renewed general interest in the Danish expedition to Arabia was marked by the publication in 1962 of Thorkild Hansen's novel *Det Lykkelige Arabien: En Dansk Ekspedition, 1761-67*, almost exactly 200 years after the departure of the ship *Groenland* from Copenhagen.<sup>4</sup> The novel, translated into a range of languages, including Arabic, is a kind of written documentary fiction and the book is, at least in Denmark and partly also in the English-speaking world, probably to a lesser degree in other language-areas, largely responsible for the fact that a surprising number of people have heard about Carsten Niebuhr and the tragic death of the other members of the expedition. But Thorkild Hansen's novel is also the source of much misinformation and the reason for the widely held misconception that the expedition was a complete and tragic failure – all its scientific collections lost, its other scientific results forgotten and the many sacrifices of its members made in vain. According to Thorkild Hansen nothing was left to remind us about the Danish expedition to *Arabia Felix*, except for the troubling storyline of his book.

Fortunately Thorkild Hansen's assessment, poetic license taken into consideration, has been recognized as not being accurate, and eventually his popularized presentation has been corrected. For example, Hansen probably got his first knowledge about the Royal Danish expedition by reading about the already previously acknowledged scientific importance of the still existing herbarium and work of the naturalist of



Fig 2. Peter Forsskål. Portrait painted in 1760 by P. Dahlman shortly before Forsskål left Sweden for Copenhagen and the Arabian Journey. The portrait is private property and preserved at Salnecke Manor, Uppland, Sweden. It was photographed for reproduction in *Tänkar om borgerliga friheten - Thoughts on Civil Liberty* (Forsskål 2009). Courtesy of the photographer, Julia Gyllenadler; the image has been communicated by David Goldberg, co-editor of Forsskål (2009).

the expedition, Peter Forsskål,<sup>5</sup> about whom specialised publications, mainly about Forsskål's botanical research, had been written in the first quarter of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup> And soon after Thorkild Hansen's novel appeared Danish scholars from natural history, but also from the humanities, began objecting to Hansen's negative view of the expedition's results and pointed out that although much had been lost, there were still important collections from the expedition in the main museums in Copenhagen, including the important natural history collections by Forsskål

Niebuhr (2003), Niebuhr (2004) and Niebuhr (2009). For the published diary of F.C. von Haven, see Haven (2005).

4. An English translation of Thorkild Hansen novel appeared in 1964, entitled *Arabia Felix: The Danish Expedition of 1761-1767*. Many other translations followed: a German translation in 1965, an Arab translation in 1983, a French translation in 1988, and a Dutch translation in 2005. For the titles of all these translations see Hansen (1962, 1964, 1965, 1983, 1988, 2005). Most translations seem to have appeared in several editions, and more translations in other languages may exist.

5. Fig. 2.

6. Christensen (1918; 1922); Schück (1923).

in *Statens Naturhistoriske Museum* [Natural History Museum of Denmark],<sup>7</sup> collections of archaeological and ethnological objects made by Niebuhr in *Nationalmuseet* [National Museum of Denmark], books and manuscripts collected by von Haven in *Det Kongelige Bibliotek* [Royal Library / Danish National Library],<sup>8</sup> documents in *Rigsarkivet* [the Danish State Archives]<sup>9</sup> and in the Library of the *Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel*,<sup>10</sup> as well as a wealth of valuable information and unique perspectives in Niebuhr's and Forsskål's publications.

Progressively the recognition of the expedition and appreciation of its cultural and scientific significance grew. This was marked in a number of ways. For example, Niebuhr's singular contribution to learning was acknowledged in 1982 when the University of Copenhagen opened *Carsten Niebuhr Institutet for Nærorientalske Oldtidskulturer* [The Carsten Niebuhr Institute for Ancient Near Eastern Studies], combining the disci-

plines of Egyptology, Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology. Then in 1992, the focus of the Institute was broadened to include linguistic scholars in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Hebrew, and the name was changed to simply *Carsten Niebuhr Institutet for Nærorientalske Studier* [The Carsten Niebuhr Institute for Near Eastern Studies].<sup>11</sup> Then pioneering exhibitions were held in Kiel and Copenhagen in 1986 and 1987, initiated by Stig T. Rasmussen, Leading Librarian and Head of the Oriental Department of *Det Kongelige Bibliotek*, together with Dieter Lohmeier, then Director of the *Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek* [State Library of Schleswig-Holstein]. The exhibitions were accompanied by a very useful exhibition catalogue,<sup>12</sup> which was soon followed in 1990 by the publication of a magnificent volume on the expedition in Danish, edited by Stig T. Rasmussen - *Den Arabiske Rejse 1761-1767. En dansk ekspedition set i videnskabshistorisk perspektiv*.<sup>13</sup> Reprinted in 1997, this book focussed on presenting the most important scholarly results of the expedition for a Danish-reading audience and was accompanied by beautifully reproduced illustrations from the expedition.

In 1994, the English botanist F. Nigel Hepper of the Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK, and his Danish colleague Ib Friis, published a book analysing the botanical results which Forsskål had collected on the *Arabian Journey*, with an Introductory Essay. The book was published in English under the title *The Plants of Pehr Forsskåls Flora Aegyptiaco-Arabica*.<sup>14</sup> Subsequently Carsten Niebuhr, in a very broad con-

7. Mainly the *Herbarium Forsskålii*, which can be searched on <http://plants.jstor.org/> with 'Collector:Forsskål'. Duplicate specimens of some of Forsskål's plant collections are located in the Botanical Museum of the University of Lund, the Herbarium of the Natural History Museum, London, and the Herbarium of the Christian-Albrechts Universität zu Kiel (*Herbarium Universitatis Kiliensis*). Forsskål's 'fish herbarium' is accessible on [http://www.zmuc.dk/verweb/peter\\_forsskaal/peter\\_forsskaal.html](http://www.zmuc.dk/verweb/peter_forsskaal/peter_forsskaal.html). A number of other preparations of animals from the expedition are also preserved with the zoological collections of the Museum; unfortunately all birdskins from the expedition were lost before reaching Denmark.

8. Examples of works that corrected Hansen's presentation with regard to the results of Forsskål's zoological studies on the *Arabian Journey* are e.g. Spärck (1963), Klausewitz and Nielsen (1965) and Wolff (1967).

