

Austria-Hungary and Egypt (1882–1914)¹

Michaela Mikešová

The aim of this essay is to analyze relations between Austria-Hungary and Egypt from 1882 to 1914, when Egypt was occupied by the Great Britain, although it was still a part of the Ottoman Empire. Nevertheless, in this period Austria-Hungary developed a lot of considerable and conspicuous activities in the country that did not end by the British occupation of Egypt, but a few weeks after the outbreak of the First World War when its consular officials were deported from the country on 10 September 1914. Austrian interests in Egypt had been patent since the mid-17th century. Over time, an extensive network of consular offices was built up and Austria-Hungary's growing influence was further expanded with signature of a contract between the Austrian shipping company, Lloyd, and Austria's Imperial and Royal Post. Austrian Lloyd had also become the main transport link between European countries and Egypt in the second half of the 19th century and furthermore supplied a large number of various goods and materials.

Egypt was also used as a holiday destination not just for Austrian subjects, but also for members of the House of Habsburg. Some major figures to visit include Emperor Franz Joseph I, his wife, Empress Elizabeth and Crown Prince Rudolf. Conversely, Egyptians left for Austria-Hungary for work — either as servants or as part of the entertainment industry, or in order to acquire higher education.

Austria-Hungary's entry into the war on the side of the Central Powers caused significant complications for many Austrian subjects in Egypt, who were forced to leave their exotic country of residence. Nevertheless, after their departure, significant traces of their activities remained, particularly in regard to architects, some of whose buildings can still be seen in Egypt today, as well as the owners of department stores, painters and travellers.

EGYPT'S POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, 1882–1914

Egypt was part of the Ottoman Empire from 1517 until its secession in 1914. During this period, the Sultan's suzerainty was broken by French occupation from 1798–1801.

¹ This study is a part of the grant project SGS-2013–044 *Rakousko-Uhersko a Orient na počátku 20. století*, which the author conducts at the Department of History, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen.

From 1805, Egypt was ruled by Mohamed Ali, who after conflict with the Sultan, and under British pressure, was ultimately named governor of Egypt, where he ruled as the viceroy (also known as the Khedive), with his ancestors able to inherit the title.²

In 1879, Prince Muhammad Tewfik acceded to the throne following his father, Ismail, during the peak of a financial crisis which was the result of the costly construction and official opening of the Suez Canal, and Ismail's squandering of money. Khedive Tewfik tried to avert the financial crisis by undertaking the steps, which were required to lead to economic recovery. Nevertheless, the negative situation created the basis for a revolt by nationalists.³

Egyptian nationalism could be subdivided into three groups. The first group was made up of Islamic modernists and included young clerics at Al-Azhar University in Cairo. The second group were so-called constitutionalists, who were members of the European-educated new middle classes, which had arisen during the economic changes, which had happened under the Khedivates of Said and Ismail. The third group, which led the revolt from 1881–1882 included Arab military officers who particularly opposed the privileged status of officers of Turkish-Cherkessk origin.⁴

The rebellion began on 9 September 1881, when army units led by Ahmed Arabi Pasha demonstrated in front of the Khedive's Abdeen Palace. It was mainly Great Britain and France, which became involved, in the Egyptian problem. From the beginning of Arabi's revolt, Britain had one objective, which was to gain full control over the whole country.⁵ Both countries also considered the unrest in the country to be a direct threat to their financial interests in Egypt, and so it was decided that a combined fleet would be sent to Egyptian waters. The first major unrest occurred on 11 June 1882 in Alexandria, and a month later, 11 July 1882, when British Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, later Lord Alcaister, began bombardment of Alexandria. In the meantime, the French parliament refused to approve French participation in military intervention, and France withdrew from further action in the whole matter. Subsequently, the British army landed in Alexandria, essentially beginning the British occupation of Egypt. Arabi Pasha's revolt was definitively defeated by British General Wolseley on 13 September 1882 at the Battle of Tel el-Kebir. Arabi Pasha and his officers surrendered in the days after the battle and were exiled to Ceylon.

Arabi's defeat led to the defeat of the nationalist movement, which was suppressed for a whole decade.⁶ The movement only experienced a resurgence with the arrival of the new Khedive, Tewfik's sixteen-year-old son, Abbas II who ruled until 1914.⁷ After suppression of the revolt, Egypt was temporarily occupied by Great Britain, but it essentially became a part of the British Empire, even though it was formally a part of

2 S. HOFMANN, "... die glühendste Sommerhitze konnte mir nichts anhaben": Österreichisch-Ungarische Kolonien in Ägypten bis 1914, Wien 2000, pp. 16–18.

3 A. SONBOL (Ed.), *The Last Khedive of Egypt: Memoirs of Abbas Hilmi II*, Reading 1998, p. 45.

4 J. KURZREITER, *Österreich-Ungarn und die Ägyptische Frage 1881–88*, Wien 1994, pp. 16–17.

5 SONBOL, pp. 47–48.

6 W. MOMMSEN, *Imperialismus in Ägypten: Der Aufstieg der ägyptischen nationalen Bewegung: 1805–1956*, München, Wien 1961, p. 85.

7 A. L. AL-SAYYID MARSOT, *A History of Egypt: From the Arab Conquest to the Present*, Cambridge 2007, pp. 90–91.

the Ottoman Empire and paid the Sultan an annual tribute. Executive power continued to remain in the hands of the Khedive. Despite this, it was neither the Khedive nor the Egyptian government, which held real power, but rather the British Consul-General who was subject to the Foreign Minister in London. A number of men held this position between 1882 and 1914; Sir Edward Baldwin Malet from 1879 to 1883, Sir Evelyn Baring from 1883 to 1907 (Lord Cromer from 1892), Sir John Eldon Gorst from 1907 to 1911 and Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener after him from 1911 until 1914.

