

Tamara Berger

R ECEPTIONS OF ANCIENT EGYPT: A CASE STUDY COLLECTION



АРХИВ ВОЈВОДИНЕ

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For Steffen, Vincent and Theo

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INTRODUCTION

Roman emperor Hadrian, painter Paul Klee, neurologist Sigmund Freud, and plenty of others besides from ancient times up until the present have something in common: a great interest in ancient Egypt. There are many faces of this curiosity. Some have left traces of their interest in the form of collections of Egyptianized objects like Freud, who saw a common ground between psychoanalysis, which he founded, and archaeology, as they both search for deeper layers: one standing for personal memory and another for collective history.¹ Some have purchased works of art that were made for them in “an Egyptian style”, and yet others, like architects, artists and writers, have produced their own works as acts of reception of ancient Egyptian art. One of the most important aims of this case study collection is the attempt to emphasize the importance of the context of each of the examples of receptions of ancient Egypt, and thus, recognizing factors that have influenced the final result.

Bob Brier raised the question as to why ancient Egypt is a greater fascination for most people than Mesoamerican civilizations, even though the Maya built pyramids and had a mysterious script, as did ancient Egyptians. A possible reason he observes is the fact that we can identify more with Egyptian than with Mayan culture.² One obvious problem is the definition of “we”; certainly some people can see more commonalities between their culture and the Mayan culture than with ancient Egyptian culture. Yet, if “we” is defined as “Europeans” (and North Americans who descend from Europeans), it is clear that ancient Egyptian culture in its later stages was already fascinating to its contemporaries from old Greece. This fascination can also be observed from the following epoch of ancient Rome, to humanism, the Renaissance and up until modernity. In other words, Egyptian culture is present in European minds from the cradle of European culture. In that sense, although ancient Egypt seems to be mystical and exotic, it is at

¹ Bob Brier, *Egyptomania. Our Three thousand year obsession with the land of pharaohs* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 201–202.

² Brier, *Egyptomania*, 200–201.

the same time very close and familiar. Egyptian culture is deeply intertwined with European cultural heritage to such an extent that some of the layers are not easily visible and definable, as it is not clear anymore what source is the real inspiration of some of the receptions of ancient Egypt: is it an Egyptian original, a Roman copy, or some other source (e.g. Piranesi's designs, the *Description de l'Égypte*, drawings from Lepsius's expedition, etc.). Some Egyptian forms and motifs are so common that they might have origins in the Land of Pharaohs, but they have also been *ours* for a long time.

Except for the case study about receptions in Serbia, that deals with a very broad range of receptions, most of the examples in this case study collection are drawn from architecture. There are certain criteria for architecture that are used to compare different architectural styles. One of the comparing systems was developed by Banister Fletcher, who regarded the following elements as important: plans, walls, openings, doors, roofs, columns, moldings, and ornamentation.³ In the present publication, like in Maxi Schreiber's analysis of receptions of old Egyptian architecture in modernity,⁴ not all of these criteria were viewed as relevant. The focus was on details in ornamentation, or the general impression. Aesthetics are also considered as well as parallels in symbolism and meaning of architecture and its elements.

Some might ask "Why another publication about the examples of reception of ancient Egypt?" and such a question would not be undue. Many studies have been published about so-called Egyptomania, the Egyptian revival, fascination with ancient Egypt and receptions of ancient Egypt. Of course, there are numerous other examples of phenomena in different fields from ancient Greek writers to modern video games, that are already described. The case studies in this publication, however, have another purpose than just mentioning new chapters in a broad web of receptions of ancient Egypt, a phenomenon widespread on all continents (except Antarctica), and from cultures contemporary to ancient Egypt to the present day. The case studies gathered here are used as an illustration of the meanings, as kind of a tool that helps in shaping a better understanding of the receptions of Egypt.

This is not the first publication with such an approach. For instance, the brilliant book "Beyond Egyptomania: Objects, style, and agency" edited by

³ Banister Fletcher, *A history of architecture on the comparative method* (London: Batsford, 1905), x.

⁴ Maxi Schreiber, *Altägyptische Architektur und ihre Rezeption in der Moderne. Architektur in Deutschland 1900–1933* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2018).

Miguel John Versluys,⁵ which also uses case studies, offers many explanations of the complex phenomenon of receptions of ancient Egypt. The present publication originates from the author's personal wish to understand why Egypt is present in so many aspects of the everyday life, even up to our contemporary society. Starting from the moment of writing the bachelor's thesis "Perception of Egypt and cultural development of Europe" to the present day, the author was haunted by the presence of Egypt in many aspects of culture and different geo-political contexts in countries like Serbia, Croatia, and Germany. It became kind of a challenge to explore the traces of receptions of Egypt in every new city of residence or just a city visited for the first time. At some point, the recognition of numerous, just a few or no traces of receptions of Egypt in the architecture of a city, became a new tool of understanding the historical context by which the face of the city was shaped.

To provide one example: I was working at an archaeological excavation in Heilbronn, Southern Germany, for six months. In the architecture of Heilbronn, I didn't notice a single trace of ancient Egyptian influences. The reason for that, as I understood after the visit to the local museum, is that an extremely high percentage (57%) of the city was destroyed during bombings in World War 2.⁶ Elsewhere in Southern Germany, in the city of Ludwigsburg, there is an abundance of examples of influences within the architecture, which is why the chapter about Ludwigsburg has the title "Ludwigsburg, city of obelisks". Ludwigsburg was built strictly by plans, the houses in the initial phase had precisely defined forms, and, most importantly, there was a lack of lengthy traditions in the city, which was founded at the beginning of the 18th century. This has contributed to the wish of creating a "social glue" in the appearance of the city that recalls common (European, German, etc.) roots, a mutual history and a belonging to the same culture and tradition. Another important factor is that Ludwigsburg was not as badly destroyed in World War 2 (only 2%) as Heilbronn was.⁷ Of course, the time when it was built (18th century) has played a decisive role for Ludwigsburg, which is also visible in the comparison to Heilbronn. Although Heilbronn dates back to the middle ages, it is architecturally a lot younger,

⁵ Miguel John Versluys, ed., *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style and agency* (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020).

⁶ Heinz Bardua, "Kriegsschäden in Baden-Württemberg 1939–1945" in *Historischer Atlas von Baden-Württemberg. Erläuterungen* (Stuttgart: Offizin Chr. Scheufele, 1975), 1–23, https://www.leo-bw.de/media/kgi_atlas/current/delivered/pdf/HABW_7_11.pdf.

⁷ Bardua, "Kriegsschäden in Baden-Württemberg 1939–1945", 1–23.

since it had to be extensively rebuilt in a totally different socio-political context after World War 2. The distance between Heilbronn and Ludwigsburg is no more than 40 km or a 35–45 min car ride, and despite that, they offer a completely different picture about the receptions of ancient Egypt in the German state of Baden-Württemberg. This difference illustrates the importance of understanding the particular context in which receptions of ancient Egypt are embedded.

Egyptomania is a term that is used a lot in published works about receptions of ancient Egypt. However, its negative undertone, due to the suffix “mania”, was a decisive factor in not including the term in this publication. The presence of Egypt in a lot of aspects of various societies over a long time has far deeper reasons than mania or obsession, which is understood to be irrational. It is not reasonable to look for an explanation of such complex phenomena in simple mania and an appeal to the Egyptian style. Receptions of ancient Egypt are present for more than two millennia, and today they can be found in every populated corner of the earth. The main goal of this case study collection is to define at least some of the mechanisms that have contributed to the spread of receptions of ancient Egypt in so many contexts.

At first glance, it looks like the case studies gathered in this collection have little in common, due to the broad geographical distance between some of them. However, during research, it became notable that, despite the distance, there are some common elements, e.g. architectural eclecticism, which includes Egyptian elements at the orangery in Weikersheim Palace from the 18th century as well as many works of the Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik from the 20th century. Gravestones in the form of obelisks are present both at cemeteries in Ludwigsburg, Southern Germany, and at cemeteries in Novi Sad, Serbia. The architectural design of The National Bank building in Belgrade, Serbia, could well be utilized, without any restraint, for some of the buildings in Myliusstraße in Ludwigsburg. Many more common features might be found, but what was far more important for this research than similarities is the uniqueness of the context of every example of reception. In the course of research into the examples in these case studies, it could be established that, although each example might be understood as an instance of the same phenomenon, differences in contexts are what create the need to investigate each example in as much detail as possible. This indicates the danger of inductive reasoning in the case of receptions of ancient Egypt, which should be described only in plural as “receptions” to emphasize their changeable nature.

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CHAPTER 1

Mnemohistories and Receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia⁸

This chapter presents preliminary results and considerations on the reception of ancient Egypt in the Republic of Serbia. The intention is to present main characteristics and examples of the phenomenon, creating a general overview rather than a complete analysis and discussion of all cases available. The complexity of the subject is rooted in the high variety of topics, sources and time periods. Materials included in this study stem from travelogues, public and mortuary architecture and museal artifact collections including paintings and even comic books spanning from the medieval period to the contemporary modern era. Furthermore, all sources regarding the Serbian reception of ancient Egyptian culture can only be evaluated in the context of their contemporary historical and socio-cultural circumstances. Contextualization of examples from Serbia is given in exemplars from other states in the Balkan region and beyond. Given that between contemporary cases in areas corresponding with spatial units, such as national borders, or even on an individual level, there seem to be slight shifts in the respective reception of ancient Egypt culture, it is suggested that using the term *receptions* in plural form instead of *reception* is more appropriate here.

1 Historical background

“[...] the present world would be different if derived from a different past while the past would be different if constructed in a different present. Past and present contexts move dialectically in relation to each other.”⁹

⁸ This chapter represents a revised and extended version of the article that was published in *Aegyptiaca. Journal of the History of Reception of Ancient Egypt* 5 (2020), <https://journals.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/index.php/aegyp/article/view/76124/69890>.

⁹ Ian Hodder, *Theory and practice in archaeology* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992),

By analogy, if our reception of the past was different, surely our view of the present would not be the same as well. When it comes to the reception of ancient Egypt in Serbia, the aforementioned premise is the foundation of the hypothesis that the “Serbian reception” does not always correspond with the receptions in other European countries.

The most relevant medieval source for this study originates from the time of the Nemanjić dynasty, established by Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja (who ruled from 1166–1196). The first evidence of the encounter of Serbs with ancient Egypt stems from the period of Nemanjić’s rule. The end of the dynasty is marked by the death of Stefan Uroš V. in 1371. Shortly thereafter Serbia lost the Battle of Maritza (1371) and at Kosovo (1389), after which in 1459 Serbia fell under Ottoman rule, where some of its parts remained for five centuries.

Since medieval times, Serbia has both geographically and culturally been part of Eastern Europe, which was under the political influence of Byzantium,¹⁰ contrasting with the different historic path of Western Europe. Here the receptions of Egypt were largely impacted by imperial aspirations and colonialism. Under Ottoman rule and subsequent periods Serbia never became a colonial power and was essentially part of the same imperium as Egypt after the Ottoman Sultan Selim I. conquered Egypt in 1517.

Similarly to Western Europe, the most significant sources for the receptions of Egypt in medieval Serbia were the Bible and historic Greek and Roman scriptures.¹¹ However, the mnemohistories of Eastern and Western Europe are generally different. According to Assmann (2017) there are two possible ways to approach an understanding of the past: the historical approach, referring to the processing of events, and the mnemohistorical, referring to the history of the event’s reception.¹² During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Serbian policies featured a deeply-rooted denial of the historical connection with “the Orient” and rather sought out common his-

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¹⁰ Szűcs Jenő, “The Three Historical Regions of Europe: An Outline”, *Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 29, no. 2/4 (1983): 131–184.

¹¹ Cf. Florian Ebeling, “Ägyptische Freimaurerei zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik”, in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimaurerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2017), 29–124.

¹² Jan Assmann, “Egyptian Mysteries and Secret Societies in the Age of Enlightenment. A ‘mnemo-historical’ study”, *Aegyptiaca* 1 (2017): 4–25, <https://doi.org/10.11588/aegypt.2017.1.40162>.

torical roots with other European countries. Beyond that, Western European countries like France or England were consolidating their imperial power over Egypt, a strategy with which Serbia aspired to affiliate, not as an actual imperial force but rather symbolically through the possession of artifacts representing parts of the Egyptian world.

For most of the twentieth century, Serbia was a part of Yugoslavia. The year 1918 marked the rise of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenians. In 1929 the official state name was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which later became a republic that lasted until 1992. After an initial pursuit after World War II of establishing political connections with the communist USSR, then president of Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito (who ruled from 1953–1980) turned his back on the Soviet Union, the consequence of which was Yugoslavia facing isolation.¹³ Tito visited Egypt in 1956, one year after meeting Indian Prime Minister Nehru and Egyptian president Nasser at the Suez Canal.¹⁴ In the same year the three heads of state met in Brioni, publicly announcing their common political goals.¹⁵ Tito opened the first conference of the newly formed Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961, and full members of the movement were Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Cuba, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia and the Provisional Government of Algeria.¹⁶ The main aims were decolonization, the peaceful solution of all international conflicts, non-intervention into the internal affairs of other countries and equality among all nations and peoples – all under the principle of anti-imperialism. Egypt, Yugoslavia and India were thus in the same “third” block in the Cold War, at the forefront of a new political entity that still exists today. The Non-Aligned Movement was created by countries that were (formally) neither aligned with, nor against power blocks during the Cold War. The close long-term cooperation of Egypt and Yugoslavia led to an historic record of frequent diplomatic communication and material gifts. Presents Tito received from Egypt are currently located in the Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade,

¹³ Vladimir Petrović, “Josip Broz Tito’s summit diplomacy in the international relations of socialist Yugoslavia 1944–1961”, *Annales, Series Historia et Sociologia* 24, no. 4 (2014): 1–16.

¹⁴ Petrović, “Josip Broz Tito’s summit diplomacy”, 1–16.

¹⁵ Dragan Bogetić, “Jugoslavija i nesvrstanost: prilog prevazilaženju predrasuda i stereotipa”, *Annales, Series Historia et Sociologia* 24, no. 4 (2014): 615–624.

¹⁶ Mirna Bogut, *Pokret nesvrstanih i Beogradska konferencija, Diplomski rad, Filozofski fakultet Sveučilište Strossmayera u Osijeku* (Osijek 2018), 29.

temporally ranging from archaeological artefacts dating to the age of pharaohs to modern day tablecloths.¹⁷

After the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, Serbia and Montenegro became a state union that lasted until 2006, when Montenegro separated and Serbia became an independent republic.

2 Serbian encounters with Egypt

2.1 Hermeticism and gnosticism

Hermeticism, as a link between ancient Egypt and Europe, endured in the Middle Ages. The Florence humanists spread the Latin translation of the Corpus Hermeticum to the whole of Europe in the fifteenth century, but it was still present before the Renaissance and known to church fathers who saw it as the origin of pagan Greek philosophy.¹⁸ Hermetic texts are an accumulation of writings of diverse content, that can be divided in groups of philosophical-theological and “technical” texts about astrology, alchemy, and instructions for magical rituals.¹⁹ Eighteen texts that make up the Corpus Hermeticum were written around the first four centuries C.E. and manifested in Byzantine manuscripts in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries.²⁰ Although the territory of present day Serbia became a part of Byzantium after the divide of the Roman empire in 495 AD, there is no evidence as to possible receptions of ancient Egypt via the Corpus Hermeticum in medieval Serbia. Yet there was a wide-ranging interest in old texts – including the Hermetic Corpus²¹ – in Byzantium more generally. There is not any direct evidence, however, that shows whether educated Serbian people used it and thus what kind of receptions could have taken place.²² Literature in medieval

¹⁷ Aleksandra Momčilović Jovanović, “Gifts for Tito: Egypt in Collections of the Museum of Yugoslav History”, in *Egypt remembered by Serbia*, ed. Emilia Epštajn (Belgrade: The museum of African art: The Veda and Dr Zdravka Pečara Collection, 2011/2013), 65–76.

¹⁸ Florian Ebeling, *The secret History of Hermes Trismegistus. Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 10.

¹⁹ Ebeling, *The secret History of Hermes Trismegistus*, 11.

²⁰ Ebeling, *The secret History of Hermes Trismegistus*, 57–59.

²¹ Michele Mertens, “Graeco-Egyptian Alchemy in Byzantium” in *The Occult Sciences in Byzantium*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Maria Mavroudi (Geneva: La Pomme d’or, 2006), 205–230.

²² Васиљевић, Вера, *Сенка Египта* (Београд: Досије студио, 2016), 175.

Serbia was, initially, concentrated on theological themes and texts used in churches and monasteries. Other texts in the Greek language like the *Corpus Hermeticum* could feasibly have been part of monastery libraries.

In a broader sense, the phenomenon of gnosis in late antiquity can be summed up by ideas in Hermetic literature and also by ideas of Gnosticism.²³ Mythological systems with a strong interest in esoteric knowledge (*gnosis*) are considered under the term “Gnostic systems”. The birth of Gnosticism is believed to have Hellenistic-Jewish roots and manifested itself probably around the first century C.E.²⁴ There are three main groups of gnostic learning: pagan-Greek, Christian-Greek and oriental. The first group is formed from the hermetic texts of Hermes Trismegistos, who was perceived as the father of alchemy.²⁵

Parallels between ancient Egyptian religion and Gnosticism might be traced in the tractate *Eugnostos* dated to the first century C.E.²⁶ The reception of Gnosticism might be an interesting avenue for further research because of its connection with the Bogomil sect. There are several theories about which teaching is the source of the later Bogomil sect: Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism or Gnosticism.²⁷ Some scholars claim that the Gnostic character of the Bogomilian doctrine is obvious.²⁸ Bogomilism as a religious movement, marked by some of its contemporaries as heretical, spread in Serbia in the twelfth century.²⁹ Grand Prince Stefan Nemanja (1166–1196), the founder of the Serbian medieval state, severely punished members of the Bogomil sect. Reasons for this can be found in the Bogomils’ tendency to withdraw from

²³ Woulter J. Hanegraaff, “Introduction”, in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, ed. Woulter J. Hanegraaff (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006), vii–xiii.

²⁴ Gilles Quispel, “Gnosticism from its origins to the Middle Ages [first edition]”, in *Encyclopedia of Religion, Second Edition*, ed. Lindsay Jones (Detroit et al.: Macmillan Reference USA, Thomson Gale, 2005), 5: 3507–3515, here: 3508; Aldo Magris, “Gnosticism from its origins to the Middle Ages [further consideration]”, in *Encyclopedia of Religion, Second Edition*, ed. Lindsay Jones (Detroit et al.: Macmillan Reference USA, Thomson Gale, 2005), 5: 3515–3522, here: 3515.

²⁵ Jost Weyer, *Graf Wolfgang II. von Hohenlohe und die Alchemie. Alchemistische Studien in Schloß Weikersheim 1587–1610* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1992), 60

²⁶ Douglas M. Parrott, “Gnosticism and Egyptian Religion”, *Novum Testamentum* 29, Fasc. 1 (January, 1987): 73–93.

²⁷ Dimitri Obolensky, “Chapter XII: The Bogomils” in *Byzantium and the Slavs: collected studies* (London: Varorium Reprints, 1971), 1–23.

²⁸ e.g. Kurt Rudolph, *Die Gnosis. Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion* (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang, 1977), 399.

²⁹ Edina Bozoky, “Bogomilism”, in *Dictionary of Gnosis & Western Esotericism*, ed. Woulter J. Hanegraaff (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2006), 192–194.

the army, along with their attitude against the official church, which at the time of the founding of the state was certainly considered a sufficient reason for the movement to be suppressed. Although the teachings of the Bogomils may also have had some blurred roots in ancient Egypt, by the twelfth century they were certainly no longer perceived as Egyptian. Without going further into the issue, it is a possible focus for further research, although with some reservations: many ideas or art forms from ancient Egypt arrived to later producers of receptions by what we might consider detours rather than more direct routes.

2.2 Travelers

a) Historic sources

The first preserved materials evidencing receptions of Egypt in medieval Serbia stem from local pilgrimages to the locations mentioned in the Bible in the Near East. Travel guides to the “Holy Land” dating back to the seventh century were written for pilgrims in the Greek language and translated into Slavic languages.³⁰ Reportedly the first part of one route from Serbia to Jerusalem and other important biblical cities ran south of the Sava and Danube rivers, through the Morava-Vardar valley to Thessaloniki (Greece), and eventually via the Mediterranean to Egypt or Jaffa.³¹

The first evidence of travelers to Egypt is the historical text “Vita of Saint Sava” about Rastko Nemanjić (1174–1236), later known as Saint Sava, who was the son of the aforementioned Stefan Nemanja. It was written in 1264 by Domentijan (possibly also a traveler, though this is unconfirmed). Domentijan was a monk in Hilandar, an orthodox monastery in Athos, Greece, founded by Saint Sava and his father Stefan Nemanja in 1198. Both interventions from the fourteenth century and a handwritten version from 1619 were eventually published in the nineteenth century.³² There is also a later original version of “Vita” written by Teodosije of Hilandar (ca. 1328), that differs from Domentijan’s text. Teodosije, for example, mentions gifts given to Saint Sava by a sultan, although there is no mention of it in Domentijan’s

³⁰ Томислав Јовановић, прир., *Света земља у српској књижевности од краја XIII до краја XVIII века* (Београд: Чигоја штампа, 2007), 9.

³¹ Јовановић, *Света земља у српској књижевности*, 36.

³² Stojan Novaković, *Istorija srpske književnosti* (Beograd: Državna štamparija, 1867), 62.

text.³³ Since it is impossible to determine on which source of information Teodosije's text is based (perhaps not from Domentijan) there is no reason to conclude its inaccuracy.³⁴ Saint Sava traveled to the Holy Land twice, visiting Egypt during the second trip in 1234/35.³⁵ On his journey he visited Alexandria, monasteries in the deserts of Lybia, Theba, Sinai³⁶ and Cairo during the reign of sultan al-Malik al-Kāmil (1218–1238). Saint Sava traveled from Jerusalem to the monastery of Kalamon, along to the coast of the Dead Sea, to the town of Kerak and finally to "Big Babylon" and "Big Egypt", which probably refer to parts of Cairo.³⁷

Dating to the beginning of the seventeenth century, a travel report to Egypt was preserved, written by Lavrentije of Hilandar (a Serbian monastery in Greece) whose destinations were Jerusalem and other holy places named in the Bible. He reports visiting a location in Jerusalem to which Jesus and his parents fled from Herod, and subsequently of Joseph's granaries.³⁸ Cosmas of Jerusalem (eighth century C.E.) described the Egyptian pyramids as resembling the granaries of Joseph,³⁹ which persisted as an explanation for the function of the pyramids for a considerable time.

A more recent example of historical reports from Egypt stems from Jerotej Račanin, who traveled there in the first half of the eighteenth century. In his travelogue he describes personal impressions as well as animals (ostriches), plants (sugarcane, figs, cotton), people and the pyramids:

*[...] It is a miracle in the world [...]. And so great in size and height – one can see it from (the distance of) three days of walking.*⁴⁰

*[...] То је једно чудо на свету [...]. Толика је величина и висина – од три дана хода може се видети.*⁴¹

³³ Александар Савић, "Дарови са Нила: нови поглед на сусрет Светог Саве са египатским султаном", *Зборник матице српске за историју* 90 (2014): 7–35.

³⁴ Савић, "Дарови са Нила".

³⁵ Gerhard Podskalky, "Die Jerusalemwallfahrt in der bulgarischen und serbischen Literatur des Mittelalters", *Byzantinoslavica* XVI, 3 (1995): 675–686.

³⁶ Александар Савић, "'Измишљање' Вавилона – географија и хагиографија у блиско-источном итинерару Светог Саве српског", *Зборник радова Византолошког института* LII (2015): 291–312; Podskalky, "Die Jerusalemwallfahrt".

³⁷ Савић, "'Измишљање' Вавилона".

³⁸ Јовановић, *Света земља у српској књижевности*, 112.

³⁹ Regine Schulz, "Travelers, Correspondents, and Scholars. Images of Egypt through the Millennia", in *Egypt. The World of the Pharaohs*, ed. Regine Schulz and Matthias S. Koenemann, (Cologne: Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 1998), 490–497.

⁴⁰ Translation by Tamara Berger.

⁴¹ Јовановић, *Света земља у српској књижевности*, 177.

b) Discussion

In the Serbia of the Middle Ages traveling was not a very popular and rather a troublesome activity.⁴² Most Serbians were peasants and their feudal proprietors forbade them to leave their homes without permission, as peasants were one of the most important pillars of the society's economy.⁴³ For the vast majority of peasants the only affordable means of transport was walking, which naturally excludes long distances, e.g. to Egypt. A note preserved from that time was written by Jevstatije – a young monk who joined two other monks on their way to Egypt after unsuccessfully seeking traveling companions for a long time.⁴⁴ It can be concluded that at this time a long trip could necessitate a lot of planning, but that the problem was not so much about money and/or time; rather, other practical factors also played a role.

In his text about Sava's travel to Egypt, Domentijan constantly draws parallels between places where Jesus rested according to the Bible and those of Sava.⁴⁵ It is important to emphasize that Sava was not an ordinary pilgrim or traveler but a saint in the eyes of his biographers, which is why the texts about his journey contain hagiographical elements. Hagiographies generally consisted of well defined chapters, such as *vitae* or miracles/deeds carried out by the saint, but more importantly were organized in a specific form which was more significant than the actual content.⁴⁶

One main focus of Domentijan's text is how warmly Saint Sava had been welcomed to the holy places he visited following biblical narratives and how he gave valuable gifts to people in need. However, in his text he neither mentioned any ancient Egyptian monuments nor any reference to Egyptian culture, which exemplifies why mnemohistory is a key concept for understanding receptions of ancient Egypt, or any other culture for that matter. Domentijan's aim in "Vita Saint Sava" was to show the ideal image of a prince whose diplomatic work led to the autocephalous status of the Serbian church. The journey itself was seen as a challenge that served to prove faith

⁴² Небојша Порчић, "Путовање – живот у покрету", in *Приватни живот у српским земљама средњег века*, ed. Смиља Марјановић-Душанић, Даница Поповић (Београд: СЛЮ, 2004), 183–217, here: 216.

⁴³ Небојша Порчић, "Путовање – живот у покрету", 193.

⁴⁴ Небојша Порчић, "Путовање – живот у покрету", 216.

⁴⁵ Доментијан, "Животи Светога Саве и Симеона", in *Стара српска књижевност, Књига I*, ed. Живан Милисавец (Нови Сад, Београд: Матица српска, Српска књижевна задруга, 1970).

⁴⁶ Савић, "Измишљање Вавилона".

rather than to explore exotic countries. Traveling was not only dangerous but also very expensive, which is why Saint Sava received “a lot of” or even “uncountable” gold and “other utilities” from his nephew King Radoslav⁴⁷ (ruled 1228–1234). It can be assumed that Saint Sava must have seen some of the Egyptian antiquities on its way, so the fact that not even the pyramids are mentioned speaks about the character of this source. When Nemanjić’s state was founded, the focus was on achieving independence for the Serbian Orthodox Church (through the diplomatic activity of Saint Sava) and crowning the first internationally-recognized Serbian king, which was achieved in 1217. Political interests were focused on neighboring European countries and the identity of the state was built with the Orthodox Christian religion at its core – a constellation which, at least according to the official texts, seemed to prevent any further interest in extra-European states. At this stage, Serbian mnemohistory merely connected Egypt with events reported in the Bible.

Lavrentije wrote about biblical parallels on his journey, but also included information demonstrating his curiosity outside of the pilgrimage narrative. He mentions seeing human bones on the surface of a field “and the bones and skins and everything” (translation T. B.) (“[...] И кости и кожа и све цело [...]”).⁴⁸ About the impression the sighting of mummies might have left on the Hilandar monk, we can only speculate. His text is highly influenced by the context of the Renaissance, which in addition to religious themes sparked writing about observations and interpretations of Egyptian monuments.

Jerotej Račanin did not abandon the tradition of describing places mentioned in the Bible, as the purpose of his journey was a pilgrimage. However, besides the impetus of confirmation in reverence to holy places, he also intended his texts as a travel guide or an experience report to read for those people who were not able to travel themselves.

The interpretation of travelogues must always take the biography of the author into account as it likely has an important impact on their world views. Whether prince, pilgrim or wealthy adventurer in latter centuries, every travel report shows the respective *Zeitgeist* combined with individual perspectives. Through receptions from travelers, it is notable how Egypt comes a long way from a marginal, merely spatial stage for the Bible to the complex phenomenon that awakes the imagination.

⁴⁷ Небојша Порчић, “Путовање – живот у покрету”, 209.

⁴⁸ Јовановић, *Света земља у српској књижевности*, 112.

