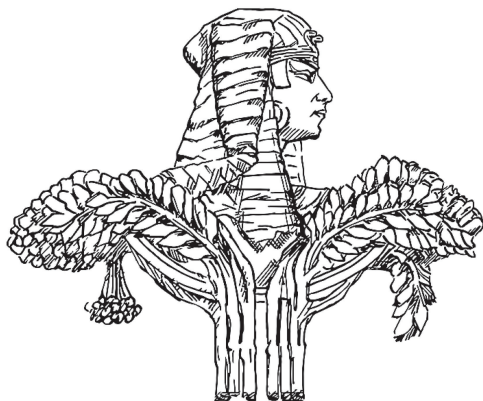


# Egypt and Austria XII



## **Egypt and the Orient: The Current Research**

Proceedings of the Conference held at  
the Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb  
(September 17th-22nd, 2018)

Edited by Mladen Tomorad

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# Egypt and Austria XII

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Faculty of Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb

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**Egypt and Austria**



**University of Zagreb  
Faculty of Croatian Studies**

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## CONTENTS

Egypt and Austria – Egypt and the Orient: Current Research .....	7
------------------------------------------------------------------	---

### CHAPTER 1: EARLY TRAVELLERS TO EGYPT AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Letters from Vienna: Richard Pococke en route to Egypt ( <i>Rachel Finnegan</i> ) .....	13
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Terryfying unreason or a model of toleration? Imagining Islam in Fictional Travelogues of Václav Matěj Kramerius ( <i>Lucie Storchová</i> ) .....	29
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Epidemics between Europe and Egypt in a rediscovered work of Giuseppe Nizzoli ( <i>Carlo Rindi Nuzzolo &amp; Irene Guidotti</i> ) .....	39
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

### CHAPTER 2: TRAVELLERS TO EGYPT AND THE ORIENT IN THE MIDDLE AND THE SECOND HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY

Jakov Šašel: The origins of his Travelogue ( <i>Sanda Kočevár</i> ) .....	49
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Carlo de Marchesetti: An Austrian botanist in the land of the pharaohs ( <i>Susanna Moser</i> ) .....	69
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Prokesch-Osten Jr (1837-1919) ( <i>Angela Blaschek</i> ) .....	89
----------------------------------------------------------------	----

The bombardment of Alexandria 1882 in the writings of Milan Jovanović Morski ( <i>Vera Vasiljević</i> ) .....	99
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Mária Fáy, the first Hungarian woman traveller and her journey to the Orient ( <i>Eszter Feró</i> ) .....	111
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

### CHAPTER 3: FORMATION OF EGYPTIAN COLLECTIONS

The Egyptian coffin and mummy of Stephan Delhaes and other mummies from Akhmim in Hungary ( <i>Éva Liptay</i> ) .....	127
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Oriental paintings in the former Keglević Château Topol'čianky ( <i>Marta Herucová</i> ) .....	143
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Aegyptiaca and an exhibition in Presburg/Bratislava in 1865 ( <i>Jozef Hudec</i> ) .....	167
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Egyptology in the Varaždin area: the contribution of the Bombelles family and the Paszhtory – Varady family ( <i>Anja Kovačič</i> ) .....	189
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

---

The Egyptian collection of the Museum of Slavonia and its donors ( <i>Marina Kovač</i> ).....	203
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

#### CHAPTER 4: EGYPT IN ART/ORIENTALIST ART

Carl Rudolf Huber and the temptation of the East (Ernst Czerny) .....	223
-----------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Adolf Loos's purchase in 1914: The story of Ivan Napotnik and his Egyptian woman ( <i>Vesna Kamin Kajfež</i> ).....	259
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

#### CHAPTER 5: TRAVELLERS TO EGYPT IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Fran Gundrum Oriovčanin's voyage from Križevci to Alexandria ( <i>Ivana Funda</i> ).....	267
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Fran Srećko Gundrum Oriovčanin in Luxor (4th-7th December 1902): The search for key comparative narratives in his diary ( <i>Mladen Tomorad</i> ) .....	273
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Gundrum's description of the construction and grand opening of the Old Aswan Dam in 1902 ( <i>Margareta Filipović-Srboj</i> ) .....	291
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