Austria-Hungary was very well informed of events in Egypt through its consulates. A particularly significant incident occurred in the village of Denshawai, through which British officers were travelling, five of whom went off to shoot pigeons. During the shooting, a woman was injured and subsequently died, and this led the villagers to mob the officers. The British officers went on the attack and Captain Bull was later found unconscious on the path and subsequently died. Two other officers were seriously injured. The British arrested many of the villagers and the case was sent to a special court which sat in Shibein-Al-Koum presided over by Boutros Pasha Ghali.⁸ The tribunal, made up of 51 accused sentenced four villagers to death by hanging, two to life imprisonment, one to fifteen years imprisonment, two to seven years imprisonment, three to one year imprisonment, five to fifty lashes, and the rest were freed.⁹ In the aftermath of the incident, the British occupying army in Egypt was strengthened. British Secretary of State for War, Richard Burton Haldane, announced the act in the House of Commons, along with an increase in numbers of the occupying army in Egypt and Sudan by up to 57,000 men. The new units were to be transported from Crete and Britain and were to become a part of the Egyptian occupying army.¹⁰

The Denshawai Incident became a symbol of British oppression and inspired a wave of protests and demonstrations. It wasn't only the nationalists, but also their supporters in the British parliament, who asked for their pardon or for partial life sentences on parole. In the end, their request was granted and on 8 January 1908 on the occasion of the new Khedive's accession to the throne, a full pardon was granted to all those punished without exception.¹¹

In November 1908, Prime Minister Moustafa Fahmi Pasha resigned for health reasons. After discussions with Consul-General Sir Eldon Gorst, the Khedive appointed Boutros Pasha Ghali to the vacant position, which he held while keeping his position as Foreign Minister.¹² He was assassinated on 20 February 1910 when he left his office to get into a vehicle, which was waiting for him. He was hit by a revolver five times from close proximity. Four bullets caused minor injuries, but the last hit his stomach and proved fatal. After arrival at hospital where he was operated on, he died of his

⁸ M. AHMED (Ed.), *Egypt in the 20th Century: Chronology of Major Events*, London 2003, pp. 18–19.

⁹ Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Abteilung Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (henceforth HH-StA), Politisches Archiv (henceforth PA), XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 24 (Ägypten 1906–1907), Schreiben an Grafen Gofuchowski von Graf Anton Stadnicki, Alexandrien, June 1, 1906.

¹⁰ HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 24, Schreiben an Grafen Gofuchowski von Graf Anton Stadnicki, Alexandrien, August 4, 1906.

¹¹ HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 25 (Ägypten 1908–1910), Schreiben an Alois Freiherrn Lexa von Aehrenthal von Graf Thaddaus Bolesta-Koziebrodzki, Cairo, January 1, 1908.

¹² AHMED, p. 24.

injuries the next morning. The assassination was committed by 24-year old Egyptian, Ibrahim Nassif al-Wardani,¹³ who was sentenced to death by court on 18 May.¹⁴ The sentence was carried out on 28 June 1910 in Cairo.¹⁵

In March 1910, former President of the United States of America, Theodor Roosevelt, visited Egypt, staying a few days in Cairo after finishing a hunting expedition in Africa. During his stay there, he was invited to the Egyptian University, where he held a lecture on the development of national universities and the future development of political life in Egypt.¹⁶

That same year, assassinations by revolver in Egypt became more widespread. On 10 April 1910, a German named Goldstein wanted to take revenge on his boss, the Prefect of Police because he was dismissed from service for misconduct and drunkenness. He shot at him, but the bullet missed the prefect. Two days later, an officer high up in the Egyptian railway authority, Mr M Ramondi, was shot by a job seeker because he wasn't accepted due to insufficient experience. The would-be assassin fired a number of times, but only injured Ramondi on his hands and arms, while one bullet went astray and hit the hand of another Egyptian officer present in the room. The would-be assassin was arrested and handed over to the local authorities for punishment.¹⁷

Another affair to occur in Egypt was the uncovering of a nationalist plot in Cairo, which was discovered in early July 1912. Its objective was to murder the Khedive, Lord Kitchener and the Prime Minister. Three conspirators were immediately jailed, while a fourth got away and couldn't be found. A man who was friends with the conspirators was later also jailed. This was followed by numerous interrogations and house searches.¹⁸ On 14 August, a judgement on the four accused was pronounced. Iman Wakid was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment with hard labour, and Thar el Arabi and Abdul Salaam to 15 years imprisonment.¹⁹ The final accused was released.²⁰

In April 1914, Khedive Abbas II Hilmi set off on his private yacht, Mahrousa, for his annual summer travels in Europe, during which he planned to spend Ramadan in Constantinople.²¹ During his travels on 28 June 1914, Franz Ferdinand d'Este was assassinated. International tensions escalated and resulted in the outbreak of the First

13 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 25, Schreiben an Graf Aehrenthal von Graf L. Széchenyi, Cairo, February 23, 1910.

14 AHMED, p. 35.

15 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 25, Schreiben an Graf Aehrenthal von Graf L. Széchenyi, Cairo, July 2, 1910.

16 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 25, Schreiben an Graf Aehrenthal von Graf L. Széchenyi, Cairo, April 1, 1910.

17 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 25, Schreiben an Graf Aehrenthal von Graf L. Széchenyi, Cairo, April 12, 1910.

18 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 26 (Ägypten 1911-1917), Schreiben an Graf Berchtold von Graf F. Hoyos, San Stefano, July 18, 1912.

19 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 26 (Ägypten 1911-1917), Schreiben an Graf Berchtold von Graf F. Hoyos, San Stefano, August 15, 1912.

20 AHMED, p. 43.

21 HHStA, PA, XXXI Ägypten, Kt. 26 (Ägypten 1911-1917), Schreiben an Graf Berchtold von Graf L. Széchenyi, Bulkeley, May 27, 1914.

