

Under the cover of P.O. Brøndsted's diaries

Some remarks on the content and style of P.O. Brøndsted's diaries from his Grand Tour through Germany, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey in the years 1806-1811

by Gorm Schou-Rode

The material

When Bishop Jacob Peter Mynster wrote the biography of his deceased friend Peter Oluf Brøndsted (fig. 1), he had some twenty notebooks with diary entries in front of him.¹ The earliest was marked Br.32 and started in Nîmes on 28 July 1809. The bishop presumed that earlier diaries existed among Brøndsted's papers still left in Rome, and he was right. Three notebooks marked Br.29, Br.30 and Br.31 with diary entries can be found today in the Department of Manuscripts and Rare Books in the Royal Library in Copenhagen, together with Br.33 and Br.35 with notes from Greece and Asia Minor, which were among Mynster's sources.² The biography was written as an introduction to *P.O. Brøndsted's Reise i Grækenland i Aarene 1810-1813*, edited by N.V. Dorph and published in Copenhagen, 1844.

A few years later – in 1850 – Dorph published a small book – 150 pages – called: *Uddrag of P.O. Brøndsted's Reise-Dagbøger*.³ Extracts from the early diaries Br.29, Br.30 and Br.31 fill the first half of this publication; the comprehensive material Mynster had had access to a few years earlier seems to have disappeared. Dorph made use of Brøndsted's diaries in a very carefree way: sentences are moved or removed and interpolations employed. Frequently the excerpts

are misleading, e.g. when you read that Oehlen-schläger, after the patriotic Danes' celebration of their insane King's birthday in Paris, "wanted to speak French well to be able to keep company with Napoléon and influence him"⁴. The statement occurs in the diary, but as the context has been removed the reader might get the impression that the poet was extremely naïve, when in fact he was just extremely drunk. The major part of the last half of the book is not rooted in the diaries; it is cobbled together from extracts of letters.

The background

After receiving his degree in divinity in 1802, Brøndsted concentrated on the study of the classics, and as one of his university professors, D.G. Moldenhawer, happened to be headmaster of a short-lived experimental school, "Pædagogisk Seminarium", at that time, he was offered the opportunity to expand his studies with modern languages. His facility for languages was considerable, he easily acquired fluency in French and Italian and became familiar with English, which at that time was a language known by only a few people in the business world and by the collectors of the "Sound Toll" in Elsinore, but which was regarded as useless in the academic world. The close friendship he developed

1. Brøndsted 1844b, I, 14.

2. KB (The Royal Library/Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen), NKS (New Royal Collection/Ny kongelig Samling), 2400 4°: Peter Oluf Brøndsted, diaries, Br.29, Br.30, Br.31, Br.33, Br.35. Unless otherwise indicated all references are to these five diaries.

3. Brøndsted 1850.

4. "ønskede blot at han kunde godt Fransk og kunde omgaaes ham, da han saa meente nok at skulle kunne virke paa ham." Br.29, the 29th of January 1807.



Fig. 1. P.O. Brøndsted, Paris 1808, drawn and engraved by G.-L. Chrétien, who made use of the Physionotrace method (*Dessiné et gravé par Chrétien inventeur du Physionotrace...*) (Mikala Brøndsted, cat. No. 2)

here with Georg Heinrich Carl Koës, two years younger than himself, came to be of vital importance for both. Koës had studied at the university in Halle under the guidance of the epoch-making German philologist Friedrich August Wolf, who had probably inspired his desire to visit Greece, a dream Brøndsted soon shared. At the University of Copenhagen they were both regarded as unusually gifted, and their career paths looked perfect from the start. In 1804 Brøndsted received the gold medal for a philological dissertation, and two years later both of them took a doctoral degree, Koës for a thesis on Homer, Brøndsted for his studies in Plato.⁵ The success of the young scholars in their private lives was remarkable as well;

they became engaged to two of the most attractive and admired women of their generation. Brøndsted's fiancée was Frederikke, Koës' younger sister, then not quite sixteen years old.

Georg Koës' father was very wealthy, and his son inherited a fortune when he died in 1804. The financial situation was more complicated for Brøndsted: his father was quite well-off, but not sufficiently so as to be able to provide funds for extravagant travel. Government finances in Denmark were in a bad state, but Brøndsted's application to "Fonden ad usus publicos" was nevertheless met, and 300 rigsdaler per annum was granted for four years to enable the two young scholars to "make use of the facilities offered by Ger-

5. Brøndsted 1806; Koës 1806b.

many and France, subsequently to study at least one year in Rome, before the journey through the landscapes of the European parts of Greece, which one could hope would be most rewarding for their branch of knowledge.”⁶ Their professors wished them a pleasant journey, but many envied the two young men so favoured in every way, and Brøndsted later noticed that his travel companion was probably right when he “supposed that Mr. Schow as well as Mr. Thorlacius etc. would like to see us break our necks in the Alps or in Greece”.⁷

Round the year 1800 few people went abroad. When they did, many were keen to describe their adventures in letters to their fellow-countrymen back home, and these were often published later, or used as sources for the writing of an account of the journey. Interesting letters often circulated among the receiver's friends, of which the letter writer was of course aware. Brøndsted did not want to be restricted by self-censorship and postal communication from the Levant through business houses and embassies being untrustworthy, he chose to keep a diary.