9. The main parts of documents from the *Arabian Journey* are found in *Tyske Kancelli, Udenrigske Afdeling, Realia, Den Arabiske Rejse I-III, 1756-70 (pakke 3-003, 004 og 005), Reviderede regnskaber, Videnskabelige Institutioner m.m., Kaptajn C. Niebuhrs rejse 1760-67 and Håndskriftsamlingen, XV. Speciel personhistorie, Niebuhr-slægten (pakke 108)*. For other archival sources, see for example in Lawrence J. Baack's paper in this volume.

10. See digitized documents in *Nachlass Carsten Niebuhr, 314.3. Zur Reisebeschreibung gehörende Dokumente und Manuskriptfragmente sowie Vorarbeiten zur Veröffentlichung der Aufzeichnungen Forsskåls* - <http://dibiki.ub.uni-kiel.de/viewer/resolver?urn=urn:nbn:de:gv:8:2-1600225>

11. The development has since gone further. In 2004 *Carsten Niebuhr Institutet* and all other institutes or departments at the University of Copenhagen dealing with language, culture, religion and society in the world outside the majority-cultures of Western Europe and the United States of America merged to form *Institut for Tværkulturelle og Regionale Studier (TØRS)* [the Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies], with the staff of the former *Carsten Niebuhr Institute* forming a section.

12. Rasmussen (1986).

13. Rasmussen (1990). The English translation of this title is *The Arabian Journey 1761-1767. A Danish expedition seen in perspective of the history of science*, but a translation has never been published.

14. Hepper and Friis (1994).

text, was the subject of an interdisciplinary conference held in Eutin, Schleswig-Holstein in October 1999. The papers presented at the conference resulted in a substantial volume of proceedings, published in 2002 under the editorship of Josef Wiesehöfer and Stephan Conermann as *Carsten Niebuhr (1733-1815) und seine Zeit*.<sup>15</sup> Also Dieter Lohmeier published a series of significant, archivally based articles and essays on various aspects of the expedition in journals and books published in Denmark and Germany.<sup>16</sup> Finally, symbolic of the heightened awareness of the importance of the expedition, 2009 saw the naming of a newly established street in Copenhagen as the *Carsten Niebuhr Gade*. It joins appropriately the much older *Bernstorffsgade*, named for J.H.E. Bernstorff, the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs who together with Moltke, the Lord Chamberlain to Frederik V, played such a central role in the sponsorship and leadership of the expedition.

However, nearly all of these activities have been meetings, exhibitions or publications using the Danish or German languages. Comparatively little has been written in English about Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* in general, if we exclude the English translation of Thorkild Hansen's novel and a few specialist publications about the various academic fields covered by the expedition. For the English speaking world, the only readily accessible resources in that language remained two very old works. One is the biography, or rather really lengthy obituary, of Carsten Niebuhr by his, for quite different reasons very famous, son, the historian Barthold Georg Niebuhr. It appeared in English translation in 1835 in a series of biographies of prominent people, but it attracted little notice and seems to have served mainly as morally edifying reading for young people.<sup>17</sup> More importantly, an English translation of selected texts and with some redrawn illustrations from Niebuhr's publications about the *Arabian Journey* was produced

by the Scottish author and journalist Robert Heron, published in 1792 in Edinburgh. This book, issued in two volumes, has often been reprinted and is now freely available on the internet.<sup>18</sup>

Heron's corrupted translation and adaptation was not a good beginning for the reputation of Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* in the English-speaking world: Heron almost certainly made his translation from one of the shortened French translations that appeared in 1779 or 1780, not from the original German edition, and took great liberties in his rendering of Niebuhr's texts. The translation did not include all of Niebuhr's publications, only extracts from the first volume of the *Reisebeschreibung*, extracts from *Beschreibung von Arabien*, and the first pages of the second volume of the *Reisebeschreibung*, ending the account with Niebuhr in Bombay in 1764, three years before the end of the expedition, and claiming, in Heron's Preface, that Niebuhr only "remained in the East as soon ... till he could find a fit opportunity of returning safe into Europe, with the collection of curiosities which was left in his hands." Heron's edition systematically eliminated those passages which frequently distinguished Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* from other contemporary expeditions and travellers. To cite just one of many examples, Heron edited a passage from Niebuhr's text describing an experience in the Nile delta as follows. It reads:

Near a village of the Delta, an honest peasant paid great attention to my operations, as I was taking different angles. To shew him something curious, I made him look through the same glass. He was greatly alarmed to see the village, to which he belonged, standing upside down. My servant told him, that Government were offended with that village, and had sent me to destroy it. He instantly intreated me to wait but a few moments, that he might have time to save his wife and his cow. He then ran in great haste towards his house; and I went again on board my boat.<sup>19</sup>

15. Wiesehöfer and Conermann (2002).

16. Lohmeier (2008, 2010a, 2010b, 2011); Lohmeier and Rasmussen (2011).

17. Niebuhr (1835).

18. Niebuhr (1792). Digital facsimile edition by Google available on <http://books.google.dk/books?id=5P8vAAAAAYAAJ>

19. Niebuhr (1792), p. 39.

Here the translation stops, whereas Niebuhr continues with the following contextual observation:

One therefore should not be surprised that the Muslims get suspicious about such observations, since one also not too long ago has found enough Europeans who took everything, which they could not understand immediately, for sorcery.<sup>20</sup>

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Heron was busy indeed when working on this abbreviated translation of Niebuhr.<sup>21</sup> “Borne down by drink and debt, he was thrown into prison by his creditors”, but despite these difficulties, 1792 was, the *Dictionary* continues, the best of his years with regard to his output of printed matter, since in addition to reformulating and translating Niebuhr’s publications, he also managed to publish a translation of Jacques Cazotte’s *Mille et une fadaïses, Contes a dormir debout* as simply *Arabian Tales*. Then in addition he wrote a book called *Elegant Extracts of Natural History*, a whole volume entitled *Observations Made in a journey through the Western Counties of Scotland in 1792* (still an account of interest according to the *Dictionary*), and at the same time worked on a major study, namely his *History of Scotland*, which soon came out in six volumes from 1794-1799. After making progress on some of these projects he was freed from prison on the condition that two-thirds of his remuneration for the books would go to his creditors. In short, there was not much time for great attention to crafting a reliable, accurate translation of Niebuhr’s works. Moreover, in Heron’s English translation Niebuhr’s illustrations did not fare any better than the text, as we learn in this volume from Anne Haslund Hansen’s analysis of the illustrations in Niebuhr’s *Beschreibung von Arabien*, the three volumes of the *Reisebeschreibung* and Heron’s version. Thus both the quantity and quality of the sources in English on the expedi-

tion to *Arabia Felix* are deficient and raise a variety of issues.