World War. Once Turkey had entered the war, the Khedive, who was still in Istanbul, issued a declaration in which he dissolved his government, promised a constitution for his people and called on them to revolt against the British. The British were faced with the question of how to deal with Egypt. In the end, Great Britain issued a declaration on 18 December 1914 on Egypt's secession from the Ottoman Empire, becoming a British protectorate and Sultanate. As such, Egypt was ruled directly by the British Foreign Secretary, and in place of the previous Consul-General, the office of High Commissioner was established. The next day, Khedive Abbas II Hilmi was deposed. On 20 December 1914, the post of Khedive was replaced by Sultan, a position taken by Hussein Kamel.²²

CONSULAR RELATIONS

The Habsburgs first expressed interest in the Egyptian Nile around 1740. In 1750, Ahmed Pasha, Governor of Egypt, approved the establishment of consulates at Mediterranean ports, leading to the appointment of the first Austrian Vice-Consul, Franz Agostini in Alexandria in 1763. To begin with, he held office without the approval of the Sublime Porte, but in 1781 he gained official recognition which gave him the right to use the Imperial flag on the consulate building.²³

From 1792, a Consulate General was established in Cairo, a position held by Carlo di Rosetti, while from 1810 the office in Alexandria was run by Anton Godard, then Franz Champion after his death in 1817. In 1819, the consulates moved their headquarters. The Consulate General was moved to Alexandria, and the Vice-Consulate to Cairo. In the same year, Georg Cavacco was named the new Consul-General. This exchange of headquarters was done because under the government of Muhammad Ali the economic and political centre of gravity moved to Alexandria. Besides these two offices, a Vice Consulate was formed in Damietta, and a Consular Agency in Rosetta.²⁴

After reforms in the consular structure in the Levant in 1846, the Consulate General was in Alexandria, the Vice-Consulate in Cairo and Damietta and the Consular Agency in Rosetta and Suez. In 1869, a few months before the opening of the Suez Canal, a Diplomatic Agency was established in Cairo, with its head being named as Gustav Schreiner, who had been Consul-General in Alexandria for many years. Only in 1891 were the Diplomatic Agency in Cairo and the Consulate General for Egypt in Alexandria formally separated, with the previous Consulate General in Alexandria becoming a Consulate. In 1869, a Consulate was set up and put into operation in Port Said, and its first Consul was Josef von Stefenelli.²⁵

In the end, the offices in Damietta, Rosetta, Al-Qusayr and Tanta-Mahalla were closed during the 19th century. In 1914, the network of Imperial and Royal representa-

²² AHMED, p. 51.

²³ R. AGSTNER, *Die Habsburger-Monarchie und Ägypten: Eine Bestandaufnahme*, in: *Österreich und Ägypten: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Beziehungen vom 18. Jahrhundert bis 1918*, Kairo 1993, p. 8.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 8–9.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 10–11.

tives in Egypt included the Diplomatic Agency together with the Consulate General in Cairo, Work Consulate in Cairo with subordinate Consular Agencies in Ghirga, Qena, Luxor, Minya and Assyut, the Consulate in Alexandria with subordinate Vice-Consulate in Mansoura and the Consulate in Port Said with subordinate Vice-Consulate in Suez and Consular Agency in Ismailia. After the outbreak of the First World War and Austria-Hungary's alliance with the Central Powers, Consular officers were expelled from Egypt by the British occupying army's high command on 10 September 1914. As such, Austria-Hungary's official presence in Egypt came to an end.²⁶

BUSINESS RELATIONS

There are clear Austrian attempts at beginning trade with Egypt from 1750. In 1768, discussions began between the Egyptian Company (Ägyptische Compagnie) and traders in Trieste, whose partners were Counts Kinsky and Bolza. Although the company didn't survive, it was from this point onwards that trade between the Austrian coast and Egypt began to develop — with textile goods, copper and lead being exported.²⁷

After the European Revolutions of 1848, but also in 1849 and 1850, Austrian exports began to gradually increase. It was mostly agricultural products, draught and beef cattle, wood and sugar, which were exported, along with textile, glass, paper and iron goods. It was the era of the first mountain railway, the so-called Semmeringbahn, and the construction of the Port of Trieste. Capital flowed from abroad to Austria and large industry flourished, particular in the manufacture of steel, textiles and chemicals.²⁸

Austrian export to Egypt grew by more than 4.5 times from 1874 to 1911 (from 462,000 to 1,988,000 Egyptian pounds). Export first doubled by 1885, and then fell in 1886 as a result of a number of factors, specifically revolution, poor crops and a cholera epidemic. Export then stagnated until 1899, following which it had tripled by 1907.²⁹

Egypt increased its total imports from abroad. England was dominant, with an average share of around 40% of imports to Egypt. The second largest importer was the Ottoman Empire, which from a stable 20% in 1896 fell to 10% in 1907, just ahead of France, which had maintained the same level for many years. Austria's share of imports fell from 1887 to 7%, putting the Austrian monarchy behind France. Ready-to-wear clothing made up 20% of Austria's exports to Egypt, with construction timber around 15% and sugar between 3 and 9%.³⁰

Austrian imports from Egypt increased hugely between 1874 and 1911 (from 462,000 to 1,430,000 Egyptian pounds). They remained relatively stable until 1901, only then doubling by 1910. Almost 55% of Egyptian goods went to England, with Eng-

26 Ibidem, pp. 26–27.

27 M. PURKHART, *Österreichs Handel mit Ägypten*, in: *Egypt and Austria V: Egypt's Heritage in Europe*, Koper 2009, p. 185.