2.3 Funerary and commemorative monuments

a) *Historic sources*

An early example of memorial architecture in the form of an obelisk in Serbia dates from 1427. It is a monument at the place of death of despot Stefan Lazarević (1377–1427) in the courtyard of the church of prophet Elijah in a hamlet called Crkvine, municipality Mladenovac, near Belgrade.⁴⁹ It is not clear whether this obelisk really fits into studies regarding the reception of Egypt, because it is actually a very low monument that could resemble the first Egyptian obelisks or even *benben* (the mound that arose from the primordial water) that were smaller in dimensions and not as tall and long as the representative examples from the latter times. Curran described *benben* as a “pyramidal or stunted obelisk-like shape”.⁵⁰ In humanist scripts from the fifteenth century like *De Re Aedificatoria* (1452) an obelisk in the context of Egypt is already defined as a large structure that stands alone.⁵¹ On the other hand, the erection of the obelisk dedicated to Lazarević was not financed by the state, but initiated by one of the members of the despot’s entourage – this could mean that potentially there weren’t sufficient resources for an obelisk of more impressive dimensions. The obelisk with a pyramid-shaped top from Crkvine is erected on the exact place where Lazarević fell from his horse in the immediate vicinity of the church, of which he was the founder, just as memorial monuments of later times are certainly connected with the reception of Egypt. Until this time, some Serbs had already come into contact with Egyptian antiquities, so it is possible that someone was inspired by Egyptian monuments. It is also important to note that there are no other known examples from that period. The centuries-long discontinuation in the erection of this type of monument, caused by Turkish rule, came to a halt in the nineteenth century, as can be seen, for example, at a grave monument of poet Branko Radičević (1824–1853) in Stražilovo (1885).⁵²

⁴⁹ Biljana Mišić, *Monument at the place of death of Despot Stefan Lazarević* (Belgrade: Cultural Heritage Preservation Institute of Belgrade, 2008), 7.

⁵⁰ Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long, and Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A history* (Cambridge/Massachusetts: Burndy Library, 2009), 14.

⁵¹ James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival. Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 84.

⁵² Виолета Н. Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955* (Докторска дисертација, Универзитет у Београду, 2013), 38.

The Petrovaradin Fortress, which was intensely embattled in 1848/49, is located in the city of Novi Sad and contains a military cemetery from the mid-nineteenth century. In commemoration of this event, a monumental memorial was built in 1850 in the central part of the military cemetery: a massive marble obelisk in the shape of a pyramid on a rectangular pedestal (Fig. 1). It is located above the collective tomb where the members of the Austrian army's command staff were buried. This monument, comparable to a later monument at Gučevo, is an interesting example of the receptions of Egypt in Serbia by Austro-Hungarians soldiers.

The tombs of prominent Novi Sad citizens dating from the nineteenth to the first half of the twentieth centuries are usually distinguished by a monument, most often in the form of a high obelisk.⁵³ The surface on top of the crypt at such tombs is usually planted with different vegetation or covered with a grave slab made from granite or marble. The highest concentrations of tombs featuring monumental obelisks can be found in Almaško (Fig. 2), Uspensko (Fig. 3), and in the Roman Catholic Cemetery Complex, although they are also common at Trandžament cemetery.⁵⁴



Figure 1.
Monumental memorial dedicated to soldiers killed during the Revolution of 1848 and 1849, from: the private collection of Kristijan Obšust.

⁵³ Kristijan Obšust, "Istorijska groblja Novog Sada i Petrovaradina kao prostori sećanja", in *Mapiranje mesta sećanja i kultura sećanja Novog Sada*, last modified November 2017, <https://kulturasecanjabiblioteka.wordpress.com/istorijska-groblja-novog-sada-i-petrovaradina-kao-prostori-secanja/>.

⁵⁴ Obšust, "Istorijska groblja Novog Sada i Petrovaradina".



Figure 2.
A grave at Almanaško cemetery, Novi Sad,
from: the private collection of Kristijan Obšust.



Figure 3.
A grave at Uspensko cemetery, Novi Sad,
from: the private collection of Kristijan Obšust.

An obelisk-shaped memorial in Topčider Park was sculpted in 1859 by Franc Loran, whose name is engraved in it, honoring the return of Prince Miloš (1780–1860) to Serbia⁵⁵ and the reestablishment of the Obrenović dynasty. The obelisk rests on a pedestal and is decorated with heraldic symbols and wreaths.

Another example of an obelisk-shaped monument on a pedestal was erected in 1880 in honor of the four-year-old Crown Prince Alexander⁵⁶ and is about 10m in height. Two years after its erection, part of the ceremony proclaiming the Kingdom of Serbia was held there.

After World War I, memorial fountains in the form of an obelisk and a column⁵⁷ were relatively frequent. One example is a fountain located in the village of Viševac and dedicated to Karađorđe, the leader of the First Serbian Uprising (1804–1813).⁵⁸

Architecture is not a passive entity that simply displays characteristics of broader social tendencies or the *Zeitgeist* – architecture takes an active role in shaping the appearance of cities through ideas of purchasers, designers and architects.⁵⁹ One individual with great stylistic influence was Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962),⁶⁰ a Croatian and Yugoslavian sculptor, architect and writer.⁶¹ He was educated in Vienna and probably for that reason was “infected” with the art movement of the Vienna Secession. Before World War I he spent time in Rome, where he encountered antique stylistic vocabulary.⁶² Furthermore, he was interested in Croatian national myths and general South Slavic myths. His model for the Vidovdan Temple was presented at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 1915.⁶³ The temple combines Greek, Roman

⁵⁵ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 39.

⁵⁶ Тимотијевић, Мирослав, “Научник као национални херој и подизање споменика Јосифу Панчићу”, *Годишњак града Београда* XLIX–L (2002–2003): 236.

⁵⁷ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 129.

⁵⁸ Анонимус, “Састанак у Орашцу”, *Политика*, September 2, 1930, 4.

⁵⁹ Александар Кадиевић, *Архитектура и дух времена* (Београд: Грађевинска књига, 2010), 21.

⁶⁰ See the chapter “Receptions of Ancient Egypt in works of sculptor Ivan Meštrović and architect Jože Plečnik” in this publication.

⁶¹ A more detailed study of Meštrović’s work is given in Chapter 2.

⁶² Ema Alihodžić Jašarović, “Projekti Ivana Meštrovića i Harolda Bilinića na Lovčenu u tadašnjem političkom i ideološkom kontekstu”, *Prostor* 26, no. 2 (56) (2018): 320–331.

⁶³ Dean A. Porter, “Ivan Meštrović: Current State of Criticism”, *The Courier*, February 19, 1984, 17–28.

and Egyptian motifs⁶⁴ and the composition of past and present, ancient and modern, in a sense forms a specifically South Slavic topos.⁶⁵ Among other stone plastics, the most outstanding Egyptian reference is the large sphinx at the end of the string of caryatid sculptures.⁶⁶ The Vidovdan Temple was supposed to be a place for worshipping the cult of Prince Lazar and for the commemoration of the battle in Kosovo. In that battle Serbia lost to the Turks on the day of the religious holiday Vidovdan, 28.6.1389. In the nineteenth century this episode of Serbian history became a very popular topos and of great importance for shaping a national identity. Although the temple was never realized, the idea of antique and Egyptian motifs woven into the model related to the extolling of national Serbian history and, merged with the concept of unity among South Slavic people, poses an interesting example of reception. Linking the motifs of ancient Greece, resembling the idea of the cradle of European civilization, its predecessor in Egypt and its heir in Rome, the idea of the Vidovdan Temple conceptually confirmed the affiliation of Serbia and the southern Slavs to the family of European peoples.



Figure 4.
Soldier-cemetery in the city of Subotica
from: the private collection of Violeta Obrenović.

⁶⁴ Alihodžić Jašarović, "Projekti Ivana Meštrovića i Harolda Bilinića", 320–331.

⁶⁵ Tatjana Petzer, "'Balkankunst'. Bildende Kunst und Geoästhetik des Balkans seit 1900", in *Handbuch Balkan*, ed. Uwe Hinrichs, Thede Kahl, and Petra Himstedt-Vaid (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2014), 733–751.

⁶⁶ Petzer, "'Balkankunst'", 733–751.



Figure 5.
Memorial at the cemetery in Subotica,
from: the private collection of Violeta Obrenović.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, obelisk-shaped monuments appeared in significant numbers in Belgrade cemeteries and in cemeteries in other Serbian cities. Obelisks as tombstones became popular during World War I, and subsequently rose to high popularity.⁶⁷ Two obelisks from the late nineteenth century, erected by architect Svetomir Lazić⁶⁸ commemorating the Dimić family and the Milanović family have been preserved at the Topčider cemetery in Belgrade.⁶⁹

Located at the highest point of the Gardoš cemetery (Zemun, Belgrade), the engraved three-story pyramid made from grey stone was erected in honor of the 573 members of Zemun's Jewish community, who were killed during World War II. Commemorative ceremonies are still held today in front of this pyramid.⁷⁰ A memorial cemetery dedicated to Red Army soldiers who

⁶⁷ Нада Живковић, “Сеоска гробља и појединачни надгробни споменици на београдском подручју: стање и заштита”, *Наслеђе* 3 (2001): 115–120.

⁶⁸ Тања Дамљановић, “Архитекта Светомир Лазич (1894–1985)”, *Саопштења* XXIX (1997): 249–262.

⁶⁹ Нада Живковић, “Топчидерско гробље у Београду – настанак и развој”, *Наслеђе* 8 (2007): 171–177.

⁷⁰ Миодраг Дабижић, “Земунско гробље на брду Гардош II”, *Наслеђе* 8 (2007): 179–196.

fell in World War II, in the city of Subotica,⁷¹ features a series of the same obelisk-shaped tombstones (Fig. 4). The grey surface of the tombstones is highlighted by engraved and coloured red stars. Located in the center of the graveyard is a monumental obelisk on a square pedestal dedicated to 34 unknown soldiers of the Red Army with a Russian inscription (Fig. 5).⁷²



Figure 6.
Nušić's home (1922)
at Novo Groblje, Belgrade
from: the private collection
of Violeta Obrenović.



Figure 7.
Nušić's home: a side view,
from: the private collection
of Violeta Obrenović.

A pyramid-shaped tomb is represented by the grave of Branislav Nušić, a Serbian satirist, essayist and novelist (1864–1938). It was built in 1922 and still exists today at the Novo groblje (New Cemetery) in Belgrade (Figs. 6, 7).

In 1927, a chapel was erected at Belgrade's New Cemetery in the Alley of the Greats in honor of Velimir Mihailo Teodorović (1849–1898), a Serbian benefactor and the extramarital son of the Prince Mihailo Obrenović (Fig. 8). The chapel was built in Serbian Byzantine style with elements of late Se-

⁷¹ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 477.

⁷² Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 477–478.

cessionism.⁷³ The base of the chapel is built in the style of an Egyptian temple while the upper part shows a floral and simple ornamentation and decorations partly inspired by Christian themes.



Figure 8.
Chapel of Velimir Mihailo Teodorović, Novo Groblje, Belgrade,
from: the private collection of Violeta Obrenović.

⁷³ Milan Brdar, ed., *The new cemetery in Belgrade – Guide* (Beograd: JKP “Pogrebne usluge”), 13.



Figure 9.
Monument on Gučevo,
from: the private collection of Violeta Obrenović

In the first half of the twentieth century, close to border areas and beyond, ossuaries were constructed in pyramidal form, such as the representative monument in Gučevo (between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina).⁷⁴ This monument was originally erected in 1917 by Austro-Hungarians for their fallen soldiers, but they could not finish it because the Serbian army liberated the area (Fig. 9). A similar war memorial was designed two years later (1919) by Carlo Bugatti in Neo-Classical style in the form of a pyramid supporting an urn.⁷⁵

In 1926 the Reserve Officers and Warriors Association decided to complete the monument and, by adding Serbian national symbols, ascribed it exclusively to Serbian soldiers, although the bodies of soldiers from both sides were interred in the ossuary. Architect Gojko Todić laid out a remod-

⁷⁴ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 121–122.

⁷⁵ Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 365–366.

eling plan while the sculptor Milorad Jovanović made the sculptures for the monument⁷⁶ from blocks of artificial stone in the shape of a pyramid, approximately 16 meters in height.⁷⁷ The consecration was performed in the presence of Serbian Orthodox Church representatives, former Gučevo soldiers, families of fallen soldiers, and representatives of the king, government and army.⁷⁸ The inscription on the monument was taken from “The Mountain Wreath” written by Petar II Petrović Njegoš: “Blessed is he who lives forever, he had a reason to be born” (“Благо оном ко довијека живи, имао се рашта и родити”), alluding to the topic of immortality or the afterlife.



Figure 10.
Memorial in the city of Topola,
from: the private collection of Violeta Obrenović.

⁷⁶ Ненад Л. Лајбеншпенгер, “Споменик и костурница на Гучеву – део историјата”, in *The First World War, Serbia, The Balkans and Great Powers*, ed. Srđan Rudić and Miljan Milkić (Belgrade: Institute of History and Strategic Research Institute, 2015), 507–514.

⁷⁷ Ненад Л. Лајбеншпенгер, “Споменик и костурница на Гучеву – део историјата”, 507–514.

⁷⁸ Ненад Л. Лајбеншпенгер, “Споменик и костурница на Гучеву – део историјата”, 507–514.

Monuments in the form of obelisks or pyramids were also erected in town and village centers (e.g. Topola), as well as memorials at church ports (e.g. Lanište, Bela Palanka) or school yards (e.g. Božurnja, Topola).⁷⁹ Exemplary are: the monument dedicated to fallen warriors in the defense of Leskovac, erected in 1929, on the road between Leskovac and Vlasotinac; and a memorial erected in the city of Topola by King Aleksandar I Karađorđević and war invalids (Fig. 10).⁸⁰

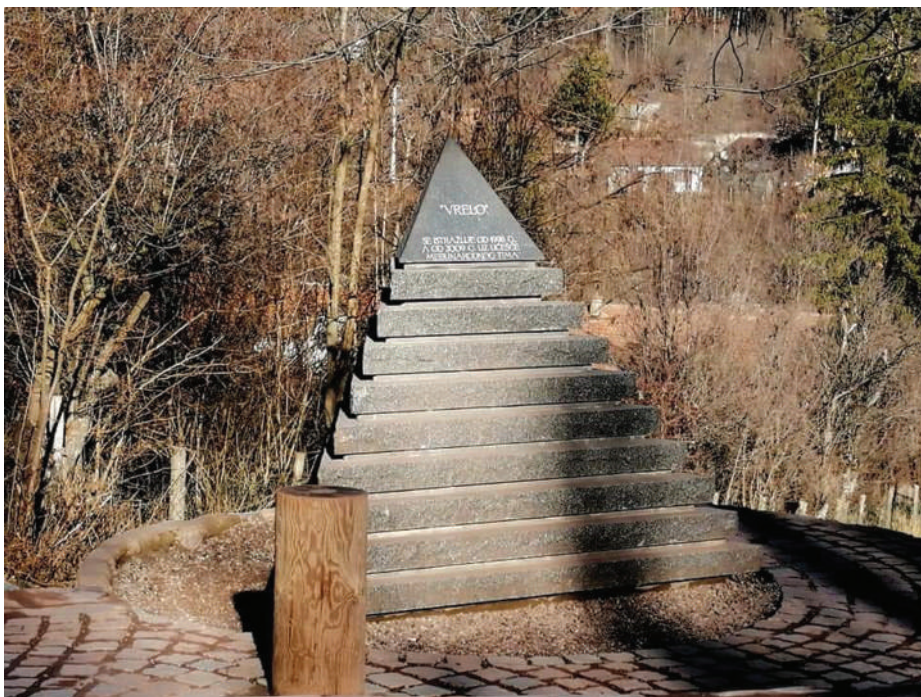


Figure 11.
Pyramid-shaped monument on the Rtanj mountain.
Photo by Nataša Milić.

On the Rtanj mountain, in eastern Serbia, exists a pyramidal monument (Fig. 11). An inscription, carved on top of the pyramid, reads as follows: “‘A fountainhead’ is subject of research since 1998 and since 2009 was researched by an international team”.⁸¹ The monument is located on the place

⁷⁹ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 122–124.

⁸⁰ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 122–123.

⁸¹ “‘Vrelo’ se istražuje od 1998 g. A od 2009 g. uz učešće međunarodnog tima.”

that was believed to be a source of magnetic power by fringe theoreticians. The whole mountain is believed to have special benefits for human health by some people, and similarities to the Khufu pyramid have been noted.⁸² The same ideas apply to a Bosnian pyramid complex – a pseudo-archaeological tourist attraction – which is based on the pyramid-like shape of the mountain, as in the case of the Rtanj mountain. However, the step-pyramid monument made of black marble with nine “steps” and a pyramid with an inscription on top of it is an interesting example of contemporary receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia.

b) Discussion

According to Sigfried Morenz, European encounters with Egypt can be divided into three phases. The first phase lasts until the end of the Middle Ages and is characterized by unconscious implications, simply accepted and transmitted without questioning.⁸³ The memorial of Despot Stefan Lazarević can be understood as a perfect example for this claim. The beginning of the fifteenth century was a turbulent time for the Roman Catholic Church, with political infighting between competing popes, until the new pope Martin V. brought the curia, pilgrims and people back to Rome.⁸⁴ In the spirit of renewal and reinvention, after the stabilization of the political sphere, humanists had an increasing interest in antiquities inside the city of Rome – obelisks were among the most important. Italian travelers made trips to Constantinople in this period in search of ancient Greek manuscripts, which were also high on the agenda.⁸⁵

Pilgrimage became a mass movement in the 13th and 14th centuries, and although it is not possible to assess exact numbers, according to some estimations millions of people might have been involved.⁸⁶ One of the most

⁸² e.g. “Rtanj - The mysterious pyramidal shaped beauty”, Serbia.com, accessed February 6, 2021, <http://www.serbia.com/visit-serbia/natural-beauties/mountains/rtanj-the-mysterious-pyramidal-shaped-beauty/>.

⁸³ Elke Blumenthal, “Das ägyptisierende Leipzig. Prolegomena zu einer Bestandsaufnahme”, in *Exotisch, Weisheitlich und Uralt. Europäische Konstruktionen Altägyptens*, ed. Thomas Glück and Ludwig Morenz (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2007), 351–384.

⁸⁴ Curran et al., *Obelisk. A history*, 73.

⁸⁵ Curran et al., *Obelisk. A history*, 73.

⁸⁶ Peter J. Brenner, “Does Travelling Matter? The Impact of Travel Literature on European

popular goal for pilgrims was Jerusalem. Some pilgrims traveled by ship, but not all of them could afford this means of transportation, having instead to use the road. The circulation of people comes with the circulation of ideas to a certain extent, which in turn means that it is possible that interest in obelisks could have somehow found its way to medieval Serbia via this route.

Memories may be and certainly are often construed differently on the individual and the societal level.⁸⁷ Individual as well as collective memories are subject to continuous change.⁸⁸ It is true that individuals in one society share a common mnemohistory to a certain extent, but their attitudes and perspectives on the respective mnemohistory might differ from one another. It has to be emphasized that in cases where a form of posthumous architecture occurs regularly in terms of particular space and time, such as the obelisk-shaped gravestones in Novi Sad graveyards, it cannot automatically be concluded that all individuals involved in their erection understood and interpreted the stylistic connection to Egyptian architecture in the same way. It is certainly possible that some purchasers simply followed the fashion, or that architectural fashion in turn led to greater visibility and consequently accessibility of these types of gravestones. Different receptions are visible in more explicit examples like the Nušić's tomb, where the relatively wealthy customer intentionally chose a conceptual solution in the form of a pyramid-shaped tomb as part of a broader phenomenon. Branislav Nušić acted as head of the Committee that established the Belgrade Municipal Court, which in 1930 aimed at building new monuments commemorating a list of historically important persons.⁸⁹ One group of monuments took the shape of a pyramid and these were erected in historically important places. Nušić's son died in World War I, and at that time it was widespread practice to build a memorial in the form of an obelisk or pyramid in military (and even civilian) cemeteries.⁹⁰ The pyramid commissioned by Gaius Cestius⁹¹ served

Culture", in *El viaje y la percepción del otro: viajeros por la Península Ibérica y sus descripciones (siglos XVIII y XIX)*, ed. Ricarda Musser (Madrid and Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana, and Vervuert, 2011), 11-22, https://publications.iai.spk-berlin.de/servlets/MCRFileNodeServlet/Document_derivate_00000709/BIA_141_011_022.pdf.

⁸⁷ Aleida Assmann and Linda Shortt, "Memory and Political Change: Introduction", in *Memory and Political Change*, ed. Aleida Assmann and Linda Shortt (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2012), 1-14.

⁸⁸ Assmann and Shortt, "Memory and Political Change: Introduction", 1-14.

⁸⁹ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918-1955*, 213.

⁹⁰ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918-1955*, 112.

⁹¹ Marike van Aerde, *Egypt and the Augustian Cultural Revolution. An interpretative arche-*

as a model for many European pyramids (for example the one in Karlsruhe, Germany)⁹² although it is smaller in dimensions. Formally, Nušić's pyramid is steep and narrow in comparison to the classical Giza pyramids and rather resembles the Gaius Cestius pyramid or even small pyramids erected for workers in the village of Deir el Medina. The inscription on the tomb also indicates a connection with ancient Egyptian houses of the deceased: "Nušić's home" ("Нушићева кућа"). Regional analogies can be found at the Cabas (latter Grubišić) family tomb in the Miragoj cemetery in Zagreb, Croatia, that was finished in 1932⁹³ or at Josef Plečnik's pyramid-shaped monument to Sigismund Zois (1927) in Ljubljana, Slovenia.⁹⁴ Plečnik⁹⁵ was part of the Vienna Secession (1901–1909) and a member of the Austrian Architect's society since 1906.⁹⁶ Receptions of ancient Egypt in the Secession movement are a very common phenomenon. Jugendstil or Secession, however, shouldn't be understood as a style in the strictest sense; it is more like a principal, a *modus operandi* for artists.⁹⁷ It is rather a stylistic movement (during the years from about 1890 until 1910) that was based on originality, authenticity and freedom of expression. On the one hand, it was a contrast to the styles that were inspired with paragons from history; on the other hand, authors who were creating works in the style of Jugendstil were often inspired from exotic worlds like ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, but most of all from Japan.⁹⁸

The tombs of the Nušić and Dimić families at Topčider cemetery were built after construction plans of the architect Svetomir Lazić, who had studied architecture in Prague under Josef Fanta.⁹⁹ It is worth mentioning that

ological overview (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2015), 168, <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/32818>.

⁹² Alexandra Becker and Jessica Schwinn, "Ägyptische Motive in Bauten und Denkmälern von Friedrich Weinbrenner", in *Pyramide, Sphinx und Obelisk. Ägyptische Motive in Karlsruhe und am Oberrhein* (Karlsruhe: Badisches Landesmuseum, 2002), 11–14.

⁹³ Marina Bagarić, "Egypt as Imaged by 19th- and 20th-Century Zagreb: Buildings, Monuments and Street Furniture", in *Egypt in Croatia: Croatian Fascination with Ancient Egypt from Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing LTD, 2019), 249–260.

⁹⁴ Breda Mihelić et al., "Plečnik's Ljubljana", in *Plečnik's Ljubljana*, ed. Breda Mihelić and Boštjan Kerbler (Ljubljana: Mesna občina Ljubljana, 2017), 24–41.

⁹⁵ A more detailed study of Plečnik's work is given in Chapter 2.

⁹⁶ Breda Mihelić, "By way of an introduction", in *Plečnik's Ljubljana*, ed. Breda Mihelić and Boštjan Kerbler (Ljubljana: Mesna občina Ljubljana, 2017), 4–9.

⁹⁷ Friedmann Schäfer, *Jugendstil* (Karlsruhe: G. Braun Buchverlag, 2009), 21.

⁹⁸ Schäfer, *Jugendstil*, 21.

⁹⁹ Дамљановић "Архитекта Светомир Лазич (1894–1985)".

Fanta was one of the most significant Czech representatives of Art Nouveau architecture, which often used models inspired by ancient Egyptian design vocabulary, so it is possible that he represented a main source of influence on the ideas and style of Svetomir Lazić. Examples of Fanta's works influenced by ancient Egyptian styles are Francis Josef Station (today the Main Station) in Prague (1901–1909), designed as an Egyptian temple with pylons flanking the monumental entrance to the main hall,¹⁰⁰ or the Hlahol concert Hall in Prague (1903–06) with a gable that is clamped between two pylons and a cavetto cornice above the door. The field above the entrance is decorated with a colorful phoenix, known to ancient Egyptians as *Benu*-bird, connected with the *benben*, a legendary place where the sun's rays touched the earth for the first time.¹⁰¹

Unlike the Ottoman-administered Balkan countries, some Balkan countries such as Croatia or Slovenia were part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy until 1918 and thus were influenced by a high interest for producing Egyptian artistic elements.¹⁰² The formation of the bourgeoisie in the Principality and later Kingdom of Serbia was influenced by the German-speaking countries, more specifically through immigrants and Serbs who were educated there, bringing back the design vocabulary of funerary architecture inspired by ancient Egypt.¹⁰³ During the Habsburg monarchy non-classical examples of Orientalism are notable, yet they are different from the Orientalism in colonial powers like France and Britain, since the Habsburgs were interested in both ancient and modern states.¹⁰⁴ In Bosnia and Herzegovina the development of specific local receptions divergent from other ex-Yugoslav states is notable. After the fall of the Ottoman empire, Austro-Hungarians introduced western architectural styles into the capital city of Sarajevo.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Zuzana Ragulová, "Czech Art Nouveau architecture in the cities of Prague, Brno and Hradec Králové", in *Strand 3. The New Frontiers: Unveiling Art Nouveau Cities* [papers from strand 3 of the II. Art Nouveau International Congress] (Barcelona, 2015), accessed February 6, 2021, http://www.artnouveau.eu/admin_ponencies/functions/upload/uploads/Ragulova_Zuzana_Paper.pdf.

¹⁰¹ Curran et al., *Obelisk. A history*, 14.

¹⁰² See Tomorad Mladen, "Egyptian revival and modern 'Egyptomania' in Croatia", in *Egypt in Croatia: Croatian Fascination with Ancient Egypt from Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing LTD, 2019), 245–248.

¹⁰³ Vera Vasiljević, "Stari Egipat u našem kulturnom nasleđu?", *Etnoantropološki problemi*, n.s. 8, vol. 3 (2013): 825–844.

¹⁰⁴ Hana Navrátilová, "The wisdom of Egypt in the Art of František Bílek", in *Exotisch, Weisheitlich und Uralt. Europäische Konstruktionen Altägyptens*, ed. Thomas Glück and Ludwig Morenz (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2007), 265–280.

¹⁰⁵ Katherine Marple-Cantrell, *Phoenix or Phantom: Residents and Sarajevo's Post-War*

One of them was the Czech architect Josip Vancaš, who regularly used Egyptian elements in his work, for example pylons at Villa Mathilde in Sarajevo (1902–1903). While in this part of the Balkans, comparably to Serbia, stylistic connections with the Ottoman past were also denied, a peculiarity of western influence entailed the preference of the Spanish Moorish Revival style as well as the Egyptian and Syrian Mamluk architecture, e.g. in the Mostar Gymnasium.

Collective memory can be divided into two main types: one that is connected with origins and another that consists of one's own memories or the "recent past".¹⁰⁶ This division can be adduced as an explanation for some architectural tendencies in Belgrade during the nineteenth century. British traveler Kinglake had visited Belgrade in 1834–1835 and described it as an "oriental" city.¹⁰⁷ In 1877 Turkish garrisons left Belgrade and subsequently the city's architecture displayed less and less Turkish stylistic vocabulary, increasingly aligning with other contemporary European cities. In this regard, the recent "oriental" past has been disclaimed by the acceptance of European tendencies in the making of memorial architecture. Obelisk-shaped monuments became very common in commemorating national heroes and historical events and figures.¹⁰⁸ The first Obelisk in Zagreb, Croatia was erected in 1835, and another early example can be found in Maksimir Park (1843).¹⁰⁹ Serbian examples are common from the second half of the nineteenth century, corresponding with political changes. These political, social and historical contexts of past receptions of objects/texts can often only be recognized in hindsight with temporal distance.

The monuments dedicated to soldiers killed during the Revolution of 1848 and 1849 in Novi Sad and in Gučevo are specific examples of memorials representing receptions by foreigners, who influenced the stylistic taste of people indigenous to the area. In the case of Gučevo the existing "skeleton" was demanded to be refurbished according to the taste of the locals. In turn there are also examples of receptions by Serbs stylistically expressed outside of Serbia. While these are not included in this study, they could be the subject of future research.

Changes (Columbia University, 2008), 17–18, https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/isp_collection/52.

¹⁰⁶ Jan Asmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: C.H.Beck, 1997), 51–52.

¹⁰⁷ Alexander William Kinglake, *Eothen* (London: John Lehmann, 1948), 26.

¹⁰⁸ Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955*, 39.

¹⁰⁹ Bagarić, "Egypt as Imaged by 19th- and 20th-Century Zagreb", 249–260.

2.4. Egypt in non-memorial architecture

The stylistic vocabulary of ancient Egypt has shaped Serbian cultural identity and spaces through its connection with other European identities. Not only did the references to ancient Egypt symbolize ideas of immortality and eternal life, but they also provided a set of aesthetic tools that shaped the overall look of Serbian cities and towns.