This symposium is an appropriate opportunity to enhance understanding of the significance of Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian journey* in the English speaking world. Real change in Anglophones’ view of Carsten Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* will surely come about with the appearance of Lawrence J. Baack’s forthcoming book-sized study of the planning and carrying out of the Danish expedition and of its results and scientific importance. We are all looking forward to this book to be entitled *Undying Curiosity: Carsten Niebuhr and the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia, 1761-1767*. Meanwhile, we hope that the present volume will provide a useful complement to Lawrence J. Baack’s book and throw a light on the expedition which is decidedly different from that of Heron’s presentation of both Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey*. The symposium has also been an opportunity to look at scientific expeditions in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> and first half of nineteenth century in general and place the *Arabian Journey* in that wider context.<sup>22</sup>

The *Arabian Journey* had in fact a precursor: a Danish expedition to Egypt and Nubia, undertaken by the Danish naval officer Frederik Ludvig Norden in 1737-1738. Although the results of this expedition were published in French, English and German in the eighteenth century, and, in 2010, in a magnificently produced Danish translation, this expedition is prob-

20. Niebuhr (1774), p. 50: ‘Man darf sich eben nicht sehr verwundern, dass die Mohammedaner über dergleichen Beobachtungen argwöhnisch werden, da man nicht vor langer Zeit auch noch Europäer genug gefunden hat, die alles für Zauberey hielten, was sie nicht gleich begreifen konnten.’

21. Henderson (2004).

22. Also neglected aspects of the work of Peter Forsskål, his publications on politics and civil liberty, are now subject to new awareness in the English speaking world and elsewhere. Already during his studies with Michaelis in Göttingen Forsskål was exceptionally outspoken in matters relating to politics and liberty (Michaelis 1793, pp. 64-66). Forsskål’s publication on civil liberty and the freedom of speech (Forsskål 1759) was banned in Sweden immediately after its publication; this ban was undoubtedly an important reason why Forsskål decided to accept the post as member of the *Arabian Journey*. Forsskål’s original Swedish text was republished in 2009, together with an English translation (Forsskål 2009) and translations into French, German, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Turkish, Russian, Hebrew, Arabic and Chinese have been made available on the World Wide Web (<http://www.peterforsskal.com/thetext-ma.html>).

ably even less known in the English-speaking world than the *Arabian Journey*.<sup>23</sup> Norden's expedition is not given a full treatment in any paper in this symposium, and its achievements and relation to the *Arabian Journey* are therefore briefly summarised here. Initially Norden's *voyage* was not a scientific expedition. The Danish King Christian VI sent Norden to Egypt together with a French count, Pierre Josef le Roux d'Esneval and a small party. D'Esneval had convinced the King that commercial links between Denmark and Ethiopia (Abyssinia) would be profitable and that such links could best be established by sending a Danish mission along the Nile and the Blue Nile to the Abyssinian Emperor. Norden, who was a competent draughtsman and had acquired a profound knowledge of art, architecture and ancient history during travels in the Netherlands, France and Italy, was the official representative of the King on the expedition.

The party landed at Alexandria, where Norden, like Niebuhr did later, drew and measured the Column of Pompey and the obelisk of Cleopatra. Near Cairo, he also, like Niebuhr did later, studied and drew the great pyramid complexes at Giza: the pyramids of Cheops, Chephren and Mycerinus, the Great Sphinx and one of the smaller pyramids. The party continued up the Nile by boat. In spite of difficulties with getting ashore, Norden drew the old pyramids at Meidum and Dashur, drew and mapped monuments

at Karnak, Luxor and Thebes, including the Memnon Colossi and the Ramesseum, as well as the temples at Philae. After changing boat at Aswan and the First Cataract, the party continued up the Nile for about 200 km, as far as the Nubian village of al-Dirr near the Second Cataract. Hostility of the people along the river made further progress impossible, and the plan of reaching Abyssinia along the Blue Nile had to be abandoned. In Nubia Norden was the first to make scholarly observations and to draw the ancient ruins. Returned to Denmark, Norden was asked by Christian VI to prepare his manuscripts and drawings from the journey for publication. Norden began drafting the text in French and found an artist to etch the plates, but died in Paris in 1742 with the work unfinished. In 1746 Christian VI died and was succeeded by Frederik V. The new King entrusted the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, founded by Christian VI in 1742, to publish Norden's work. This resulted in 1755 in two volumes in folio, *Voyage d'Égypte et de Nubie*, with 159 plates of Egyptian monuments, contemporary topography and technology.

Norden's meticulously executed drawings of Egyptian monuments won almost immediately approval, and the success of Norden's voyage was undoubtedly of importance for the *Arabian Journey*. The liberality with which Christian VI had sponsored Norden's expedition to Egypt and how, afterwards, Frederik V and the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters had supported the publication of Norden's work inspired Michaelis when he asked the Danish government to support further studies in the Orient. In a letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> of May, 1756,<sup>24</sup> nearly a year after the publication of Norden's *Voyage*, Michaelis applied to the Danish minister, J.H.E. Bernstorff, asking for support for two of his students, a certain Strøm from Norway and F.C. von Haven from Denmark, to allow them to study Arabic in preparation for further travels to the Arab world. Michaelis argued that knowledge of Arabic was essential for scholarly travellers in the East, and even Norden's *Voyage* contained errors caused by Norden's lack of proficien-

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23. The first edition of Norden's *Voyage* (Norden 1755) was in large folio with 159 copper plates based on Norden's own drawings. A complete and commented translation into English with the original copper plates (Norden 1757) was published shortly after. About 20 years later the English edition was translated into German (Norden 1779), and about 40 years later an enlarged and commented French edition (Norden 1795-1798) was published in quarto. Abbreviated versions with few or no plates have also been published (see Lomholt 1960, pp. 95-100). Several works analyze Norden's voyage and travel account and drawings in considerable detail: Lomholt (1960, 1961), Kjølsten (1965), Buhl, Dal & Holck Colding (1986) and an introduction to a new Danish translation of Norden's work (Norden 2010). Norden's original drawings from the journey were published and commented by Buhl (1993).