The journey through Germany

The two companions left Copenhagen on the 1st of August 1806, but the diary from the first three months of the tour was lost by a stroke of bad luck, as it was placed in a carpet bag, which unfortunately fell off the carriage somewhere southwest of Leipzig between Weissenfels and Camburg on the 7th of October.⁸ During the months in Germany studies did not occupy much of their time. They enjoyed a trek in the Harz before they left Dresden heading for Paris, now accompanied by Adam Oehlenschläger, the greatest poet of the romantic era in Denmark. A stop was made in

Halle, as Koës wanted to meet his former professor Wolf, before they continued to Weimar to make it possible for Oehlenschläger to revisit Goethe. In a letter from Wolf, which Koës presented to Goethe, the professor introduces the bearer of the message with the words: “Es ist ein lieber, hoffnungsvoller Jüngling, und der, wie gesagt, im Stande ist, ein 1000 Rthlr auf Graben bei Delphi oder sonst zu verwenden.”⁹ The travelling companions arrived in Weimar on the 8th of October, and 5 days later Brøndsted started the first of the surviving diaries; Br.29.

Life in Weimar appeared peaceful; the newcomers met their friends, enjoyed the theatrical performance in the evenings and paid a visit to the huge, picturesque camp of the Prussian army located on the fields nearby. The French army was approaching, but no one had anticipated that a military confrontation was imminent, and the shock was great, when sounds from a battle could be heard in the morning of the 14th of October 1806.

The style and corrections in the first diary

A closer look at the entry in Brøndsted's diary on the day of the battle of Jena-Auerstädt shows some of the characteristic features in his writing at this point in time. The town was filled with rumours, and the rapidly changing situation is conveyed in short, nearly stenographic remarks: “Retreat of Prussian baggage and carriages with wounded across the big palace bridge. Up into the Snail's Shell, where the bombardment could be heard more clearly. Home. More wounded Prussians and Saxons brought in and a number of French captives – the brown Prussian hussar together with his captured French hussar.”¹⁰

A statement like “Up into the Snail's Shell, where

6. “benytte de Subsidier Tyskland og Frankrige tilbyder, siden studere i Rom mindst et Aar og derpaa gjennemrejse alle de Egne af det europæiske Grækenland, hvor de kunne haabe at vinde meest for deres Videnskab.” Glarbo et al. 1897-1947, II, 102-103.

7. “han mener at baade h' Schow og h' Torl[acius] etc gjerne saae os brække Halsen paa Alperne el. i G[ræ]kenland.” Br.29, the 17th of February 1807.

8. Br.29, the 13th of October 1806.

9. Wolf 1935, I, 418.

10. “Tilbagetog over den store Slotsbro af Preusisk Bagage og Vogne med Saarede. Op i Sneglehuset, hvor Kanonaden tydeligere hørtes. Hjem. Flere preusiske og Saxiske Saarede indbragte og nogle Franske Fanger – den brune Preusiske Husar med sin fangne franske Husar.” Br.29, the 14th of October 1806.

the bombardment could be heard more clearly” and other similar remarks cannot be understood immediately, and as it is often hard to read gothic handwriting, a metaphor like *snail's shell* makes you doubt that the reading is correct. For Brøndsted the sentence was sufficient to recall that he climbed the mediaeval tower of the royal palace in Weimar, which was later embellished with a baroque onion dome. The aim of the text is apparently to support the writer's memory, not to inform other people about the course of events.

Around noon cannon balls began to hit the town, and the Danes left the third floor of the public house and took shelter in the basement. Oehlenschläger did not keep a diary, and more than a month passed by before he pulled himself together to inform his fiancée Sofie Ørsted in Copenhagen of the events in Weimar. In a letter dated Paris the 23rd of November 1806 he writes: “Three terrifying shots rang out, windows and doors rattled and we heard the distinct hiss of bullets passing through the air. Brøndsted, Koës and I, all pale and silent, eyed each other for a moment. Come, I said! let us go below. I believe there is a basement underneath this house. There the bullets cannot reach us. We went down ... [and] sat wrapped in our overcoats on the steps leading down to the cellar.”¹¹