From Habsburg Galicia to the Ottoman Egypt. Impressions from A voyage to Egypt by Stanisław Trzeciak (1904) ( <i>Grzegorz First</i> ).....	299
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Karel Pečnik: A Slovenian physician in Egypt ( <i>Jaro Lajovic</i> ).....	313
---------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Ivan Meštrović's correspondence to Ruža Meštrović from Egypt and the Middle East in 1927: the artist's fascination with Egypt reflected in his picture postcards to Ruža Meštrović ( <i>Sabina Kaštelančić</i> ) .....	323
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

#### CHAPTER 6: EGYPTIAN REVIVAL AND EGYPTOMANIA

A case of modern-day burials in ancient Egyptian sarcophagi ( <i>Tomislav Kajfež</i> ) .....	343
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Egyptianising funerary architecture in Budapest ( <i>Andrea Fullér</i> ).....	353
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Images of Egypt in Zagreb from the 19th and 20th centuries: buildings, monuments, street furniture ( <i>Marina Bagarić</i> ) .....	375
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

Ivan Meštrović – creating art for eternity: Meštrović's fascination with ancient Egypt as illustrated in the family mausoleum in Otavice ( <i>Zorana Jurić Šabić</i> ) .....	397
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----

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CHAPTER 7: OTHER STUDIES

A new approach to old sound recordings from Morocco (*Clemens Gütl*) .....413

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## EGYPT AND AUSTRIA – EGYPT AND THE ORIENT: CURRENT RESEARCH

The 12th *Egypt and Austria* conference (Zagreb, 17–22 September 2018) was organised by the Egypt and Austria Society and the Faculty of the Croatian Studies of the University of Zagreb. The event took place in the Croatian Institute of History (Opatička 10, Zagreb). The main theme of the conference was current research related to the interactions between Egypt and the states of the former Habsburg Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire up to the middle of the 20th century. During the conference more than 39 papers were presented. This book covers a selection of these papers and we all hope that our readers will enjoy them.

According to the well-established standards of *Egypt and Austria* conferences, a wide range of topics was covered in papers from authors from Croatia, Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia, Serbia, Poland, and beyond. The multidisciplinary and international character of the conferences have always been the greatest strengths of *Egypt and Austria* meetings. Various aspects of cultural, historic and economic relationships, which might possibly have been overlooked from one point of view, have been highlighted from another. Ever since the first volume (published 2005), *Egypt and Austria* conference papers have contributed to a multifaceted and rich picture of a wide range of encounters between West and East, i.e. Central Europe, with a focus on the Habsburg states on the ‘Western’ side, and the Ottoman Empire, with a focus on Egypt, from the ‘Eastern’ side.

The first section of the volume addresses early travellers to Egypt and the Middle East. The reader is set *en route* by Rachel Finnegan’s paper describing a stop-over in Vienna by the 18th-century traveller the Reverend Richard Pococke on his way to the East.

The Czech journalist and writer Václav Kramérius had never travelled to the Orient at all, but he published in the early 19th century a series of fictional dialogues between a farmer and a messenger to do with foreign countries, strange civilisations, and religions. These fictive travelogues in dialogue are full of negative stereotypes on Islam and Muslims. As Lucie Storchová explained in her paper, these writings, somewhat shocking to the modern reader, reflected the emerging Czech nation and demonstrated proper attitudes.

In previous conferences Carlo Rindi and Irene Guidotti reported on the results of their research project on Giuseppe Nizzoli, Chancellor of the Austrian Consulate in Egypt. In this present volume, they treat a particular topic – Nizzoli’s concern with cholera. This dangerous disease reached epidemic levels in Europe and the Near East in the early 1830s. Nizzoli communicated his observations of the disease

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in Egypt and suggested preventive measures to the Austrian government. To this end, he published a short book, seemingly lost but rediscovered by the authors.

Udo Staf is a descendant of a family of captains and seamen from Kotor/Cattaro, named Lukovich, who had family branches in many countries, including Egypt. In Egyptian circles, the best known is Anton von Lukovich, an engineer based in Alexandria, who, when working on Alexandria's defensive works, discovered the antique Egyptian columns that later became an integral part of the Kunsthistorisches Museum building in Vienna. Udo Staf gives a short overview of the rich history of the Lukovich family and their relations with the Near East.