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24. The letter is here cited from Christensen (1918), p. 2.

cy in that language. More letters were quickly exchanged between Michaelis and Bernstorff, and by the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August Michaelis had drafted preliminary instructions for a scholar to be sent to *Arabia Felix*.<sup>25</sup> § 5 of this preliminary instruction discussed Oriental place names, which should be recorded with Arab characters, as in Norden's work. In § 14 and 15 in the same draft Michaelis pointed out how cheaply one could travel in the Orient and flattered the King: "How much did Norden's voyage cost? What an excellent present to science from the nation of Denmark. I have read the reviews ... But I expect new and useful result from a voyage to *Arabia Felix*, and I expect these results will undoubtedly exceed the result of that beautiful travel account [Norden's *Voyage*]." The final Royal Instruction does not mention Norden, but it is highly likely that § 10 – about how the travellers should behave when dealing with the local population – is inspired by Norden's experiences,<sup>26</sup> for example that travellers should follow local tradition with regard to clothing, avoid all quarrels with Arab and Turkish men and any amorous approaches to Arab women.<sup>27</sup> In § 29 of the final Royal Instruction Niebuhr is, as in Michaelis's first draft, requested to record Oriental place names with Arab characters.

25. The letter is reprinted in Michaelis (1794-1796), no. 82.

26. See Paul John Frandsen's introduction to Norden (2010), p. XLIV. Norden's advice to future travelers can be found in Norden (1755), pp. 39-44.

27. The idea that European travellers should avoid offence by wearing local style clothes and behave in agreement with the local norms became well established the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Like Niebuhr, who sometimes travelled under the names of Kawâdja Abdallah or Abdallah Aqa, the Swiss Orientalist Johann Ludwig Burckhardt (1784-1817) adopted the identity of Sheikh Ibrahim Ibn Abdallah and travelled 1809-1817 in Syria, Egypt, Nubia and Arabia (Hallett 1965, pp. 366-378). The British explorer Richard Burton (1821-1890) in 1853, familiar with the customs and behaviour of Muslims and dressed like a Muslim pilgrim, made the first hajj to Mecca known to have been completed by a European (Burton 1855-1856). But in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the considerate and careful approach of Niebuhr and Forsskål in their encounters with local people was new or at least not common, and Niebuhr and Forsskål's methods in acquiring local knowledge seem to mark a new departure for the study of foreign cultures and their interaction with nature.

That Norden's *Voyage* was in some ways considered a model for the *Arabian Journey* is also notable in the writings by Niebuhr and von Haven about Egypt. Niebuhr mentions Norden's observations rather frequently in the parts of the *Reisebeschreibung* that dealt with Egypt, and sometimes Niebuhr used Norden's work as a standard for his own. Although Norden had provided a good drawing of the Column of Pompey in Alexandria there were still doubts about its exact height, and Niebuhr therefore made precise observations of this. Niebuhr pointed out that he made detailed maps of the Nile Delta because such a map was lacking in Norden's work, but also stressed: "I do not believe that any of the many visitors to Egypt has produced as reliable maps of the country as P. Sicard<sup>28</sup> and Captain Norden, and neither of these had the opportunity to test their maps with astronomical observations." Both Niebuhr and von Haven commented positively on the reliability of Norden's drawings and maps of ancient monuments and contemporary Egyptian topography.<sup>29</sup>

Norden's main achievements are his insightful observations and drawings of ancient Egyptian monuments and contemporary towns and his carefully done sketch maps of the Nile from Cairo to al-Dirr, represented on 29 partial maps with indication of all villages and ancient ruins he saw, as well as two overview maps. Niebuhr did not specifically mention Norden's drawings of water-lifting implements, boats, sophisticated incubators for eggs and other agricultural machinery, but also Niebuhr's *Reisebeschreibung* contains detailed studies of such technologies, most likely inspired by Norden. Unlike the archaeological and topographic observations, Norden's observations on natural history were restricted and not in any way comparable with Forsskål's research during the *Arabian Journey*. Norden identified the ibis of classical authors with the bird he called "Pharaoh's Chicken."<sup>30</sup>

28. Père Claude Siccard (1677-1726), a French Jesuit who lived and travelled in Egypt from 1712 to his death.

29. See for example Niebuhr (1774), pp. 48, 60, 70, 99, 115 and 124; Haven (2005), pp. 236-237, 258, 282, 306, 310 and 311.

30. On Plate 33 and in the text it is also called 'Pouille de

Fig. 3. Frontispiece for F.L. Norden's *Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie*, published 1755 by the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters. The frontispiece was designed and etched after Norden's death by Marcus Tuscher under the auspices of members of the Academy. Reproduced from a copy in the possession of the Academy.



*Frontispiece of Norden's Voyage d'Egypte et de Nubie, par M. Norden, Londres, 1755.*



Fig. 4. Title vignette of Carsten Niebuhr's *Beschreibung von Arabien* (Niebuhr 1772), reused for the two volumes of his *Resebschreibung* (Niebuhr 1774-1778) that appeared during his lifetime. The signatures (not reproduced here) include the initials of the designer, "I.W. inv.", which must stand for the sculptor Johannes Wiedewelt, while "I. F. Clemens Sculp." shows that the etching was done by the engraver Johan Frederik Clemens. From the title page of the first volume of *Resebschreibung*, as rendered in Carsten Niebuhr Biblioteket, Vol. 1 (Niebuhr 2003).

He drew a praying mantis (*Miomantis* sp.) and an unidentifiable mosquito (both in Plate 32), a number of cultivated plants (a banana and a cypress in Plate 33, the ornamental tree *Cassia fistula* from India in Plate 54, the sycamore-fig (*Ficus sycomorus*) in Plate 38) and a native plant from Nubia, called *oschar* (*Calotropis procera*) in Plate 59. Forsskål's publications from the *Arabian Journey* do not mention Norden's observations of Egyptian fauna and flora.