28 HOFMANN, p. 31.

29 PURKHART, p. 187.

30 Ibidem.

land's share falling from 70% in 1884 to 50% in 1911. In second position was Russia and France with an average of 8%. Eventually, Russia began increasing imports from Egypt, exceeding France's value, which remained constant. Austria kept fourth place with an average 5%, although it reached a peak of 8% in 1899. Despite this, Austria was behind Italy until 1894, and behind the USA and Germany from 1896/97, which acquired their share from zero within just a few years.³¹

Both countries traded extensively together and cotton, mineral water, clothing, fezzes, beer, refrigerators, iron stoves and cars belonged to their main business items. After the outbreak of the civil war in the USA, American cotton disappeared from global markets. For other countries, the cotton shortage opened up the opportunity to break into the market, and Egypt also embraced the opportunity, becoming the world's main cotton producer. It was only after the collapse of the American cotton market that Egypt becomes a country of economic interest, for Europeans in particular who were looking for cheap raw materials for their cotton-mills.³²

By the turn of the century, Austria-Hungary was already exporting mineral water to Egypt. In a report sent to Vienna, Austro-Hungarian authorities in Cairo stressed that mineral water imports had been neglected. The report further explained that demand for the product had increased as a result of greater prosperity and possibly also greater awareness of the danger of drinking water from the Nile, which, while it tasted good, incurred the possibility of becoming infected with typhoid or other diseases. The report also stated that Austria-Hungary was the third largest importer of mineral water after England and France.³³

In 1912, the Consul issued a report on the economic conditions and business relations between Egypt and Austria-Hungary and its dominant position, particularly in the area of clothing. The report said that the monarchy had been involved in the clothing trade for many years. In contrast to 1910, when profits were £295,000, in 1911 profits increased to £345,000. In 1913, products from Austria-Hungary made up 29% of all Egyptian imports of ready-to-wear clothing, with 17% from Great Britain, 14% from Germany and the rest mainly coming from France and Italy.³⁴

For a long time, fezzes were the Turkish national hat. These cylindrical red felt hats get their name from the Moroccan city of Fes, which at one time had an almost exclusive monopoly on this headgear. The plant from which the red dye was obtained for colouring the felt came from this region. With the discovery of artificial dyes, other countries also began production of fezzes. In the years prior to 1914, Austria-Hungary exported such a large number of fezzes that 80% of fezzes sold were made in Austria. The quality of the Austrian product was very high. The remaining 20% were made in Tunisia, Algeria, Turkey and Italy.³⁵

Austria-Hungary controlled two thirds of the Egyptian draught beer market. Anton Dreher'schen operated breweries in Alexandria, for which he had a warehouse, which was filled each week with goods arriving on the Lloyd steamship from Trieste.

31 Ibidem, p. 188.

32 HOFMANN, pp. 31–32.

33 Ibidem, p. 32.

34 Ibidem, pp. 32–34.

35 Ibidem, pp. 33–34.

Two breweries were put into operation in Cairo in 1912, “die Brasserie des Pyramides” and “Crown Brewery”, which manufactured lager and Munich-style dark beer. Hops were imported solely from Austria-Hungary for beer production. In 1913, beer imports to Egypt from Austria-Hungary comprised: 73,963 barrels of draught beer and 5,856 dozen bottled beers; from England: 22,158 barrels of draught beer and 73,700 dozen bottled beers; and from Germany: 15,900 barrels of draught beer and 47,952 dozen bottled beers.³⁶

Household items were also imported to Egypt from Austro-Hungarian producers. In 1912, Austrian factories produced the largest number of refrigerators for Egypt. Iron stoves were mainly from France and were generally reliable, although Austrian ones were usually made from lighter materials. With the development of the automobile industry, vehicles were imported to Egypt, with the first arriving in 1911 as a batch of six.³⁷

Beside goods from Austria-Hungary to Egypt also businessmen arrived who founded department stores. These department stores which operated in Egypt were mainly owned by people of Jewish origin. Both migrants and local Jewish traders had built a number of large department stores with numerous branches in Egypt's cities, as well as other important cities such as Constantinople and Thessaloniki.³⁸ With growing trade, Austrian businessmen began opening branches in Egypt. In the mid-19th century, there were 28 Austrian department stores and four retailers in Cairo, two Austrian department stores in Alexandria and half of Egyptian maritime trade was operated using Austrian and Tuscan boats.³⁹ The best-know department stores were Kirchmayer, Albert Mayer & Co., Orosdi-Back, Stein's Oriental Store and Victor Tiring & Frères.

On 1 January 1906, Rudolf and Andreas Kirchmayer founded an import and order store under the name “Rudolf Kirchmayer & Co.”. Their company was registered in the Commercial Register in Cairo under the number 8. At the same time, they founded a branch of a company of the same name in Vienna on 23 February 1906, which they registered in Vienna, with the main object of trade being miscellaneous goods. This Viennese branch, however, was closed in October 1908 because trade in Egypt was doing better. In Egypt, the company operated two branches of its department store, one in Cairo, where customers could order suitcases, pianos and furniture, and a second in Alexandria at Mohammed Ali Square 10. Everything changed with the start of the First World War. Approval was needed to trade, limiting trade and leading the business to gradually shut down. The British considered the store an enemy company, and it was definitively shut down in 1920. Kirchmayer returned to Vienna that year, and moved to Mödling where he died in April 1925.⁴⁰

Sigmund Mayer was born on 12 December 1831 as the son of a textile merchant in Bratislava. In 1854, Mayer arrived in Vienna as the head of one branch of his father's business. In 1866, he founded a limited partnership with his brother Albert,

36 Ibidem, p. 35.

37 Ibidem, p. 36.

38 Ibidem, p. 94.

39 PURKHART, p. 186.

40 HOFMANN, pp. 94–96.

a trader in Cairo, which was to deal in the sale of clothing. The company's headquarters were acquired in Alexandria and it had one branch in Vienna. In 1878, the company became a public company headquartered in Vienna with branches in Alexandria, Cairo, Constantinople and Salonica. Its stores offered suit-making, shirts, ties, travelling clothes, hats and other goods. The company did well during the war, as it was given permission to trade by Great Britain and its allies. Sigmund Meyer died in Vienna in October 1920, and the company continued to trade until the 1930s.⁴¹