One example is The National Bank building in Belgrade, built in 1889 and 1922–1925, which retains its original appearance today,¹¹⁰ e.g. through visible decorative obelisks on the top of its roof. The architect of the National Bank was Konstantin Jovanović (1849–1923), who was born in Vienna and was a student of Gottfried Semper.¹¹¹ Semper designed some of the sections of the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, which in turn largely influenced his later work.¹¹²

“Hotel Avala” at Avala Mountain near Belgrade, was designed by architect Viktor Lukomski and built in 1931. The building has elements of decoration in the Serbo-Byzantine style, combined with contemporarily modern architectural solutions. Here the most significant architectural elements for this study are two large sphinxes carved from artificial stone which flank a stairway leading to a terrace on the north side of the building; these sphinxes were created by the Russian-born sculptor Vladimir Zagorodnyuk, who also contributed decorative plastics for the facade. There are many examples of sphinxes and lions/lionesses all over Europe and America that were copied from Roman paragons.¹¹³

In the last decade of the twentieth century the shopping mall “Piramida” (Pyramid), with a pyramid-shaped glass dome, was built in New Belgrade. The pyramid fits into the brutalist architecture of socialist realism in this part of the city, and thus shows how in Belgrade, Egyptian themes can be incorporated both into historical styles and modern architecture.

2.5. Gender studies and receptions of ancient Egypt

A particularly interesting example demonstrating receptions of ancient Egypt in comics and graphic novels in Serbia is “Princess Ru”, written and

¹¹⁰ Гордана Гордић, “Палата Народне банке”, *Наслеђе* 2 (1999): 85–94.

¹¹¹ Vasiljević, “Stari Egipat u našem kulturnom nasleđu?”, 825–844.

¹¹² Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 323.

¹¹³ Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 399.

drawn by Đorđe Lobačev (Figs. 11, 12). One aspect of stereotypes about ancient Egypt regularly occurring in comic books might be rooted in common codes of communication between author and readership.¹¹⁴ Ancient Egypt belongs to a global collective history and, outside of academic settings, every individual can freely express themselves in subjective commentary on the past. Artistic freedom provides a certain level of deliverance from the obligation to do extensive research on a topic before, for example, drawing and wording a comic book: a superficial mentioning of ancient Egypt will instantly prompt average readers to find an associative surrounding setting or context for the scene in question previously stored in their mental map. “Princess Ru” serves as a great example for creating a stage for a story with very few allusions to ancient Egypt itself. Apart from the extremely schematic head coverings of some characters, sometimes featuring decorations of an ureus, there are only few direct visual references to ancient Egypt. However, some motifs from the domain of popular culture, such as Princess Ru as a revived mummy; secret knowledge hidden from mortals, timeless female beauty¹¹⁵ and similar topics are referenced. Osiris is depicted in heaven and not in the underworld, so his resemblance is actually greater to gods of Greek mythology or even Christian themes than ancient Egyptian gods. The army of the Egyptian Ahmes consists of human-animal hybrids, such as human-snakes and human-birds, alluding to common depictions of Egyptian deities. A depiction of modern Egypt included the stereotypical elements of dancers and hashish as well as “black people”, while Princess Ru as a revived female Egyptian mummy is depicted with white skin corresponding with representations of women in ancient Egyptian art. Furthermore, her character is drawn as passive and feminine, although the reason for that does not necessarily have to be rooted in orientalist stereotypes,¹¹⁶ but in the more general tendency of exaggerated gender characteristics in comics. Narratives like that of Princess Ru, which in this context acts as a metaphor for the passiveness of femininity in stereotypical Egypt and adjacent areas, are not new and are quite common in products of pop-culture prevalently produced by men for men.

¹¹⁴ Vera Vasiljević, “Princess Ru and Papyrus - Stereotypes on ancient Egypt in graphic novels”, *Etnoantropološki problemi*, n. s. god 7. sv. 3 (2012): 763–788.

¹¹⁵ Đorđe Lobačev, “Princeza Ru”, in *Mika Miš* (Belgrade 1938), 205–259, reprint in Žika Bogdanović, ed., *Pegaz*, specijalni broj 2 (1989), 25–86.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003), 138.



Figures 12, 13.
 From the comic "Princess Ru"
 by Đorđe Lobačev,
 from: *Pegaz*, specijalni broj 2 (1989): 30, 57.

There are few but nonetheless substantial examples of receptions from a female point of view. One of them is preserved from Jelena J. Dimitrijević (1862–1954), a feminist and passionate traveler, and part of a new gener-

ation of educated female Serbian writers.¹¹⁷ Dimitrijević was well-traveled and amongst other topics addressed her journey to Egypt (1926) in her writings. Interestingly she chose an unusual point of view; through the perspective of classical travel descriptions of landscapes and travel routes subtly interspersed with her feminist views and ideas.¹¹⁸ Describing historical places she saw in Egypt and the social position of women, she came into contact with the feminist movement in Egypt and introduced completely new ideas of ancient and modern Egypt to female Serbian readers.

While being aware of her gender and age, Dimitrijević traveled alone without acknowledging it as problematic.¹¹⁹ As a woman from the Balkans, the exceptionality of her position is twofold – she viewed herself as neither European nor as “eastern”. Dimitrijević’s writings have a special value as no travelogues written by men refer to any solo travellers defining as female in these times. Following Dimitrijević, another example of a female writer addressing travels to Egypt (1931) in her writing is Desa Dugalić, a Serbian actress. Dugalić writes from the perspective of a European traveler (of unspecified gender), who is fascinated with ancient monuments and history, pointing out perceived dichotomies of Europe and other continents, West and East,¹²⁰ modern and ancient.

An important difference between the two writers is that Dimitrijević reflected upon systemic parallels between regions, for example between poor peasants in south Serbian villages and poor villagers in modern Egypt,¹²¹ while Dugalić solely wrote from the position of a white, European visitor to an exotic country. Moreover, Dimitrijević underscored her curiosity about both traces of Egypt’s ancient past and modern Egypt, while Dugalić was not interested in modern Egypt but rather its allegedly glorious past. Dimitrijević thematized colonialism and imperialism, while Dugalić takes a Eurocentric point of view. The example of these two women, who both left precious

¹¹⁷ Svetlana Tomić, “The travel writings of Jelena J. Dimitrijević: Feminist Politics and privileged Intellectual Identity”, in *On the Very Edge: Modernism and Modernity in the Arts and Architecture of Interwar Serbia 1918–1941*, ed. Jelena Bogdanovic, Lilen F. Robinson, and Igor Marjanović (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2014), 115–135.

¹¹⁸ Tomić, “The travel writings of Jelena J. Dimitrijević”, 115–135.

¹¹⁹ Milica Naumov, “In search of the East”, in *Egypt remembered by Serbia*, ed. Emilia Epštajn (Belgrade: The museum of African art: The Veda and dr Zdravka Pečara Collection, 2011/2013), 47–65.

¹²⁰ Naumov, “In search of the East”, 47–65.

¹²¹ Naumov, “In search of the East”, 47–65.

evidence for their receptions of Egypt, shows how different viewpoints of the same phenomenon can contribute to its overall interpretation.

2.6. Ancient Egypt “personally” in Serbia

a) Historical sources

Collections of Egyptian artefacts can be found in the National Museum in Belgrade, and less numerous in the Museum of History of Yugoslavia as well as at the city museums in Vršac, Sombor and Užice, although almost all artefacts are in depots. The reason for this is based on the objective of most museum exhibitions to promote national continuity and narratives about the past of the Serbian state, which is complicated by displaying Egyptian artefacts.¹²² Since the 1960s,¹²³ there have not been any new Serbian expeditions in Egypt to date,¹²⁴ (and the artefacts present in Serbian museums are the product of past political constellations.

The City Museum of Vršac has the biggest collection of ancient Egyptian artefacts with a total number of 97 pieces.¹²⁵ It received them from painter Paja Jovanović (who traveled to Egypt in 1887), printer and publisher Vilmos Wettl, Mikša Adler (through his brother Joseph who traveled to Egypt in 1869) and the antiquarian Leonhard Böhm.¹²⁶ It is unknown as to how long Jovanović stayed in Egypt or whether he visited the original sites or the museum in Cairo.¹²⁷ He began his studies at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts in 1877, just as the Austrian society was opening up to art featuring Near

¹²² Vera Vasiljević, “Nevidljivo nasleđe: stari Egipat i muzeji u Srbiji”, *Etnoantropološki problemi*, n. s. god 13, sv. 3 (2018): 617–630.

¹²³ See Uroš Matić, “Images of a pharaonic past. On the development and Current State of Egyptology in Serbia”, in *Egypt remembered by Serbia*, ed. Emilia Epštajn (Belgrade: The museum of African art: The Veda and Dr Zdravka Pečara Collection, 2011/2013), 29–42.

¹²⁴ Вера Васиљевић, “Египтологија код нас- луксуз или потреба?”, *Гласник САД* 15–16 (1999–2000): 297–301.

¹²⁵ Branislav Anđelković, “Glasnik Srpskog arheološkog društva”, *Journal of the Serbian Archaeological Society* 23 (2007): 227–244.

¹²⁶ Branislav Anđelković and Miroslava Panić-Štorh, *Staroegipatska zbirka Gradskog muzeja u Vršcu / The Collection of Egyptian Antiquities in the City Museum of Vršac* (Vršac: Gradski muzej Vršac, 2002), 9–11.

¹²⁷ Вера Васиљевић, “Ентеријер каирске куће на сликама Паје Јовановића”, *Зборник народног музеја – Београд XXI/2* (2014): 205–220.

East-based motifs.¹²⁸ The gallery exhibiting his paintings organized his trip to Egypt.¹²⁹ Jovanović, a painter of typically Balkan and Near Eastern topics, frequently took photographs on his journey and he also bought numerous everyday items on his travels. Although at least one of his paintings depicts an interior of a contemporary house in Cairo,¹³⁰ he was not particularly influential in terms of the receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia. His art was primarily aimed at Western European customers and adapted to their taste. His major contribution is to be seen in his gifts to the museum in Vršac.

A nobleman named Pavle Ridički traveled to Egypt in 1888, leaving behind plenty of information about his travels. He purchased an ancient Egyptian mummy and donated it to the National Museum in Belgrade, which became the first Serbian museum to exhibit an ancient Egyptian piece in August 1888.¹³¹ In January 1888 he sailed with the ship “Austral” from Naples to Egypt where he disembarked in Suez.¹³² He visited a series of important Egyptian sites, such as the Egyptian Museum, the Cheops Pyramid (which he entered) and the Sphinx at Giza, several mosques and Coptic churches, the tombs in the rock at Beni Hasan, Tel el-Amarna, the Hathor Temple in Dendera, Thebes, Karnak, Luxor, and the temples in Esna and Kom Ombo.¹³³ In his records he mentions that the French archaeologist Auguste Mariette was excavating in Egypt and refers to some of his findings. In “Letters from a Long Way”, Pavle Ridički describes landmarks with much more detail than preceding writers. The mummy he bought for the Serbian museum was scientifically examined for the first time in 1993.¹³⁴

The collection at the City Museum in Sombor features materials which Jovan Fernbach bought on his travels in Egypt in 1899.¹³⁵ There are 22 pieces from the Third Intermediate Period until the Roman period in Sombor Mu-

¹²⁸ Васиљевић, “Ентеријер каирске куће на сликама Паје Јовановића”, 205–220.

¹²⁹ Васиљевић, “Ентеријер каирске куће на сликама Паје Јовановића”, 205–220.

¹³⁰ Васиљевић, “Ентеријер каирске куће на сликама Паје Јовановића”, 205–220.

¹³¹ Branislav Anđelković, “The Belgrade Mummy: Current research and future possibilities”, *Journal of the Serbian Archaeological Society* 19 (2003): 143–148.

¹³² Бранислав Анђелковић, “Павле Риђички – донатор Београдске мумије: реконструкција пута на Блиски исток 1888”, *Годишњак за друштвену историју* II/3 (1995): 329–341.

¹³³ Анђелковић, “Павле Риђички – донатор Београдске мумије”, 329–341.

¹³⁴ Anđelković, “The Belgrade Mummy: Current research and future Possibilities”, 143–148.

¹³⁵ Branislav Anđelković, “Egyptian antiquities in the museums of Serbia”, in *Egyptian museum collections around the world: Studies for the centennial of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo*, ed. Mamdouh Eldamaty and Mai Trad (Cairo: Supreme Council of Antiquities, 2002), 39–50.

seum: one shabti figurine, one amulet, one plaque with a high relief figure or a mold, two jewelry items, and two vessels.¹³⁶

The Museum of History of Yugoslavia harbours a bronze statuette of Osiris dating to the sixth or fourth centuries B.C.E. from Beni Suef, and three alabaster vases from the pyramid of Djoser.¹³⁷

Scholars in Serbia have been discussing the need for the foundation of a new museum specialized in ancient Egyptian antiquities, displaying all finds in the same location and available for public view. The necessity for this step is underlined by the fact that, for example, the Egyptian collection of the City Museum in Vršac was exhibited before World War II,¹³⁸ only to be on display again in 2019 as part of the exhibition in the Museum of African Art.¹³⁹ Overall, Egyptian antiquities are almost completely inaccessible and their existence probably partly unknown to the public.

The only Egyptian artefact with an archaeological context was found at an excavation in Serbia at Trnjanci-Pilatovići, near a town called Užicka Požega. The scarab was found in situ¹⁴⁰ during an excavation of a tumulus in 1978. Dating to the 20th–22nd dynasty (1190–720 B.C.) it was probably imported by Greek merchants.¹⁴¹ The grave mound itself was dated to ca 550–520 B.C.E.¹⁴²

b) Discussion

Most texts about the receptions of ancient Egypt emphasize the importance of the Napoleonic wars, the decipherment of the hieroglyphs or the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun as catalysts attracting new interest

¹³⁶ Andelković, “Glasnik Srpskog arheološkog društva”, 227–244.

¹³⁷ Andelković, “Glasnik Srpskog arheološkog društva”, 227–244.

¹³⁸ Andelković, and Panić-Štorh, *Staroegipatska zbirka Gradskog muzeja u Vršcu*, 9–11.

¹³⁹ “Pod Lupom, Staroegipatske zbirke u muzejima u Srbiji”, Muzej afričke umetnosti u Beogradu, accessed February 6, 2021, <http://mau.rs/sr/pro%C5%A1le-izlo%C5%BEbe/pod-lupom-staroegipatske-zbirke-u-muzejima-u-srbiji.html>.

¹⁴⁰ Andelković, “Egyptian antiquities in the museums of Serbia”, 39–50.

¹⁴¹ Branislav Andelković, “Arheološki materijal bliskoistočnog porekla u Srbiji”, *Journal of the Serbian Archaeological Society* 7 (1991): 67–77.

¹⁴² Mladen Tomorad, “Early penetration of Ancient Egyptian Artefacts and Aegyptiaca (7th–1st Centuries BCE)”, in *Egypt in Croatia: Croatian Fascination with Ancient Egypt from Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress 2020), 1–14.

in Egyptian themes. Periodic “resurgences” of interest¹⁴³ are occurring in the context of reception studies on topics other than ancient Egypt, which is nevertheless not a passive object that waits to be rediscovered, but should be viewed as an active agent¹⁴⁴ creating history. The Napoleonic Wars are surely important, but in relation to ancient Egypt they resemble an analogy of the role the Cold War had in the Space Race; you could refer to it as the “Egyptian Race”. Owning physical embodiments of ancient Egypt and representing a passion for the exotic and a certain aesthetic, became a matter of prestige. Russia, Britain, France, the Scandinavian states, Italy, Germany and Austria were rivals¹⁴⁵ regarding the possession of Egyptian artifacts. There were significant discrepancies in the receptions of Egypt between Western European states. In Britain, for example, there is a striking dominance of classical art as a source of European narratives, as opposed to France where after the French Revolution art from Egypt was presented as equal in status to that from Greece, Italy and France itself.¹⁴⁶

Beginning in the early nineteenth century, the Serbian struggle for liberation from the Ottoman rule elicited a series of changes in Serbian society. Especially in the second half of the nineteenth century, investments in scientific and cultural fields intensified. Prince Miloš Obrenović (1780–1860) financed the education of Serbs in European capitals and encouraged educated artists and architects to return to Serbia.¹⁴⁷ Situated in a liminal space, neither a part of Europe nor “the Orient” (or both at the same time), Serbia pursued an emancipation from the long Turkish rule, keeping pace with the new tendencies of Western Europe and also actively (re)constructing national identities. While functionally there is a need for differentiating be-

¹⁴³ See Salvatore Settis, *The future of the classical* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006).

¹⁴⁴ Miguel John Versluys, “‘Une géographie intérieure’: the Perpetual Presence of Egypt”, *Aegyptiaca* 3 (2018): 159–166, <https://doi.org/10.11588/aegyp.2018.3.49002>.

¹⁴⁵ Christina Riggs, “Ancient Egypt in the Museum: Concepts and Constructions”, in *A companion to Ancient Egypt*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd (Chichester, Oxford, and Malden: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2010), 2: 1129–1157.

¹⁴⁶ See C. Duncan, *Civilising Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (London: Routledge, 1995) and C. Duncan, “From the princely gallery to the public art museum: the Louvre Museum and the National Gallery, London.”, in *Representing the Nation: A Reader. Histories, Heritage and Museums*, ed. D. Boswell and J. Evans (London: Routledge, 1999), 304–331 according to Riggs, “Ancient Egypt in the Museum: Concepts and Constructions”, 1135–1136.

¹⁴⁷ Bojana Matejić, “Orijentalizam i Drugi u modernom žanr slikarstvu”, in *Istorija umetnosti u Srbiji. XX vek: Modernost i modernizam (1878–1941)*, ed. Miško Šuvaković (Beograd: Orion Art, 2014), 591–612.

tween “real” and “constructed” (or other) identities,¹⁴⁸ for reception studies this has no relevance. Identities of the new European national states were made in connection with mutual origins, and in opposition to the other, which was also gaining its characteristics in the process and thus was constructed. Consequently, it seems self-evident that the nucleus of Serbian museum collections with materials of Egyptian provenance donated by Serbian travelers to Egypt formed synchronously with the construction of a new national identity.

Comparable to those of other European countries, Serbian intellectuals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries traveled around the world, bringing back fascinating stories about exotic countries to their homelands. These travelers also imported some of the first artefacts from the land of the pharaohs to their compatriots. At that time these became centerpieces and a novelty for national museums and assemblages while Western Europe already had a set of established ideas about Egypt. To illustrate this further, it should be emphasized that Serbia’s oldest public museum, the National Museum, was founded in 1844, while the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University in Great Britain had existed since 1683. The obvious discrepancies are still visible today, e.g. there are nine assemblages specialized in Egyptian artefacts in Germany available to public view, while in Serbia there are only small collections in museums (none of which actually specializes in Egypt) and the material is rarely presented to the public.

The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century donations of Egyptian artefacts, then seen as curiosities from an exotic foreign world, can be viewed as attempts to educate and contribute to a general knowledge of the Serbian populace. In the twentieth century, museums followed more political agendas, such as the unification of the Slavic countries on the Balkan, creating narratives of communist Yugoslavia, and searching for new identities in the post-war period. An almost constant invisibility of Egyptian artefacts from World War I onwards had created a situation in which ancient Egypt was still considered as the exotic “other” and not as an important part of a general history of civilisation.

The unique political constellation of Yugoslavia in close connection with Egypt until the death of Tito (1980) facilitated a somewhat warm, friendly and curious friendship. One example for these tendencies are the

¹⁴⁸ Jan Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian: the memory of Egypt in western monotheism* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 2.

exhibitions of contemporary Egyptian art at the “Cvijeta Zuzorić” Art Pavilion in Belgrade in 1962 as well as Egyptian modern applied arts in 1967 and 1979 in the Museum of Applied Arts in Belgrade.¹⁴⁹ Further examples can be found in cinematography with the event “Week of Egyptian (UAR) Film” in Belgrade held in 1960, 1961 and 1975.¹⁵⁰ In 2009, 2010 and 2012 events addressing retrospectives of Egyptian cinematography took place in Belgrade.¹⁵¹ In 2019 Egypt was the honorary guest of the Belgrade Book Fair, which each year promotes a different nation. While these modern examples of receptions are merely mentioned in this study, they have the potential to be core subjects for future studies.

3 Why *receptions*?¹⁵²

During the analysis of the phenomenon of receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia, the need arose to provide context in order to redefine its theoretical framework. For example, referring to the pyramid-shaped tomb of Branislav Nušić, the specific constellation of events in his life, his position in society and the function he had in the planning of monuments in Serbia, sheds a whole new light on his choice as opposed to discarding it as just part of a broader phenomenon. The diversity of individual receptions is illustrated by the contemporary texts of the two female travelers, Dimitrijević and Dugalić, contrasting the usual male point of view. It has been shown that each example of receptions deserves an extensive contextual analysis.

Although it is important to become familiar with the history of events in order to gain insight into the broader context of receptions, features of history should be approached with caution and not used uncritically to explain the respective receptions. Any case of individuals creating receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia incorporates mnemohistorical aspects likely influencing the result, which is why it is important not to automatically rely on the

¹⁴⁹ Narcisa Knežević-Šijan, “Egyptian art. Important Belgrade Exhibitions of Fine and Applied Arts in the Second Half of the 20th Century”, in *Egypt remembered by Serbia*, ed. Emilia Epštajn (Belgrade: The museum of African art: The Veda and Dr Zdravka Pečara Collection, 2011/2013), 81–98.

¹⁵⁰ Aleksandar Maričić, “To freedom... and back: Egyptian Cinematography at the week of UAR Film”, in *Egypt remembered by Serbia*, ed. Emilia Epštajn (Belgrade: The museum of African art: The Veda and dr Zdravka Pečara Collection, 2011/2013), 99–113.

¹⁵¹ Maričić, “To freedom... and back”, 99–113.

¹⁵² See also Chapter 6 for more details about theoretical approach.

most obvious solution. There may not be such a thing as a singular holistic understanding of reception; rather, the concept should be referred to as *receptions*. Based on our own chronological context we might be prone to view past receptions within the broader historical context, while inadvertently disregarding the ideational background of the producer. Weighing historical and mnemohistorical aspects against each other to reconstruct any reception might not necessarily result in the full picture of historic reality, which in part will always be subject to the interpretation of the respective researcher. For this reason the phenomenon should be rather referred to as *receptions* in plural than reception in singular as the latter falsely suggests that there is only one version of perception of the same phenomena. This understanding of receptions corresponds with the concept of dynamic *identities* opposed to the simplification of a singular static, essentialist identity of past and present individuals. This chapter does not claim to provide a complete interpretation of receptions in Serbia from all epochs and every possible point of view, but rather presents new approaches to old phenomena which holds great potential for extensive future research.

The consideration of the past cannot be static but needs to be always moving.¹⁵³ A person who wants to understand the past automatically introduces a certain level of bias into his research of the subject.¹⁵⁴ A scientist that researches the receptions of ancient Egypt (or other cultures) has his own set of ideas and prejudices and is reconstructing past receptions through also drawing from his own reception, and by doing so creating a model of understanding the present.¹⁵⁵ It has to be emphasized that while a researcher usually strives for objectivity he/she necessarily becomes part of the interpretation of the reception of a historical phenomenon, which in turn is an aspect of his/her mnemohistory. Thus the aim of this work is to encourage people from different parts of the world to address the topic contributing their views in the context of their personal mnemohistories.

¹⁵³ Assmann, *Moses the Egyptian*, 14.

¹⁵⁴ Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London and New York: continuum, 2004), 270.

¹⁵⁵ Florian Ebeling, "Hans Georg Gadamer's 'history of effect' and its application to the pre-Egyptological concept of ancient Egypt", *Aegyptiaca* 4 (2019): 55–73, <https://doi.org/10.11588/aegyp.2019.4.66093>.

4 Epilogue

From the Middle Ages onwards, ancient Egypt has been a part of mnemohistories in Serbia. The evolution of the receptions of ancient Egypt runs from the simple stage where biblical stories were reenacted to the more complex language of symbols and meanings that are widely known and available today. Although many Serbian travelers had the opportunity to visit Egypt, one gets the impression that some tendencies, for example in architecture, have found their paths to Serbia not directly from Egypt, but indirectly, through the perception of models in Europe and other classical sources. Therefore the receptions in Serbia are not particularly innovative and original and, for most examples of the receptions of Egypt, analogies could be found elsewhere. In Western Europe, European settings are also frequently used rather than those from Egypt, but historical circumstances have allowed Serbia to participate in European trends at a time when Egypt had, in some ways, already become part of a European global historical worldview. The most common visual markers of the presence of Serbian receptions of Egypt are obelisks, pyramids and sphinxes. Egyptian stylistic vocabulary is very common in memorial and funerary contexts, connected with ideas of eternal life and remembrance. Apart from memorial obelisks and obelisk fountains, Egyptian motifs are not vastly common or indeed are less explicit in cities. Obelisks of small dimensions on public buildings are part of the architectural vocabulary and rhythm that does not require particular explanation. They could either be seen as a part of receptions of ancient Egypt or as receptions of archetypes from other parts of Europe. In spite of all that, the unique constellation of mnemohistories and local traditions provide an authentic mark on the receptions of ancient Egypt. Other examples, like modern lingual references, exemplified by corporation names, like “Oziris Elektrik” (a company for the production, service and sale of electrical devices), “Sfinga (Sphynx) Gym & Spa Club”, or “Sfinga” funeral services, are embedded in local contexts and are a part of the mental maps of citizens.

Academic work of understanding past receptions is, in fact, also a type of reception. The receptions of the past presented here will hopefully become a part of future studies of receptions, and thus will contribute a piece of the big picture of research on receptions of and in the past. Some possible explanations of receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia are given in this article, and yet others are only mentioned as an illumination of a broader phenomenon. Detailed research of every example always brings some new insights.

Although in a positivistic manner, an analogy can be seen in mathematics and the ancient Egyptians' astonishing accuracy of the understanding of π ¹⁵⁶ – one can always try to be closer to an accurate image of receptions (just as mathematicians try to count more decimals of π), but completeness can, ultimately, never be reached.

Rezime

Mnemoistorije i recepcije starog Egipta u Srbiji

U okviru ove studije slučaja su sumirani primeri od putopisa, preko arhitekture i muzejskih artefakata, sve do stripa. Vremenski okvir je od srednjeg veka do danas. Iz tog razloga je važno naglasiti da u obzir nisu uzeti svi postojeći primeri, već samo jedan mali deo, koji je iskorišćen da se donesu neki opšti zaključci o fenomenu recepcija starog Egipta u Srbiji. Uz primere iz Srbije su u cilju davanja konteksta podacima korišćene regionalne analogije kao i analogije iz drugih delova sveta.

Među prvim primerima recepcija Egipta u Srbiji je žitije Setog Save, koji je dva puta putovao u Egipat. Iz XVII veka potiče putopis Lavrentija iz Hilandara, koji je takođe imao prilike da putuje u zemlju Nila. Jerotej Račanin, sa druge strane, ostavlja sasvim drugačije beleške o putovanju u Egipat od svojih prethodnika, dajući tekstu lični pečat i ne osvrćući se na paralele između mesta koja se pominju u Bibliji i mesta koje sam posećuje, kao što je to bio slučaj u putopisima njegovih prethodnika.

Na Petrovaradinskoj tvrđavi se nalazi spomenik iz 1850. godine koji ima oblik obeliska i podignut je na mestu grobnice palih austrijskih vojnika. Najveći broj grobova sa obeliscima se u Novom Sadu može naći na Alma-naškom, Uspenskom i Rimo-katoličkom groblju, kao i na groblju Trandžament.

U Beogradu je 1859. u Topčiderskom parku podignut spomenik u čast povratka kneza Miloša u Srbiju. Godine 1880. podignut je 10 m visok obelisk u čast princa Aleksandra. Na groblju posvećenom vojnicima Crvene Armije palim u Drugom svetskom ratu u Subotici se nalaze obelisci sa crvenom zvezdom i tekstom na ruskom jeziku. Na Novom groblju u Beogradu je grobnica Branislava Nušića sa spomenikom u obliku piramide.

¹⁵⁶ Hermann Engels, "Quadrature of the circle in Ancient Egypt", *Historia mathematica* 4 (1977): 137–140.

Recepcije Egipta su, dakako poznate i iz domena izvan funerarnog i memorijalnog konteksta. Neki od primera su Hotel „Avala” i zgrada Narodne banke u Beogradu.

Strip „Princeza Ru” Đorđa Lobačeva daje takođe interesantan doprinos recepciji starog Egipta u domenu pop-kulture. Ženska perspektiva je vidljiva u delima feministkinje Jelene Dimitrijević koja je Egipat posetila 1926., kao i glumice Dese Dugalić (poseta Egiptu 1931).

Poseban deo je posvećen kolekcijama egipatskih nalaza kojih ima u Narodnom muzeju u Beogradu, kao i u Muzeju istorije Jugoslavije u istom gradu, zatim u gradskim muzejima u Vršcu, Somboru i Užicu.