In his diary entry for the 14th of October Brøndsted mentions that he brought Oehlenschläger's and Koës' overcoats down to the cellar without mentioning that he himself took refuge there. Oehlenschläger as well as Brøndsted had some military experience from the corps of volunteers formed by the Danish students during the English attack on Copenhagen in April 1801, but their response to their situation in Weimar must have been very different. Two days later Brøndsted remarks upon Oehlenschläger's behaviour during the

battle: “It was a source of consolation to O[ehlenschläger] that a poet must be a ~~true hermaphrodite~~ a spiritually strong personality that encompasses in his nature both the male and the female principle (a true comment – ~~maybe even extending to the assumption that this composite nature of the true poet also affects bones and skeletal frame.~~ O[ehlenschläger] would most definitely have noticed that both he and Götthe possess wide hips such as women customarily display). On this basis, O[ehlenschläger] consoled himself on his lack of personal courage.”¹²

The words crossed out in the just quoted passage have been deleted carefully. The way it is done makes it possible that Brøndsted himself carried out the editing. The author later labels the diary “my silent father confessor”,¹³ and if this is to be credited, there would be no reason for Brøndsted to withdraw his penetrating psychological observation although it could cause offence. Many youthful, spontaneous remarks are left untouched, but a few – quite indiscrete – have been crossed out. It is impossible to decide conclusively whether the bowdlerization was carried out by Brøndsted or someone else who wanted to adjust the text for posterity.

No one can tell how Brøndsted reacted when Oehlenschläger lost courage in the cellar during the bombardment, but the length of his stay there is probably accurately described by Koës: “Oehlenschläger und ich retirirten in den Keller, Brøndstedt nur eine kleine Weile”.¹⁴

The three Danes were forced to remain in Weimar until the 24th of October, as all horses in the territory were conscripted by the French army. Due to the military operations the continuation of the journey to Paris was difficult, but they succeeded in visiting Frankfurt

11. “Tree forfærdelige Skud hørte vi hvine, Vinduer og Døre rystede og vi hørte tydelig Kuglernes Hvinen giennem Luften. Brøndsted Koes og jeg betragtede hinanden et Øjeblik blege og tause. Kom, sagde jeg! Lader os gaae ned, der er vist en Kielder under Huset, der kan Kuglerne icke ramme os. Vi gik da ned ... [og] sadde paa Kieldertrappen svöbt i vore Kavaier.” Oehlenschläger 1945-50, II, 135.

12. “Ø[hlenschläger] tröstet sig med at Digteren burde være ~~en sand Hermaphrodit~~ en aandelig stærk Natur som omfattede i sit Væsen

baade det Mandige og det Qvindelige (en sand Bemærkning – ~~maaskee selv den Formening sand at denne blandede Natur hos den sande Digter udstrecker sig lige til Knokkel og Beenbygningen.~~ Ø[hlenschläger] i det mindste vil hos sig selv og Götthe have bemærket at de begge have store Hofter som Fruentimmerne). Paa denne Grund Ø[hlenschläger] tröstet sig over Mangel af personligt Mod.” Br.29, the 16th of October 1806.

13. “min tavse Skriftefader”. Br.31, the 9th of July 1808.

14. Koës 1906, 121.

am Main and Mainz on their way. German locations and the tour to Paris occupy the first quarter of this volume of the diary.

The period of the Paris diaries

The French capital was reached on the 15th of November 1806. Paris and new acquaintances fill up the remaining part of Br.29. The diary is full by the 28th of February 1807, and the daily notes continue in Br.30. Although most of Brøndsted's time was spent with studies, this is not the major subject in the diary, as other notebooks were in use in which to file the output of his academic work. The diary ends on the 22nd of August 1807. Br.31 covers a long period of time, but with major gaps. Daily notes are written through the remaining part of 1807 up to the 27th of Marts 1808. Brøndsted tries to recommence the diary on the 8th of July and changes from the gothic to the roman style handwriting, which he naturally employed in his professional writings, but the result is only a backward glance in a few sentences about his life in April and May followed by twelve blank leaves. Brøndsted's New Year resolution results in daily entries for the first 15 days of 1809, and nine blank pages are left for a summary of the events which took place before the 12th of June the same year, when Brøndsted finally left Paris heading for Rome and recommenced the diary.

The suspension of the diary in periods of 1808 and 1809 could be the consequence of different situations: too much work, a feeling of jogging along as usual, or an unwillingness to record what happened. The entries from the first weeks of 1809 are of the same proportions as the earlier ones; life appears to be as rich and busy as before. In general travel stimulates Brøndsted's diary writing, but no allusion to "the eight happiest days of my life in la Vallée de Chamouny" in the summer of 1808, which are mentioned in a letter to Oehlenschläger written in Paris the 3rd of December

1808¹⁵, can be found in the diary. Brøndsted's own financial situation was of great concern at this point in time, but his future brother-in-law, Holger Aagaard, might have invited him to take part in his Grand Tour.