Differences between Norden's *Voyage* and Niebuhr's and Forsskål's publications can be illustrated by a comparison of the frontispiece of Norden's *Voy-*

*age*<sup>31</sup> with the title vignette of Niebuhr's publications.<sup>32</sup> The frontispiece in Norden's *Voyage* is a grand emblematic representation of Egyptian antiquities with references to antique mythology and classical authors: Danish scholarship is personified by the central figure, Pallas Athene, carrying a staff with the Greek letters XP (for Christ) instead of her spear. Standing under the winged goddess Fama, wearing a regal ermine-lined cloak and with a male lion holding the Danish coat of arms, she points towards Egyptian an-

31. Fig. 3.

32. Fig. 4.

tiquities and a woman, who is a personification of ancient Egypt. Some of the antiquities are derived from Norden's drawings, such as the Canopic jar from Plate 55 and, in the remote background, the Memnon Colossi from Norden's Plate 110. In the foreground rests a man, personification of the Nile, with an oar or a rudder. The representations of animals refer to classical legends about Egypt. The bird eating a snake in the foreground is an ibis; according to Herodotus' *Histories* (Book 2, Chapter 75) the ibis is a useful bird that eats snakes, particularly winged snakes that come flying to Egypt from Arabia. The biological fact is that all species of ibis have long, down-curved bills used for feeding on crustaceans and insect larvae in mud or shallow water. The bird in front of the crocodile in the foreground represents a "trochilus", a legendary Egyptian bird, which, according to Herodotus (*Histories*, Book 2, Chapter 68), is supposed to fly into the mouth of a crocodile and feed on scraps of food and leeches. This legend has later been associated with the Egyptian plover (*Pluvianus aegyptius*), a bird sometimes seen near crocodiles on river banks, but the story about birds cleaning the mouth of crocodiles is now considered legendary. The representations of Egyptian plants are more realistic, apart from the date palms to the left in the frontispiece, the fruits of which look more like coconuts than dates. Behind the obelisk one sees the leaves of a banana, and the plant in front of the ibis is the *oschar* (*Calotropis procera*) of Plate 59.<sup>33</sup> It is as if the designer of the frontispiece has wanted to make up for the scanty observations on natural history by adding references to anecdotes from Herodotus. Norden's text does not contain these legendary references; the frontispiece was designed and etched by the German artist Marcus Tuscher under instruction of members of the Danish Academy.<sup>34</sup>

33. This wild plant was already observed by Prospero Alpini, who saw it near Alexandria and illustrated it as *Beid el sar* (Alpini 1592, Plate 86).

34. Lomholt (1960), pp. 75-97, 100, describes how production of copper plates, printing and publication of Norden's *Voyage*, and subsequently sale of the copper plates to English publishers, was discussed in plenary meetings of the Academy

Niebuhr's smaller title vignette<sup>35</sup> is also emblematic, but quite unpretentious in comparison with the frontispiece for Norden's *Voyage*. The two women in Niebuhr's vignette impersonate scholarly activities, but do not agree with any of the classical nine Muses. The woman to the left does not hold a celestial globe, the usual attribute of Urania, Muse for Astronomy, but a ruler and a compass used for measuring a distance on a globe representing the Earth. On the globe one can see the Arabian Peninsula and the word *Asia*. The woman to the right holds what seems to be a telescope and has a crown of stars; apparently she represents astronomical observations. The title vignette is a simple, decorative element in the book; it has classical allusions, but refers only to scientific observations on the *Arabian Journey*. There are only 17 years between the publication of Norden's *Voyage* and Niebuhr's first book about the *Arabian Journey*. Although the Danish Academy and Niebuhr had unequal financial capacity, yet the difference between the publications resulting from the two important Danish expeditions to the Orient seems also to demonstrate a striking change in attitudes to scholarship over short time.

As intended, the proceedings in this volume cover a wide array of topics, ranging geographically from Siberia via the Middle East and the Red Sea to Hawaii, and chronologically from the *longue durée* of apodemics (*i.e.* instructions about or manuals in the art and science of travelling) and the scientific instructions from the late sixteenth century onwards to some of the last *polyhistor*s travelling in Arabia and Abyssinia, keenly interested in natural history, archaeology and old manuscripts. Neither the symposium, nor these proceedings contain comprehensive treatments of all parts of the *Arabian Journey*, let alone touch upon a majority of early scientific expeditions between 1750 and 1850. Some readers may miss treatments of Carsten Niebuhr's studies in India, his observations on his long journey home through the countries that

during the years 1747-1757. See also Lomholt (1960), pp. 85-87 and Paul Johan Frandsen's introduction to Norden (2010), pp. XLIV-XLVI.

35. Fig. 4.

are now Oman, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Cyprus, Palestine, Turkey and Eastern Europe or a discussion of his careful studies of the cuneiform writing in the ruins of Persepolis. However, systematic evaluations of Niebuhr's observations in all parts of the *Arabian Journey* have been published previously in the proceedings by Wieschöfer and Conermann from the Eutin symposium in 1999.<sup>36</sup>

Also missing in these proceedings are treatments of many other important expeditions in the period 1750-1850. The great British and French naval expeditions to the Pacific are only marginally touched upon here: the French global circumnavigation in 1766-1769, led by Louis Antoine de Bougainville, and the three circumnavigations lead by James Cook, in 1768-1771, in 1772-1775 and in 1776-1779. These expeditions combined mapping of uncharted land and islands in the Pacific with a variety of other observations and scientific studies, and they involved encounters with people that had never met Europeans before. Cook's first expedition observed a passage of Venus from Tahiti and explored the coasts of New Zealand and the eastern coast of Australia.<sup>37</sup> Cook's second expedition explored the southern part of the Pacific via visits to Tahiti and New Zealand, continuing southwards until the expedition nearly touched Antarctica at 70° 10' S, followed by landing on hitherto unknown islands in the western Pacific, including the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu) and New Caledonia.<sup>38</sup> Cook's third expedi-

tion focussed on the northern Pacific where, in January 1778, the expedition came to the Hawaiian Islands, hitherto not marked on European maps,<sup>39</sup> and made the first contacts with the Hawaiians. From Hawaii the expedition continued as far north as 70° 30' N in present-day Alaska and thereby crossed the route followed in 1841 by Bering.<sup>40</sup> During a second visit to Hawaii in February 1779 violent conflicts broke out between members of the expedition and local inhabitant and Cook was killed in a confrontation at Kealakekua Bay on the west coast of Hawaii.<sup>41</sup> Other important naval expeditions went to the western coast of North America and the Arctic during this period, including the expedition lead by Gorge Vancouver in the years 1791-1795. It was again a global circumnavigation, but the main task was to continue Cook's exploration of western coast of North America. British expeditions in 1818 and 1829-1833, lead by William Edward Parry and John Ross, went to Baffin Bay, between Greenland and Canada, and continued along the northern coast of North America, hoping to find a connection between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. In 1818 John Ross made the first contact with

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interactions between expedition members and local population are not found in the illustrations from the *Arabian Journey*, where members of the expedition are observers, as shown in the illustration *Kriegsübungen der Araber in Yemen* (Fig. 2 in Anne Haslund Hansen's article). A drawing in pen and watercolours by John Webber, artist on Cook's third expedition, is entitled *A Human Sacrifice at Otaheiti* [Tahiti] and shows the ceremony at Attahouroo [Utuaimahurau] on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 1777, after the sacrificed man has been killed. (British Library Add.Ms 15513f.16). Cook and one of his officers are witnesses, as are the three members of the Danish expedition in *Kriegsübungen*.