Najvažniji deo ove studije je zaključak da je primerenije govoriti o recepcijama (receptions) Starog Egipta, dakle u množini, nego u jednini (reception) kako je to običaj. Kada se u obzir uzmu svi aspekti, kako istorijski tako i mnemoistorijski (mnemohistory), slika o pojedinom slučaju recepcije Egipta i dalje neće biti potpuna. Ovaj fenomen pokazuje sličnost sa konceptom identiteta takođe shvaćenih u množini, kao suprotstavljenih statičnom, jednoznačnom u esencijalističkom ključu shvaćenom identitetu (u jednini).

CHAPTER 2

Receptions of Ancient Egypt in works of sculptor Ivan Meštrović and architect Jože Plečnik

Abstract

Ivan Meštrović and Jože Plečnik were both born in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, educated in Vienna and influenced by Vienna secession at a young age. Although Meštrović's main emphasis was sculpture and Plečnik's was architecture, they were well versed in both artistic disciplines. Plečnik gave a new architectural appearance to Ljubljana, Prague and Vienna, and Meštrović's sculptures are found in many cities like Chicago, Washington D. C., Zagreb, Belgrade, Bratislava, Bucharest etc. This case study offers an overview of their works that are inspired by ancient Egyptian art, in an attempt to decipher the reasons for the receptions of Egypt in so many works by these authors.

1 Receptions of Ivan Meštrović

*"...the nights are pleasant and cool, the stars seem much nearer than in our country although there are no pyramids and tombs there..."*¹⁵⁷

(From the postcard that Meštrović wrote in Egypt in 1927 to his first wife Ruža).

Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) was a Croatian sculptor, architect, and writer born in Vrpolje, Slavonia, in North Croatia. Meštrović's *oeuvre* is often analyzed in the contexts of his reception of classical antiquity and within the ideological, political, and broader historical constellations during his

¹⁵⁷ Sabina Kaštelančić, „Ivan Meštrović: His Fascination with Ancient Civilisations, as Reflected in His Postcards to Ruža Meštrović, May 1927“, in *Egypt in Croatia. Croatian fascination with ancient Egypt from antiquity to modern times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing LTD, 2019): 137–148.

long professional life. The reception of ancient Egypt in his works is usually mentioned as a secondary companion of the reception of Greek and Roman art and thus has not yet been analyzed as a unique phenomenon¹⁵⁸.

Crucial to his later world-wide fame was the discovery of his talent at a young age. An antique collector, Lujo Marun (1857–1939), recognized his talent, and thus sought financial assistance for Meštrović, and finally succeeded to send him to Vienna¹⁵⁹. At first, Meštrović had difficulties because of the lack of formal primary education. It is often noted that Auguste Rodin was a role model for Meštrović, and Rodin evidently reciprocated this admiration, speaking of Meštrović as “a phenomenon among the sculptors” even when Meštrović was still at the beginning of his career¹⁶⁰.

Viennese secession highly influenced Meštrović's works, which were often a very successful combination of secessionistic abstract style and rougher folk style. In 1903 he participated in the first of many exhibitions with the Vienna Secession group. In 1911 Gustav Klimt won the first prize for a painting at the international exhibition in Rome, and at the same time, Meštrović was placed first in the category of sculpture. Klimt was also a role model for Meštrović within the movement of the Vienna secession¹⁶¹ in the formative years of his work, as Klimt had found a new way of authentic artistic expression which rejected eclecticism and styles of the past epochs. On the other hand, Meštrović looked back to archaic models – especially in his epical works inspired by the histories of Balkan people – although this tendency was heavily criticized in artistic circles¹⁶². In 1911 he won the first prize at the annual International Exhibition in London¹⁶³. Meštrović trave-

¹⁵⁸ There are some recent exceptions: Zorana Jurić Šabić, “Ivan Meštrović – Creating Art for Eternity: Meštrović's Fascination with Ancient Egypt as Illustrated by the Family Mausoleum in Otavice”, in *Egypt in Croatia. Croatian fascination with ancient Egypt from antiquity to modern times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing LTD, 2019): 261–268; Zorana Jurić Šabić, „Ivan Meštrović in Egypt, May 1927“, in *Egypt in Croatia. Croatian fascination with ancient Egypt from antiquity to modern times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress Publishing LTD, 2019): 133–136.

¹⁵⁹ Duško Kečkemet, „Meštrović, Marun, Gunjača i Povijest Hrvata“, *Starohrvatska prosvjeta* III/30 (2003): 261–268.

¹⁶⁰ James F. Flanigan, “Introduction”, in *Ivan Meštrović at Notre dame. Selected Campus Sculptures* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2003), 9–11.

¹⁶¹ Ana Adamec, “Arhaična komponenta u kiparstvu Ivana Meštrovića”, *Rad. Inst. Povij. Umjet.* 18 (1994): 73–86.

¹⁶² Adamec, “Arhaična komponenta u kiparstvu Ivana Meštrovića”, 73–86.

¹⁶³ Dean A. Porter, “Ivan Mestrovic: The Current State of Criticism”, *The Courier* 19.2 (1984): 17–28.

led to Rome before the First World War, where he became acquainted with styles from antiquity¹⁶⁴. Some of the first topics he was interested in after his time in Rome were related to national and South Slavic myths. In 1915 he had a solo exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, which was the second exhibition of a living artist in the history of the museum (the first living artist was Auguste Rodin)¹⁶⁵, which speaks in favor of the recognized quality of his work. He also became the first living artist to have an exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (1947)¹⁶⁶.

His works can be found in countries throughout Europe and beyond. Meštrović had commissions all over the world, from an Episcopal church in Hawaii to King Ferdinand I of Bulgaria to the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota¹⁶⁷. Perhaps his most famous works outside of Croatia are „The Indians“ in Grant Park, Chicago. Particularly interesting is the way he considered the surrounding of the monuments as he wanted to emphasize their appearance in the urban setting¹⁶⁸.

Ivan Meštrović spent a month on a journey encompassing Greece and Egypt in 1927. A lot of monuments that he saw on his voyage influenced his later works in many ways. One example is the monument to Gregory of Nin (1927) for the Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, for which Meštrović changed its dimensions in order to make it a monumental size sculpture that resembles ancient Egyptian taste¹⁶⁹. Monumentality is not the only ancient Egyptian echo in Meštrović's sculptures. In some of his works the hallmarks of his fascination with ancient Egypt are far more noticeable. In the process of comprehending paragons of European sculpture, Meštrović came by archaic sources in ancient Egypt and learned about the sculptural block and incision technique¹⁷⁰.

There are clear parallels between certain Egyptian sculptural forms and the works of Meštrović. Most of his works that have the hallmarks of ancient

¹⁶⁴ Alihodžić Jašarović, Ema, „Projekti Ivana Meštrovića i Harolda Bilinića na Lovčenu u tadašnjem političkom i ideološkom kontekstu“, *Prostor* 2 (56), 26 (2018): 320–331.

¹⁶⁵ The author is very grateful to Ms. Barbara Vujanović for this information.

¹⁶⁶ Flanigan, „Introduction“, 9–11.

¹⁶⁷ Robert McCormick, „Ivan Meštrović“, in *Ivan Meštrović at Notre dame. Selected Campus Sculptures* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2003), 12–24.

¹⁶⁸ Barbara Vujanović, „Derivacija klasičnih modela u modernoj umjetnosti: primjeri monumentalizma u spomeničkoj plastici Ivana Meštrovića“, *ADRIAS* sv. 21 (2015): 153–170.

¹⁶⁹ Jurić Šabić, „Ivan Meštrović – Creating Art for Eternity“, 261–268.

¹⁷⁰ Ana Adamec, „Arhaična komponenta u kiparstvu Ivana Meštrovića“, *Rad. Inst. Povij. Umjet.* 18 (1994): 73–86.

Egyptian art were made in the period after his journey to Egypt in 1927, although not all. What is more, he used some of the principles of Egyptian decorum in producing the sculptures that are not obviously connected with Egyptian forms. One method for presenting motion is frontality of the abdomen as opposed to the face represented in profile (or half-profile)¹⁷¹, which is also a well-known method of old Egyptian two-dimensional depictions, and Meštrović uses it in the family mausoleum in Otavice.

a) History of the Croats

“History of the Croats” is one of the most popular of Meštrović’s sculptures (Figure 1). The sculpture was made in 1932 for the new building of the Old Croats Museum in Knin¹⁷². It bears a clear resemblance to the portrait of Meštrović’s mother, made in 1908. A serious face has, at first glance, no expression. But a woman’s gaze stretching far beyond the viewer shows her contemplation about the long and rich history – and also the hardship and suffering – of her people. The hands of the woman are folded on

the horizontal surface of her lap. Made of white marble, its height is 206 cm.

The sculpture is today used as a logo on The student grade history reports of Split University.

Meštrović found inspiration for the “History of the Croats” in ancient Egyptian scribe sculptures. There are many Egyptian scribes that Meštrović could have seen on his journeys, one possibility being the statue of Amunhotep, son of Nebiry in the Brooklyn Museum



Figure 1.
History of Croats (Zagreb, 1932).
A photograph of a plaster model
(the author of the photo is not specified).
Photo library of the Meštrović Gallery in
Split, inv. no. FGM-245

¹⁷¹ Vera Horvat-Pintarić, “Die Macht des Decorums”, in *Ivan Meštrović. Sculpturen* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 1987): 11–15.

¹⁷² Kečkemet, “Meštrović, Marun, Gunjača i Povijest Hrvata”, 261–268.



Figure 2.
Amunhotep, Son of Nebiry,
 ca. 1426–1400 B.C.E. Limestone,
 pigment, 25 3/8 × 14 5/16 × 14 3/8
 in., 206 lb. (64.5 × 36.3 × 36.5 cm,
 93.44kg).
 Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin
 Wilbour Fund, 37.29E.

(Figure 2). This pale-white colored statue fashioned from limestone came to the Museum as a part of the Charles Edwin Wilbour Collection in 1916. Meštrović exhibited at the Brooklyn Museum in 1924, so he probably saw the statue. During his Paris years, Meštrović often visited Louvre¹⁷³, where he likely saw a large collection of ancient Egyptian antiquities. The Seated Scribe from Saqqara (Louvre E3023) discovered by Mariette and sent to the Louvre in the middle of the 19th century might also have been his source of inspiration.

The legs of the female personification of Croatian history are crossed in the attitude of a scribe. Egyptian scribes have a papyrus scroll with hieroglyphs in their lap, and Croatian history has a tablet with a Glagolitic script, an old Croatian script.

Symbolism is a very important component of Meštrović's early works

that are a part of the broader secessionistic movement in European art¹⁷⁴. Later works are usually engaged with more specific topics, but the strong symbolism was still an integral part of Meštrović's sculptural language.

b) Contemplation and Seated figure/Meditation

“Contemplation” was made in 1923/24 (Figure 3). This sculpture is clearly cubic and geometric and differs from representations of women in Meštrović's works from the same period¹⁷⁵ (for example “Waiting” from

¹⁷³ Sandi Bulimbašić, “Prilog identifikaciji djela Ivana Meštrovića na izložbama u prva dva desetljeća 20. stoljeća”, *Rad. Inst. povij. Umjet.* 39 (2015): 149–162.

¹⁷⁴ Ana Adamec, “O skulpturi secesije u Hrvatskoj”, *Peristil* 21, no. 1 (1978): 173–177.

¹⁷⁵ Horvat-Pintarić, “Die Macht des Decorums”, 11–15.

1928). It echoes ancient Egyptian block statues that emerged in the Middle Kingdom. Block statues represent sitting individuals with knees drawn up to the chin. It gives an impression of the whole as of a block-shaped statue with a human head, sometimes with arms and legs, or only with arms, but sometimes without limbs¹⁷⁶. An example that Meštrović might have seen in the Louvre is the block statue of Pa-di-Chahdedet, a military general of the time of Psametik I from the 26th dynasty or – once again an example from Charles Edwin Wilbour Fund – a block statue of Padimahes from the Brooklyn Museum (Figure 4). “Contemplation” could be seen as a modern block statue in secessionistic style as it retains a very compressed squatting position of the legs, with arms that are crossed and feet that peek out from under a long dress. Ancient Egyptian block statues are schematic and symmetric, and “Contemplation” takes this basic unit and uses it in a contemporary artistic context, with the addition of expression of emotions and symbolism that are very important for a secessionistic repertoire. This is an example of the reception of ancient Egypt that is masterfully adjusted to the *Zeitgeist*.

c) Seated figure/Meditation

Seated figure/Meditation (1947–50) from the collection of the Snite Museum of Art was made out of white marble, with the dimensions 89 x 58 x 58 cm¹⁷⁷. This sculpture resembles the Block statues of ancient Egypt even more than “Contemplation”. The whole human figure is packed into a kind of cube: both arms rest on the knees of the seated figure, and the head is buried in the arms. The front part of the legs is almost vertical and forms a unity with the sides of the arms and the occiput, which are both plane. Only the feet and hands remind the viewer the he/she is looking at a human figure, and not some abstract, cubistic form.

d) Prophet Jeremiah

The sculpture of Prophet Jeremiah resembles a block-statue form. The feet are only partially visible and the whole figure looks schematized. Only the head attracts attention and shows a deeply concentrated face in prayer or contemplation.

¹⁷⁶ Ian Shaw, „Block Statue“, in *The Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Harris N. Abrams, 1995), 55.

¹⁷⁷ See Robert B. McCormick et al., *Ivan Meštrović at Notre Dame. Selected Campus Sculptures* (University of Notre Dame, 2003), 32, https://sniteartmuseum.nd.edu/assets/134727/meistrovic2_8.5_mb_pdf.pdf.

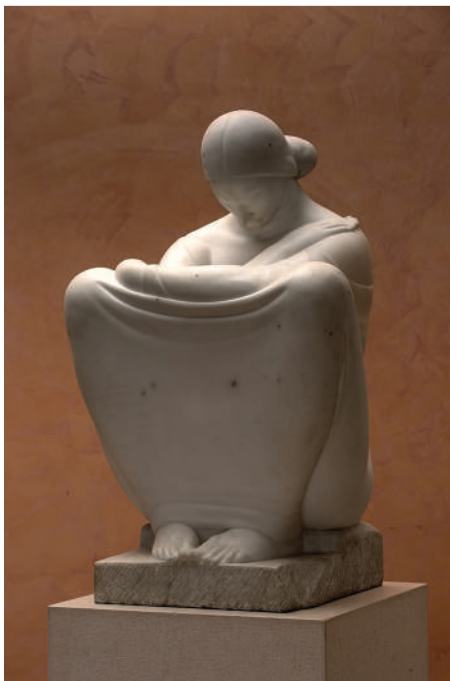


Figure 3.
Contemplation (Zagreb, 1924).
Carrar marble, 104 x 64 x 58.5 cm owned
by the Meštrović Gallery in Split, inv.
ozn. GMS-5.
Author of the photo: Zoran Alajbeg.
Photo library of the Meštrović Gallery in
Split, inv. no. FGM-5769



Figure 4.
Padimahes, ca. 760–525 B.C.E. Granodio-
rite with feldspar phenocrysts, 18 1/4 x 8
11/16 x 12 5/8 in., 115 lb. (46.3 x 22 x 32.1
cm, 52.16kg).
Brooklyn Museum, Charles Edwin Wil-
bour Fund, 64.146.

e) Isis and Horus

The sculpture is part of the Syracuse University Art Collection and was made during the artist's stay at Syracuse University, where he was artist-in-residence and professor¹⁷⁸. It was made of African onyx, and its dimensions are 47 x 63.5 x 40.7 cm¹⁷⁹.

¹⁷⁸ David Tatham, "Ivan Mestrovic in Syracuse, 1947–1955", *The Courier* (1997): 5–24.

¹⁷⁹ Jelena Uskoković, "Meštrovićeve skulpture u zbirci Sveučilišta u Syracusi (SAD)", *Rad. Inst. Povij. Umjet.* 16 (1992): 227–233.

f) The Njegoš's mausoleum at Lovćen mountain

In the architecture of the Njegoš's mausoleum the parallels to Egyptian temples are highly visible, e.g. the Temple of Edfu¹⁸⁰ from the Ptolemaic period (Figure 5). A long, uncovered vestibule leads to the most sacred hall. The floor plan with its axial direction of movement from “public” or open to the most sacred part of the mausoleum clearly resembles ancient Egyptian ideas.



Figure 5.
Mausoleum of Njegoš,
Photo by Darko Bulatović, Wikimedia Commons (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=65659110>)

g) Sculpture of Njegoš

Caryatides and the large sculpture of Njegoš were finished before 1959, but the construction of the mausoleum itself was postponed¹⁸¹. The seated sculpture of Njegoš was made of black granite (Figure 6). Behind Njegoš's head is an eagle, with the head in profile and the body presented frontally.

¹⁸⁰ Davor Stipan, “Prilog revalorizaciji arhitektonske ostavštine Ivana Meštrovića u svijetlu muzeološko-baštinskog promišljanja”, *Museum theory and practice* 44 (1–4) (2013): 187–196.

¹⁸¹ František Šišteš, “Njegoševa grobnica na Lovćenu”, *MATICA*, fall/winter (2012): 105–140.

Representation of the Khafre from the 4th Egyptian dynasty has also a bird of prey – a Horus hawk (Figure 7). The coat of arms of countries influenced by Byzantine culture was a two-headed eagle, which is probably the reason why Meštrović uses an eagle (and not the hawk), which is not a common symbol. But for Meštrović the idea was more important than the details¹⁸². That is why he took the Egyptian idea of the ruler, which was the son of the Horus, and an example of Khafre presented as the king, and incorporated it in a south-Slavic context.



Figure 6.
Sculpture of Njegoš.
Photo by Hugo Ideler, Wikimedia Commons
(<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=38534680>)

¹⁸² Horvat-Pintarić, “Die Macht des Decorums”, 11–15.



Figure 7.
Seated statue of Khafre with Horus. Fourth Dynasty. Egyptian Museum in Cairo.
Photo by Soutekh67, Wikimedia Commons (<https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/56/Khephren%2BHorus.jpg>)

h) Family mausoleum in Otavice

In the 1920s Meštrović made architectural plans for the family mausoleum, which was built in 1930 (Figure 8). This building represents a specific kind of unity of sacral and sepulchral space. The building has clear surfaces that make an impression of monumentality. A dome is not a part of ancient Egyptian architectural language, but it is a widespread hallmark of oriental architecture, and there are examples of usage of both dome and Egyptian-style architectural elements on one building. One example is the Mausoleum Manasteriotti (Rijeka, Croatia).¹⁸³ This combination also appears

¹⁸³ More on that in: Tamara Berger, "Receptions of ancient Egypt in Rijeka, Croatia", forthcoming.

in Speyer Cathedral (Speyer, Germany) that received obelisks on the west façade in 1772, but was unfortunately heavily damaged during the French Revolution and, eventually, the façade was restored in Neo-Romanesque style.

The four Evangelists represented in reliefs inside explicitly recall ancient Egyptian reliefs. The Representation of John, whose symbol is an eagle, resembles representations of Horus, e.g. the Procreation of Horus in Sokar chapel in Abydos. All figures are composed with geometrical stylization typical for Secession, with frontal depictions of the body but with the faces in profile that are characteristic of the Egyptian artistic tradition. Behind the heads of every Evangelist are barely visible aureoles, which are connected in one plane with lowered wings. Seen together they come across as the stylized winged sun-disc. The winged sun-disc is a common ornament on commercial graveyards.



Figure 8.
Church of the Most Holy Redeemer - tomb of the Meštrović family (1928 - 1930) author of the photo: Zoran Alajbeg.
Photo library of the Meštrović Gallery in Split, inv. no. FGM-2815

i) Vidovdan Tempel¹⁸⁴

Ideas about the Temple that celebrates south Slaves was developed in Paris in 1908, and building was completed in 1912¹⁸⁵. The model for the Vidovdan Temple was presented at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 1915 and received the first prize. The temple combines Greek, Roman, and Egyptian motifs, that outgrow their particular archetypes and became part of Meštrović's individual style¹⁸⁶. In this temple specific South Slavic topoi are also recognizable¹⁸⁷.

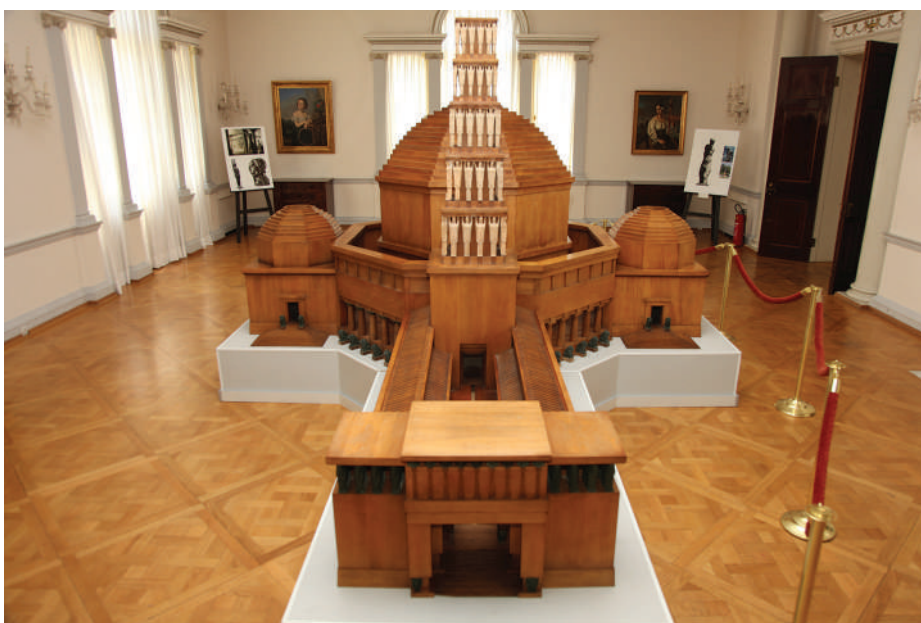


Figure 9.
Model of Vidovdan temple,
Photo: Archive of the Royal Palace, Belgrad

¹⁸⁴ See Chapter 1 for the Vidovdan Temple in the context of receptions in Serbia.

¹⁸⁵ Vinko Srhoj, "Ivan Meštrović i politika kao prostor ahistorijskog idealizma", *Ars Adriatica* 4/2014: 369–384.

¹⁸⁶ Barbara Vujanović, "Elementi klasičnoga i njihovo variranje od negacije do apropiacije u kiparskom opusu Ivana Meštrovića. Studentsko- zagrebačko razdoblje", *ADRIAS* 18 (2012): 233–247.

¹⁸⁷ Tatjana Petzer, "Balkankunst'. Bildende Kunst und Geoästhetik des Balkans seit 1900", in *Handbuch Balkan (Slavistische Studien Bücher)*, Neue Folge 23, ed. Petra Himstedt-Vaid, Uwe Hinrichs, and Thede Kahl (2014), 733–751.

Its first name was simply “The Temple”, as the monument was meant to be the symbolic place of contemplation of common South Slavic histories. At that time Croatia was a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, so Meštrović chose to exhibit his works in the Serbian pavilion for political reasons¹⁸⁸, and thus all the sculptors and the Temple itself became the names connected with one event in Serbian history: the Battle of Kosovo¹⁸⁹. The Vidovdan Temple (Figure 9) was supposed to be the site of the glorification of the cult of Prince Lazar and the battle in Kosovo in general, in which Serbia was lost to the Turks in 1389. By the time of the nineteenth century, this episode of Serbian history became a very popular topos and of great importance to national identity in its infancy (the so-called “Kosovo Myth”).



Figure 10.
Model of Vidovdan temple, side view,
Photo: Archive of the Royal Palace, Belgrad

¹⁸⁸ Ivan Meštrović, *Uspomene na političke ljude i događaje* (Buenos Aires: Knjižnica hrvatske revije, 1961), 20–21.

¹⁸⁹ Srhoj, “Ivan Meštrović i politika kao prostor ahistorijskog idealizma”, 369–384.

Although the temple was never built, it was one of Meštrović's most ambitious projects. Meštrović was planning to include more than a hundred sculptures in the temple. It is impossible not to notice the large sphinx (Figure 11) among caryatids and other stone plastics¹⁹⁰. It is not quite clear



Figure 11.
Caryatids of the Vidovdan Temple with the Sphinx - solo exhibition by Ivan Meštrović in Vienna in 1910 (Die XXXV AUSSTELLUNG DER WIENER SECESSION). The author of the photo is not specified. Photo library of the Meštrović Gallery in Split, inv. no. FGM-962

if the face of the sphinx is intended to appear female or male, but through the androgynous look of the head, the female breasts make an obvious distinction and connect the sphinx closer to Greek than Egyptian models. Like the sphinx in works of the Czech Art Nouveau sculptor František Bílek (1872–1941), this sphinx lacks erotic connotations so commonly evoked by other contemporary artists¹⁹¹ and can be understood as a symbol of wisdom and secret knowledge. One more parallel between Meštrović and Bílek is that both of them were very religious and interested in spirituality. In Bílek's idea of the Temple, he sought the ideal in Egyptian decorative motifs (porticos and columns), but also in Egyptian spirituality¹⁹².

Monumental architecture without windows and facade with quite subdued ornamentation typical for Egyptian sacral architecture is presented at the Vidovdan Temple. Unaccented entrances bring to mind the simplicity of entrances to Egyptian mastabas. The pylon-like facade brings a dramatic effect to the entrance into the long atrium¹⁹³.

¹⁹⁰ Petzer, "Balkankunst". Bildende Kunst und Geoästhetik des Balkans seit 1900", 733–751.

¹⁹¹ Hana Navrátilová, "The wisdom of Egypt in the Art of František Bílek", in *Exotisch, Weisheitlich und Uralt. Europäische Konstruktion Altägyptens*, ed. Thomas Glück and Ludwig Morenz (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2007), 265–280.

¹⁹² Navrátilová, "The wisdom of Egypt in the Art of František Bílek", 265–280.

¹⁹³ Laurence Schmeckebeier, *Ivan Meštrović: sculptor and patriot* (New York: Syracuse Uni-

2 Receptions of Jože Plečnik

Jože Plečnik (1872–1957) was the most influential Slovenian architect, leaving his mark on the architectural settings of Vienna, Prague, and Ljubljana. He was born to a carpenter's family in Ljubljana, where he finished primary school, but since he preferred drawing and painting to studying he did not complete secondary school¹⁹⁴. He received a state scholarship for the trade school in Graz instead, and graduated there. Although he found a job in a furniture production company afterwards, he saw his future in architecture and, with the help of the architect Otto Wagner, he joined the Academy in Vienna in 1895¹⁹⁵. In 1897 Plečnik won the design competition for the Gutenberg memorial in Vienna together with the sculptor Othmar Schimkowitz¹⁹⁶. For his bachelor's thesis, he received the Prix de Rome (1898–1899), which he utilized to travel around Italy, England, Belgium, Germany, and France for a year – this experience had a great influence on his aesthetic. His mentor was Otto Wagner, who had joined the Secession movement in 1899¹⁹⁷, two years after Gustav Klimt founded the movement¹⁹⁸. During his professorial career of twenty years, Wagner educated only about twenty students, because his criteria were very strict¹⁹⁹. Wagner nominated Plečnik as his successor, but in the end he was rejected three times. In Vienna, where the German national movement flourished, with the Royal family as a significant influencing factor, an architect with a Slavic background had no chance to obtain a leading position at the most renowned architectural school in the Austro-Hungarian Empire²⁰⁰.

versity Press, 1959), 17.

¹⁹⁴ Breda Mihelić, "By way of an introduction. Jože Plečnik: Architect, urban planner, designer and teacher", in *Plečnik's Ljubljana. Portrait of a city* (Ljubljana: Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2017), 4–9.

¹⁹⁵ Mihelić, "By way of an introduction. Jože Plečnik: Architect, urban planner, designer and teacher", 4–9.

¹⁹⁶ Mihelić, "By way of an introduction. Jože Plečnik: Architect, urban planner, designer and teacher", 4–9.

¹⁹⁷ Stefanie Lieb, *Was ist Jugendstil?* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2010), 53.

¹⁹⁸ Lieb, *Was ist Jugendstil?*, 145.

¹⁹⁹ Lieb, *Was ist Jugendstil?*, 157.

²⁰⁰ Tamim el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy* (master's thesis, Texas Tech University, 2000), 119–120.

Important exhibitions that thematize Plečnik's *oeuvre* didn't come about until after his death, with new approaches to architectural theory that have since recognized the universality of Plečnik's architectural language. Some of these important exhibitions were held in 1983 in the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, in 1986 at the Pompidou Centre in Paris, and in Brussels in 2008. The pluralistic language of Art Nouveau encouraged many architects at that time to search for and to form national styles, but for Plečnik that was only a phase. He was mostly seeking for the local in his architectural expression²⁰¹, although his work can be considered universal, timeless, and unique.