Major themes

What subjects would you expect to find treated in a young man's diary from a stay in Paris? The story of his love affairs? An introduction to French cuisine? Brøndsted lived in a very lively area in Paris with a lot of women of easy virtue, but he seems more surprised than tempted, and it took him quite some time to figure out that the kind lady who on the 19th of November 1806 invited Oehlenschläger, Koës and himself to pay her a visit and offered her assistance to make their stay more pleasant was in fact offering them the use – or misuse – of her 15 year old daughter. Out of the corner of his eye Brøndsted observed a number of young attractive women, but his fiancée was waiting in Denmark. Fine restaurants were frequented, but the menus and wines are not recorded.

The impression of the metropolis was overwhelming. Life in the crowded streets, the extensive traffic, the rumours about the ongoing war and the big events arranged by the Emperor to please the Parisians are all reflected in the diary, but theatres, concerts and museums are more important topics. If you flick through the diaries in a hurry, you might get the impression that most nights were spent in a theatre, but that is not so. Brøndsted describes many plays and operas in detail, and he enjoys participating in private musical soirées, but the most frequent statement about his evenings is this: "*I worked.*" Beside the scholarly work, his more personal education was time-consuming. Brøndsted had a need for physical activities, and many hours were spent with the French fencing master he contacted immediately after his arrival to Paris. His command of French was good, but as a man of the world

15. "I Chamouny Dalen henbragte jeg i Sommer 8 af de lykkeligste Dage jeg har levet." Oehlenschläger 1945-50, III, 203.

Brøndsted wanted to speak the language fluently, and in addition he wanted to work his way through French literature. Studies in modern Greek were of course a must, and on top of this: music. In the diary we meet the friends gathered round a punch bowl singing, while Brøndsted plays the piano. But his ambitions were much grander, and he started to take lessons from Friedrich Kalkbrenner, and valuable information about this minor composer and later famous virtuoso is found in the diary. The birth of some of the composer's early works and his life as maître de plaisir to the Italian princess of Caramanico are referred to, and Brøndsted used the opportunity to introduce Kalkbrenner to contemporary Danish music, e.g. C.E.F. Weyse. The two young men's attitude to life was very different, and Brøndsted as the son of a pastor in Horsens in Jutland points out that "The French upbringing combined with debauchery has weakened his [Kalkbrenner's] inward power."¹⁶ The gifted pupil benefited much from the lessons and scored a great success at German-French musical soirées in Paris, not least as accompanist for the German painter and harpist Theresa aus dem Winckel.

An abundance of persons – many famous in their field – appear in the text. The Danes were naturally accepted as a part of the German intellectual colony in Paris, and became friends with e.g. the Schlegel brothers. Oehlenschläger's very productive phase in Paris can be followed in the diaries, and they have been an important source for literary historians like Kr. Arntzen and Vilhelm Andersen. The increasingly tense development in the relationship between France and Denmark was followed through the newspapers and the debates at the Danish minister Dreyer's splendid dinner table, but the English bombardment of Copenhagen in September 1807 came as a shock. The anxiety of the Danes in Paris, including the newly arrived poet Jens Baggesen, emerges clearly from the diaries.

Letters of introduction to important persons in the

French world of science and scholarship from Frederik Münter and others secured Brøndsted immediate contact to influential persons, e.g. Aubin-Louis Millin and Abbot Henri Grégoire, both kindly disposed towards Danes. Foreigners were treated very well in the reading room of the Bibliothèque Nationale and allowed to borrow even rare books and study them in their private residence, which was attractive during winter, as the library was not heated. Brøndsted benefited much from his friendship with the learned librarian Karl Benedict Hase, who directed him to study the posthumous papers of his predecessor D'Ansse de Villoison, which included much material from the investigations by the latter in Greece during the years 1785-1787. Hase, who had compiled a catalogue of the papers, could not withstand Brøndsted's pressure, and on the 26th of November 1806 allowed him to make a copy, although this was clearly illegal. Extracts from the catalogue of Villoison's papers were published anonymously in the *Intelligenzblatt* published as supplement to *Hallischen Literatur-Zeitung* (January 1807, nos. 6 and 7), and Brøndsted was later accused of being the source of the leakage. Nothing in the diary indicates that Brøndsted was the originator of the clumsy German translation, but months had passed before he denied any connection with the publication in an announcement included in a letter from Paris the 14th of June 1807 to Wolf. The following entry appears in the diary the day before: "Tonight I was frustra in rue Viev[ienne] – in case a more reasonable fate should finally smile upon me!"¹⁷ From rue Vivienne there was an entrance to Bibliothèque Nationale, but the name of the man Brøndsted wanted to meet is kept secret even from his "confessor" on this particular day, as well as three days later when they actually meet and Brøndsted writes the cryptic statement: "I made the necessary arrangements with him."¹⁸ The entry in the diary is not necessarily connected to the unfortunate publication of the catalogue, which Brøndsted probably wanted to forget, as

16. "Den franske Optragelse forbunden med Udsvævelser har svækket hans indere Kraft", Br.30, the 14th of July 1807.

