

Familiar landscapes in a “strange new country”; British female travel writers in Colonial Cyprus

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HEADQUARTERS, NIKOSIA

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British female travel writers in Colonial Cyprus



Esmé Scott Stevenson
(1853-1925)

Annie Brassie
(1839-1887)

Gladys Peto
(1890-1977)



BRITISH FEMALE TRAVEL WRITERS IN COLONIAL CYPRUS

- **Esmé Scott-Stevenson (September 1878)**

Wife of Captain Andrew Scott Stevenson, District Commissioner of
Kyrenia

Our Home in Cyprus, London 1880.



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London 1880.

- **Gladys Peto, artist (1928)**

Wife of C.L. Emmerson, officer of the Medical Services of the British Army
Malta and Cyprus, London 1928.



THE TRAVEL WRITERS:

- Avoid political analysis
- Familiarize their British readership with this “strange new country”
- Describe familiar landscapes



Esmé Scott-Stevenson

- Similarities with places in Britain (e.g. Devonshire, Richmond Park)
- Images of short, close grass and cattle grazing recall British pastures and meadows



Gladys Peto

- Descriptions of greenery
- Similarities with British landscapes
(e.g. abbeys seen in England or France with Gothic ruins and carvings)
- Comparison of the anemones in Cyprus with the anemones in Britain



Annie Brassey

- Similarities with British landscapes (eg white cliffs of Old England)
- Familiar images of trees, crops and streams
- BUT Cyprus often viewed as an infertile land (no green hills, no land suitable for cultivation)



Imagery of the garden

- The garden occupies a prominent place in Victorian ideology
(“values of privacy, order, taste and appreciation of nature in a controlled environment”, Davidoff and Hall, 2018)
- Cyprus “indirectly or directly portrayed as a garden of the British empire” (Roussou Sinclair, 2002)



Imagery of the garden

- **Esmé Scott Stevenson**

Cyprus is a garden offering “a curious feeling of freedom”

A garden without the gardener

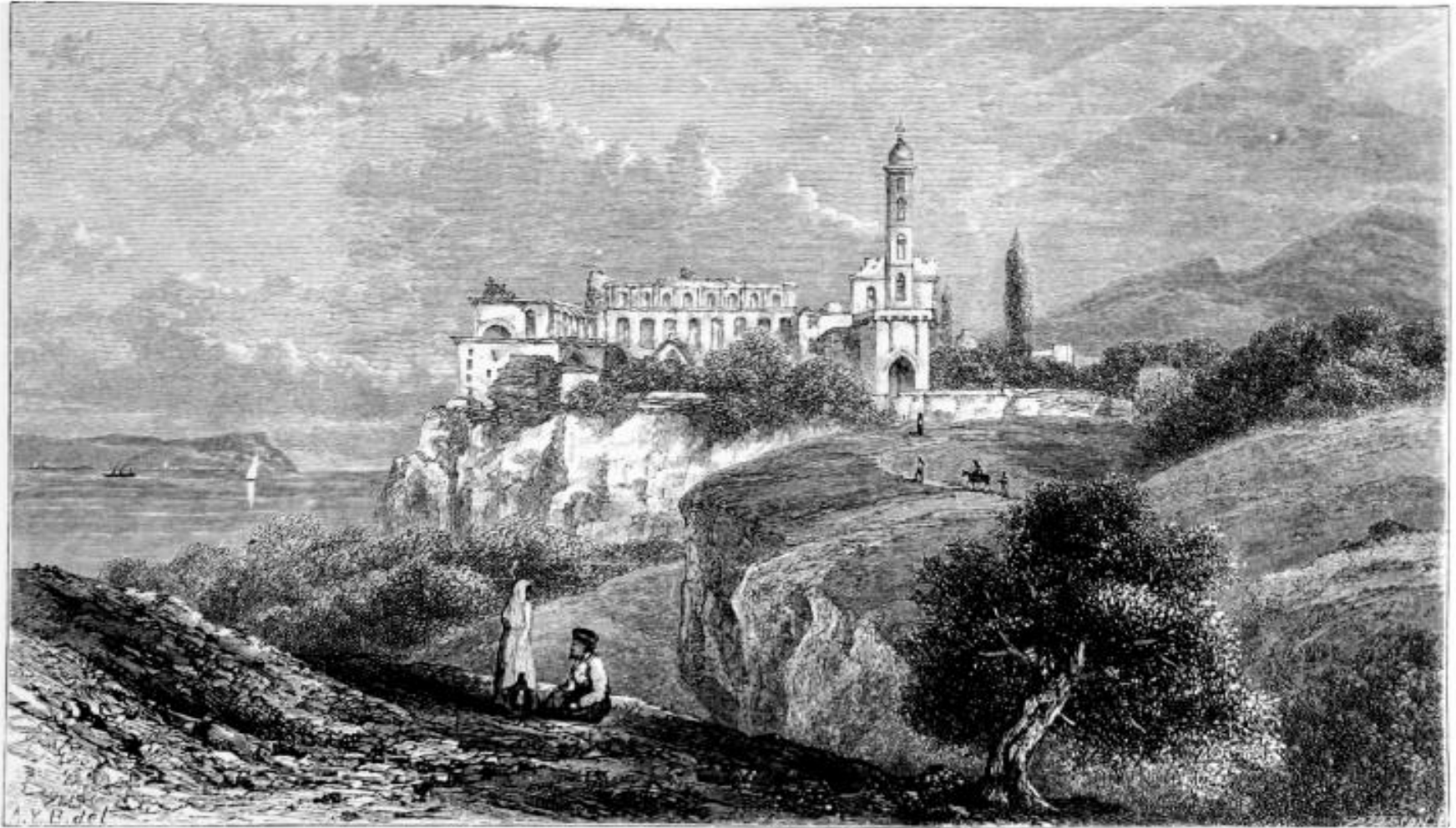
- **Gladys Peto**

Cyprus as a fertile place suitable for cultivation

She is the gardener – she offers gardening advice



Natural landscape of Cyprus as an ambassador



CONVENT OF LA PAIX