Leon Orosdi and Hermann de Surányi founded the public company "Orosdi, Back & Cie." as business associates. It was headquartered in Vienna, and they had a department store in Alexandria on Mohammed Ali Square, where the Kirchmayer and Mayer stores stood. Two further branches were set up in Cairo, and one in Mouski. Their stores offered customers cutlery, hats, fabrics, underwear, perfumes, woollen goods, clocks and jewellery. After the war broke out, the company wasn't shut down because it was officially registered in Paris. In 1924 the Vienna part was closed, but it continued to operate in Egypt until 1956 when the company was nationalised as part of President Nasser's nationalisation policy, and the company became part of the state-owned "Omar Effendi" chain-store.⁴²

In April 1844, Salomon Stein was born, and 19 years later he founded a small store in Cairo which offered ready-to-wear clothing. In 1869, a son, Doro, was born to Salomon. Salomon was the sole owner of the company between 1871 and 1875. He founded a branch in Alexandria in 1875, also on Mohammed Ali Square, and another branch was opened in Mouski. When Salomon Stein died in 1889, his son Doro took over the company. He shut down the branch in Mouski and hired out an exhibition hall at 31 Kasr el Nil street which was centrally positioned in Cairo. In 1904, he charged Viennese architect, Friedrich Schön with building a large department store on Ataba El Khadra Square in Cairo, and he designed the "Grande Fabrique S Stein" for him. The building had a number of departments with 180 sales assistants who were to look after customers, and provided clothing for men, women and children. The first floor, accessible only by electric elevator, contained the men's and boy's departments, the second floor contained workshops, which made ready-to-wear suits and tailor-made suits and storage. The women's and children's departments were located on the ground floor together with fashion accessories. Two generators ensured full electric lighting. Although the company was sold to the English firm "Morums & Young" in 1913, it was shut down in 1920. Doro Stein died in December 1940 in Vienna.⁴³

Victor Tiring was born in February 1849 in Constantinople, and he moved to Vienna as a Turkish clothes producer. When he received Austrian citizenship in Vienna in 1881, he founded the public company "Victor Tiring & Brüder" that same year with his brothers Dr Gustav Tiring (a lawyer in Livorno) and Conrad (a trader in Constantinople), having its headquarters in Vienna. In 1912, he founded a branch in Cairo. During the First World War, restrictions were placed on the Cairo store, which was finally shut down in 1920.⁴⁴

41 Ibidem, pp. 97–98.

42 Ibidem, p. 99.

43 Ibidem, pp. 100–102.

44 Ibidem, p. 103.

MUTUAL VISITS

While Genoa and Venice had been using their ports for importing goods from the east and transporting them inland, the city of Trieste remained cut off from northern countries because of the Alps. This situation was changed by Emperor Charles VI, who built a railway line bearing his name from inland to the coast, going from Vienna via Semmering, Graz, and Ljubljana to Trieste. It wasn't until the 1830s that the conditions were right for growth in travel and freight transport, a result of the use of steam engines, and not just on the railways, which allowed people and cargo to be transported long distances and at short intervals.⁴⁵

The easiest route to Egypt was across the sea. A few months before it was founded in 1837, Austrian transport company Lloyd (Österreichische Lloyd) began operating regular boat transport between Trieste and Alexandria.⁴⁶ This was a joint-stock company headed by Baron Salomon Rothschild (1774–1855). Austrian Lloyd, which established business and tourist transport on the route, signed a contract with Austrian Imperial and Royal Post in 1837 for postal delivery. This postal service was of great importance, no less so from the perspective of Austrian diplomatic relations, as Vienna had acquired a tool for spreading its influence across the Levant.⁴⁷

Beginning in 1851, travellers had the opportunity to undertake a four-day journey to Alexandria with Austrian Lloyd steamships twice a month.⁴⁸ Lloyd boats were the fastest and surest link between Egypt and Europe until 1914. Lloyd steamships left Trieste every Thursday at 11:30 am, and arrived in Brindisi on Friday around 1:00 pm, from where they left for Alexandria after an hour's rest, arriving there on Monday at 6:00 am. Passengers had the opportunity to transfer to another Lloyd route in Alexandria, which headed to Constantinople via Port Said, Jaffa, Beirut and Smyrna. A first-class Lloyd steamship ticket cost 130.35 Gulden and a second-class ticket cost 88.70 Gulden. The Trieste-Alexandria route used the fastest ships and most experienced captains Austrian Lloyd had to offer.⁴⁹

Despite the high prices, journeys were often sold out, as Austrian Lloyd was famed for its punctuality, efficiency and reliability. Furthermore, it was known for its outstanding cooking. First-class passengers could look forward to breakfasts of rolls and eggs, naturally served with tea or coffee. In contrast, brunch at 11am was made up of two hot meals, cheese, fruit, bread and coffee. Tea was served until 4pm, and at round 6:30pm passengers could look forward to an extensive dinner made up of soups, four hot meals, salad, cakes, cheese, fruit, rolls and coffee. At around eight in the evening, they were able to take tea with milk and bread with butter. Second-class passengers received the same menu, but there were a smaller number

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 43.

⁴⁶ AGSTNER, p. 21.

⁴⁷ R. MÍŠEK, *The Oriental Policy of Hapsburg Monarchy in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century and Anton Prokesch von Osten as Its Remarkable Diplomat*, in: *Egypt and Austria I: Proceedings of the Symposium*; Institute of Egyptology, August 31st to September 2nd, 2004, Praha 2005, pp. 88–89.

⁴⁸ HOFMANN, p. 43.