17. "I Aften var jeg frustra i rue Viev[ienne] – quod tandem æqvior mihi fortuna surrideat!" Br.30, the 13th of June 1807.

18. "Jeg aftalte med ham det Nødvendige", Br.30, the 16th of June 1807.

he had supplied his former professor D.G. Moldenhawer in Copenhagen with a transcript of his copy.

The expanded stay in Paris

Deadlines are very popular in our day and age, and one had been stipulated for Brøndsted. The research scholarship was granted for four years, but he had not yet visited Greece and barely Italy when it expired. Why did Brøndsted stay so very long in Paris? The wars and the financial problems caused by them are not the main reason. The diaries point to two explanations: Paris and Brøndsted's ambitions.

Paris was the capital – and not only of France. Rome had been moved to Paris – and not only Rome. Since Antiquity it has been a tradition that works of art belonged to the winner of a war, and could be used to embellish the winner's cities. During the Napoleonic wars, this was carried out to an extent that is hard to believe. Statues, paintings, rare books and manuscripts from most of Europe were brought to Paris – and the material was not locked up, not reserved for French eyes only. It is not accidental that Friedrich Schlegel chose to live in Paris during the period, when he wrote about paintings. A large number of famous European paintings could be seen there, as well as many of the most admired statues from Antiquity. Paris offered an irresistible possibility for an overview of the arts, even for those who disliked the Emperor and his capital. Brøndsted followed the fashion of his time, which required a fascination for paintings – especially of the Italian school – but he was also a keen observer of contemporary French painting. On several occasions remarks in the diaries have turned out to be of interest to

French art historians, and likewise his comments on the art works he saw at la Malmaison contained surprises for the present conservateur.

The second explanation for the long stay, extremely high ambitions, haunted Brøndsted for the rest of his life. The preparations for the tour to Greece included a review of the entire literature on the subject, and a long letter to Frederik Münter dated Paris the 17th of April 1807 reveals that another aim of his studies in Paris was: “to acquire the most detailed knowledge about all sources for Plato scholarship and the entire history of Plato's philosophy, and already on the present tour ... to get in my possession as much material for a critical edition of Plato as I can manage.”¹⁹

The striving for perfection, combined with his view that “all hasty writing and author's precipitation – this mongrel offspring of an ignoble father and a lax mother: of vanity and the abused art of printing” must be regarded as “a pernicious evil which has confused the most excellent talents and overloaded almost every field of knowledge with a perplexing and unwholesome superabundance of books”²⁰ makes it obvious that Brøndsted's future academic career would be painful. The quotation is found in Brøndsted's introduction to the verse translation of Robert Vace's *Le Romanz de Rou*, which, although printed later, was composed in Paris.²¹

In a letter which Koës and Brøndsted received on one of the last days of August 1807, the Commission for Antiquities²² in Denmark, which was set up on the 22nd of May of the same year, had encouraged them “to communicate to them [the members of the commission] what discoveries we might make concerning relics or monuments of the exploits of our ancestors

19. “for mig: at erhverve mig den meest detaillerede Kundskab om alle Kilder for Plato's Kritik og den hele Platonske Filosofies Historie og allerede paa denne Reise ... at sætte mig i Besiddelse af saa Meget mange Materialer som jeg kan overkomme til en kritisk Udgave af Plato”. KB, NKS, 1698 2^o: Breve til Fr. Münter 1807, the 17th of April 1807.

20. “al iilsom Skriven og Forfatterpræcipation – denne Bastard af en uædel Fader og en letfærdig Moder: af Forfængelighed og

den misbrugte Bogtrykkerkonst – for et fordærligt Onde, som baade har forvirret de ypperste Anlæg, og overlæsset fast ethvert Kundskabsfag med en forvildende og uvederqvægende Overflod af Böger”. Brøndsted 1817-1818, XV.

21. Cf. Brøndsted 1817-1818.

22. For information about Brøndsted and the Commission for Antiquities, cf. Jakobsen 2007.

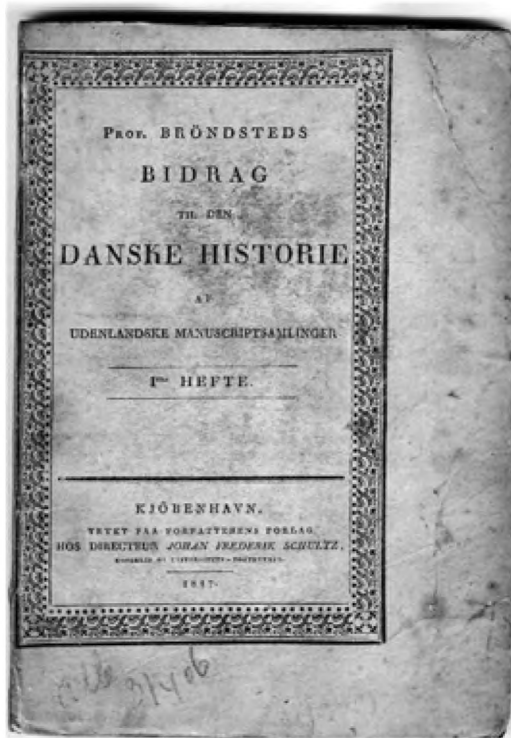


Fig. 2. The cover of the copy of the book inscribed to his friend, Chamberlain, Ch. de Teilmann, by Brøndsted on the 5th of November 1817.