There are numerous examples in Plečnik's works where he incorporated pyramidal forms and obelisks, so these shapes can be seen as trademarks of his. Some of them are more reminiscent of Egyptian paragons, but others use the basic form and transform it into a completely new creation. Examples of the latter are not included in this case study, although their initial idea can be considered Egyptian in origin. To illustrate this point, take the following example into account. There is a monument on the Moravian Bastion of Prague Castle made in 1922/23, that has the form of a very narrow and high monument. On its top exists a Ionic capital, so the final form looks more like a reception of ancient Greek art, although it is called an obelisk.

a) Zois pyramid

In 1927 Plečnik erected a monument in memory of Sigismund Zois in front of the Zois House in Ljubljana (Figure 12). Sigismund (or Žiga) Zois was a very important figure in the Enlightenment Era in the Habsburg Monarchy, and considered to be the most educated man of his time in Slovenia. He also was the creator of what was called Zois' enlightened circle, and was a Freemason.

An analogy can be made between Zois pyramid and the oldest post-antique pyramid in the world which is located in Seelze, 12 km from Hannover, in Germany. The pyramid in Seelze was built in 1630 as a memorial for lieutenant general Johann/ Hanns Michael Elias von Obentraut, who died in the Battle of Seelze in 1625²⁰². One interpretation of Plečnik's repeated use of

²⁰¹ el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy*, 107.

²⁰² Christian E. Loeben, "Die älteste Pyramide der Neuzeit und weitere Pyramiden rund um Hannover", in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimauerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2017), 313-326.

pyramids is that his great role model, the German architect Gottfried Semper, was buried at the same Protestant cemetery on which the pyramid of Gaius Cestius is located, as he writes in one of his letters to his brother²⁰³.



Figure 12.
Pyramid of Zois,
Photo: documentation of Muzej in galerije mesta Ljubljane.

b) Roman wall

After archaeological excavations, the remnant of a Roman wall was reconstructed and reinforced to a uniform height in the first decade of the 20th century. However, this and other repairs in the years that followed were not done adequately, so the wall was left in poor condition. Since then, in the 1920s, as it was considered an obstacle to traffic and to have been ruining the image of the city, an initiative was formed to have the Roman wall demolished. At that time, when the removal of the Roman walls in the Mirje area was a realistic option, Plečnik was among those who advocated for its

²⁰³ Prelovšek, "Monuments by the architect Jože Plečnik", 11–26.

preservation, and between 1928 and 1938 the walls were renovated²⁰⁴. He redesigned one of the old city gates by adding an arched vault to it – one was closed with columns, and a third was closed with a pyramid (Figure 13). The pyramid is reminiscent of the pyramid of the Cestius family on the *Via Appia* in Rome. The setting within the monotonous wall draws the attention to the pyramid itself and, at the same time, awakens a sense of antiquity which is inherent in the structure.



Figure 13.
Pyramid on the Roman wall,
Photo by Luca Baronchelli (made during Archest Project)

c) Trnovo bridge/ Trnovski most

The Trnovo arch bridge (Figure 14) was built between 1931 and 1932 by builder Matko Curk (1885–1953), who constructed some of the most important architectural monuments in Ljubljana according to plans by Plečnik²⁰⁵

²⁰⁴ Darja Pergovnik, “Plečnik’s green Ljubljana”, in *Plečnik’s Ljubljana. Portrait of a city* (Ljubljana: Mestna občina Ljubljana, 2017), 32–41.

²⁰⁵ Andrej Studen, “Curk, Matko (1885–1953)”, *Slovenska biografija*, accessed February 23,

The bridge, which is made of iron and concrete, is located at the beginning of a walking axis leading from John the Baptist Church to Congress Square. All of its corners are covered with small, steep pyramids; each looks just like the pyramid of Gaius Cestius or the pyramids from Deir el-Medina. The center of the bridge is flanked by a statue of St. John the Baptist, patron saint of Trnovo Church, on the western side vis-à-vis a slender pyramid/obelisk with a candelabrum on the eastern side. An unusual feature is the birch alley that follows alongside the bridge.



Figure 14.
Pyramids on Trnovo bridge.
Curiosity of Ljubljana Tourism,
Author: Nea Culpa,
www.visitljubljana.com

d) Prague Castle/ Pražský hrad

The obelisk, built between 1924 and 1928, was pursued by Czechoslovakian president Tomáš Masaryk for the fallen legionnaires in World War I²⁰⁶. Tomáš Masaryk and his daughter Alice, who was actually acting First Lady of the Republic at that time, had great influence on Plečnik's architecture, and thus on works carried out on Prague Castle. Plečnik saw great potential as his client Tomáš Masaryk was ambitious, financially well situated and aspired to restyle Prague Castle to be representative for the new state of Czechoslovakia²⁰⁷. Interestingly, Alice and her father were traveling to Egypt during the renovation works on the castle²⁰⁸. Plečnik held the position of the Prague Castle architect and in his

2021, <https://www.slovenska-biografija.si/oseba/sbi1021040/>.

²⁰⁶ Prelovšek, "Monuments by the architect Jože Plečnik", 11–26.

²⁰⁷ el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy*, 97.

²⁰⁸ el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy*, 101.

capacity as such he designed a huge monolith made of a single piece of granite (Figure 15). The obelisk was criticized by some as “capitalist bizarre” and as opposed to the ideals of the new state²⁰⁹.

The monument is located in front of the Saint Vitus Cathedral in the Prague Castle complex. Initially it was planned to be a huge obelisk, but it was erected at just about 15,5 m in height. Although Plečnik also wanted to add an eternal light to it, along with the heraldic lion – a symbol of Czechia – and the Slovakian double-cross, nothing of these plans was implemented in the end. The reason for this was that a series of unfortunate events took place from the extraction point of the stone in a stone pit to the final resting spot at Prague Castle. After several extracted monoliths fractured, the last one was successfully cut out and transported, but the height was less impressive than originally planned²¹⁰. This is why Plečnik gave up on his original ideas and created a simple obelisk without ornamentation but with a golden pyramidion. Plečnik was using paragons from Italy, with which he had become familiar with during his post-graduate travels. Since ancient Egyptian monuments and Roman works in an Egyptian style were more easily accessible when Egypt itself was not, they were an important source of inspiration and are still significant in contemporary society.

Besides that, Plečnik reconstructed the First and Third Courtyard of Prague Castle and the Southern Gardens. In 1923 he built a pavilion called The Bellevue into the complex of the Pražský hrad. It is located in front of the southern façade of Prague Castle. One part of the pavilion has a façade composed of five Egyptianizing columns in the form of an opened papyrus flower that supports a flat roof²¹¹. In the southern Gardens of the castle, there is a small pyramid in the vicinity of Bellvedere²¹². This pyramid stands for the origin of the place and has a complex metaphorical function²¹³.

The entirety of the works in the Castle area, however, can be perceived as a part of Plečnik’s striving for ideals in Roman architecture. During his tour through Italy in 1898/99, he made studies of the “Ancient Roman Ba-

²⁰⁹ el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy*, 72.

²¹⁰ el Haje, *Jože Plečnik: his architecture in Prague for freedom and a new democracy*, 42; for a different version about the obelisk and its history see: John Steele Gordon, *Washington’s Monument: And the Fascinating History of the Obelisk* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2016).

²¹¹ Bažant, “Plečnik, Prague, and Palatine”, 51–74.

²¹² Kázmér Kovács, “Metaphorical function of the architectural form”, in *On Form and Pattern*, ed. Cătălin Vasilescu (Bucharest: Editura Academiei, 2015), 400–418.

²¹³ Kovács, “Metaphorical function of the architectural form”, 400–418.

roque” that transforms ancient Greek forms²¹⁴. The main source of inspiration for him might have been Roman architecture since he used characteristic elements like porticoed façade, basilican hall, crypto portico, vestibule in the form of a rotunda, and he also built a park shaped like a hippodrome in Prague Castle²¹⁵. Thus, Greek as well as Egyptian elements in his work can be understood as part of a Roman architectural language. The Romans used models from the past and transformed them into their own architectural alphabet, and Plečnik uses the same mechanism to transform Roman legacy into a style appropriate for the works in Pražský hrad.



Figure 15.
Obelisk in Prague Castle,
Photo by Jan Polák, Wikimedia Commons
(https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d9/Prague_Castle%2C_Obelisk.JPG)

e) St. Charles Borromeo fountain in Vienna

Josef Engelhart was a Viennese sculptor and one of the founders of the Viennese secession movement. As he had problems with the design of the sculptures for the St. Charles Borromeo, he asked Plečnik for his help. The fountain is located at the Karl-Borromäus-Platz (Figure 16). It has a round basin and houses a groups of putts that carry the upper construction with the main figures e.g. St. Charles Borromeo. On the top is a trilateral marble obelisk with a pyramidion. Examples of fountains with obelisks are numer-

²¹⁴ Bažant, “Plečnik, Prague, and Palatine”, 51–74.

²¹⁵ Bažant, “Plečnik, Prague, and Palatine”, 51–74.

ous; to name but one: the Robba fountain in Ljubljana from the 18th century, that was made by the sculptor Francesco Robba. The basic idea for the fountain stems from the Fountain of Four Rivers in Rome²¹⁶.



Figure 16.
St. Charles Borromeo fountain in Vienna,
Photo by Thomas Ledl, Wikimedia Commons (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Karl-Borrom%C3%A4us-Brunnen_2.jpg)

f) Ljubljana Sluice Gate/Zapornica na Ljubljanici

The Ljubljana sluice gate was built between 1939 and 1944 by architect Jože Plečnik and sculptor Božidar Pengov (Figure 17). It connects the left and right banks of the Ljubljana between the former Šempeter barracks and Ambrož square in Ljubljana. The construction regulates the water level and flow velocity of the river that runs through the center of Ljubljana and consists of three reinforced concrete pylons that are 2,4 m wide, while underneath them are flow fields that measure 12,25 m in width²¹⁷.

²¹⁶ See “The Robba Fountain. The Story of the City’s Symbol”, *National Gallery of Slovenia*, accessed December 12, 2020, https://archive.is/20130418171424/http://www.ng-slo.si/en/default.asp?k=razstava_dogodek&rid=281#selection-405.675-405.766.

²¹⁷ Boštjan Burger, “Ljubljana, Zapornica na Ljubljanici”, *Burger Landmarks*, accessed December 13, 2020, https://www.burger.si/Plecnik/Ljubljana_Zapornice/uvod.htm.



Figure 17.
Ljubljana Sluice Gate,
Photo by Petr Šmídek, 2008 (<https://www.archiweb.cz/en/b/zdymadlo-na-rece-lublanica-zapornica-na-ljublanici>)

In this work, Plečnik has made an imposing work of art that at the same time hides a mechanical apparatus that lowers and raises the gates. The pillars with Doric and Ionic capitals and Etruscan vessels carved with dragon heads²¹⁸ demonstrate eclecticism of historical styles that were used in the Ljubljana sluice gate. For the study at hand the gate is especially interesting, since it includes buttresses that are reminiscent of the entrance to the mortuary temple in the Djoser complex from the 3rd dynasty (Figure 18). On both banks and in the middle of the river are three towers with slanted walls, resembling Egyptian temple pylons. This work of Plečnik shows his tendency to monumentality which he achieves through simple solutions and by incorporating models from antiquity.

²¹⁸ Boštjan Burger, "Ljubljana, Zapornica na Ljublanici", *Burger Landmarks*, accessed December 13, 2020, https://www.burger.si/Plecnik/Ljubljana_Zapornice/uvod.htm.



Figure 18.

The northern temple of the Djoser complex,
Ovedc, Wikimedia Commons (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/By_ovedc_-_Step_pyramid_complex_of_Djoser_-_01.jpg)

g) Church of St. Francis/ Cerkev sv. Frančiška

The church of St. Francis was constructed between 1925 and 1927 (Figure 19). The idea for it was derived from the plans for the Church of the Sacred Heart in Prague. A gently sloping gable roof carries a cylindrical bell-tower that was constructed in 1931. The bell-tower is placed on an axis with the main entrance and ends with a Renaissance tempietto. On the square floor plan on which the bell-tower stands, are four sleeve bent-pyramids on the angles. This work combines the design of an early Christian basilica with Egyptian and Renaissance elements. As analogy, the Luxembourg main station tower might be mentioned. The Luxembourg main station was built between 1907 and 1913 in Moselle Baroque revival style. There one can spot even more steep pyramids on the edges of the rectangular grid that surrounds the top part of the tower (Figure 20).



Figure 19.
Church of St. Francis,
Photo by Petr Šmídek
(<https://www.archiweb.cz/en/b/kostel-sv-frantiska-z-assisi-cerkev-sv-franciska-asiskega>)



Figure 20.
Luxembourg railway station,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

h) Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord

The Roman Catholic Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord was built between 1929 and 1932 in Prague (Figure 21). This church combines classical pediments and garlands, with elements of Mediterranean vernacular churches (i.e. in this case a flat, open belfry) and Egyptian forms like pyramids and pylons. The church tower is over 42 m high and the diameter of the clock is nearly eight-meters wide. Two obelisks flank the pylon-like tower and let it appear even more monumental. Obelisks on churches are not uncommon, of course. There are many examples: the Franciscan Church of Annunciation in Ljubljana, Slovenia (1646–1660) or the Protestant church in Ludwigsburg, Germany (1718–1726) to name but a few. From the 16th century onwards they were considered a legitimate option for the design of churches.



Figure 21.
Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord,
Photo by Thomas Ledl, Wikimedia Commons (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/83/Prag_Joze_Plecnik_Kirche.jpg)

3 Why Meštrović and Plečnik?

“The imagined national community is based on an imagined continuity that reaches back into the depths of time.”, Jan Assmann²¹⁹.

Both the Croatian sculptor and the Slovenian architect have a lot in common: they lived at the same time, stemmed from poor families, and were initially poorly educated, but their talent and dedication made them great artists, whose influence extended far beyond their home countries. Furthermore, both were born under the Habsburg monarchy, educated in Vienna, and were once part of the Secession movement. An important common feature was that both had an infallible sense for the coexistence of monumental

²¹⁹ Jan Assmann, *Cultural memory and early civilization: writing, remembrance, and political imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 114.

sculptures within an architectural setting. For example, Plečnik made sculptures for and designed the St. Charles Borromeo fountain in Vienna²²⁰ and Meštrović made both architectural plans and a sculptural program for the Vidovdan temple. Plečnik and Meštrović were both Slavic patriots to a certain extent. They have both left incredible legacies for their native countries, although they were not always well understood there²²¹. Most importantly for the subject of this case study, both were, at least partially, inspired by ancient Egyptian style. Assmann's assessment of collective identity can be applied to these two artists because they were both looking for continuity and belonging for Slavs or their nations to the European family of nations respectively by taking parts of the collective past as a model for their works.

Meštrović's biggest role model was not Rodin, but the German sculptor Franz Metzner. He was a professor in Vienna at the "Kunstgewerbeschule" (School of Fine Arts and Crafts) from 1903–1906, while Meštrović was at the Academy²²². Amongst other things, the Art Nouveau tendencies in the works of Metzner are especially noteworthy. For example his work "Sphinx of Life" with the nemes headscarf is evidence of his interest in ancient Egyptian themes, while at the same time the vase is decorated in a manner that was typical for Jugendstil²²³. He also worked as a sculptor on the Zacherlhaus in Vienna (1903–1905) together with Jože Plečnik, who was an architect on the project. Plečnik had written to his brother about his intention to take part in the competition for the monument for Tsar Alexandar II in Kyiv, in which he was supposed to work with Ivan Meštrović²²⁴.

Plečnik was inspired by classicism, although it is hard to determine the exact source of classicizing features in his work. This is due to the fact that his final plans were very different from every model from the past that he

²²⁰ Damjan Prelovšek, "Monuments by the architect Jože Plečnik", *Acta historiae artis slovenica* 18, 2 (2013): 11–26.

²²¹ For his political views that were misunderstood by the regime of NDH Meštrović was even imprisoned and almost have died in jail before he could flee in exile; he was the rest of his life most of the time abroad; Many of Plečnik's ideas are rejected in Slovenia, and he was also in new political circumstances (communism) not welcomed because of his religious views; His compatriots don't even named a street in Ljubljana after him, although he breathed a completely new spirit into Ljubljana.

²²² Schmeckerbier, *Ivan Meštrović: sculptor and patriot*, 23.

²²³ Jenny Schon, "Ein fast vergessener Moderner", in *Geschichte und Geschichten* (1919): 95–99, <https://berlingeschichte.de/bms/bmstxt99/9907gesc.htm>.

²²⁴ Damjan Prelovšek, *Josef Plečnik. Wiener Arbeiten von 1896 bis 1914* (Wien: Edition Tusch, 1979), 188.

had on his mind at the beginning²²⁵. It is possible that Plečnik took his main ideas from Roman art, as all his pyramids resemble the shape of the Gaius Cestius pyramid in Rome more than they do Egyptian pyramids. Plečnik's travel to Italy, therefore, was probably most important for his development. The same applies for the works of Meštrović, where Egypt as an inspiration for his works isn't that obvious at first glance. There is a chance that Meštrović was predominantly inspired directly by his travel to Egypt and by original Egyptian artefacts that he was able to see in museums worldwide. Both have made eclectic works, e.g. Meštrović's unrealized Vidovdan temple and Plečnik's Ljubljana sluice gates, that combine Egyptian, Greek, and Roman elements.

One of the reasons for choosing these two artists is that there are numerous similarities in their life circumstances that connect the Croatian sculptor and the Slovenian architect, yet their receptions of ancient Egypt are different. This emphasizes the importance of understanding the broader context of every single act of reception. Plečnik's inspiration is more classical in its origins, and although Egypt is a part of the classical sources to which he turned, some of his works could also have been directly inspired by Egyptian paragons e.g. the Ljubljana sluice gates, or the Church of the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord. References to Egyptian block statues in the works of Meštrović, on the other hand, are direct references to Egypt, yet more latent. Furthermore, there are differences in the approach to various works in the *oeuvre* of both artists, which means there is no place for generalizations in the analysis of a single artist. The observed distinctions are of great relevance, because they imply that it is of grave importance to understand every single act of reception as an isolated case, i.e. with individual characteristics, and with references to the biography of the artist, inclusive of the characteristics of the movement to which he/she belongs, as well as their socio-cultural and historical contexts. This example reflects the importance of addressing each phenomenon not as a *reception* of ancient Egypt, but as *receptions* of ancient Egypt.

²²⁵ Jan Bažant, "Plečnik, Prague, and Palatine", *ARS* 46/1 (2013): 51–74.

Rezime

Recepcije starog Egipta u radovima skulptora Ivana Meštrovića i arhitekta Jože Plečnika

Biografije hrvatskog skulptora Ivana Meštrovića i slovenačkog arhitekta Jože Plečnika imaju znatan broj dodirnih tačaka. Ova dva umetnika su rođena u Austro-Ugarskoj, živeli su u otprilike istom vremenskom periodu, obojica se školovali u Beču i tamo postali delom umetničkog pokreta secesije koja je udahnula novi polet u umetničke krugove vremena na prelazu između 19. i 20. veka. Meštrović je ostavio neizbrisiv trag kao skulptor čija se dela mogu videti u gradovima od Čikaga i Vašingtona, preko Beograda, Zagreba, Bukurešta, Bratislave i drugih. Plečnik je promenio lica Ljubljane, Praga i Beča. Najvažnija dodirna tačka Meštrovića i Plečnika za ovu studiju je svakako odraz umetnosti starog Egipta koji se zapaža u mnogim njihovim delima. Ipak, recepcije starog Egipta kod ova dva umetnika nisu istovetne i izvori za njih su uglavnom takođe različiti. Plečnikovi uzori najverovatnije vuku korene iz Italije, sa njegovog putovanja u mladim danima. Piramide koje su čest motiv i njegov zaštitni znak su više nalik na Cestiusovu piramidu izgrađenu u Rimu u 12. v. pre naše ere, nego na egipatske piramide. Drugi Plečnikov omiljeni motiv je obelisk, koji često biva transformisan u stub sa motivima drugih epoha i time gubi vezu sa egipatskim obeliscima. Meštrovićeve aluzije na umetnost starog Egipta se mogu okarakterisati kao dosta latentnije i one ne upućuju na prvi pogled na svoje izvoriste. Postoji mogućnost da je na Meštrovića naveći utisak ostavilo putovanje u Egipat, kao i posete mnogim svetskim muzejima koji čuvaju egipatske originalne umetnine. Poređenje recepcija Egipta u opusima Plečnika i Meštrovića ukazuje na važnost analiziranja svakog pojedinačnog slučaja recepcije kao posebnog fenomena, ne uzimajući u obzir samo opšte karakteristike jednog društveno-političkog, istorijskog i umetničkog konteksta kao odgovor na pitanje zašto se određeni umetnik odlučio da u svome delu da reference na stari Egipat, već i osobenosti pojedinačnog slučaja recepcije. Na prvi pogled bi se moglo reći na osnovu konteksta vremena i okolnosti u kojima su Plečnik i Meštrović stvarali da su razlozi i uzroci za njihovo pozivanje na stari Egipat isti, što se detaljnijom analizom pokazuje kao pogrešno.

CHAPTER 3

Receptions of ancient Egypt in Ludwigsburg, the city of obelisks

Abstract

Ludwigsburg was founded at the beginning of the 18th century in the vicinity of Stuttgart, in southwestern Germany. A fascinating diapason of exponents of receptions of ancient Egypt in this young city raises the question: why are there so many examples and which factors have influenced purchasers or artists to make such choices? There are three main groups of receptions of ancient Egypt in Ludwigsburg that are analyzed in this case study: 1. public and private buildings in the city, 2. public memorials, 3. receptions in a funerary context. All of these groups are part of an architectonic repertoire of many other cities, but the specific history of Ludwigsburg offers some possible explanations for this particular example. The dialogue between public and private, communicative and collective memory in Assmann's terms, and local and collective (German, European, etc.) identities have provided a fertile ground to constitute the social glue of the city. An active role played by some of the examples of receptions of ancient Egypt led to the forming of new ideas about local and collective identities, that have influenced receptions in the private domain.

1 Introduction

"Narratives look to the past in order to shed light on the present... We are what we remember."

Jan Assmann, *Mind of Egypt*²²⁶

The city of Ludwigsburg is quite young: its history dates back just about

²²⁶ Jan Assmann, *The mind of Egypt. History of the meaning in the time of the pharaohs* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2002), 10.

300 years. The founder of Ludwigsburg was duke Eberhard Ludwig, who laid the foundation stone of the city on May 7, 1704²²⁷. Nine years after its foundation, Ludwigsburg was declared the third main city and duke's residency, alongside Stuttgart and Tübingen²²⁸.

Ludwigsburg has plenty of exponents of receptions of ancient Egypt. One of the reasons can be drawn from the broader context of European history. As already mentioned, Ludwigsburg was founded at the beginning of the 18th century and most of the traces of receptions of ancient Egypt originate from the 18th and 19th centuries, a period when the industrial revolution implicated social changes that led to the greater economical stability of broader society. It was a period in which the economical power of the population was steadily growing and where urbanization led to the building of new cities. In these historical circumstances, it was not only the ruling families who were able to finance the building of representative or even monumental architecture; broader parts of society were included in cultural life and could afford expensive projects. Such a constellation led to the production of architecture that was sometimes criticized by contemporaries as demonstrating a lack of good taste. Some examples of the receptions of ancient Egypt in Ludwigsburg were purchased by the rulers, and some by persons from other parts of society, but there are no extreme examples like the building of the Civil and Military (or Public) Library²²⁹ that was built in 1823 on Ker Street in the city of Devonport in England²³⁰. There are few examples from the 18th century, but most instances of the receptions of ancient Egypt in the domain of architecture in Ludwigsburg originate from the 19th century. As in the history of the reception of ancient Egypt in general in the 19th century, obelisks were used in two contexts: as memorials that are imposing and attract attention, but were, at the same time, relatively minimalistic in design, or as grave markers.

The French occupation of Egypt from 1798 to 1801 dramatically influenced the European perception of both ancient and modern Egypt. From then on it was no longer part of the inaccessible world, known mostly

²²⁷ Albert Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg. Von der Vorgeschichte bis zum Jahr 1816*, vol. 1 (Ludwigsburg: Verlag Ungeheuer + Ulmer, 2000), 39.

²²⁸ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 1: 125.

²²⁹ Now called "Odd Fellows Hall".

²³⁰ James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival. Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 264–266.

through an intermediaries, but part of the European sphere of influence²³¹. From the 3rd decade of the 19th century onwards there were regular maritime and railway connections between Europe, North Africa and the Near East that made the “Orient” more accessible to Europeans²³². Nevertheless, the image of Egypt as a mysterious, veiled civilization, at least in the context of understanding its reception from a European perspective, persisted, even after the decipherment of the hieroglyphs and two hundred years of scientific research. As Plutarch noted, the first impressions or obvious aspects do not reveal a full picture of Egyptian culture: one needs an interpretation, or a broader context to understand this complex phenomenon²³³. The same is true for the understanding of receptions of ancient Egypt: although the broader context of the known history offers general guidelines, for the understanding of the meaning of individual exponents of the receptions of ancient Egypt one needs to have a closer and more in-depth look.

2 Obelisks in the city of Ludwigsburg

“The basic principle behind all connective structures is repetition. This guarantees that the lines of action will not branch out into infinite variations but instead will establish themselves in recognizable patterns immediately identifiable as elements of a shared culture.”

Jan Assmann²³⁴

Connective structures or “social glue” are manifested in common values and laws in society, however, the second important component is the memory of the shared past²³⁵. Exponents of social connectivity can be materialized in public architecture. Ludwigsburg is a small city: today it has less than 100,000 inhabitants and at the beginning of its history there were several appeals by duke Eberhard Ludwig for people to come and live there. To accomplish growth in population he promised generous privileges, e.g. a

²³¹ Stephen Quirke, “Modern mummies and ancient scarabs”, *Journal of the History of Collections* 9, no. 2 (1997): 253–262.

²³² Vera Vasiljević, *Senka Egipta* (Beograd: Dosije studio, 2016), 173.

²³³ Florian Ebeling, “Zum Hermetismus in der Freimaurerei des 18. Jahrhunderts”, *Quatuor Coronati. Jahrbuch für Freimaurerforschung* 48 (2011): 55–71.

²³⁴ Jan Assmann, *Cultural memory and early civilization. Writing, remembrance and political imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 3.

²³⁵ Assmann, *Cultural memory and early civilization*, 3.

building site with a garden, timber free of charge, a twenty-year tax exemption, etc.²³⁶. One travelogue from 1780 mentions Ludwigsburg as a wonderful city, but unfortunately empty²³⁷. In such a constellation a clear tendency can be observed of making the city a kind of familiar place, using historical styles that give it a look of authority, longevity, and tradition. Obelisks found their place in eclectic styles that are visible in Ludwigsburg today. Assmann's understanding of the shared past is very well illustrated here, as the architecture of Ludwigsburg makes physical the goal of showing common roots in the classical past and affiliation with the national variants of stylistic tendencies (like German neo-renaissance) as well as the international architectural styles of European cities.

Myliusstraße

Ferdinand Friedrich Heinrich von Mylius was born in Ludwigsburg in 1784. He had a very impressive military career and, after his retirement, wanted to help his native city. Amongst other things he financed the construction of the street that still bears his name today, which is the street that extends from the main train station in the direction of the city. Mylius street was built between 1865 and 1869²³⁸.

The central post department in Myliusstraße, which opened in 1887²³⁹, had a gable with five obelisks. Additionally there was one small obelisk on the front facade above the window on the first floor. None of them are visible today.

The second oldest building of Myliusstraße has the house number 8 (Figure 1). It was built in 1866 by Julius Jung for the city counselor Erwin Schreiber in the style of historicism. This villa-like house is not only important due to its artistic characteristics, but also because, from the outset,

²³⁶ Günter Bergan, "Das Ludwigsburger Bürgerhaus nach 1760", *Treff im Museum* 2015: 34–35, https://www.museumsfreunde-ludwigsburg.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Treff_im_Museum_2015.pdf.

²³⁷ Wolfgang Läßle, "'Die Stadt ist Ungemein wohl gebauet'. Ludwigsburg in alten Reisebeschreibungen", in *Ludwigsburger Lesebuch*, ed. Thomas Stierle (Erdmannhausen: Ludwig Stark Verlag, 1994), 10–21.

²³⁸ Brigitte Reinhardt and Sabine Weyrauch, "Zwei Ludwigsburger Bürgerhäuser des 19. Jahrhunderts", *Denkmalpflege in Baden-Württemberg* 7, vol. 4 (1978): 156–163.

²³⁹ Wolfgang Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war* (Gudensberg-Gleichen: Wartberg Verlag, 1995), 10.

other buildings in the street were meant for commercial purposes, i.e. to be tenement houses with the stores on the ground floor²⁴⁰. This triaxial house was modified for its new owner Premierlieutenant Kleemann in 1893/97 by Fritz Baumgärtner. He enlarged the house with two additional axes that were made of brick²⁴¹. One of the mansard-roof windows has volutes on both sides, is flanked by pilasters, and on its top is a small obelisk (Figure 2). The other two roof windows (in the original part of the house), located left and right from the above mentioned, have only volutes (“snails”) and a simple bow above them. On the architectural outline of the new renovation from 1897, there are four more obelisks on the edges of the two new axes, but today they are not present. In this version the roof is modified as well: before it had truncated pyramid towers (like the Music Hall in Ludwigsburg), and after the renovation, it got a mansard-roof²⁴².