39. Fig. 5 shows a map of the world that was widely circulating at that time (Prinald 1766). The map reflects the knowledge of the world by the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, including the parts of the Aleutian Islands ("Land discovered in 1741") and the part of Alaska ("Discovered in 1741") that were discovered during Bering's second expedition. The Hawaiian Islands are not indicated; they were, as mentioned, discovered by Captain Cook only in 1778.

40. See paper by Peter Ulf Møller in this volume.

41. Liebersohn's article in this volume illustrates the development only 40-50 years after the first meeting between the Hawaiian population and Cook's expedition.

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36. In Wieschöfer and Conermann (2002): Egypt (Lucian Reinfandt, pp. 105-120), Sinai (Detlev Kraack, pp. 121-154), Yemen (Friedheim Hartwig, pp. 155-202), Indian antiquities (Martin Brandtner, 203-266), contemporary Iran (Birgit Hoffmann, 287-300), Constantinople and the Ottoman Empire (Gottfried Hagen, pp. 301-324).

37. The literature on the 18<sup>th</sup> century Pacific voyages is enormous and includes much that does not represent scholarly research. Recent overviews of Cook's expeditions are Rigby and Merwe (2002) and Thomas (2003).

38. An illustration from Cook's second expedition by the artist William Hodge, *The Landing at Erramanga, one of the New Hebrides*, has been reproduced as Fig. 12 in Anne Haslund Hansen's article in this volume. Members of Cook's expedition escape by boat from a party of local inhabitants on the shore of the island of Erromango, now part of Vanuatu. Such dramatic



Fig. 5. Prinald's map of the world from 1766: *A New Map of the World, on Mercators Projection*. Engraved by the King's authority for the *New Geographical Dictionary* (Prinald 1766). Hand coloured version; original size 18 x 27 cm. A digital image of this version of Prinald's map was provided by the owner, the Special Collections of the University of Texas at Arlington Library, Arlington, Texas, and it is reproduced here with permission [00387, 126/10].

the extremely isolated Polar Eskimos, the Inughuit, at Cape York on the north-west coast of Greenland.

At the beginning of the period dealt with here the main coastlines of the continents had become quite well known, with the exception of the coasts and islands of the Pacific and the Polar regions that were the subject of Bougainville's, Cook's, Vancouver's, Parry's and Ross' naval expeditions. Yet the academic knowledge remained limited about the natural history and the detailed geography of the interior of continents other than Europe, as well as the scholarly understanding of foreign cultures, both ancient and contemporary. After the beginning of the nineteenth century major expeditions went increasingly over

land, like the *Arabian Journey*, for example Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's expedition across the North American continent in 1804-1806, or Alexander von Humboldt's extensive travels and scientific observations in South America during the years 1799-1804. Gradually the focus of exploration changed from sea voyages aimed at discovering new routes of navigation or trade, new islands, or indeed new continents, to travels into the interior of continents. Travel over land meant that the travellers had more frequent and sustained encounters with local populations and other travellers.

In the first planning stages the symposium had a slightly different working title, *Local encounters and reli-*

*gious reflections in Early Scientific Expeditions*. The subsequent title of the symposium, *World Views and Local Encounters in Early Scientific Expeditions 1750-1850*, indicated a wish to bring together a number of scholars to look at early scientific expeditions in a wider perspective, religious and secular. However, as the planning of the symposium and the proceedings progressed the Committee realised that focussing more on Niebuhr and the *Arabian Journey* would be necessary, and the title of the proceedings has therefore finally become: *Early Scientific Expeditions and Local Encounters – New Perspectives on Carsten Niebuhr and The Arabian Journey*. A majority of the papers in this volume have focus on the *Arabian Journey* and other expeditions to the area around the Red Sea. The sequence of the papers mainly reflects the chronology of the expeditions.

Daniel Carey's contribution sets the work of Niebuhr and Forsskål in a *long durée* of attempts, from the late sixteenth to the eighteenth century, to organize scientific travel and expeditions in order to promote and regulate observation, and to make travelling more scientifically productive by formulating questions to be addressed during the travels. Over this same period an extensive literature of instruction and advice also appeared, beginning in the sixteenth century with the Humanist intervention to reform travel in the 1570s, together with the instructions issued by trading companies for a variety of voyages. These efforts took on a new impetus under the auspices of the Royal Society in the 1660s as it formulated inquiries for different countries and supplied more general advice on what to observe for travellers and mariners. Viewed from this perspective, the extensive guidelines and questions devised by Johann David Michaelis and his colleagues for the *Arabian Journey* represent the culmination and synthesis of long standing attempts to make travel productive of new knowledge.

Peter Ulf Møller's contribution makes the comparison between Vitus Bering's Russian Kamchatka Expeditions (1725-30 and 1733-43) and the *Arabian Journey*, attempting to identify some similarities, but also to set off the uniqueness of the two Russian expeditions. The title of the paper, *Long Transit to the Unknown*, points to characteristic features of the two Russian

expeditions: the fact that the duration of the famous sea voyages in the North Pacific Ocean was much shorter than the time spent in transit through Siberia and on preparations for the sailing. The sea voyages could begin only when vessels had been built on the eastern coast of Siberia. The paper gives special attention to the relations between the expedition members, local Russians in Siberia, and the indigenous local population.

Lawrence J. Baack's contribution analyses how the *Arabian Journey* was transformed from the initial strong focus on biblical philology to an emphasis on the natural sciences, cartography, cultural geography, epigraphy and archaeology: This shift took place in parallel with a change of the expedition from being an essentially Euro-centric project to a project with interest in the sciences and the Middle East in their own right. The personalities of the three principal investigators had a major part in this change, and the paper explores the roles played by the participants, the contrasting character of their encounters with Middle Eastern peoples and cultures, and the varied robustness of the disciplines they pursued in the field. Thus the priorities and practices of the expedition changed as the expedition proceeded through the countries of the Middle East, and more and more of its members died.

