

Colonial Discourses

Series Two

Part 1: Papers of Richard Burton

New!! Part 2: Papers of James Augustus Grant and John Hanning Speke



- How were territories discovered and named?
- How did imperial explorers interact with natives?
- What were the expeditions like, and how were they funded and planned?
- How did the explorers depict native tribes?



Colonial Discourses brings together a wide variety of sources – travel narratives, Indian and African fiction, cuttings and journals. This second series focuses on the papers of imperial adventurers and explorers.

Part 1 covers the recently-discovered papers of Richard Burton at the Wiltshire & Swindon Record Office. **Part 2** covers the papers of James Augustus Grant (1827-1892) and related material by John Hanning Speke (1827-1864) from the National Library of Scotland.

The expeditions of Burton, Grant and Speke in the 1850s and 1860s had far-reaching consequences. Whilst their avowed aim was to discover the source of the White Nile and to increase knowledge of the geography of East Africa, their letters, papers and manuscript journals reveal far more.

• They provide insights into the way that Victorian science catalogued, classified and helped to control the areas and societies that were explored. Did colonial powers take into account the views of rival local communities and ethnic or linguistic groupings when they framed the boundaries of new countries?

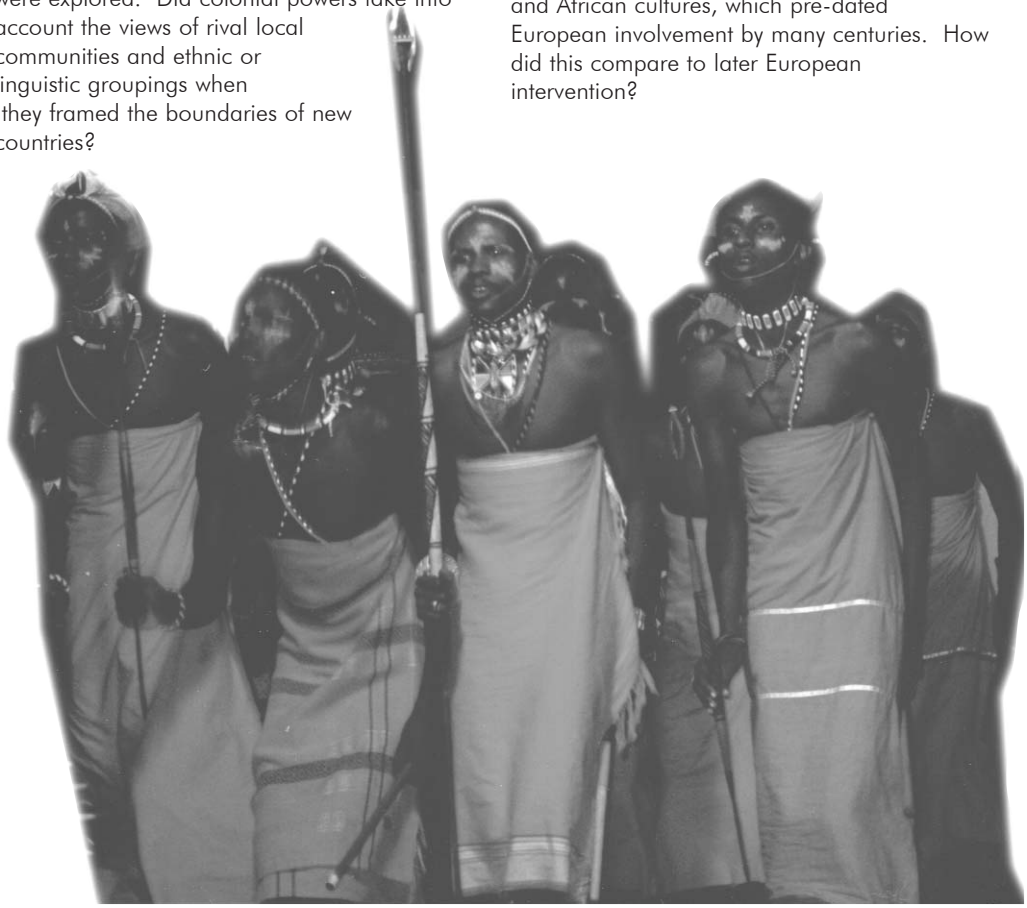
• Speke's journals document hundreds of interviews with locals describing the geography of areas that he could not reach. How did he and his contemporaries assimilate such evidence?