Figure 1.
House in the Myliusstraße 8.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

²⁴⁰ Reinhardt and Weyrauch, “Zwei Ludwigsburger Bürgerhäuser des 19. Jahrhunderts”, 156–163.

²⁴¹ Reinhardt and Weyrauch, “Zwei Ludwigsburger Bürgerhäuser des 19. Jahrhunderts”, 156–163.

²⁴² Reinhardt and Weyrauch, “Zwei Ludwigsburger Bürgerhäuser des 19. Jahrhunderts”, 156–163.



Figure 2.
Myliusstraße 8, detail.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 3.
House in the Myliusstraße 12/14,
Photo by S. and T. Berger



The house in Myliusstraße 12/14 was built in 1891 bearing historicist and renaissance styles (Figure 3). The architect was Ludwig Schell. It features the so-called *Stuttgarter Dach* or Stuttgart roof, which consists of one sloping roof surface and a flat tin roof so that it seems that the building has one floor fewer than it really has. In the middle line of the facade, between two windows, is an ornament that has an obelisk on the pedestal on its top (Figure 4). This ornament looks like a recess for a statue.

Figure 4.
Myliusstraße 12/14, detail.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 5.
Music Hall,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Music hall (Musikhalle)

Historicism is an architectural style that was very popular in Ludwigsburg between 1870 and 1890. One of the most representative buildings of that period is the music hall from 1889 (Figure 5)²⁴³. The music hall was donated by the coffee manufacturer Herman Franck. The Franck family also financed sidewalks for pedestrians, which were needed because of the stronger traffic in the city at that time²⁴⁴.

Wilhelm Albert Bauder (1853–1930) and Johann Schmohl were the architects of the building. Bauder was the architect of several other important buildings in Ludwigsburg; for example, he was responsible for the renovation of Villa Franck and Villa Feyerabend²⁴⁵. Besides that he also designed the house in Asperger Straße 37 – the Freemasons lodge temple. The Freemasons temple in Ludwigsburg is a neo-gothic building with the usual masonic symbols.

Above the entrance of the music hall is a two-part window, with a broken pediment and an obelisk in the middle of the pediment. The roof window with the broken pediment is flanked by two small obelisks, one on either side. Between the levels of these two windows is a slate with the title „Musikhalle“. The building was made of red bricks, while the roof shapes are inspired by French renaissance style.

Protestant church (Evangelische Kirche) (W)

The protestant church is located on the west side of the market square in the city center, at the Stadtkirchenplatz 6 (Figure 6). It was constructed between 1718 and 1726 according to plans of Donato Giuseppe Frisoni, an Italian architect of the Castle (Schloß) Favorite and stuccoist at the Ludwigsburg Palace. The church is baroque in style. The foundation stone was laid in the year that Ludwigsburg was declared as a city²⁴⁶. While being construct-

²⁴³ Albert Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg. Von 1816 bis zum Kriegsende 1945*, vol. 2 (Ludwigsburg: Verlag Ungeheuer + Ulmer, 2000), 113.

²⁴⁴ Reinhardt and Weyrauch, “Zwei Ludwigsburger Bürgerhäuser des 19. Jahrhunderts”, 156–163.

²⁴⁵ Karsten Preßler, “Das Ulmer Münster in Ludwigsburg: Entdeckungen bei der Instandsetzung eines Bürgerhauses aus dem 19. Jahrhundert”, *Denkmalpflege in Baden-Württemberg* 44, vol. 1 (2015): 18–25.

²⁴⁶ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 1: 123.

ed the church suffered a constant insufficiency of financial resources, despite numerous appeals for donations. The shortage of money led to changing construction plans with the goal of finding a solution that still made the church look representative, but with a minimum of investment.



Figure 7.
Protestant church, detail.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 6.
Protestant church,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

On the western side of the church, there is a voluten gable with two obelisks, one on either side, and a cross on top (Figure 7). The obelisks are placed on small pedestals and decorated with fan-shaped acroteria at the base (in the form of a palmette), and geometric motifs in the middle part.

The 18th century is particularly rich in evidence of literary receptions of ancient Egypt: they can be found in philosophical, historical, theological, and religious studies as well as in opera²⁴⁷. In the 18th century, a notable scientific interest in ancient Egypt can be observed. One particularly important book was published in 1721 by Fischer von Erlach, entitled “Entwurff einer historischen Architektur”²⁴⁸. Interest in Egypt was not longer so connected with the exploration of Christian ideas; curiosity gave rise to the impulse to research in many fields; research into architectural history was one source of inspiration for contemporary architects. After the “resurrection” of the obelisks in Rome in the 16th century under the authority of the Roman Pope,

²⁴⁷ Ebeling, “Zum Hermetismus in der Freimaurerei des 18. Jahrhunderts”, 55–71.

²⁴⁸ Dirk Syndram, *Ägypten – Faszinationen. Untersuchungen zum Ägyptenbild im europäischen Klassizismus bis 1800* (Frankfurt am Main, Bern, New York, Paris: Peter Lang, 1990), 23–24.

they were not longer simply pagan symbols; instead, they were seen in an alternate way: a symbol both of the victory over paganism and of victory in general. Therefore their appearance on churches should not be understood odd; indeed, these new meanings led to them becoming commonplace. One early example is the Franciscan Church of Annunciation in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, which was built between 1646 and 1660.

The obelisk at Holzmarkt

The most famous obelisk in Ludwigsburg is located in the heart of the city, more precisely in the center of a roundabout that connects some of the most prominent streets in the city center (Figure 8). Today there are coffee shops around it and it resides in the vicinity of the big shopping mall “Mar-stall Center” (“Mews”).

After the Second World War, there were competing ideas about the renovation of the Holzmarkt. Some citizens considered a memorial for war victims, while others opinioned that a memorial for the ex-major or just to commemorate the city’s history would be more appropriate²⁴⁹. In 1954, for the 250th anniversary of Ludwigsburg, an obelisk was erected, and on its reliefs four famous literati from Ludwigsburg are represented (one on each of its four sides)²⁵⁰. Bronze medallions were made by Stuttgart sculptor Rudolf Pauschinger (1882-1958) representing Visser, Strauß, Mörike and Kerner²⁵¹. An analogy can be made between the obelisk at the Holzmarkt and the obelisk in the garden of Castle Sanssouci in Potsdam, Germany. The obelisk in Potsdam was made in 1793 by the architect Langhans and also has four medallions (also one on each side). The symbolism of these medallions is quite different as they represent the four seasons of the year and the passing of human life²⁵². Although the symbolism of the Sanssouci obelisk was obviously not the source of inspiration for the obelisk at the Holzmarkt, the same cannot be said for its appearance. However, the main source of inspiration was an obelisk on the Karlsplatz²⁵³.

²⁴⁹ Christmut Praeger, „Zur Geschichte des Denkmals auf dem Ludwigsburger Holzmarkt“, in *Auch einer. Friedrich Theodor Vischer zum hundertsten Todestag*, ed. Andrea Berger-Fix (Ludwigsburg: Städtisches Museum Ludwigsburg, 1987), 186–192.

²⁵⁰ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 2: 533.

²⁵¹ Praeger, „Zur Geschichte des Denkmals auf dem Ludwigsburger Holzmarkt“.

²⁵² Sigfried Schildmacher, „Ägyptische Symbole in freimaurerischen Landschaftsgärten des 18. Jahrhunderts“, in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimaurerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2017), 327–349.

²⁵³ Praeger, „Zur Geschichte des Denkmals auf dem Ludwigsburger Holzmarkt“.



Figure 8.
Obelisk at the Holzmarkt,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

The history of the obelisk at the Holzmarkt is much longer, though. The Holzmarkt was designed by Frisoni at the beginning of the 18th century and at its center a wooden pump well was located. In 1889 it was replaced with a decorative fountain that featured an obelisk made from black syenite and was called “Abelbrunnen”²⁵⁴. In the middle of the octagonal basin was a pediment with an obelisk without pyramidion, but with a star-like decoration on top. It was erected in recognition of the great services of mayor Heinrich Abel (1825–1917) for his twenty-fifth jubilee and remained there until 1943²⁵⁵.

Obelisks have been a part of European cities for a long time, therefore the question about their symbolic meaning can seem a bit redundant. Obelisks were trophies of the Roman emperors, and although all but one had fallen, they were well known in Europe. Renaissance curiosity led to the erection

of some of them. They were generally considered as symbols of ancient civilizations and of technical mastery, both of ancient Egyptians and of latter societies that had transported and re-erected them, but every epoch had some additional meanings, reflective of its *Zeitgeist*. In the 19th century obelisks were perceived both as a confirmation of power of an empire (e.g. Great Britain), and, from the point of view of romanticism, as symbols of the decay of empires, since romanticism suggested that every empire comes to an end²⁵⁶. These meanings, however, can't be taken as an explanation of every example from that period. The Abelbrunnen could presumably be connected with other aspects of the range of meanings attributed to obelisks: it might have been seen to refer to the glorification of kings and their war achievements

²⁵⁴ Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 39.

²⁵⁵ Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 39.

²⁵⁶ Chris Elliott, “The Needle and the New Zelandier Cleopatra's Needle as Memento Mori for Empire”, *Aegyptiaca* 5 (2020): 434–445.

as well as good relationship with gods. The importance of the obelisk from the 20th century that still stands today might be its emphasis on tradition, longevity, and prosperity of the city; additionally, through its minimalistic and simple shape, it might be associated with monumentality and visibility from far away. In this case there is a twofold traditional significance: 1. ancient Egyptian state longevity and persistence; 2. constancy of the obelisk as a monument in that location.

Solitude–Ludwigsburg land survey (Landesvermessung) obelisk

Already in Old Württemberg, and later after the incorporation of large areas into the Kingdom, people were dissatisfied because of the diversity of land tax systems²⁵⁷. In 1818 King Wilhelm set a cadastre commission that was tasked with measuring distances in the state. One of the lines measured was the route between the castle Solitude and the city of Ludwigsburg. Both endpoints were originally marked by stone tablets after the measuring of the route was complete. In 1985, at the end of the alley “Solitudeallee”, a small granite obelisk made by Walter Kirschler was erected (Figure 9)²⁵⁸.



The practice of putting obelisks at the beginning of roads has a long tradition and could be a source of inspiration for choosing the form of an obelisk as a memorial of the land survey. An analogy can be found in Sydney, where the Obelisk of Distances from 1818 was a starting point for measuring road distances. Another possibility is the image of ancient Egypt as a land of mathematics and precise measuring techniques.

Figure 9.
Solitude–Ludwigsburg land survey
(Landmessung) Obelisk,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

²⁵⁷ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 2: 27.

²⁵⁸ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 2: 30.

Obelisk for the emperors at the Römerhügel

On the opposite side of a street vis-à-vis a big water tower, is an obelisk which stands on a pedestal on a small mound (Figure 10). This memorial functions to commemorate several visits of the German emperors Wilhelm I (1797–1888) and Friedrich III (1831–1888) between 1872–1885. A formerly existing bronze tablet that was mounted on the obelisk and contained an inscription as well as dates of the visits of the emperors is not there anymore (it was removed during the WWI)²⁵⁹. Only a plate on the front side facing the street that bears the inscription „Kaiserstein“ (Emperor’s stone) is preserved. The obelisk has a pyramidion and no ornaments.



Figure 10.
Obelisk at the Römerhügel,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Linden Fountain (Lindenbrunnen)

The Linden Fountain is located in the Lindenstraße which lies in the city center (Figure 11). The Lindenstraße stretches between Holzmarkt (with its obelisk) in the east and Gartenstrasse in the west. The Lindenbrunnen forms the western end.

On the fountain is a plate with the following text: “Linden Fountain / Replica of the original from 1725 / Established in 1989 with the support of the citizens’ association Lower City 1893 (registered association) / City of

²⁵⁹ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 2: 533.

Ludwigsburg”²⁶⁰. It is a simple obelisk with a rectangular cast-iron basin. One of the most prominent examples of an obelisk fountain originates from the 18th century and is located in the park of castle Schönbrunn in Vienna. The Linden Fountain is much more modest and simple. Such obelisk fountains are not uncommon in German cities: another nearby example is located inside the new cemetery in Ludwigsburg.



Figure 11.
Linden Fountain, Photo by S. and T.
Berger

²⁶⁰ “Lindenbrunnen / Nachguß des Originals von 1725 / Aufgestellt in 1989 mit Unterstützung des / Bürgervereins der Unteren Stadt 1893 (eingetragener Verein) / Stadt Ludwigsburg”

*Administrative Building of the former district hospital
(Bezirkstkrankenhaus)*

The building in the Posilipostraße 2 can be classified as an example of neo-renaissance style and was built after plans of Konrad Fränkel between 1901 and 1903. Until the last quarter of the 19th century, this style was common for public buildings. Today only the two-wing complex from the initial building complex is left.

The volute-gable has three small obelisks on both sides and on top (Figure 12). The form of the obelisks is so well translated into the language of the building that it results in an organic extension of the edges of the gable.



Figure 12.
Administrative Building of the former district hospital,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Favorite Palace (Schloß Favorite)

Duke Eberhard Ludwig's wish to move his residency from Stuttgart to Ludwigsburg is evidenced from the year 1715. This wish resulted in the construction of a small Lusthouse in the vicinity of Ludwigsburg Residential

Palace²⁶¹. The baroque Favorite Palace was built between 1717 and 1723 according to the architectural plans of Nette and Frisoni (Figure 10)²⁶². Nette died in 1714, and Frisoni took over the works and used Nette's architectural plans to some extent²⁶³.



Figure 13.
Favorite Palace.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Originally, the palace was used as a summer residence and hunting lodge for the duke. Favourite Palace was built like a typical garden-palace that was common in European architecture from the 16th century²⁶⁴. The layout is rectangular with four pavilions. The central part of the southern facade of the building with the free stairs is divided into three units: two pylon-like towers and a lower part in the middle. All roofs of the two-floor towers are crowned with small obelisks.

Favorite Palace is considered as one of the most original works of its kind and also very original for the artistic opus of Frisoni, which has no paragon amongst his contemporary architectural works²⁶⁵.

²⁶¹ Klaus Merten, "Die Baugeschichte von Schloss Ludwigsburg bis 1721", in *Schloss Ludwigsburg. Geschichte einer barocken Residenz* (Tübingen: Silberburg-Verlag, 2004), 6–45.

²⁶² Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 44.

²⁶³ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 1: 54.

²⁶⁴ Merten, "Die Baugeschichte von Schloss Ludwigsburg bis 1721", 6–45.

²⁶⁵ Merten, "Die Baugeschichte von Schloss Ludwigsburg bis 1721", 6–45.

Obelisk at the Karlsplatz

In 1806/1808 an obelisk was erected on the Karlsplatz, which was a trademark of the place for almost one hundred years²⁶⁶. Information about the erection of that obelisk is not quite clear, as there appears to be a discrepancy of two years in different sources²⁶⁷. Burkarth writes about two obelisks from Hohenheim Castle (a manor estate in Stuttgart): the first was moved to the New Palace in Stuttgart through decree of the king, where it replaced an obelisk that originally stood at the Karlsplatz in Stuttgart (only the foundation stone of the obelisk from Karlsplatz was re-used), and the second was transferred to Ludwigsburg by Thouret in 1808 and erected at the Kasernen Platz (Karlsplatz)²⁶⁸.

The obelisk of king Friedrich contained a bronze relief of the king, a king's crown, and a monogram "F(ridricus) R(ex)" as conferment of his royal dignity²⁶⁹. The design for the medallion and the monogram was possibly made by Philipp Jakob Scheffauer²⁷⁰ (1756–1808), with Ludwigsburg-born plasterer Joseph Wilhelm Ludwig Mack likely having executed the design (1767–1835)²⁷¹. Mack was a student of well-known classicist sculptor Dannecker as well as of Scheffauer. The medallion wasn't mounted on the obelisk until after the death of Friedrich I²⁷². In 1900 the obelisk was worn down during works on the Friedenskirche (than called Garnisonskirche)²⁷³.

²⁶⁶ Wolf Deiseroth, Daniela Naumann, Adelheid Hanke, and Alois Schneider, *Stadt Ludwigsburg. Denkmaltopographie Baden-Württemberg*, vol. I.8.1 (Stuttgart: Konrad Theiss Verlag, 2004), 132–133, 194–195. For the history of this obelisk see as well: Axel Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret (1767–1845). Forschungen zum Wirken eines württembergischen Hofarchitekten in der Zeit des Klassizismus." (PhD diss., University of Stuttgart, 1991), 202–204 cat. no. 1806/8, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18419/opus-8847>; *Schwäbischer Merkur*, September 10, 1900; Paul Faerber, *Nikolaus Friedrich von Thouret. Ein Baumeister des Klassizismus* (Stuttgart, 1949), PL. 116 bottom; Gerhard Graser, "Wie Ludwigsburg zu einer neuen Garnisonskirche kam.," *Hie gut Württemberg* 4, vol. 9 (1953): 59–60; Christmut Praeger, "Zur Geschichte des Denkmals auf dem Ludwigsburger Holzmarkt." in *Auch einer. Friedrich Theodor Vischer zum hundertsten Todestag*, ed. Andrea Berger-Fix (Ludwigsburg: Städtisches Museum Ludwigsburg, 1987), 186–192.

²⁶⁷ cf. Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 195; Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 55; Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret", 203–204 cat. no. 1806/8.

²⁶⁸ Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret", 202–204 cat. no. 1806/8.

²⁶⁹ Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 55; Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret", 858 Fig. 25.

²⁷⁰ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 195.

²⁷¹ Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret", 204 cat. no. 1806/8.

²⁷² Another discrepancy of two sources: Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 195 lists only Scheffauer as creator, whereas the year of execution is stated as 1806; Burkarth, "Nikolaus von Thouret", 204 writes that Mack made the model of the medallion, but it wasn't mounted until after the death of Friedrich I.

²⁷³ Läßle, *Ludwigsburg wie es früher war*, 55.

Wilhelmstraße 45

The house in Wilhelm Straße 45 was built in 1891 and represents a mixture of several styles: historicist, late renaissance, and baroque forms in the French style „Belle Epoque“ (Figure 14). The architect was Carl Metzger and the manufacturer A. Witzel its purchaser²⁷⁴. The house with *Avant-corp* is rich in ornaments: window frames, balustrade, lesene, etc. The mansard-roof contains three windows: the one in the middle has a pediment and a small obelisk above it.



Figure 14.
House in Wilhelm Straße 45.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Mathildenstraße 6

The neorenaissance building in Mathildenstraße was built of red brick. Four obelisks were visible on the edges of the gable pediments in its heyday, but only one has been preserved (Figure 15). This building was both residential and the workplace of dr. Valter Pintus (1880-1938), who was murdered in camp Dachau.

²⁷⁴ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 208.



Figure 15.
House in Mathildestraße 6,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Alleenstraße 10

This house was built in 1887 by Fritz Baumgärtner (who modified the villa in Myliusstraße 8) for the merchant Julius Israel²⁷⁵. The house was built from brick and has small obelisks on the edges of the roof. On the square east of it was once a synagogue, which had been built by the same architect as the house, though this was destroyed in 1938²⁷⁶.

²⁷⁵ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 85.

²⁷⁶ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 85.

Uhlandstraße 4

The house was made of brick with French mansards and was built in 1886 by Richard Hardegg²⁷⁷. The stones are symmetrically integrated into the facade. On each side of the middle roof window sits a small obelisk; on top above the window a larger obelisk crowns the gable.

Obelisk at the former dairy farm (Meierei) at Monrepos Palace

The lakeside Monrepos Palace is located northwest from Ludwigsburg and connected by pathways to the residence Ludwigsburg Palace and the pleasure palace and hunting lodge Favourite Palace. There was likely already a lake house around the year 1600, used for duck hunting activities²⁷⁸. In 1714, under duke Eberhard Ludwig, a pavilion designed by Nette - who was one of the architects of Ludwigsburg Palace - was constructed at Monrepos²⁷⁹. In the 18th century, massive construction activity continued to take place under duke Karl Eugen (1728–1793). Yet, during his reign, interest for Monrepos vanished, and its state is described as a “sleeping beauty” until the beginning of the 19th century. Duke Friedrich II. (from 1806 onwards king and subsequently named king Friedrich I.) initiated reconstruction works and the construction of new buildings like cavalier and official buildings, as well as stables²⁸⁰. Additionally, a dairy farm westward from Monrepos Palace was constructed according to the construction plans of Johann Jakob Atzel (1754–1816)²⁸¹. These buildings were finished in 1809²⁸².

In the central point in between these buildings an obelisk made of yellowish sandstone was erected. (Figure 16). The obelisk has no ornaments or inscription, and was probably a marker of the central place of the surrounding buildings²⁸³.

²⁷⁷ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 199.

²⁷⁸ Birgit Hlawatsch, “Monrepos. 400 Jahre württembergische Geschichte”, *Ludwigsburger Geschichtsblätter* 45 (1991): 39–69.

²⁷⁹ Hlawatsch, “Monrepos”, 39–69.

²⁸⁰ Hans Eugen, *Monrepos. Baugeschichte eines Lustschlosses* (Stuttgart: Verlag von Strecker und Schröder, 1933), 11.

²⁸¹ Eugen, *Monrepos. Baugeschichte eines Lustschlosses*, 23.

²⁸² Hlawatsch, “Monrepos”, 39–69.

²⁸³ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 218.



Figure 16
Obelisk in Monrepos, by dairy farm,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

It is notable that Napoleon Bonaparte visited Ludwigsburg two times, and as a token of gratitude for his support, he has raised the status of duke Friedrich II. who became king Friedrich I. of Württemberg. French campaigns in Egypt and Syria (1798–1801) were a source of inspiration for their time. The first volume of the *Description de l'Égypte* was published in 1809, after the dairy farm at Monrepos Palace was already finished, but Egyptian design was well-known from other sources before that publication, so they could have been used as models for the obelisk at Monrepos too.

The buildings at Monrepos were predominantly designed in classicism and Baroque style, although gothic style was used as well as in the case of the chapel on the

artificial island of the lake. The taste for the exotic was visible, e.g. the play “Cortez” that was performed at the Monrepos theater, for the kings of Russia and Austria amongst others²⁸⁴. Because of the long lasting time period of construction works, taste was changing, so the obelisk can be understood as one of the exponents of the elite taste. The access to this complex was closed for common people until king Friedrich I. decided to open it on certain days for the broader public. Decorations of the buildings at Monrepos were primarily intended to appeal to rulers and for elite visitors, so the obelisk can be understood as a wish to show the Monrepos complex in the light of contemporary political events.

It is noteworthy that a contemporary source refers to the Festinbau, a

²⁸⁴ Norbert Stein, “Zur Geschichte des Festin-und Theaterbaus beim Seeschloß Monrepos”, *Ludwigsburger Geschichtsblätter* 45 (1991): 71–86.

building within the Monrepos complex, which is described as having Egyptian ornaments²⁸⁵; unfortunately this building was already demolished in 1818 and the building material and ornaments were used for other construction projects²⁸⁶.

3 Receptions of ancient Egypt in a funerary context

New Cemetery (der Neue Friedhof)

In 1880 a new cemetery was inaugurated in Ludwigsburg. The cemetery chapel in neo-romantic style was built in 1901/02 by Heinrich Dolmetsch²⁸⁷. In the following years many gravestones in historical styles were erected. There is also one part of the cemetery that is separated by an enclosure – the new Jewish cemetery, where some gravestones from the first decades of the 20th century are still preserved. This Jewish cemetery is known as “new Jewish cemetery” since there was also another – the old Jewish cemetery, that was used until the end of the 19th century.

The French Revolution brought many reforms, in this case to burial customs. The great grave-yard of Père-Lachaise in Paris, with many Egyptianizing monuments, originates from this period²⁸⁸. This Parisian graveyard attracted many visitors because of its beautiful neo-classical monuments, several important people who were buried there (e.g. Champollion, and Napoleon’s savant Gaspar Monge), and the publications about it which were widely available²⁸⁹. It thus became a possible source of inspiration for later examples of funerary architecture inspired by ancient Egypt. English landscape gardens with monuments – e.g. William Shenstone’s gardens at The Leasowes – were transformed into gardens of continental Europe with cenotaphs and, later, with real tombs²⁹⁰.

As part of a research project at the University of Mannheim, participants were presented with photographs of people unknown to them and a series

²⁸⁵ Johann Daniel Georg Memminger, *Stuttgart und Ludwigsburg mit ihren Umgebungen* (Stuttgart und Tübingen: J. G. Cotta’sche Buchhandlung, 1817), 444–445, <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10020512-1>.

²⁸⁶ Stein, “Zur Geschichte des Festin-und Theaterbaus beim Seeschloß Monrepos”, 71–86.

²⁸⁷ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 121.

²⁸⁸ Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 287–288.

²⁸⁹ Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 288–289.

²⁹⁰ Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 172.

of cars (one photograph of each), and asked to guess which car belonged to whom²⁹¹. The result was very interesting: about seventy percent of all guessing was right. A car is an object that is chosen by its owner as a symbolic expression of their material and immaterial attitudes. With this in mind, one can ask about the motivations of the people who choose for themselves or for deceased members of their families tombstones inspired by Egyptian forms or decorated with Egyptian motifs. The difference between the aforementioned car owners and tomb owners is that, although the car type often expresses the lifestyle of its owner, the car can be a temporary choice. The tomb is normally a permanent material expression of the image that should be communicated to the world of living visitors of the graveyard.

Egyptian motifs were very widespread within the designs of funerary monuments. The reason should not be sought (only) in the picture of Egyptian civilization as obsessed with death, but in the simplicity of forms and purity of architectural expression²⁹². An obelisk is among the most widespread shapes of grave markers, and on the New Cemetery in Ludwigsburg are numerous specimens.

a) Obelisk fountain (Obeliskenbrunnen)

There is one fountain with a simple obelisk without pyramidion and a rectangular basin near the cemetery entrance (Figure 17).



Figure 17.
Obelisk fountain.
Photo by
S. and T. Berger

²⁹¹ Annette Schäfer, *Wir sind was wir haben. Die tiefere Bedeutung der Dinge für unser Leben* (München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2012), 128–129.

²⁹² Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 280.

b) Obelisk for List and Gläser families

The obelisk is made of black marble with a pyramidion, a palmette, and rose ornaments. The first to be buried under the obelisk was Friedrich List in 1906; the last was Margarete Gläser in 2017²⁹³ (Figure 18).



Figure 18.
Obelisk of the Gläser, Jenner, Scobel and List families.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

c) Obelisk of Kircher, and Braun families

Black marble obelisk of Kircher (Karl 1859–1900, Karoline 1858–1936, Karl 1886–1913) and Braun (Wilhelmine 1894–1975, Franz Xaver Braun 1893–1985, Margarete 1923–2001) families. This monument has a shape derived from the shape of an obelisk: its

Figure 19.
Gravestone of the Kircher and Braun families.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



²⁹³ List: Friedrich (1848–1906; master butcher), Pauline [née Stahl] (1856–1928); Gläser: Karoline [née Breitenbücher] (1861–1937), August (1856–1937; forgemaster), Eugen (1889–1958), Maria [née List] (1891–1962), Frida (1894–1981), Margarete (1921–2017); Jenner: Annelise [née Gläser] (1918–1990); Scobel: Elfriede [née Gläser] (1923–2008), Erich (1914–1992).

sides are not the same but are adapted to the standardized rectangular plate shape of the tombstones (Figure 19). The pyramidion is very plainly represented.

e) Piticco family

The burial place of the Piticco family (Katharina 1932–2002, Liliano 1937–2007) is interesting because the grave-stone is rather new and has the form of a simple obelisk without stylization that many of its older counterparts in this graveyard have (Figure 20).



Figure 20.
Obelisk of the Pittico family. Photo by S. and T. Berger

f) Nägele, Durst, and Stümpfle families

The gravestone of Nägele, Durst, and Stümpfle families is not very well preserved, although it originates from the first half of the 20th century (Figure 21). It has a frame-like construction that forms the letter “U”. Two vertical sides of the frame have a column-like form with “capitals” that have engraved stylized papyrus flowers. Typical representations of the papyrus plant in ancient Egypt have a more overturned bell-like shape than the example on

the Nägele, Durst, and Stümpfle families' gravestone, which has more rounded edges, so the interpretation is not definitive. It is, rather, a possibility. Every century produced its own specific idea of style to originally Egyptian motifs, and some of them were more schematized or not very precise, so it would not be a surprise if the same is the case with the gravestone from Ludwigsburg cemetery. "Mistakes" in the representation of Egyptian motifs, however, are not rare. One example was noted on the Gillow mausoleum at Thurnham, near Lancaster, Lancashire, where the papyrus capitals have clear Egyptian paragon, but their shafts are "wrong", i.e. not Egyptian in their appearance²⁹⁴.