The second section deals with later travellers, such as the Carinthian-born gunsmith Jakov Šašel (Jakob Schaschel), who joined the Austrian Catholic mission to the Sudan in 1853/4 and later published a lavishly illustrated account of his travels, basing most of this work on letters and published accounts from other missionaries who shared his own experiences (paper by Sanda Kočevár). Later in the 19th century, the Triestine botanist Carlo de Marchesetti travelled three times to Egypt. Although for some reason unimpressed by the pharaonic monuments, Marchesetti had a strong interest in Egyptian prehistory, a topic widely neglected by many Egyptologists of his time. He was on friendly terms with Georg Schweinfurth, who donated a collection of Egyptian *silex* artefacts to the Natural History Museum of Trieste that augmented the collection donated by Marchesetti himself, acquired in the Luxor area.

Growing tourism to Egypt created an obvious market for guidebooks. Following earlier examples from England and France, the first German guidebook to Egypt was published by the Austrian Lloyd steamship company, authored by Moritz Busch. However, the first really popular modern guidebook in German was compiled by Anton von Prokesch-Osten Jr, the son of the famous Austrian diplomat and writer of the same name. Angela Blaschek explores this travel guide from 1874, which, just three years later, faced a competitor in the form of Baedeker's first guide to the Egyptian Delta.

Milan Jovanović Morski, a medical doctor and writer, described in several of his novels the upheaval and terrible destruction that occurred in Alexandria during the 'Orabi Revolt' in 1882. The European quarter was razed to the ground and the former 'masters' of the country had to flee or defend themselves; they were bravely helped by people from Boka Kotorska, whose role was highlighted by the author (contribution by Vera Vasiljevic).

Mária Fáy was the first Hungarian woman traveller to Egypt. She planned and organised her journey on her own, and published her travelogue under her own name. Eszter Feró in her paper investigates how the popular publications of this remarkable woman boosted interest in Egypt throughout Hungary, although in the 1890s academic Egyptology did not yet exist there.



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The next section, headed 'Formation of Egyptian collections' opens with Eva Liptay's research on the very scarce Egyptian collection of Stephan Delhaes, an Hungarian artist and collector who spent many years in Vienna as a conservator at the famous Liechtenstein Gallery. Several coffins from Akhmim can be traced in various Hungarian collections and there was also one such a coffin in the Delhaes collection – still containing its mummy. In a research project, the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts, where several objects from the Delhaes collection could be identified, was able to demonstrate that the coffin and the mummy originally belonged together – part of the burial of a certain Hortesnakht from the 3rd century BC.

Marta Herucová in her paper presents six Orientalist paintings from the Chateau Topoľčianky, near Nitra in Slovakia. One of them is by Gyula Tornai; another one was signed 'E. v. Ransonnet', i.e. Elisa von Ransonnet, sister of the more prominent Eugen von Ransonnet, as the present study demonstrates.

It was a particularly pleasant surprise that, after the lecture by Marta Herucová, Jozef Hudec announced that the next *Egypt and Austria* conference would take place at Topoľčianky in October 2020. Jozef Hudec also gave the next paper, in which he described an exhibition of more than 60 Egyptian items in 1865 in Bratislava at a meeting of Hungarian physicians and naturalists.

The City museum of Varaždin holds a small collection of Egyptian artefacts, assembled in the 19th century by members of the Paszthory-Varady family. Correspondingly, the Bombelle family, also resident in the Varaždin area, seems to have been more interested in exotic trees and plants from Egypt.

The Museum of Slavonia in Osijek also curated a collection of 16 Egyptian items which, in 2017, were transferred to Osijek's newly founded archaeological museum. All of these objects were donations by citizens, mostly in the 1890s. Interestingly, two objects, a shabti and a votive stela, were found in Osijek. The hieroglyphic text of the stela was first translated by Leo Reinisch, the first Professor of Egyptology at Vienna University. Marina Kovač in her paper discusses these Egyptian objects and their respective donors.

The subsequent 'Art section' consists of two papers. Ernst Czerny traces the career of Carl Rudolph Huber as an Orientalist painter. Huber, renowned for his animal and hunting pictures, also had a second interest as an Orientalist, and this aspect of his art remained almost unnoticed in Vienna. Huber's known Orientalist pictures are discussed in this paper.