Jonathan M. Hess summarizes in his contribution the previous research about Johann David Michaelis, who promoted the *Arabian Journey* to provide secular knowledge about the natural world and culture of the Near East to bear on understanding of the Scriptures. The paper reviews Michaelis's vision of Oriental scholarship, his interventions in the debates on Jewish emancipation and the anti-Semitism that Michaelis expressed in this context. The new results in the paper involve analyses of the motivations beyond Michaelis's interventions in the debate over Jewish emancipation and the specific role of the Niebuhr-expedition in this context. It is shown how the relationship between Michaelis and Niebuhr can throw light on the relationship between Judaism, Christianity and a modern European political order. The goal of this exercise is not to locate in Michaelis a kind of

nineteenth-century scientific racism, but to show that the relationship between Michaelis and Niebuhr enables us to reconstruct how knowledge of the ancient Near East could become political in an eighteenth century concept and how this is reflected in later periods.

Michael Harbsmeier's contribution looks at Niebuhr's method in doing field work from three different angles of comparison: the originality of Niebuhr's approach is established by comparison with some of his predecessors. Niebuhr's own understanding of his method is illustrated by his critical portrayal of other travellers which he met in the field. Finally the paper analyses how later scholars have praised and evaluated Niebuhr's contributions to scholarship. These analyses conclude with a discussion of how the role of fieldwork has been underestimated and even silenced in many histories of scholarship and science.

Philippe Provençal's contribution discusses the gathering of local names and designations for plants and animals by Peter Forsskål, the appointed naturalist of the Danish expedition. It concludes that Forsskål's notes represent a pioneer work of considerable academic value. The philological difficulties, methods and implications of Forsskål's material are discussed. During field work involving the gathering of local names, the researcher may encounter a number of difficulties. These include both doubts about the identity of the species in question and linguistic imprecision. The researcher may be unable to differentiate or recognise the different linguistic features of the provided names or designations, or may not be able to understand precisely what the informant means. Even when the spelling of the collected species name is controlled by the informant, spelling mistakes may occur. These difficulties are illustrated through six examples, gathered from Forsskål's philological material and Provençal's own field research along the Red Sea.

Roger Guichard points out that the long stay of the scholars of the *Arabian Journey* in Egypt was unplanned and many academic tasks which the members of the expedition managed to carry out there were not mentioned in the otherwise painstakingly

detailed instructions written by Michaelis. Thus free to follow his own interests in Egypt, Niebuhr was able to approach the country with an open mind and in so doing made early contributions to Egyptology, mapped Cairo and the Nile Delta and left a detailed account of many characteristic features of the country. The paper points out that Egypt for many previous scholarly visitors had been little more than the great drama of Israel in Egypt, an important part of the Old Testament. Niebuhr looked at Egypt with an open mind and saw an age-old civilization with a much longer and richer history than the Biblical story. Niebuhr's interest in Egyptian antiquities, not least the hieroglyphs, made an outstanding contribution to the nascent discipline of Egyptology.<sup>42</sup>

Michel-Pierre Detalle and Renaud Detalle review Carsten Niebuhr's relations with the French *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* to which he in 1768 sent a memorandum with his responses to questions submitted to the Danish expedition to Arabia by the French Academy. Due to subsequent theft of the document it was forgotten until the authors rediscovered it in the French *Bibliothèque nationale* in 2001. Some of the contents of the memorandum are described together with

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42. The editors fully agree with this very positive evaluation of Niebuhr's contribution to the early phases of Egyptology, not least Niebuhr understanding of the significance of the hieroglyphs before the discovery of the Rosetta Stone by Napoleon's scholars in 1799 and the importance of representing them correctly, as he later also did with the cuneiform script in Persepolis. Yet, it seems relevant here to point out a few other pioneers of scientific Egyptology, notably Benoît de Maillet, who was French consul in Cairo 1693-1720 and provided material for *Description de l'Égypte*, a large volume touching upon many aspects of ancient and contemporary Egypt, thoroughly, but poorly edited by the abbot Jean Baptiste Le Mascrier, whom Maillet used to edit his texts (Maillet 1735), the French Jesuit Claude Siccard, who lived and travelled widely in Egypt 1712-1726 and produced the earliest known map of the country, the above mentioned Frederik Louis Norden, Danish traveller and careful observer of ancient Egyptian monuments in Egypt and Nubia 1737-1738 (Norden 1755), and Richard Pococke, English prelate who travelled widely in the Middle East 1737-1741 and wrote an account of his visit to Egypt, including a journey up the Nile as far as Philae at the same time as Norden's (Pococke 1743).

the circumstances associated with its reception, nearly coinciding with a visit by King Christian VII to the French Academy.

Anne Haslund Hansen's contribution analyses the characteristics of the visual documentation from the *Arabian Journey* and the published illustrations in Niebuhr's own publications, the *Beschreibung von Arabien* and the *Reisebeschreibung*, with regard to motifs and distribution of the plates within the published works. She demonstrates that the total assembly of published images does not correspond with the Royal instructions. The early death of the expedition's draughtsman meant that Niebuhr had to take over as the artist of the expedition, a task he was capable of doing, at least to some extent, but not trained for. However, changes to the initial plans also occurred because new opportunities presented themselves during the expedition. She also analyses to what extent the illustrations agree with the presupposed ideas of the period about illustrations of travelogues in general and presupposed ideas of the Orient in particular.

Catharina Raudvere's contribution analyses the works of the Swedish travelling scholar Jacob Jonas Björnståhl (1731-1779) who started his more than twelve-year long journey as a tutor to two young aristocrats on their *Grand Tour*. Björnståhl continued alone to Constantinople and never returned. His letters from the long journey were published in Stockholm continuously during the journey (and afterwards in six volumes), skilfully presenting his observations in a popular form that partly financed his travels. From Constantinople he reported on linguistic, ethnographic and topographic observations and on the religious diversity. His comparative method is a result of his background in the Linnaean environment at Uppsala University, but is also a strategy to reach his audience of armchair travellers. The paper examines Björnståhl's texts as a continuation of earlier Swedish interests in the Orient and pioneer work with a more systematic academic approach to the languages and culture of the Muslim world. Both the Danish expedition to *Arabia Felix* and Björnståhl's stay in Constantinople provided material for future Scandinavian research in the Middle East.