On top of the papyrus flowers are small pyramids. Similar flowers are known from the tomb of Khaemhat in the Theban necropolis, for example, in the scene „The royal scribe in charge of harvests presiding over work on the lands“²⁹⁵. Papyrus was extremely important in ancient Egypt, e.g. for building boats, ropes, matting, paper and even for food²⁹⁶. *Sema-tawy* depicts entwined lily (Upper Egypt) and papyrus (Lower Egypt) plants with a trachea; these representations are the symbol of the unity of the two lands²⁹⁷. In a fifth dynasty tomb at Saqqara



Figure 21.
Gravestone of the Nägele, Busse and
Stümpfle families.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

²⁹⁴ Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 292–295.

²⁹⁵ Émile Praise d'Avennes, *Egyptian art* (Köln: Taschen, 2020), PL. XLII.

²⁹⁶ Helene J. Kantor, "Plant Ornament: Its origin and development in the Ancient Near East." (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1945), 7–8.

²⁹⁷ Bruno Sandkühler, *Lotus und Papyrus – der Atem Ägyptens* (Dornach: Verlag am Goe-

is a representation of a journey downstream to acquire papyrus flowers for the goddess Hathor²⁹⁸. Papyrus thicket was a symbol of regeneration, protec-

tion, and fertility²⁹⁹, which were important for the idea of the after-life. With this in mind, it is strange that papyrus isn't more present in modern funeral contexts as painted or carved decoration, and not just as a papyrus-capital on columns that was relatively popular in the 1920s–1930s (together with cavetto cornices and other Egyptian motifs)³⁰⁰. That presenting a papyrus was the intention of the sculptor of the gravestone in Ludwigsburg should thus be considered.



Figure 22.
Obelisk of Vogel, Grüninger, and Dinçon families.

Photo by S. and T. Berger

g) Obelisk of Vogel, Grüninger, and Dinçon families

Obelisk of Vogel (Pauline 1859–1901, Wilhelm 1855–1908), Grüninger (Marie Sofie [née Vogel] 1883–1943, Kurt 1920–1943, Heinrich 1869–1945, Gertrud 1908–2001, Meta Geisel [née Grüninger] 1910–1996) and Dinçon (Otto 1905–1979, Elisabeth 1910–1990) families (Figure 22). The obelisk is made of black marble and decorated with a cross and palmette.

theanum, 2017), 59.

²⁹⁸ Kantor, *Plant Ornament*, 8.

²⁹⁹ Anna zu Stolberg, “Exkurs – Lotus und Papyrus im Alten Ägypten”, in *Ägypten, die Moderne, die ‘Beuroner Kunstschule’*, ed. Harald Siebenmorgen and Anna zu Stolberg (Karlsruhe: Badisches Landesmuseum, 2009), 134–138.

³⁰⁰ Curl, *The Egyptian revival*, 377.

h) Obelisk of Riekert, and Hezel families.

Riekert (Friedrich 1841–1900, Martin 1886–1952, Hedwig [née Spohr] 1893–1956, Lotte 1918–1998), and Hezel (Hilde [née Riekert] 1906–1980, Barbara Völker [née Hezel] 1938–1982) families.

Friedrich Riekert had a successful political career as a government council and was from 1881–1882 member of the Reichstag for the constituency of Württemberg. He also was an appointed member of the First Chamber of Württemberg for life. It is not surprising that his gravestone has the form of

an obelisk, because obelisks were widespread at the end of the 19th and turn of the 20th centuries, but also in that he was an important citizen and therefore his gravestone had to be representative. It would be interesting to know if he purchased the obelisk himself before his death, or if someone else (and who exactly) did. The obelisk is made of black marble and has no engravings except the names of the deceased (Figure 23).



Figure 23.
Obelisk of Riekert, and Hezel families.
Photo by S. and T. Berge

i) Obelisk of Nestel, Ott and Lepp families

Obelisk of Nestel, Ott, and Lepp³⁰¹ families (Figure 24). The oldest date of death of the persons that are memorialized by this obelisk is 1895, and the youngest 2017. The black obelisk with a pyramidion has an en-

³⁰¹ Nestel: Pauline [née Wein] (1863–1895), Gustav (1854–1927), Emilie [née Albrecht] (1871–1942), Lotte (1903–1981), Martha Schweitzer [née Nestel] 1901–1992); Ott: Freddy (1895–1963), Hede [née Nestel] (1898–1963), Günther (1924–1944); Lepp: Manfred (1927–2014), Brigitte Christa [née Ott] (1929–2017).

graved cross and palmette, as in the case of the obelisk of the Vogel, Grüninger, and Dinçon families.

*j) Memorial of the Hardegg family*³⁰²



Figure 24.
Obelisk of Günther, Nestel,
Lepp, Schweitzer, Ott families.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

The memorial has the shape of a gate, with two walls decorated with lion heads that hold the upper part of the construction, which takes the shape of a sarcophagus (Figure 25). On top of the “sarcophagus” is a vessel with an engraved hourglass (a symbol of the passing of time), a floral motif, and a reversed torch (a symbol of the passing of the soul into the next life).

The longer sides of the upper construction have two pairs of sphinxes that are looking at the amphora between them; in between these groups is a palmette motive with a volute (Figure 26). The analogy for such ornaments is to be found in Greek antique acroterions³⁰³ in terms of both ornamental motifs and their place within the memorial construction. The acroter motif that is on the corner looks like half of the central one (Figure 27)³⁰⁴.

³⁰² Hardegg: Richard (1847–1917; housebuilder and local council), Emma [née Mozer] (1857–1905), Gertrud (1896–1939), Fritz (1926–1945), Richard (1887–1947; Dr. Ing.), Adolf (1889–1970); Dorothea Mozer (1822–1891).

³⁰³ Acroterions are decorative elements placed at the apex of a gable or the corner of a building, like in the case of the Hardegg family’s gravestone construction.

³⁰⁴ Franz Sales Meyer, *A handbook of ornament* (New York: The architectural book publishing



Figure 25.
Memorial of the Hardegg family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

The shorter sides are decorated with one pair of sphinxes each. Notably, the pairs of sphinxes are surrounded by pyramidal frames. The sphinxes have a *nemes* headscarf, but their profiles are rather female and they have breasts, so they have paragon in old Greek ideas about sphinxes since Egyptian sphinxes were in most cases masculine³⁰⁵. This monumental memorial

has been made of limestone, and its color also evokes the appearance of Egyptian temples, although it is a mix of ancient Egyptian and ancient Greek aesthetic elements.

company, 1920), 166–167.

³⁰⁵ Although they are not typical, there are known examples of Egyptian female sphinxes, like the Sphinx of Shepenwepet, the queen of the 25th dynasty (ca. 660 BC) which, today, is part of the Egyptian museum in Berlin (see Dietrich Wildung, Fabian Reiter, Olivia Zorn, *Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection Berlin. 100 Masterpieces* (Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin - Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ernst Wasmuth Verlag Tübingen, Berlin und Scala Publishers Ltd, 2010), 18.



Figure 26.
Sphinxes on the Hardegg family memorial.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

1) Obelisk of the Hoffmeister family

The Hoffmeister (Käthchen 1856–1889, Otto 1851–1925, Käthe 1889–1945, Lina [née Walter] 1868–1945, Alfred 1892–1971, Irma [née Kübler] 1889–1987) family has an obelisk on a



Figure 27.
Greek sepulchral stele-crest in the
form of an acroter
(Franz Sales Meyer, *A handbook of or-
nament*, Pl. 105.4)

pediment where the names of the deceased are inscribed. The obelisk with a pyramidion was made of pale stone and has an ornament of a plant with a ribbon (Figure 28).

m) Obelisk of the Cantz family

The Cantz family³⁰⁶ (Figure 29), with the oldest date of death in 1887, has a simple obelisk with a cross, palmette, and the inscription “Auf Wiedersehen” (German for “goodbye”, but literally “see you again”).

Figure 28.
Obelisk of the Hoffmeister family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



n) Obelisk of an unknown family

The obelisk is in a very bad state of preservation, with no readable names and dates. It is made of pink limestone, with a palmette, a wreath made of flowers and a ribbon as decoration (Figure 30).

Figure 29.
Obelisk of the Cantz family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³⁰⁶ Cantz: August (1860–1887), Christian (1834–1897), Caroline (1840–1917), Helene (1898–1924), Herman (1867–1939), Pauline [née Holzwarth] (1869–1943); Erwin Schäf (1895–1965), Berta Schäf [née Cantz] (1895–1991).



o) Obelisk of the Eichhorn family

The Eichhorn family (Julius 1824–1917, Marie [née Gmelin] 1824–1893, Julie 1852–1907) has a black obelisk that is decorated with a cross and palmette motifs (Figure 31).

Figure 30.
Pink-limestone obelisk.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

p) Memorial of Cluss, and Klenk families

Cluss (Richard 1852–1896 [beer brewery owner], Richard 1881–1961 [theater owner], Karoline [née Hirsch] 1852–1935, Gertrud 1888–1987, Karl 1888–1942) and Klenk (Frida 1908–1979) families (Figure 32).

The memorial is divided into three parts: the central part is the highest and bears a large cross. Two side slabs have small obelisks on



Figure 31.
Obelisk of the Eichhorn family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

their edges, which are similar to the obelisks that are usually used for the decoration of buildings. The design of this memorial is very original, and the real source of inspiration can be sought in the work of *Giovanni Battista Piranesi* “*Diverse maniere di adornare i camini*” from 1769. Although the design of the memorial is much simpler than most of Piranesi’s designs, it uses an obelisk as part of an “Egyptian style”. The general form looks more like Piranesi’s fireplaces or even like an *Avant-corps* of a building than a grave marker (except for the cross that dominates the construction).



Figure 32.
Memorial of the Cluss and Klenk families.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

In 1902 the Cluss widow bought a building, which, constructed as a hall, became a center of cultural events in Ludwigsburg. Additionally, in 1932, it was expanded into a motion-picture theater, and in 1954 it was renamed by siblings Gertrud and Richard as “Scala-Theater”, which became one of the hallmarks of the city, and still is today³⁰⁷.

³⁰⁷ “Scala: Über uns”, accessed December 3, 2020, <https://www.scala.live/unser-scala/geschichte/>.

Old cemetery and old Jewish cemetery

The old cemetery, created in 1761 and located in Schorndorfer Straße 71, was the second in Ludwigsburg³⁰⁸. It is the final resting place of members of the royal family of Württemberg, but also of many members of the military and important citizens of Ludwigsburg.

a) An obelisk made of sandstone bears four names: Hermann Werner (1854–1894; Inspector)³⁰⁹, Lydia Werner (1852–1875), August Hermann Werner (1808–1892; Med. Rath. Dr.) and Karoline Werner [née Gmelin] (1817–1889)³¹⁰ (Figure 33).

The most prominent name on the obelisk is that of August Hermann Werner. On the side with his name, the Star of David and a wreath with palmette are engraved. The motif of a palmette is a simplified version of the original idea of the “tree of life”; the phrase in Proverbs XI, 30 says “The fruit of the righteous is the tree of life”, which emphasizes the eschatological dimension of the symbol³¹¹. The Star of David or Shield of David is a motif used from the onset of the Bronze age, but it started to become widespread in the 19th century because of its simplicity and recognizability, which were also characteristics of the “logos” of other big religions, e.g. the cross in Christianity.



Figure 33.
Obelisk of the Werner family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³⁰⁸ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 182.

³⁰⁹ Inscription on that side of the obelisk: “Die Frucht aber der Geistes ist Liebe, Freude, Friede, Geduld, Freundlichkeit, Güte, Glaube, Sanftmuth, Keuschheit. Galater 5, 22”.

³¹⁰ Inscription on that side of the obelisk: “Mein Kindlein, Lasset uns nicht lieben mit Worten, noch mit der Zunge, sondern mit der That u. Mit der Warheit / 1 John 3,18”

³¹¹ Zofja Ameisenowa, “The tree of life in Jewish iconography”, *Journal of the Warburg Institute* 2 (1938): 326–345.

August Hermann Werner was a founder of the Children's hospital and had a medical practice where he was curing poor children. During his studies, he often spent time with Austrian composer Schubert³¹². In 1837 he married Karoline Werner, and they had eleven children. The side with the name of Lydia Werner daughter of August Hermann Werner is ornamented with a cross intertwined with a rose bush. A rose symbolizes love, perfection, and truthfulness.

b) Obelisk of the Hubmann family, made from a black stone, with a pyramidion and a pediment (Emil 1835–1887, Emma [née Bischoff] 1844–1906, Emma [née Erath] 1888–1956, Heinrich 1881–1961). It is ornamented with three engraved golden crosses (Figure 34).



Figure 34.
Obelisk of the Hubmann family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 35.
Obelisk of the Ade family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³¹² Theodor Schott, "Werner, August Hermann" in *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 42 (1897): 42, online version, accessed November 12, 2020, <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd11577629X.html#adbcontent>.

c) Ade family (Karl 1835–1895, Kath. [née Rumbolz] 1837–1907, Pauline 1861–1877). The gray obelisk has no ornamentation (Figure 35).

d) Obelisk of Ernst Gebhardt (Figure 36).

Ernst Gebhardt (1832–1899) was a methodist preacher, poet, and translator born in Ludwigsburg. He was also one of the founders of the Christian Singers Association³¹³. Members of this association erected an obelisk in gratitude for his work. On the obelisk, made of black marble, is a golden harp with wheat. A harp is associated with David in the Old Testament and a symbol of St. Cecilia, patron saint of musicians. Wheat is usually associated with a person who has died at a ripe age.

e) von Schade family (Pauline [née Gukelen] 1815–1874, Helene 1837–1895). The obelisk was made of black marble without ornamentation (Figure 37).



Figure 36.
Obelisk of Ernst Gebhardt.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 37.
Obelisk of the von Schade family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³¹³ Patrick Streiff, “Gebhardt, Ernst”, in *Historisches Lexikon der Schweiz* (HLS), last modified May 17, 2005, <https://hls-dhs-dss.ch/de/articles/029013/2005-05-17/>.

f) Huss family (Eugen Heinrich 1855–1895, Clara [née Roser] 1862–1912). The obelisk was made of black marble without ornamentation (Figure 38).

g) Beyerlen family (Katharine [née Maier] 1790–1858, Wilhelm 1801–1886, Luise Kiesel [née Beyerlen] 1833–1890). The obelisk is made of gray marble with an engraved cross (Figure 39).



Figure 38.
Obelisk of the Huss family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 39.
Obelisk of the Beyerlen family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

h) Wagner family (Theobald 1843–1906 [sculptor], Caroline [née Bertsch] 1851–1937, Richard 1889–1915, Anna 1877–1960, Mathilde [née Bertsch] 1847–1871). The obelisk is made of black marble with a sign of the cross (Figure 40).

i) Heckel family (J. 1816–1879 [beer brewer], Johanna [née Ehninger] 1819–1883). The obelisk was made of grey marble, without decoration (Figure 41).



Figure 40.
Obelisk of the Wagner family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 41.
Obelisk of the Heckel family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

j) Strauss family (David Friedrich 1808–1874, Friedrich 1920–1940). The obelisk was made of black marble (Figure 42). Above the name of Friedrich Strauss a small cross pattée is notable: a “footed cross” that has been a common symbol since the Middle ages.

The old Jewish cemetery was created in 1873 on the eastern side of the old cemetery. It was actively used in the years between 1873 and 1923³¹⁴.

The old Jewish cemetery houses a memorial in the form of an obelisk, made of sandstone, and erected by the Jewish local community in 1873. The obelisk on the grave of soldiers (in the war in 1870/1871) was dedicated to one French soldier (Isidor Michael) and one German soldier (Heinrich Heidemann) who were both of Jewish religion. According to Albert Sting, this memorial is possibly unique of its kind in Germany³¹⁵.

³¹⁴ Deiseroth et al., *Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 182.

³¹⁵ Sting, *Geschichte der Stadt Ludwigsburg*, 2: 504.



The obelisk is ornamented with war symbols like flag poles, cuirass, swords, etc., and not with standard Jewish symbols that could be found on cemeteries (e.g. the Star of David, Cohen Hands, candlesticks, etc.).

Figure 42.
Obelisk of the Strauss family.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

4 Glass Pyramid in Bönningheim

In 2013 Bruno Steiger completed his residence in Bönningheim, which is in the vicinity of the city of Ludwigsburg. He conceived of a two-floored pyramid made of glass and steel as an ideal solution for living space (Figure 43). He was inspired by a pyramidal Chinese-restaurant he saw in Hannover in 1996³¹⁶. In an interview with the *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, he said that the source of his idea wasn't from ancient Egypt, but it was born out of purely practical and ecological considerations. The Chinese-restaurant that served as inspiration for Bruno Steiger bears the name "Ginkgo". Their website also doesn't make any allusions to ancient Egypt³¹⁷. The oldest post-antique pyramid built in 1630 is also located in the vicinity of Hannover³¹⁸. This pyra-

³¹⁶ Kathrin Haasis, "Das Haus ist endlich unter der Haube", *Stuttgarter Zeitung*, May 5, 2013, <https://www.stuttgarter-zeitung.de/inhalt.boennigheim-das-haus-ist-endlich-unter-der-haube.5a5991b2-465a-4a93-8b61-89a0fe7da8fa.html>.

³¹⁷ Ginkgo Restaurant Hannover, accessed January 29, 2021, <https://www.ginkgo-hannover.de/>.

³¹⁸ Christian E. Loeben, "Die älteste Pyramide der Neuzeit und weitere Pyramiden rund um Hannover", in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimaurerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2017), 313–326.

mid is known as the pyramid in Seelze (12 km NW from Hannover), which is a memorial dedicated to lieutenant general Johann/Hanns Michael Elias von Obentraut³¹⁹. Apart from this, there are pyramids from the 18th and 19th centuries in Derneburg (50 km SE from Hannover) which is the biggest tomb-pyramid in Germany, in Hämelschenburg (60 km SW from Hannover) and in Baum by Bückelburg (60 km W from Hannover)³²⁰. Although the concentration of pyramids from past centuries in the area is striking, it is not limited to these times. There is also a hotel in Hannover in the form of a glass pyramid and a café called Glashaus in Burgdorf (in the region of Hannover). The most prominent glass pyramid is possibly the one constructed by Chinese-American architect Ieoh Ming Pei in 1989 in front of the Louvre museum. While constructed in modernistic architectural language, this pyramid also has associations to ancient Egypt. Here we might ask the following question: if Bruno Steiger wasn't inspired by Egyptian architecture but by a reception of Egyptian architecture in a modern context (considering that the aforementioned Chinese-restaurant was possibly inspired by the Louvre pyramid), is this also a specific kind of reception of ancient Egypt? The answer is connected with the notion that some Egyptian motifs or visual solutions are, by now, so common and familiar, that it sometimes results in acts of receptions where the artists or purchasers don't recognize the origins of their idea (Figure 44).



Figure 43.
Pyramid in Bönningheim.
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 44.
The entrance into the pyramid.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³¹⁹ Loeben, "Die älteste Pyramide der Neuzeit und weitere Pyramiden rund um Hannover", 313–326.

³²⁰ Loeben, "Die älteste Pyramide der Neuzeit und weitere Pyramiden rund um Hannover", 313–326.

5 Conclusion

The memory of past experiences can't be directly recalled: it is rather a kind of constructive process which is defined by a present situation³²¹. Collective memory is also part of the process, as are dialogues between many factors in present society. At present, decisions are made about what will be remembered and how³²² it will be done. The processes of such a construction are defined by might and influence in society; not every member of society may speak about the past, and it is important from which point of view and in which time frame some people are allowed to speak about the past³²³. When the examples of collective memorials are analyzed in this context, the question that arises is: which tendencies in contemporary Ludwigsburg have led to the solutions like the obelisk at the Holzmarkt or the obelisk at the Römerhügel as exponents of the local collective identity? How do these examples correspond to the exponents of the individual identity embodied in the gravestones inspired by ancient Egyptian forms in Ludwigsburg? Is it possible to demonstrate a relation between communicative and cultural memory in Assmann's terms³²⁴?

It is not a simple task to understand which factors have played a decisive role in the forming of the memorials of Ludwigsburg. The obelisk at the Holzmarkt represents an idea of longevity as well as tradition both on macro-scale (old Egypt as a predecessor of ancient Greek and Roman civilisations that were the basis for the European cultural development) and micro-scale as a marker of local tradition. That obelisk represents quite different ideas than, for example, the obelisk at the Römerhügel, which should be perceived in the context of glorification of the monarch, which is also one of the Egyptian ideas connected with obelisks. These examples are public and they don't have to represent the collective memory of contemporaries that saw their construction; rather they are a part of the collective local past for new generations of citizens, and thus probably perceived as a legacy of the city's past and cultural memory. A different case is presented by grave-

³²¹ Mathias Berek, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit. Eine Theorie der Erinnerungskulturen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2009), 114.

³²² Berek, *Kollektives Gedächtnis und die gesellschaftliche Konstruktion der Wirklichkeit*, 191.

³²³ Jakob Schneider, "Tiefe Brunnen und kein Ende: Notizen zur Rezeption und Wandlung der Gedächtnistheorie", *Aegyptiaca* 5 (2020): 610–638.

³²⁴ See Jan Assmann, *Das Kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen* (München: Verlag C. H. Beck oHG, 1992).

stones in the city cemeteries. On the one hand, they can be seen as a part of a widespread trends in European cemeteries in the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, but on the other hand, there are also other possible solutions that correspond with the idea of recalling historical styles – ancient Egyptian motifs are not the only popular solution in that period. The simplicity of an obelisk as a form is not the answer, since, for example, Greek pillars also have simple forms and are often used in the form of a broken pillar on many graveyards, and there are yet still other possibilities of creating simple gravestones. The oldest preserved gravestone from the old cemetery is the obelisk of the Beyerlen family (Katharine 1790–1858). Unfortunately, it is not easy to ascertain whether some of the early obelisks inspired later families or whether an obelisk of some important person influenced decisions about gravestone designs for a lot of people in Ludwigsburg. One option is that obelisks on cemeteries in Ludwigsburg represent a relation between communicative and cultural memory: public memorials could be one source of inspiration and part of a collective local or European identity that has to be embodied in some well-known form.

The obelisks on buildings in the city of Ludwigsburg have two causes: 1. there were general instructions for the construction of buildings that have lead to a relative uniformity 2. older public buildings like the obelisk at Karlsplatz from the beginning of the 19th century have made obelisks a normal part of the architectural language of the city.

All exponents of receptions of ancient Egypt in Ludwigsburg that are a part of this case study can be divided into three groups: 1. buildings in the city, public and private 2. public memorials 3. receptions in a funerary context. It is highly likely that public buildings and memorials have had a decisive influence on the formation of a local collective identity and thus have influenced individual private constructions, like gravestones. Public buildings and memorials have played an active role in the forming of identities in the city which has a relatively short history, thus representing new exponents of individual identities. An important fact is that Ludwigsburg was a residential city for a certain period, hence its look might have had to have corresponded with the representation of its ruler. In this spirit, architecture was an active factor in creating an identity of the ruler which at the same time represented him to his subjects. That is obvious in the case of Ludwigsburg Palace, which even today is an attraction as the best preserved baroque castle in Germany.

Rezime

Recepcije starog Egipta u Ludvigsburgu, gradu obeliska

Ludvigsburg je grad u južnoj Nemačkoj, u blizini Štutgarta. U pitanju je grad sa relativno kratkom istorijom: vojvoda Eberhard Ludvig je položio kamen temeljac 1704. godine. Primeri recepcija starog Egipta u Ludvigsburgu koji su obrađeni u ovoj studiji slučaja se mogu podeliti u tri grupe: 1. privatne i javne građevine u gradu 2. javni spomenici 3. objekti iz funerarnog konteksta. Najveći broj eksponenata recepcija starog Egipta u ovom gradu potiče iz XIX veka, ali ima i primera iz XVIII i XX veka. Bitni istorijski faktori koji su mogli imati uticaj na izbor stila građevina su 1. industrijalizacija kao period ekonomskog jačanja širih masa stanovništva, koje tada mogu da priušte monumentalnije i finansijski zahtevnije građevine 2. relativna „mladost” grada koja vodi ka težnji za stvaranjem lokalnog kolektivnog identiteta, društvenog „lepka” koji povezuje građane i daje im osećaj dubine zajedničke istorije i tradicije 3. činjenica da je grad bio mesto prebivališta vladara u jednom periodu. Vidne su razlike u uzrocima recepcija u različitim kontekstima. Na premer, obelisk u centru grada na kružnom toku (Holzmarkt) prikazuje na sve četiri strane po jedan medaljon sa poznatom ličnošću iz sveta književnosti koja je ostavila trag u gradu. Taj obelisk prezentuje ideju o postojanosti i predstavlja svojevrsan marker lokalne tradicije. Sa druge strane, obelisk na Rimskom brdu je postavljen u čast posete vladara Vilhelma I i Fridriha III, te njegovu funkciju treba razumeti u kontekstu veličanja monarha, što je jedna od izvorno egipatskih ideja vezanih za obeliske. Ovi i drugi javni spomenici igraju aktivnu ulogu u izgradnji lokalnog kolektivnog identiteta, ali ne moraju biti u periodu svog nastajanja odmah percipirani od strane savremenika kao deo ličnih identiteta. Sasvim drugačiji slučaj su spomenici na grobljima, uglavnom u formi obeliska, ali i drugog tipa, koji su odraz individualnih stremljenja pokojnika, njegove porodice ili grupe sugrađana koja ih je naručila, kada su u pitanju zaslužni građani. Spomenici pripadaju sferi javnog, ali su u pitanju ne zvanične, već individualne recepcije Egipta. Moguće je da oni predstavljaju vezu između komunikativnog i kulturnog pamćenja onako kako ih definiše Asman (Assmann): javni spomenici takođe mogu biti jedan od izvora inspiracije i deo kolektivnog lokalnog ili evropskog identiteta koji mora biti otelotvoren u nekom poznatom obliku.

CHAPTER 4

Receptions of ancient Egypt in Weikersheim Palace: alchemy, obelisks and phoenixes

Abstract

Weikersheim Palace offers a wide spectrum of examples of receptions of ancient Egypt, that range from simple facade decorations in the shape of obelisks, as well as paintings and reliefs, to concepts and ideas that have Egyptian origins – like alchemy. Receptions of ancient Egypt in the palace are not as explicit as receptions of classical antiquity that are visible in the decorative program in the interior of the palace, as well as in the garden and the orangery. Even receptions of Chinese or Japanese art are reflected in an imposing collection of porcelain figures. Receptions of ancient Egypt are, on the other hand, latent.

The palace can serve as an illustration of how the long history of European confrontations with Egyptian influences has made the origins of ideas and visual solutions blurred and simultaneously part of everyone's mental map. Weikersheim Palace provides a valuable basis for research in many fields thanks to its long history and excellent state of preservation, as some parts from the Renaissance period are still visible. It also offers fruitful soil for the understanding of diversity and the context of receptions of ancient Egypt. Different examples that are preserved in Weikersheim are reflections of the broader historical, intellectual and artistic context of their time of emergence.

1 Introduction

Weikersheim Palace is located in southwest Germany, in the state of Baden-Württemberg - its beginnings date back to the 12th century. It is situated in the vicinity of the border between Baden-Württemberg and Bayern,

at the confluence of the river Vorbach into the river Tauber. Over the following centuries it conserved a very impressive building history that is visible in the many different styles that have left their traces on the appearance of the palace and the associated garden. The palace formerly used to be a residency of the House of Hohenlohe; today it is owned by the state of Baden-Württemberg (since 1967).

The construction of palaces from the Renaissance is characterized by the concept of multi-wing buildings (Mehrflügelbau) and can be differentiated from palaces of the high/late Middle Ages, which had separate buildings for different uses.³²⁵ Yet almost every Renaissance palace contains construction components from the Middle Ages,³²⁶ which is also the case for Weikersheim, while it was further developed in the baroque era. The layout of the palace is particularly interesting. According to plans of the mason Georg Robin it was meant to be an equilateral triangle-shaped layout, as unusual layouts were very popular in the period of mannerism (the transition between Renaissance and baroque).³²⁷ Ultimately the plan was never executed and the palace ended up having the irregular shape of an “opened triangle”.

Count Wolfgang II. of Hohenlohe-Langenburg (1546–1610) inherited the palace in 1586 and began construction work. It is important to note that he traveled to France, England, and Austria, which probably broadened his understanding of architecture and influenced his taste.³²⁸ The layout of Weikersheim Palace was designed by Georg Stegle,³²⁹ a student of Aberlin Tretch, between 1588 and 1590. Weikersheim Palace was partly a product of the architectural school of Stuttgart, which was subordinated to the Straßburg school of architecture.³³⁰ Some of its parts (e.g. gables) were influenced by Dutch architecture, but others had roots in German architecture, which were eventually paragons for other palaces (e.g. Öhringen, Langenburg).³³¹

³²⁵ G. Ulrich Großmann, “Beobachtungen zur Bau- und Kunstgeschichte des Schlosses Weikersheim”, in *Neue Forschungen: Schloss Weikersheim*, ed. Sara Bernert (Oppenheim am Rhein: Nünnerich-Asmus Verlag & Media 2019), 118–135.