⁴⁹ AGSTNER, pp. 21–22.

of hot meals. In third-class, passengers had to pay to be able to enjoy the meals, as did the crew.⁵⁰

Just as it is today, Egypt was a popular destination for travellers, although it was just for the upper classes to begin with. Of the Austrian elite, Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian visited Egypt in the 1850s, as did Emperor Franz Joseph I to take part in the official opening of the Suez Canal in 1869. Another important visit was that of Crown Prince Rudolf in 1881. Empress Elisabeth herself, who enjoyed travelling, visited the cities of Port Said, Ismailia and Alexandria between 22 and 24 October 1885. She returned to Egypt, this time for a longer visit, in November 1891. Archduke Otto, father of the last Austrian Emperor, also often stayed in Egypt for hunting trips.⁵¹

After Rudolf, Franz Ferdinand d'Este became heir to the throne. He went to Egypt to find relief from his tuberculosis. When his health had worsened in 1895, his doctor had ordered him to stay in Egypt in the autumn of that year. Franz Ferdinand moved into Hotel Gezirah in Cairo. He was personally convinced his illness couldn't be cured, and as such he set out to have fun in place of treatment. He visited numerous sites with Archduke Eugen (1863–1954) and Count Felix Thun (1842–1898) who were also in Cairo, and spent nights at cabarets, leading to a worsening of his health. In the end, he listened to his doctor's orders and spent a number of months on a Dahabeah. He spent Christmas 1895 in Edfu, then spent one month on the island of Elephantine. His health finally improved in Aswan, and as a result he was able to return to Austria. He also went to Egypt with his wife, Sophie of Hohenberg in spring 1903.⁵²

Many different people from various social classes arrived also in Egypt from Austria-Hungary. Some as travellers, others as architects, or painters, while others went straight into service for the Khedive himself as doctors or administrators.

Rudolf Karl von Slatin (Vienna 1857 — Merano 1932) was governor of the Sudanese province of Darfur, and from 1900 to 1914 held the office of General Inspector in Sudan. He was awarded the title of Pasha for his service to the Khedive. Another, unfortunately forgotten, servant of the Khedive was Julius Blum (Budapest 1843 — Vienna 1919). This financial expert began working in the 1860s for Credit Anstalt für Handel und Gewerbe, was its representative in Egypt and ran its subsidiary, the Austro-Egyptian Bank, which was however shut down in 1876. Subsequent to this, Blum worked for Egypt's Ministry of Finance. Between 1876 and 1890 he was deputy to the Minister of Finance and was the father of Egypt's economic miracle. In 1890, he returned to Vienna to Creditanstalt, where he was its president from 1913 until his death. As did Rudolf Carl von Slatin boasted the title of Pasha.⁵³

The Egyptian Khedives found a preference for Austrian doctors in their court. Their interest probably arose as a result of the fact that at that time there was a world-renowned medicine school in Vienna. Dr Johann (Hans) Tobias Anton Ritter von Becker (Vienna 1850 — Fischau 1927) began work in 1893 as head physician of the Austro-Hungarian hospital in Cairo, then as Austro-Hungarian court and consular

50 HOFMANN, pp. 44–45.

51 AGSTNER, pp. 16–18.

52 Ibidem, pp. 17–18.

53 Ibidem, p. 23.

doctor and principal doctor for Khedive Abbas II Hilmi. His successor from 1894 to 1914 was Dr Anton Kautzky Bey (Vienna 1867 — Vienna 1944).⁵⁴

Another Austrian who worked in Egypt was Alphons Leopold Mielich (Klosterneuburg 1863 — Salzburg 1929). He had to cut short his military career in 1887, and he moved to Egypt to recuperate in 1889, a move of vital importance for his career as an artist, because he visited it another eleven times before the outbreak of the First World War. His pictures include “Sphinx und die Pyramiden bei Giza” and “Ägyptischer Andenkenverkäufer”.⁵⁵

Alois Musil (Rychtářov u Vyškova 1868 — Otryby u Českého Štenberka 1944) was a well-known Austro-Hungarian traveller in the Orient, including Egypt. He worked there mapping the land and preparing cartographic maps, and he was also the author of various books, articles and studies of Egypt (From Creation to the Flood, On the Trails of Events of the Old Testament, The Rosetta Stone, First Egyptian Mention of the Israelites, Pharaoh of the Exodus, The Exodus and Mount Sinai, The Gift of the Nile, Christian Churches of the Modern Orient and many more).⁵⁶

Antonio Lasciac was born on 21 September 1856 in Görz as the son of a tanner. After completing school in Görz, he went to study in Vienna. In 1882 he went to Alexandria, where he built “Galerie Menasce”, inspired by “Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II” in Milan. He was given the job of building the Sheria Salah Salem complex of buildings, still standing in Alexandria today, as well as many other buildings, palaces and villas. In 1889, he left Egypt and began working in Rome, where he remained until 1897 when he returned to Cairo. In 1898, he built “Club des Princes”, the first building standing in Sharia Imad ad-Din. After completing plans for Prince Djelala Pasha’s palace, Lasciac was named Khedive Abbas II Hilmi’s chief architect, and was also given the title Bey. He built a palace in Alexandria and Constantinople for Khedive Abbas II Hilmi, a palace in Cairo for Adly Pasha and Prince Kamel el Din, and between 1908 and 1909, the “Salamlik des Prinzen Omar Sultan” building in Cairo. He built the Sharia As-Sarafian department store in Cairo in 1910, and the Al-Imara al-Hidiwiye building. For the family of murdered Boutros Pasha Ghali, he built the Coptic Orthodox Church of St Peter and Paul (El-Boutrossia) in Cairo, where Boutros Pasha Ghali is buried. After the outbreak of the First World War, he had to leave Egypt, and he lived in Rome. He returned to Egypt in the 1920s, where he continued to work as an architect. During the Second World War he lived in Görz, and he returned for the last time to Egypt in September 1946, dying there on 26 December 1946.⁵⁷

Eduard Matasek was born in Vienna in 1867 as the son of a local builder. Although he never studied architecture, he gained experience in construction during his work

54 Ibidem, pp. 23–24.

55 A. BLASCHEK, *Österreichische Orientalmaler als Reisebegleiter berühmter Persönlichkeiten im 19. Jh.*, in: Egypt and Austria I: Proceedings of the Symposium; Institute of Egyptology, August 31st to September 2nd, 2004, Praha 2005, pp. 25–27.