Ib Friis' contribution calls attention to the contrast between the Muslim Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula and the Christian highlands of Abyssinia in Africa on the other side of the Red Sea. He compares three travellers in Abyssinia during the second half of the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century. The eccentric Scottish laird, James Bruce, made out of curiosity and to win a name observations of Abyssinian geography, culture and natural history on his travels in 1768-1772. The English artist Henry Salt, secretary to a British peer of the realm, visited Abyssinia in 1805 and 1809-1810, making scholarly observations while on missions to establish diplomatic links between Abyssinia and Britain. Eduard Rüppell, German naturalist traveller, collected specimens of natural history and artefacts in the Abyssinian highlands in 1832-1833 for the *Senckenbergische Naturforschende Gesellschaft* in Frankfurt am Main. All three travellers interacted with local people from many strata in Abyssinian society, from the ruling classes to traders, soldiers and peasants; they followed approximately identical routes and collected approximately the same information and the same kinds of objects. They all wrote travelogues for the general reader, and the later travellers commented on their predecessors. Yet their attitudes to country and people were notably different. Although all three had positive ideas about the Abyssinian civilisation, only Salt and Rüppell had political visions for its future.

Charles W. J. Withers examines the travel writings of the British Arabian traveller and hydrographer James Wellsted, notably his two volumes of *Travels in Arabia* (1838). Wellsted's Arabian land-travels were undertaken between 1829 and 1837 as part of coastal navigation work and provided important information, especially about pre-Islamic epigraphy and archaeology, and about the economy and cultures of the Arabian peoples. Wellsted's expertise was endorsed by the presentation of his work to the Royal Geographical Society, but his reputation was mediated by his publisher, John Murray, who, for reasons of audience interest, published the findings of Wellsted's land travel as volume one of the *Travels in Arabia* and the scientific coastal work in volume two. By re-order-

ing Wellsted's narrative, Murray materially altered the chronology and purpose of Wellsted's work. In assessing the "truth" of travel narratives, we need to pay attention to the history of the books themselves and the role of publishers in creating audience demand for travel narratives.

Harry Liebersohn's paper deals with a subject far from the Middle East, but certainly germane to analysis of encounters between European and local culture. Liebersohn describes and discusses the meeting in Hawaii in the 1820es between American Protestant missionaries and the well developed indigenous Hawaiian culture which had integrated traditional social structure and religion with an elaborate tradition for singing and dancing, the *hula*. Liebersohn points out the contrast between traditional Hawaiian culture and the puritanism of the American missionaries, illustrated by William Ellis's *Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, or, Owhyhee* (1826). Ellis gave a generally sympathetic description of *hula*-performances, while other missionaries referred to it as an evil Hawaiian practice. Later, the hymns of the missions blended perfectly with traditional Hawaiian music to form a unique and lively Hawaiian musical tradition that has survived until today.

A final paper by Ib Friis has analysed a subject raised in discussions during and after the symposium: how valid is Carsten Niebuhr's published and unpublished criticism of James Bruce's *Travels*? After the publication of Bruce's *Travels* in 1790, Carsten Niebuhr was one of the first to discuss on a scientific basis the objectivity of Bruce's reports from his voyages in Egypt and on the Red Sea, a debate which later involved other travellers dealt with at the symposium, including George Annesley, Henry Salt and James Wellsted. Written in German, Niebuhr's contribution to this debate has been overlooked in the literature in English on Bruce's travels.

Apart from the papers represented by contributions to this volume, the participants in the symposium also had the privilege of hearing presentations from: Sverker Sörlin, Professor of environmental history at KTH - the Royal Institute of Technology - in Stockholm, Sweden (about Lutheran cameralism and

the relation between religion and the Linnaean travel project). Dieter Lohmeier, former Director of the *Schleswig-Holsteinische Landesbibliothek* (Regional Library of Schleswig-Holstein) in Kiel (on a newly found *Stammbuch*, also known as an *Album Amicorum*, which Niebuhr brought with him on his travels and in which he collected autographed greetings from people he met on the *Arabian Journey*)<sup>43</sup> and Neil Safier, Associate Professor of history at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada (on observing and collecting during a Luso-Brazilian Philosophical Voyage to Amazonia in 1783-1792).

A conclusion drawn by several of the papers in this symposium is that, in spite of careful preparations, elaborate *apodemics* and detailed instructions given to the travellers, many of the most surprising, innovating or lasting results of the expeditions were achieved either due to casual events or in cases where the travellers, not least Niebuhr, did not strictly follow the research plans outlined for them, but, stimulated by open-mindedness to other cultures, improvised and grasped unpredicted opportunities for research that offered themselves during the journey. Both careful planning and extensive flexibility have been major reasons for the success of the *Arabian Journey*.

We are now ready to turn to the sequence of printed contributions, but before doing so it remains for the Organising and Editorial Committees gratefully to thank all that have helped with the symposium and bringing this volume together. We are most obliged to Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II and Prince Henrik's Foundation for a grant in support of the symposium. We are much indebted to the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters for housing us in their splendid rooms, supporting practicalities of the symposium with a grant from the Aksel Touborg-Jensen Foundation, and for publishing these proceedings in a fitting way. We are also much indebted to the Department of Cross Cultural and Regional Studies of the University

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43. See also Lohmeier and Rasmussen (2010). Carsten Niebuhr's *Stammbuch* is now accessible in a digital facsimile on: [http://www.kb.dk/da/nb/materialer/haandskrifter/HA/e-mss/acc-2010\\_20.html](http://www.kb.dk/da/nb/materialer/haandskrifter/HA/e-mss/acc-2010_20.html)

of Copenhagen and its then head, Ingolf Thuesen, for help with organising and funding our symposium. We wish to thank Ph.D. Brian Arly Jacobsen, the Department of Cross Cultural and Regional Studies, for his energetic and competent work with the organisation of the symposium, taking care of the grants and the programme, having contact with the invited speakers and managing the early phases of the work with the proceedings. Lawrence J. Baack has kindly advised on a number of points and read and commented on several of the manuscripts. Two anonymous referees are thanked for their willingness to read and comment positively and constructively on the manuscripts. And last of all we wish to express our gratitude to all the participants in the symposium for having accepted our invitation to come to Copenhagen to take part in the presentations and discussions and for contributing their papers to this volume of proceedings.

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