here and in Italy and Greece.”²³ It was important for Brøndsted to please the authorities in Denmark, and his “Contribution to the History of Denmark” (fig. 2) was sent off from Paris as early as January 1808.²⁴

Southern France

Brøndsted finally left Paris on the 12th of June 1809 and went by stagecoach to Chalon-sur Saône and embarked on the river vessel to Lyons, where he rested for a week before he continued on the Rhône to Vienne

23. “[at give dem Bidrag af hvad Opdagelser vi i Hens[ende] til vore Forfædres Bedrifters Mindesmærker her og i Italien og G[ræ]kendland maatte gjøre.” Br.31, the 27th-29th of August 1807. In the minutes of the Commission, the importance of Normandy is underlined, Jakobsen 2007, the 9th of July 1807.

and Avignon. Aubin-Louis Millin’s newly published *Voyage dans les départemens du midi de la France* served as his guidebook, and he visited and described many Roman remains (Orange, Carpentras) before writing the last entry in the diary on the 7th of July 1809 near Nîmes.²⁵

Italy

The next diary in the series was consulted by J.M. Thiele when he wrote the second volume of his biography on Bertel Thorvaldsen, but it is missing today.²⁶ The financial problems of the travelers had necessitated Koës’ return from Paris to Copenhagen in October 1807, but the two friends now met again. During the year in Italy they became acquainted with Danish and in particular German artists and intellectuals in Rome, and Koës organized the piles of papers left by George Zoëga, who had passed away in February 1809. The English naval blockade in the Mediterranean prevented a continuation of their journey. A risky attempt to reach Greece was made on the 22nd of July 1810, when they embarked on a small sailing vessel in Otranto, which was making an attempt to bring supplies to the French garrison on the island of Corfu. The ship was wrecked, happily near the coast. Brøndsted insisted on carrying through the plan, not because he was exceptionally brave, but the idea that anything might endanger his personal safety was completely alien to his temperament. The second attempt was successful.

The Greek diary

The diary starts on Corfu on 24th August 1810, when Koës, Brøndsted and their new travel companions Karl Haller von Hallerstein, Otto Magnus Stackelberg and Jacob Linckh began their tour towards Athens. They

24. Jakobsen 2007, the 10th of March 1808, the book was, however, first published some ten years later; Brøndsted 1817-1818.

25. Millin 1807-1811.

26. Thiele 1851-1856, II.

sailed to Prevesa, continued over land to Messolonghi, and went by boat to Patras, where they arrived on the 1st of September. The trek from Preveza to Messolonghi was wetter and more difficult than expected – not designed for people in top-hats and dressed according to European fashion. After a short rest in Patras the party continued by boat to Corinth, stopping in Delphi on the way, and on the 13th of September 1810 Brøndsted arrived in Athens. During the years in Paris he had used several books for notes, keeping study notes separated from personal notes, etc. From now on the diary can be regarded as a kind of master document and copies of Greek inscriptions and topographical descriptions are included. Some of the topographical descriptions are written in German, ready to be published in German periodicals or used in letters to e.g. Wolf.

Athens

9-10,000 people lived in Athens at that time. The most important person for visiting foreigners was the nearly 60-year-old French sous-commissair Louis François Sébastian Fauvel. He himself was very interested in antiquities, but had little academic understanding of the subject. The authorities in Paris had apparently forgotten the existence of the consul; he was just a relic from the time before the Revolution. The newcomers were welcome in the small European community, mainly composed of French businessmen and other visitors such as the eccentric traveller Lady Hester Stanhope and Lord Byron, who “contracted an alliance with Dr. Bronstedt of Copenhagen as pretty a philosopher as you’d wish to see”, as he told Francis Hodgson in a letter.²⁷ Stackelberg was seriously ill from malaria, but survived both the illness and the arsenic treatment

administered as the cure by Lady Stanhope’s private physician. The other members of the party started the exploration of Athens and its surroundings and obtained – by bribery – the much desired permission to visit the Acropolis, which at that time was transformed into a Turkish fortress.²⁸