56 M. VESELÁ — P. ŽĎÁRSKÝ, *Alois Musil and Egypt*, in: Egypt and Austria V: Egypt’s Heritage in Europe, Koper 2009, pp. 89–117.

57 M. STERN, *Österreich-Ungarns Beitrag zur Architektur in Ägypten am Beispiel von drei Architekten*, in: Österreich und Ägypten: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Beziehungen vom 18. Jahrhundert bis 1918, Kairo 1993, pp. 60–63.

for his father. In 1888, he joined the construction company of two architects, Fellner and Helmer, where he worked as a designer. In 1892, the Egyptian government concluded an agreement with Fellner and Helmer to design the Egyptian exhibits for the World Exhibition in Chicago. The task was assigned to Matasek, who as a result went to Cairo in 1892 where he set about reconstructing Cairo's streets for exhibition. After his task was done, he decided to stay in Cairo and set up his own construction company, Cattau & Matasek, which he founded together with his Austro-Hungarian protégé, Maurice Cattau. Beginning in 1900, the company built office buildings, schools, hospitals and buildings everywhere in Cairo for many Egyptians and foreigners. In 1905, Matasek built the Sha'ar Hashamayim Synagogue in Adly Street, and in 1909 built a villa for himself in Maadi. In 1912, Matasek stayed in Salzburg before returning to Alexandria where he stayed in the Excelsior hotel, where he died on 31 October 1912. His last creation was the 'Austro-Hungarian Rudolf Hospital at Shubra', opened in April 1913.⁵⁸

Another builder was Karl Schejnoha, who originally worked for Cattau & Matasek. Schejnoha was born in 1869 in Habry, Budweis (České Budějovice). He built a number of buildings in Maadi until 1914 such as 'Villa Austria', and after Matasek's death he founded his own construction company.⁵⁹

Although he wasn't born within Austro-Hungary, and remained a German citizen until his death, Julius Franz is often known as an Austro-Hungarian architect because he acquired his education in Vienna, and lived for almost 20 years in Graz. After a short period working for Professor Ludwig Christian Friedrich Förster's architecture and construction office, he went to Egypt for health reasons in 1855. In 1863, he was named Khedive Ismail's court architect, received the title of Bey in 1869, and ten years later became building director for church estate in the Ministry for Public Building, and was also entrusted by Khedive Ismail to found the Arab Museum, becoming its head from 1887. He also began work on protecting and maintaining Islamic buildings and artworks, which until then had been neglected. From 1871, he ran the Ecole Polytechnique architecture courses in Cairo, resulting in the founding of the Ecole d'Irrigation et d'Architecture in 1886. He was a member of 'Comité de conservation des monuments de l'arte arabe' in Cairo from 1882, whose task was to renew damaged buildings, giving them professional restoration. In 1885, he acquired the title of Pasha, and in 1888 became director of 'Technischen Büros' at the Ministry of Culture. He lived together with his wife in Graz from 1897, where he died on 20 March 1915.⁶⁰

A builder who mainly worked in Cairo and was born in Jägerndorf (today Krnov, Czech Republic) — the Silesian part of Austria, was Oskar Horowitz. He studied at Vienna's Institute of Technology and then went to Cairo. His most-well known works include the Victor Tiring & Brüder department store for Austrian trader Victor Tiring. The building is still today used for wholesale, and at the top of the building's dome

58 J. HOLAUBEK, *Austrian Architects on the Nile (1869–1914)*, in: *Egypt and Austria I: Proceedings of the Symposium; Institute of Egyptology, August 31st to September 2nd, 2004, Praha 2005*, pp. 51–52.

59 *Ibidem*, p. 52.

60 STERN, pp. 54–56.

there are four statues of Hercules holding the Earth. Stein's Cairo branch was built at the same location as Victor Tiring & Brüder's department store, with a stunning 50-metre long glass frontage. This building was designed by Friedrich Schön, who was born in 1857. In 1904, he first built the headquarters of Salomon Stein's textile company in Vienna, and over subsequent years designed the department store on Ataba Square in Cairo.⁶¹

One of the most significant architects of the 20th century also worked in Egypt — Adolf Loos, born on 10 December 1870 in Brno. He became a well-known pioneer of modern architecture and in 1910 submitted a project he had drawn up for the Stein department store in Alexandria. Unfortunately, his design was never implemented.⁶²

In 1891, when part of Abdeen Palace burnt down, Khedive Tewfik turned to Karl von Hasenauer to renovate and expand the building. He had a lot of work in Vienna, so he entrusted his 19-year old student, Joseph Urban to the task of renovating the palace. Giovanni Miclavac, born in Trieste in 1855 also worked in Alexandria. After his studies, he went to work in Egypt, where he built the offices for the Austro-Hungarian Consulate.⁶³

Miksa (Max) Herz was born in Ottlaka in the Hungarian part of Banat on 19 May 1856. After the death of his mother, the family moved Timisoara. He studied architecture in Budapest and Vienna. The family invited him to accompany them to Italy and Egypt, where he finally joined the technical office of the Ministry of Culture, run by Julius Franz, on the proposal of the Egyptian government. He also worked as Julius Franz's assistant in the "Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe" in Cairo, and became Franz's successor and also main conservationist for historic Arab buildings after Franz's retirement. In 1890, he became a member of the "Comité international des monuments — Section d'orient", a year later became member of the Egyptian Institute, and on 20 April 1892 was given the job of running the Arab museum. He restored Medrese des Quait Bey, which dated to 1475, and the mausoleum of Sultan Qalawun and even Al-Rifai Mosque. As well as his official activities, he also worked privately as an architect in Cairo. He designed more than a hundred buildings of various styles, including "Bank el Ikari" and two large buildings on Opera Square. After the war broke out, he retired and was forced to leave Egypt. He first lived with his family in Milan, moving in September 1915 to Zurich after Italy entered the war, where he died on 5 May 1919.