• They provide unique documentary evidence of the slave trade in the interior of Africa, both from direct observation and from discussions with those that they met. How tolerant and open-minded were the explorers concerning practices which they considered abhorrent?

• They are a unique ethnographic record of customs and practices in Africa that they witnessed first hand. Why were some descriptions of punishments or sexual activities suppressed in their published accounts?

• They provided a template of masculine endeavour – as the explorers were elevated into heroes and role models. Was this warranted?

• They describe the interaction between Arabic and African cultures, which pre-dated European involvement by many centuries. How did this compare to later European intervention?





Monument at the source of the Nile

“ Burton was a real adventurer: as a scholar he could hold his own with any academic Orientalist in Europe; as a character, he was fully aware of the necessity of combat between himself and the uniformed teachers who ran Europe and European knowledge with such precise anonymity and scientific firmness.”

Edward W Saïd

Part 1: Papers of Richard Burton

At the heart of the collection is a series of scrapbooks kept by Richard and Isobel Burton, combining cuttings, letters and photographs. The "African Scrapbook", 1856-1864, one on "The State of Syria", 1869-1872, and one on "Arabia, Egypt, India, Trieste, Spiritualism and Vivisection" are particularly valuable, but scholars will also find much of interest in those concerning Brazil and Isobel Burton's Life of Burton. The cuttings are from an extraordinary range of papers from The Liverpool Post to the Rangoon Times.

There is much good material on Burton's consular activities in Damascus, 1870-1871, and a fine series of letters to Burton from Edward Freeman detailing affairs in the Balkans, an affray in Nazareth and the Midian Expedition. There are letters describing his mining interests on the Gold Coast and a detailed household inventory. Isobel Burton's manuscript of *Iracema* is included, as are details of the Burtons financial circumstances and material relating to her will and the destruction of many of the manuscripts. There is publishing correspondence regarding the *Arabian Nights* and *The History of the Sword* and there are the Burtons' own copies of *First Footsteps in East Africa*, *Lusiadas*, and *The Kasidah*. There are also a large number of photographs and important surviving sections of Burton's notebooks and sketchbooks.

This material helps us to understand the public impression and reception of Burton and to see how he was woven into the fabric of heroic imperialism despite his best efforts to upset the system and to preserve local culture. They highlight both the political value of African Exploration and the personal forces that drove Burton.

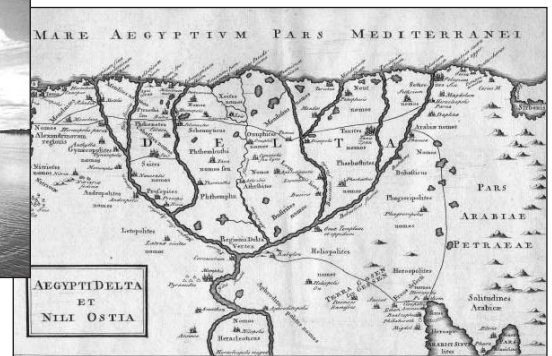


Part 2: Papers of James Grant and John Speke

Speke's own three volume journal of the expedition is included here, and scholars of colonial discourse will be interested to see how this was edited for publication. What was cut out and suppressed? What language was changed? The edited version contains large crossed-out sections (still readable), and new linking passages inserted.

We also offer Grant's journals for this and other expeditions, dated 1846, 1848-1849, 1852-1854, 1858-1891, describing life in Britain, India and Africa. Grant's frank and revealing family correspondence and letters feature Edwin Arnold, Samuel Baker, Sam Browne, Paul Belloni du Chaillu, Francis Galton, C E Gordon, Sir Henry Hamilton Johnston, John Kirk and David Livingstone amongst others. Finally there are letters of James Grant, junior, who accompanied Joseph Thomson on his last African expedition and who was also involved in Cecil Rhodes' plans for central Africa.

Several chapters are case studies illustrating complex negotiations between author and publisher as Blackwood's attempted to maintain its ideal house identity and reader. John Hanning Speke's account of his journey to the source of the Nile was acquired and then completely recast by a ghostwriter according to a "preconceived social model." The scientific importance of the exploration was de-emphasised in favour of an "explicit portrayal of savage life, and the implicit triumph of Speke over it."



COLONIAL DISCOURSES Series Two

Part 1: Papers of Richard Burton (1821-1890) from the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office

15 reels plus guide
Available

Part 2: Papers of James Augustus Grant (1827-1892) and John Hanning Speke (1827-1864) from the National Library of Scotland

17 reels plus guide
Available

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