The first excursion and the change of style in the diary

On the 24th of August Haller, Koës and Brøndsted went on their first extensive excursion to Hydra, Nauplion, Epidaurus, Argos, Mycenae and Corinth, places they explored with the help of Pausanias and the collected French edition of Richard Chandler’s *Travels in Asia Minor* and *Travels in Greece*.²⁹ The diary was left in Athens, as it would be a disaster to lose it, and a smaller notebook (Sudelbuch) was used for provisional notes. In the diary Brøndsted writes that he enjoyed the sun on a hillside on the island of Hydra, singing a couple of good Danish songs, and watching Koës, who “was strolling about a little further away close by the footpath. An old witch walked past him; shortly before three young peasant girls had passed him carrying firewood to the town; when the old hag saw Koës thus loitering about with spectacles on his nose she believed him to be prowling among the young womenfolk of Idra with indecent intentions, for which reason she found herself justified in scolding him soundly. Now Koës too became vociferous and asked her to “andare al diavolo”. This was very well understood by the Hydrean maenad who became quite threatening. She even lifted a stone and made a menacing gesture – however, she did well to abstain since she would certainly have got mauvais jeu, Koës being a

27. Byron 1973-1994, II, 37.

28. Br.33; cf. the article by Fani-Maria Tsigakou in this publication.

29. Chandler 1775; Chandler 1776.

formidable thrower of stones. From a safe distance, we watched the strange dispute with amusement.”³⁰

The text in the *Sudelbuch* is much shorter: “Koës was strolling about a little further away close by the footpath. His affair with a ‘maenad’, a dangerous old she-devil, hilarious.”³¹ The extended distance in time between the experience and the time of its recording does not detract from the freshness of the diary. Quite the contrary, story-telling replaces notes. In many passages sophisticated changes between past tense and present tense are used to convey a feeling of “being there” to the reader. The refinement of the style made it easy for Brøndsted to use quotations from the diary without any change in his later lectures in Copenhagen on the journey through Greece. On the 18th of November 1810 the travellers were back in Athens where they enjoyed a hot bath and the reunion with their friends.

Life in Athens was pleasant, and Brøndsted was busy studying modern Greek, reading Plato and writing letters. Athens and its surroundings were further explored, Fauvel’s latest excavations admired, and the circle of friends expanded with the arrival of the two young English architects Charles Cockerell and John Foster. As both of them were fine singers and good drinkers, Christmas 1810 was a memorable one, although it was a discomfort to Brøndsted’s patriotic temper that he preferred Englishmen to Frenchmen.

Second excursion, towards Constantinople

On the 1st of January 1811 Koës, Stackelberg and Brøndsted started the journey, which via Delphi and many classical sites came to an end in Constantinople. The tour was very profitable, the party discovering many inscriptions in Thebes, and obtaining many fine

coins. In Levadia they investigated the Trophonius’ Cave, and the day after the arrival in Delphi on the 13th of January, Brøndsted succeeded in locating the Corycæan Cave, for which other travellers had searched in vain. The second visit to Delphi was extremely rewarding from an archaeological point of view, as was the tour to Talanti (Atalandi), where the local Bishop had made arrangements for their stay. They left the Bishop’s palace on the 19th of January, and troubles began. Due to stormy weather and a bad shipmaster ten days passed before they reached Trikeri, a port situated at the entry to the Gulf of Pagasitikos. The weather was still terrible, when the convoy of merchant ships heading for Constantinople left the harbour; current and contrary wind made it impossible to pass through the Hellespont. The travelling companions were forced to spend eleven cold days on the small island of Paschalimani south of the island of Marmora before the vessel could continue to Constantinople. The diary was full on the 28th of February 1811, the day of their arrival in the city.

The Turkish diary

Brøndsted’s immediate reaction to Turkish society has not survived, as the next diary in the series is lost, but the travellers were still staying in Constantinople when the last surviving diary – Br.35 – starts on the 4th of May 1811. Stackelberg was busy with his drawings, Koës with exploration of Byzantine music, and Brøndsted with his language teacher. All three took part in the life of the upper echelons, and in particular Brøndsted enjoyed life in the diplomatic circles. Although hostility existed between the different embassies, many of the diplomats had young – more or less beau-

30. “jeg sad imidlertid højere oppe og qvad et par gode danske Sange – Koës gik omkring lidt længere borte tæt ved Stien. En gammel Hex gik ham forbi, kort tilforn vare passerede 3 unge Bønderpiger som bare Ved til Staden; da den gl. Hex saae Koës saaledes drive omkring med Brilller paa Næsen troede hun han gik paa Dumpejagt [søge lejlighed til utugt] efter Idras unge Qvindevildt, hvorudover hun fandt sig beføjet at sætte ham djærvt til med Skjældsord. Nu blev Koës ogsaa højrøstet og bad hende ‘andare al diavolo’. Det forstod den hidraiske Mænade

meget vel og blev grumme bister hun hævede saagar en Steen og truede – hun gjorde imidlertid vel i at lade være, da hun kunde faaet mauvais jeu, da K[oës] er en drabelig Steenslynger. Vi morede os i en Afstand over den underlige Strid.” Br.33, the 2nd of November 1810.