On the other side Egyptians travelled also in Austria-Hungary from Egypt. They arrived in Austria-Hungary in three main ways: they were either servants, part of the entertainment industry or came for higher education. Foreigners were often taken into service as exotic beings. There were servants of African origin in Austria already by the 15th century. In later decades, the number of people arriving from Egypt or Egyptian Sudan in the Habsburg monarchy grew as the routes to Egypt expanded. Austrian tourists, explorers, traders and diplomats often returned home with a young boy, or more rarely a girl. Rudolf von Slatin, for example, was accompanied by two dark-skinned servants. The story of Mohamed Medlum Mazoum is an interesting

61 HOLAUBEK, pp. 52–53.

62 AGSTNER, p. 25.

63 HOLAUBEK, p. 53.

one. He was the servant of Viennese industrialist, Josef Weidman, who took the boy to Austria from one of his numerous trips to Egypt. When Weidman died in 1905, he left his fortune of 170,000 crowns to Mohamed. The locals said that this was revenge on his wife, who received the pittance remaining, for her extramarital affair. Medlum founded an import company with the money. He died an independent trader in February 1918.⁶⁴

The presence of exotic people used to be a form of entertainment, just as exotic animals were, particularly during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. This grew into a mass culture and there was growing trade with people of dark skin, unusual body sizes or unusual appearances, who were presented on stages and became a source of entertainment. As well as the ever-more-popular “monster shows”, people of exotic origin became part of circuses, animal charming shows, variety and other musical or theatrical performances. The Sarrasani circus, for example, pitched in the former Viennese park of Am Schüttel with its “Hadj Mohammed ben Alys weltberühmte Marokkanertruppe”.⁶⁵

The idea of acquiring European knowledge suitable for modernising the country was originally an Egyptian one, in particular under the reign of Muhammed Ali. At the same time, in doing so he created the impression in Europe that the Egyptian people could be educated and even civilised, which is why small groups of students were sent to Austria-Hungary. The first such students were there to obtain knowledge of industry and mining, and later they came to study the fields of medicine at the world-renowned medicine school in Vienna.⁶⁶ In 1913, the education minister issued statistics stating that 706 Egyptians were studying abroad, of which 4 were in Austria-Hungary.⁶⁷

CONCLUSION

For Austria-Hungary as well as Egypt mutual relations of these countries were very important and they developed on a few levels, although the land on the Nile was occupied by the Great Britain from 1882 to 1914. The Habsburgs had interest in this country as early as from the mid-17th century, at the time of the British occupation they had an extensive network of consulates and thanks to the Austrian shipping company, Lloyd Egypt was available via the Mediterranean Sea. This opportunity was utilized by the members of the House of Habsburg to state visits or holiday travels but also other people from Austria-Hungary, who used to arrive to Egypt not only for work. At this time development of business relations rose and in Egypt several important Austrian department stores (Kirchmayer, Albert Mayer & Co., Orosdi-Back, Stein's Oriental Store, Victor Tiring & Frères) were founded, having been in service

⁶⁴ W. SAUER, *Egyptian Migration to the Habsburg Empire in the 19th Century*, in: *Egypt and Austria III: The Danube Monarchy and the Orient; Proceedings of the Prague Symposium*, September 11th to 14th, 2006, Praha 2007, pp. 208–210.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 212–213.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 214–215.

⁶⁷ AHMED, p. 47.

until the end of World War I. Many architects from the Habsburg Monarchy had merit in building transformation of many Egyptian towns. To the most important of them belonged Antonio Lasciac, Eduard Matasek, Karl Schejnoha, Julius Franz, Oskar Horowitz, Adolf Loos, Joseph Urban, Giovanni Miclavec a Miksa (Max) Herz. The point that deserves interest was, that Egyptian Khedives required to have Austrian doctors on their court, whom were Dr. Johann (Hans) Tobias Anton Ritter von Becker and his successor Dr. Anton Kautzky Bey. Also the Egyptians travelled to the *Austro-Hungarian* Empire either in order to obtain education or in order to become servants or get involved in show business. It is with no doubt, that mutual relations were advantageous both for Austria-Hungary and Egypt and they had great influence on both countries, especially on Egypt.

ABSTRACT

The Habsburg Monarchy was quite active in Egypt at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. Although it had only slight political interest in this area it maintained here several consulates and monitored local events very carefully. It was because a lot of Austro-Hungarian trading houses established their presence in Egypt and the land on the Nile became an important economic partner of the Habsburg Monarchy. Vienna therefore tried to support this development and to promote good Austro-Egyptian relations. The interest of citizens of Austria-Hungary in Egypt was also demonstrated by a considerable number of Austrian residents and travellers in this country. On the other hand the Egyptians travelled to the Habsburg Monarchy (especially students) in order to learn European customs and science. The mutual relations had therefore importance for both countries.

KEYWORDS

Austria-Hungary; Egypt; Great Britain; Diplomacy; Trade; Economy; Travel

Michaela Mikešová | Departement of Historical Sciences, Faculty of Philosophy and Arts,
University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Tyllova 18, 301 24, Plzeň, Czech Republic
mi.mi89@seznam.cz