In 1914, the famous Austrian architect Adolph Loos acquired a gypsum model of a statue by Ivan Napotnik called 'Egyptian Woman'. Vesna Kamin Kajfež in her study discusses this statue (now in the Slovene National Gallery) in the context of turn-of-the-century Vienna and Adolph Loos' support for Napotnik's further career.

The next section, 'Travellers from the first half of the 20th century', opens with three papers devoted to Fran Srečko Gundrum Oriovčanin by Ivana Funda,

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Mladen Tomorad, and Margareta Filipović-Srhoj. Gundrum attended a medical congress in Cairo in 1902. In an extended and unpublished diary, he describes his journey, impressions, and observations; these have proved an excellent source of information on life and travel in Egypt at the beginning of the last century. Gundrum provided detailed descriptions of many archaeological sites he saw in Upper Egypt, as well as the opening ceremony of the Old High Dam in Asuan.

Grzegorz First presents an account by the Catholic priest Stanisław Trzeciak of his journey from Krakow to Egypt in 1903, written in Polish and hardly known of today. Jaro Lajovic presents on Karel Pečnik, a Slovenian physician and specialist in tuberculosis, who lived in Alexandria from 1895 until 1911.

When the famous Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović travelled to Egypt in 1927, he regularly wrote picture postcards to his wife Ruža, who at the time was in Buenos Aires. In this way, a sort of 'picture-postcard' materialises, attesting to Meštrović's fascination with Egypt. These postcards, presented in the contribution by Sabina Kaštelančić, are still in the possession of the family and remain unpublished.

The following section on 'Egyptian Revival and Egyptomania' starts with the rather strange story of a modern-day burial in ancient Egyptian sarcophagi by Tomislav Kajfež. In 1845, the Austrian consul-general in Egypt, Anton von Laurin, sent two magnificent, granite, Old Kingdom sarcophagi, found near the Chephren pyramid in Giza, to his home in Vipava, Slovenia. There, his parents, who had previously been interred in the local cemetery, were reburied in one of the Egyptian sarcophagi. The second was used to rebury the remains of Laurin's own short-lived son, Albert, brought back from Alexandria. The two sarcophagi are still in the family's possession in the Vipava cemetery, and have been declared cultural monuments.

In Budapest, wealthy Jewish families erected large and magnificent mausolea, some of them in the Egyptian style. This Egyptianising funerary architecture of the late 19th century, which can be seen in two Jewish cemeteries in Budapest, was presented and discussed in the paper by Andrea Fullér. Many of these mausolea are presently in a ruinous state and badly neglected, nevertheless they testify to the splendour and prosperity of the Jewish *bourgeoisie* in Hungary, who often favoured the Egyptianising style for their resting places, seeing in them allusions to the Temple of Solomon or masonic connections.

As in most European capitals, Egyptianising monuments and buildings can also be found in Zagreb. Marina Bagarić in her paper describes these, starting with the first obelisk erected in 1835, the monuments in the Mirogoj Cemetery and Maksimir Park, and also the many architectural elements that resulted from the wave of Egyptomania after the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922.

Zorana Jurić Šabić in her paper focuses once more on Ivan Meštrović. One year after his above-mentioned trip to Egypt, Palestine and Greece in 1927, Meštrović

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designed the family mausoleum in Otavice, which turns out to have been heavily influenced by the artist's involvement with Ancient Egyptian and Oriental architecture, art and philosophy. The interior decoration of the monumental mausoleum remained unfinished, but Meštrović's drawings for the ceiling fresco, with its 'extremely complex iconographic programme' are known to us.

The final paper is devoted to Clemens Gütl's reconsiderations of a collection of sound recordings from Morocco (1928), held in Vienna's Phonogrammarchiv. However, the recordings were not produced in Africa, but in Vienna, where a Moroccan-born refugee named Omar Mohámmmed bēn Saïd was invited to record his renditions of native conversations and songs in his own Berber language. Gütl has collected much information on bēn Saïd's life, putting the historic recordings into a new and much more vibrant context.

The current *Egypt and Austria* editors are delighted to present this diverse volume, covering so much interesting new research, to a wider audience and hope that many readers will enjoy and be inspired by it.

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