31. “Koes gik lidt længere borte omkring tæt ved Stien – hans Affaire med en Mænade en farlig gl. Djævel, heel snurrig.”, KB, NKS, 2400 4^o: P.O. Brøndsted, Papirer, *Sudelbuch*.

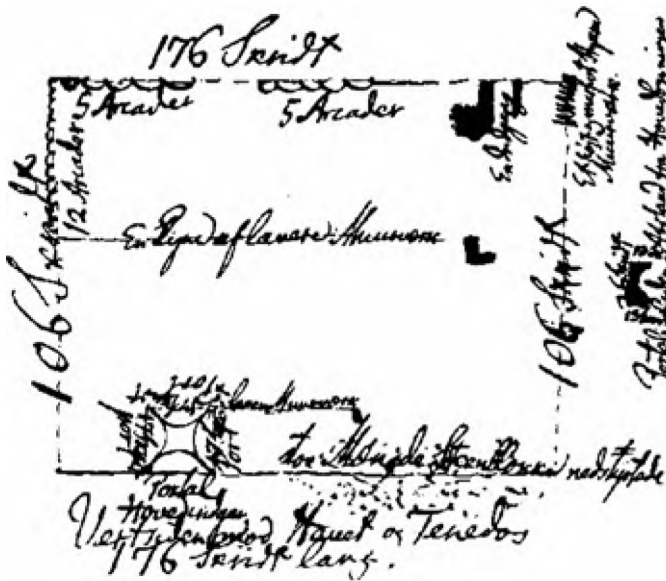


Fig. 3. Sketch on page 26 verso in Br.35.

tiful – daughters, and Brøndsted's talents as a piano player, singer, dancer etc. secured him popularity. The colourful life in Constantinople is rendered through the eyes of a tourist, and much time passes by with small excursions and pleasant times on the Princes' Islands, where high society escaped the dust and heat of the city. After a break of nearly three months the research journey continued.

Search for Troy

On the 25th of May 1811 the three travelling companions, joined by Nils Gustav Palin, the Swedish minister in Constantinople, sailed to Çanakkale. The starting point in their search for Homer's Troy was Chandler's book and Christian Gottlob Heyne's German edition of Le Chevalier's famous book³² *Description of the Plain of Troy*. Brøndsted had met Lechevalier in Paris, without being overly impressed by his knowledge, and the

visit to the area did not convince him that Lechevalier's location of Troy was correct. He kept thinking about this, and the solution he proposed in his public lectures in Copenhagen in the spring of 1817, that New Ilion must have been located in Palæo-Callifatli (=Hisarlık) is correct,³³ but he had not realized that Homer's Troy and New Ilion could both be located there in different layers in the same hill. What impressed Brøndsted most in the area were the remains of Alexandria Troas, of which many of the big marble constructions were still recognisable. However, destruction was proceeding rapidly: the marble was used for the manufacture of gigantic canon balls. Brøndsted made a number of sketches in his diary showing the placing of some of the impressive buildings (fig. 3). The German archaeological teams working there now are grateful for these, as an earthquake buried the whole area a few years after Brøndsted's visit.

The Swedish minister returned to the Princes' Is-

32. Le Chevalier 1791.

33. Brøndsted 1844b, II, 301.

lands and a life without fleas, while Stackelberg, Koës and Brøndsted continued the journey toward Smyrna. The small book used for the diary entries was full on the 4th of May 1811, when they reached the coast near the Turkish town Edremit.

The notebooks

Two of the small notebooks Brøndsted brought along on his travels in Greece and Asia Minor have survived, one with a soft cover and one with hard cover.³⁴ Along with accounts of financial transactions between the travellers, accounts from their card games, drafts of letters, notes from language lessons, renderings of inscriptions etc., a number of provisional short entries meant for the diary can be found here. The most interesting material covers the last part of 1812, when the excavation of the temple in Bassae started on the 9th of July in Brøndsted's presence. These notes are extremely difficult to read, as they were written in pencil in the soft covered notebook on pages, which have

rubbed against each other for hours on end in Brøndsted's saddlebag. The result is light grey pages with few words immediately recognisable. A last attempt to read the diary entries in the notebooks with the aid of advanced technology will be carried out, and – if successful – the material thus recovered will be printed in an appendix to the diaries.

The preparations for an annotated edition of P.O. Brøndsted's diaries, under the auspices of the Danish Society of Language and Literature, have been going on for many years, and the conclusion is now in sight. Many individuals and institutions in Denmark, Germany, France and Greece have kindly contributed to the process of unveiling the real, as well as the intellectual world behind Brøndsted's spirited remarks and reflections on his surroundings during the time of his Grand Tour.

“Tis strange, – but true; for thruth is always strange;
Stranger than fiction.”
(Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, XIV, 101).

34. KB, NKS, 2400 4°: P.O. Brøndsted, Papirer, notesbøger.