³²⁶ Großmann, “Beobachtungen zur Bau- und Kunstgeschichte des Schlosses Weikersheim”, 118–135.

³²⁷ Klaus Marten, *Schloß Weikersheim* (Heidelberg: Brausdruck GmbH), 5.

³²⁸ Wilhelm Gradmann, *Burgen und Schlösser in Hohenlohe* (Stuttgart: Drv-Verlag, 1982), 32.

³²⁹ Walther-Gerd Fleck, *Schloß Weikersheim und die Hohenlohischen Schlösser der Renaissance* (Tübingen: Kunsthistorisches Institut der Universität, 1954), 18.

³³⁰ Fleck, *Schloß Weikersheim und die Hohenlohischen Schlösser der Renaissance*, 19.

³³¹ Fleck, *Schloß Weikersheim und die Hohenlohischen Schlösser der Renaissance*, 37.

Drawings and designs that spread among contemporary artists, and thus were a source of inspiration, were important for the development of Renaissance architecture. Among them are the works of Sebastiano Serlio (1475–1554) with illustrations of a pyramid and an obelisk in *L'Architettura* from 1584, and Pirro Ligorio (ca. 1510–1583) with drawings inspired by antiquity.³³² In the works of Renaissance and mannerist authors, however, Egyptian objects such as obelisks and pyramids are often presented confusingly, and their proper categorization appeared only in the 18th century.³³³ These two assessments are of importance in understanding why obelisks were part of the architectural design in and around Weikersheim Palace and the city of Weikersheim. The architects' sources of inspiration probably stemmed from contemporary theorists and designers, without a real understanding of the origins of the elements used. Then there are also architectural components that could be seen as part of a general antiquity style, without making a great difference between different cultural traditions.



Figure 1.
Weikersheim Palace with a part of the garden,
Photo by S. and T. Berger.

³³² James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival. Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 112.

³³³ Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 113.

Together with the old town of Weikersheim, the palace of Weikersheim and the associated garden represent the image of a count's residence from the 16th to 18th centuries (Fig. 1). The baroque palace garden with almost completely preserved figural decorations from the 18th century reflects the baroque idea of old Greece and Rome as an ideal.

2 Alchemy

Count Wolfgang II. of Hohenlohe had a two-storied alchemical laboratory at Weikersheim Palace on the back side of the building for the civil servants which was built in 1602. Alchemy in general and alchemical research in particular, being one of his spare-time passions, was conducted by him in his laboratory which was fully equipped for mineral source estimation (Dokimastik).³³⁴ In said laboratory, Michael Polhaimer failed to conduct a transmutation of metals and was imprisoned.³³⁵ Some publications from the Count's library have been identified by using a list of his books, and several were known from the Count's correspondence – unfortunately not all of the publications were identifiable. A couple of them were manuscripts, but most were printed versions. During the lifetime of Count Wolfgang II. a huge selection of books about chemistry and alchemy was available, and an important part were books from the Latin Middle Ages written by or ascribed to Hermes Trismegistus, Platon, Aristoteles, Avicenna, Rhases, and Geber.³³⁶

After the Count's death, the laboratory was no longer used and today only traces of its layout are visible.³³⁷

The origins of alchemy are generally placed in Hellenistic Alexandria, Egypt³³⁸ where imitations of precious metals and stones were produced.³³⁹

³³⁴ Rudolf Werner Soukup and Helmut Mayer, *Alchemistisches Gold. Paracelsistische Pharmaka* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1997), 267.

³³⁵ Steffen Berger, "Alchemie in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit – Wandel oder Wende?", *Starigard* 10 (2010/11): 7–17.

³³⁶ Jost Weyer, *Graf Wolfgang II. von Hohenlohe und die Alchemie. Alchemistische Studien in Schloß Weikersheim 1587–1610* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1992), 55.

³³⁷ Marten, *Schloß Weikersheim*, 7.

³³⁸ Florian Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus. Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2007), 25; Paul K. Keyser, "Alchemy in the Ancient World: from Science to Magic", *Illinois classical studies* 15/2 (1990): 353–378.

³³⁹ Harald Meller, Alfred Reichenberger, and Christian-Heinrich Wunderlich, eds., *Alche-*

After the Greek conquest of Egypt in 332 B.C.E., the combination of Egyptian chemical and technical knowledge and Greek ideas about the nature of things resulted in the establishment of alchemy.³⁴⁰ Hermetical texts that were circulating in Europe during the Middle Ages were a bridge between ancient Egypt and Europe. Another important source was *Hyrogliphica* from the 15th century with its interpretations of hieroglyphs, written by Horapolo.³⁴¹ Hermes Trismegistus, who was considered an author of Hermetic texts, never actually existed – he was a fictional mixture of the Egyptian god Toth, founder of law and social order³⁴² and the Greek Hermes.³⁴³ Hermetical texts can be divided in “philosophical-theological” texts and “technical” texts. The latter group is, amongst others, comprised of texts such as the Book of the Thirty-Six Decans about astrology (dated to the first century B.C.E.), magical texts (2nd–4th century), and alchemical texts.³⁴⁴ Whilst researching Hermetic texts some scholars were more inclined to the idea that the origins of these texts were Egyptian and Iranian, and in other stages of research they saw more connections with Greek and Hellenistic ideas. Today a widespread opinion exists that these texts were a product of Hellenized Egyptian priests, but their origin was seen as a mixture of few different concepts and religious and philosophical streams.³⁴⁵

At the end of the Middle Ages, alchemy was one of three aspects of chemistry as a science, along with practical chemistry and natural philosophy.³⁴⁶

mie. *Die Suche nach dem Weltgeheimnis* (Halle/Saale: Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte Halle, 2016), 19.

³⁴⁰ Meller et al., eds., *Alchemie. Die Suche nach dem Weltgeheimnis*, 19.

³⁴¹ Florian Ebeling, “Ägyptische Freimaurerei zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik”, in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimaurerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2017), 29–124.

³⁴² Patrick Boylan, *Thoth or the Hermes of Egypt: a study of some aspects of theological thought in Ancient Egypt* (London: Oxford University Press, 1922), 88–89.

³⁴³ Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus. Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times*, 3.

³⁴⁴ Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus. Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times*, 11.

³⁴⁵ Ebeling, *The Secret History of Hermes Trismegistus. Hermeticism from Ancient to Modern Times*, 29–30.

³⁴⁶ Jost Weyer, “Der alchemische Alltag an einem Fürstenhof um 1600 – Graf Wolfgang II. von Hohenlohe und Schloss Weikersheim”, in *Alchemie und Wissenschaft des 16. Jahrhunderts. Fallstudien aus Wittenberg und vergleichbare Befunde. Internationale Tagung vom 3. bis 4. Juli 2015 in Halle (Saale)*, ed. Harald Meller, Alfred Reichenberger, and Christian-Heinrich Wunderlich (Halle/Saale: Landesamt für Denkmalpflege und Archäologie Sachsen-Anhalt – Landesmuseum

Alchemy, which was perceived by the general population as a secret science connected to magic and charlatans in later centuries, was widely practiced in German royal courts in the 16th and 17th centuries.³⁴⁷ There was also the opinion amongst some parts of society that the practical part of alchemy was suspicious because of its Arabic origins. The reason for such a view was that some of the important alchemical texts, like “Silverwater” by Ibn Umail, came from that milieu.³⁴⁸ Like the legend of Phoenix (see the part 9, this Chapter), ancient Egyptian provenance was forgotten or overlooked by some authors, and they mention Arabia as a place of origin in both contexts. Presumably, the cause of such a constellation is not that historical sources that refer to ancient Egypt as a place of provenance³⁴⁹ were not known to these authors. Rather the reason should be sought in political circumstances, as the conquest of Egypt by the Arab general ‘Amr Ibn-el’-As between 639 and 642 cut the visual and physical connection to ancient Egypt in the mental maps of Europeans.³⁵⁰ As a consequence, the picture of ancient Egypt in fact wasn’t lost in the Latin Middle Ages, but seen through glass painted with the colors of Roman and Christian receptions.³⁵¹

3 The baroque entrance to Weikersheim Palace

The royal stables of count Siegfried (1619–1684), grandson of Wolfgang II., are a structure that is almost 100 meters long and that extends along the complete eastern front of the palace. The construction consists of a north and a south wing. Paul Platz from Belfort constructed an effective connection between the palace and the city by expanding the palace and adding the stables.³⁵² He was the building master of the stables for horses, mules, and carriages, as well as of the residencies for the servants that worked with the animals.³⁵³ The gate passage with two sculptures on the sides and an obelisk

für Vorgeschichte Halle/Saale, 2016), 347–351.

³⁴⁷ Weyer, “Der alchemische Alltag an einem Fürstenhof um 1600”, 347–351.

³⁴⁸ Anke Napp, “*In Terra Aegypti*”: *Das Bild des Alten Ägypten von der Spätantike bis zur Frühen Neuzeit* (Baden-Baden: Deutscher Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2015), 189.

³⁴⁹ e.g. Tacitus (Napp, “*In Terra Aegypti*”, 161).

³⁵⁰ Dimitri Laboury and Marie Lekane, “Lost in translation? On ‘Aegyptiaca’ in the Middle Ages”, in *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style, and agency*, ed. Miguel John Versluys (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 115–131.

³⁵¹ Laboury and Lekane, “Lost in translation? On ‘Aegyptiaca’ in the Middle Ages”, 115–131.

³⁵² Gradmann, *Burgen und Schlösser in Hohenlohe*, 34.

³⁵³ Carla Fandrey, *Schloss Weikersheim* (Berlin, and München: Deutscher Kunstverlag,

on the top dates from 1684. The gate is crowned with a gable with the coat of arms of Hohenlohe/Pfalz-Zweibrücken (Figure 2). The following is inscribed on the gable³⁵⁴: “In 1684 this was happily carried out with rest of the new palace and building of the tower by Herr Paul Platz of Belfort, a master builder in Würzburg, thank god”.³⁵⁵



Figure 2.
Gate passage with an obelisk,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

The facade of the stables that faces the palace has two wall dormers on the left and two on the right side of the gate (Figure 3), and they are all adorned with obelisks (Figure 4). The gable above the gate has the form of a triangle, which possesses a half-circle field with a schematized floral ornament and with an obelisk above it. All wall dormers have the form of a simple tail gable or curly gable, with spheric additions to the edges of the upper part that was crowned with long and narrow obelisks.

2010), 13.

³⁵⁴ “Anno 1684 ist dieses mit samt dem innern neuen Schloß und Thurmbaw durch Herr Paul Platz von Belfort, Baumeister in Würzburg, Gottlob glücklich vollführt worden.”

³⁵⁵ Marten, *Schloß Weikersheim*, 13.



Figure 3.
The inner side of the gate,
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 5.
One of the wall dormers with an
obelisk,
Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 4.
The inner facade of the stables,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

4 Garden facade

Following a passage between the stables and the palace's eastern wing, the obelisk-decorated entrance for visitors with carriages leads to the bridge that is connected to the garden. The garden facade faces the valley of the river Tauber and the baroque garden with its orangery. Both the entrance to the palace and to the garden are each connected by a bridge over a moat (which was drained in 1831). The latter is flanked by two pairs of pedestals: the pair in the north (the side of the palace) carries two human figures, and the pair in the south (the side of the garden) is crowned by two very steep obelisks (Figure 6). The obelisks are each decorated with a three-dimensional coat of arms that look as if they were hung on a pyramidion. In the official guide for the baroque garden, obelisks are interpreted as the symbol of "stately fame".³⁵⁶ Obelisks, from the 18th century onwards, are a common part of "gardens of allusion" that originated in England and spread across Europe.³⁵⁷



Count Wolfgang II. found inspiration for the garden, among other models, in the garden of the duke in Stuttgart, which was considered the most beautiful garden in Germany in 1570.³⁵⁸ The copper engraving, made by Matthäus Merian, reads "Fürstlicher Lustgarten zu Stuttgart" ("Princely pleasure garden of Stuttgart"). Steep-sided obelisks on pediments are also visible in the garden. Yet, the inheritors of count Wolfgang II. might have had a broader spectrum of sources of inspiration for the garden and the new buildings in it than currently known.

Figure 6.
Obelisks at the entrance to the garden.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

³⁵⁶ Harmut Troll and Joachim Stolz, *Schlossgarten Weikersheim* (Berlin, and München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2013), 37.

³⁵⁷ James Stevens Curl, "Gardens of allusion", *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 22, no. 4 (1997): 325–342.

³⁵⁸ Troll and Stolz, *Schlossgarten Weikersheim*, 8.

5 Orangery

“Prospect and floor plan of the orangery, at the end of the view of the palace garden, for which his High Count Excellence Mr. Carl Ludwig, Count of Hohenlohe, in Weikersheim, set up the construction as a Memorial. This has not only been made for good endurance but also presents itself most delicately with beautiful statues and pyramids...”³⁵⁹ – Description of the Weikersheim Palace orangery on a chalcography by Georg Peter Schillinger, 1745.³⁶⁰



Figure 7.
The left wing of two symmetrical wings of the orangery, Photo by S. and T. Berger

³⁵⁹ “Prospect und Grundriß der Orangerie, am Ende der Aussicht des Schloß-Garten, welches Ihro Hochgraeffl. Excell. Herr Carl Ludwig Graff von Hohenlohe, in Weikersheim, zum Gedächtnis hat aufbauen lassen. Welche nicht nur allein nach guter Dauerhaftigkeit gemacht, sondern auch auf das allerzierlichste mit schönen Statuen und Pyramiden sich präsentiert...” – Beschreibung der Weikersheimer Orangerie auf einem Kupferstich von Georg Peter Schillinger, 1745.

³⁶⁰ Georg Peter Schillinger, *Architectura Civilis. Erster Theil* (Nürnberg: Homännische Officin, 1745), plate 26, <https://doi.org/10.3931/e-rara-7438>, according to Troll and Stolz, *Schlossgarten Weikersheim*, 42–43.

In 1708 the land was divided between Carl Ludwig (1674–1756) and his younger brother. Carl Ludwig got Weikersheim Palace and started to live there officially in 1709.³⁶¹ His marriage with princess Elisabeth Friederike Sophie of Oettingen-Oettingen brought him money and support in his construction-ambitions. The presence of the princess at the palace, and the dowry she brought with her, necessitated a matching representation, which had an effect on the construction of the orangery (Fig. 7) as a representational building and not only functional, like the garden buildings that were built before.³⁶² The orangery in the garden of the palace was constructed between 1719 and 1723.³⁶³

Johann Christian Lüttich was a very prolific German baroque engineer, architect, and hanoverian major general of the corps of engineers. He was responsible, for the construction of the Weikersheim arcades, amongst other building projects, which were designed as a connection between the palace and the city. The arcades at the Schloßplatz are considered as an object lesson of baroque urban architecture.³⁶⁴ Lüttich was also an architect of the Weikersheim orangery that was a counterpart to the palace itself and the non-architectonic landscape outside of the palace-garden. The orangery is a two-winged arcade-shaped building. The two parts of the orangery – mirror-inverted constructions with a roofed pavilion – have a combined length of about 100 m. Originally, the cultured citrus trees were planted directly into the ground. In 1750/51 the orangery was equipped with a solid roof and glass windows, which is when the plants were planted in buckets and taken outside during the warm parts of the year.³⁶⁵ Both wings have a grid on the roof and two steep obelisks on top of the side that faces the palace as well as an obelisk on the grid of the opposite side of the building (Fig. 8). The obelisks are steep and made of two pieces of sandstone (Fig. 9). They can be interpreted as a part of Lüttich's aspiration to design representative buildings inspired by historical themes. He probably did not consider obelisks as part of an Egyptian architectural repertoire, but as an active military officer he

³⁶¹ Fandrey, *Schloss Weikersheim*, 14.

³⁶² Troll and Stolz, *Schlossgarten Weikersheim*, 18.

³⁶³ Fandrey, *Schloss Weikersheim*, 18.

³⁶⁴ Max H. von Freeden, "Die Weikersheimer Orangerie und ihr Meister Johann Christian Lüttich," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 9, no. 1 (1940): 1–29.

³⁶⁵ Sophie von Schwerin, Joachim Stolz, and Hartmut Troll, *Wasserkunst & Götterreigen – Geschichte und Entwicklung des Weikersheimer Schlossgartens* (Regensburg: Verlag Schnell & Steiner GmbH, 2008), 51.

went as far as Eastern Europe,³⁶⁶ so he might have seen some examples of receptions of ancient Egypt in other European countries. He might have also used these models in his work, but considered them as part of a common European style – an eclectic realization of mixed historical styles, if not ancient Egyptian (Fig. 10). This can be seen as an example of the agency of materiality: such design played an active role in creating a picture of the ruling family as part of an European tradition.



Figure 8.
Detail of the orangery,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

From the 16th century onwards, royal courts within Europe started to promote the idea of growing subtropical plants like figs, oleander, rosemary, hibiscus, oranges, etc. which normally grew in a Mediterranean climate ranging from Southern Europe, the Near East, North Africa to Central Asia.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁶ e.g. he took part in the siege of Belgrade (von Freeden, “Die Weikersheimer Orangerie”, 4, 7.).

³⁶⁷ Daniel Rohrauer, “Von der fürstlichen Orangerie zum modernen Hort der Pflanzenvielfalt”, in *Orangerie. Die Wiederentdeckung eines europäischen Ideals*, ed. Simone Balsam (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2019), 111–119.



Figure 9.
View of the back of the orangery,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

From the middle of the 16th century onwards, the lemon (*Citrus limon*) was the most popular part of orangeries and was held as a symbol of eternal life, loyalty, and the baroque allegory – the ruling family.³⁶⁸ In the 16th century, simple constructions for the protection of plants in the winter months were already built, e.g. the Versailles Orangerie.³⁶⁹ In the 17th and 18th centuries the ideal of the orangeries in Central Europe became even more widespread. It developed from simple constructions for overwinter survival to pleasure houses (“Lusthäuser”) and sometimes even to palaces, designed in an orangery allegorized narrative, that appear in the texts of classical writers like Vergilius and Ovidius.³⁷⁰

³⁶⁸ von Schwerin et al., *Wasserkunst & Götterreigen*, 60.

³⁶⁹ Helmut-Eberhard Paulus, “Die klassische Orangerie als Metapher göttlicher Ideale und menschlicher Tugenden”, in *Orangerie. Die Wiederentdeckung eines europäischen Ideals*, ed. Simone Balsam (Berlin: Lukas Verlag, 2019), 127–141.

³⁷⁰ Paulus, “Die klassische Orangerie als Metapher göttlicher Ideale und menschlicher Tugenden”, 132–133.



Figure 10.
Right-wing of the orangery,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

The possession of an orangery not only showed power and wealth, but enabled investing resources for the maintenance of the plants that were normally not part of the local flora. Orangeries were a kind of temple built by people to honor the godly,³⁷¹ since representations of gods were often part of the ornamental repertoire of orangeries. With this in mind, it is not hard to see ancient Egypt as a possible source of inspiration, as Egyptian culture was known for its temples and gods.

The following fact is also important for the understanding of eclecticism: before Friedrich Ludwig Norden on a smaller scale (at the beginning of the 18th century) and Vivant Denon to a more comprehensive extent (at the beginning of the 19th century), ancient Egyptian aesthetics were known in Europe mostly in the form of hybrids from the Roman imperial period, and not “personally”.³⁷² After the Arabian conquest of Egypt between 639

³⁷¹ Paulus, “Die klassische Orangerie als Metapher göttlicher Ideale und menschlicher Tugenden”, 127–140.

³⁷² See Jan Assmann and Florian Ebeling, “The mnemohistory of Egypt. Approaches towards the understanding of Egypt in intellectual history”, in *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style and*

and 646, Egypt was present in Europe through various mediators (Greek and Roman literature, the Bible, Egyptianized art objects, etc.), and therefore the outlines that define Egyptian style and divide it from others are undetermined. In the context of the orangery it is reasonable to acknowledge the possibility that the obelisks were taken as part of a classical design, as an element of styles from antiquity. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 18th century, interest in ancient Egypt was already separated from “mediators” like the Bible, and a kind of scientific interest was present even before the hieroglyphs were deciphered. However, borders between motifs from ancient art were not clear. Mnemohistory as a remembered part of past events is a valuable concept that gives us not only a deeper understanding of ancient Egyptian artifacts and art, but of the individuals that chose some of its aspects to display their good taste, identity, or place in society.³⁷³ The example of the Weikersheim Palace orangery shows that the ruling family used specific architecture as a mediator to actively provoke an idea of their own longevity and tradition. Historical styles were commonly used at public buildings (i.e. libraries, government institutions, post offices, etc.) to show authority, collective values, and a collective past. In the case of the Weikersheim Palace orangery, the eclectic historical styles utilized provide information about the taste of the architect Lüttich, who saw examples of contemporary European architecture, or about the taste of Carl Ludwig. It is not possible to establish if the obelisks in particular were included as the request of count Ludwig, or if they were part of the architect’s visual solution, as both possibilities may apply. Simple relationships between identity and material culture have been rightfully criticized in the past few decades, because of the lack of understanding of the complexity of their interaction,³⁷⁴ which is why, in this case, the obelisks have to be actively perceived not as an illustration of static identities, but as part of communicating values, identities and ideas. Together with other elements of historical styles, they played an active role in shaping the identity of the count, and were also a part of the local identity of his subordinates.

agency, ed. Miguel John Versluys (Berlin, and Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 23–38.

³⁷³ Assmann and Ebeling, “The mnemohistory of Egypt”, 23–38.

³⁷⁴ Ann C. Gunter, “Aegyptiaca. Investigating style and agency in the Iron age eastern Mediterranean”, in *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style, and agency*, ed. Miguel John Versluys (Berlin and Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 71–86.

6 The ruin (Die Ruine)

The youngest facility in and around Weikersheim Palace and its garden is the ruin garden with the pleasure house (“Lusthaus”), which is dated by a medal that memorializes its construction in 1743.³⁷⁵ After the death of count Carl Ludwig, his wife owned the ruin until she died. In the following centuries its owners changed multiple times, until the final destruction of the building in April 1945. The first change in the ruin’s appearance came under Georg Sigmund Bauman, former personal chef of count Carl Ludwig, who made the ruin into an inn.³⁷⁶ The Pfeiffer family made a villa of the building in the first half of the 19th century. Under the next owner, Kober, it was an inn once again, before it was finally passed hands to the authorities again: it came into the possession of Prince Karl (1829–1907), who made a palace of it.³⁷⁷ Every owner made changes, but the original layout was still recognizable even in the last shape of the building, which was made at the beginning of the 20th century under the pipe organ manufacturer Andreas Laukhuff.³⁷⁸ In the last construction phase, the building had two towers that were also part of the original look of the ruin (although in the ruin they were asymmetrical, and in the version from the 20th century they were the same and symmetrical). The roofs of both towers had obelisks at their edges. Both of the two-part windows of the towers had an obelisk in the middle of the broken pediments. Unfortunately, there exist no preserved plans of every phase of the two hundred years long history of the building, so it is not clear if the Egyptian influence was present in some of the earlier stages. There is only a medal preserved for the first phase of the ruin, yet it is not clear if the medal delivers a realistic look or a schematized, simplified representation of the building. What is visible from the medal is that the ruin had two towers that were not the same – but that is connected with ideas of the passing of time and decay.

³⁷⁵ Helmut Wörner, *Der “Ruin” als herrschaftlicher Lustgarten und seine illustre Geschichte* (Altlußheim: Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Baden-Württemberg, 2020), 5–6.

³⁷⁶ Wörner, *Der “Ruin” als herrschaftlicher Lustgarten*, 39–40.

³⁷⁷ Wörner, *Der “Ruin” als herrschaftlicher Lustgarten*, 43–55.

³⁷⁸ Wörner, *Der “Ruin” als herrschaftlicher Lustgarten*, 59.

7 The death of Cleopatra

In the room of Georg Friedrich is a stucco decoration from 1598 that displays the death of Cleopatra. In the same room exists a representation of five more women from antiquity who gave their lives for a higher cause.³⁷⁹ The purpose was the depiction of episodes of the history of Rome, so Cleopatra as a representative of ancient Egypt was only part of a Roman narrative. The portrayal of the characters doesn't seem to recall Egyptian style. Rather, the figures are presented with a typical gothic perspective, mixed with modern baroque elements.³⁸⁰ The only visual details that refer to Egypt are the contours of a temple(?) in the background of a scene, which has an appearance of steep Egyptian temple walls. The pictured soldiers in the scene have "oriental" costumes. A possible explanation for such choice of stucco-artist Gerhard Schmidt was that the "Orient" was seen as a unit, as a homogenous world. It is important to note that Georg Friedrich von Hohenlohe, the oldest son of count Wolfgang, took part in the war against the Turks 1593–1606,³⁸¹ which might have also been a source of inspiration for Gerhard Schmidt.

8 Decoration of the knight hall

The most important part of a Renaissance palace was a large hall. In the case of Weikersheim Palace the hall was very unconventional because of its self-supporting ceiling.³⁸² There are 69 square, octagon-shaped, and pentagon-shaped cassettes on the ceiling. Inside the large octagons are painted demonstrations of game hunting. Between them are smaller square fields with representations of bird hunting, and in the octagons on the edges are depictions of fishing.³⁸³ One of the common scenes ranging from the Old

³⁷⁹ Markus Eiden, "Der Ausbau von Schloss Weikersheim im Renaissancestil", in *Neue Forschungen: Schloss Weikersheim*, ed. Sara Bernert (Oppenheim am Rhein: Nünnerich-Asmus Verlag & Media, 2019), 160–173.

³⁸⁰ Eiden, "Der Ausbau von Schloss Weikersheim im Renaissancestil", 160–173.

³⁸¹ Maike Trentin-Meyer, "Georg Friedrich von Hohenlohe, der Deutsche Orden und die Grafschaft Weikersheim", in *Neue Forschungen: Schloss Weikersheim*, ed. Sara Bernert (Oppenheim am Rhein: Nünnerich-Asmus Verlag & Media, 2019), 86–99.

³⁸² Jost Weyer, "Der Stuttgarter Baumeister Georg Stegle (ca. 1548–1598) und Schloss Weikersheim", *Württembergisch Franken* 101 (2017): 37–67.

³⁸³ Jakob Käßlinger, "Die Jagd als Spiegel der Gesellschaft. Bemerkungen zum Raumprogramm des Rittersaals in Schloss Weikersheim", *Württembergisch Franken* 95 (2011): 73–93.

Kingdom to the Late Period of ancient Egypt was the portrayal of the tomb owner fowling in the marshes on a papyrus skiff.³⁸⁴ This activity may be perceived as popular among the elite.³⁸⁵ From the Middle Ages onwards hunting was a privilege of the sovereigns of German courts, a kind of political instrument, but also a symbol of status, capabilities, and power.³⁸⁶ One text from the Middle Kingdom of Egypt is titled “The Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling”. Of course, the way the scenes of hunting are depicted is completely different, but some similarities in meanings are evident.

9 The bed of princess Elisabeth Sophie

“Ex flammis orior” or “I stand up from flames” was the motto of Hohenlohe county, of which the city of Weikersheim is a part. Sculptures that stand for winds from all four sides of the world are represented with a flame at their point, like a symbol of Hohenlohe. A more interesting sample of the visual presentation of the motto of Hohenlohe is the phoenix. Two phoenixes are preserved at the baldachin of the bed of princess Elisabeth Sophie. The bed was made in 1711 by Johann Jacob Sommer³⁸⁷ (1645–1715), who also made the popular dwarf gallery in the garden of the palace. The two phoenixes were placed on each side of the bed canopy. The phoenix was known to Egyptians as the *Benu*-bird, which was associated with the cult of death and the cycle of the rising and setting of the sun.³⁸⁸ However, some antique authors like Isidor wrote about the legend of the phoenix although they do not mention its Egyptian origins, and Ambrosius of Mailand from the fourth century even places the origins of the phoenix in Arabia³⁸⁹. There is also a Christian interpretation of the phoenix, as it represents immortality and Christ³⁹⁰.

³⁸⁴ Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer, “From kitchen to temple: the practical role of birds in Ancient Egypt”, in *Between Heaven and Earth: Birds in Ancient Egypt*, ed. Rozenn Bailleul-LeSuer (Chicago: Oriental Institute of University Chicago, 2012), 23–32.

³⁸⁵ Bailleul-LeSuer, “From kitchen to temple”, 23–32.

³⁸⁶ Käßplinger, “Die Jagd als Spiegel der Gesellschaft”, 73–93.

³⁸⁷ Marten, *Schloß Weikersheim*, 38.

³⁸⁸ Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long, and Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A history* (Cambridge/Massachusetts: Burndy Library, 2009), 14.

³⁸⁹ Napp, “*In Terra Aegypti*”, 161–162.

³⁹⁰ Kerstin Riepenhausen, “Das Prunkbett der Fürstin Elisabeth Frederike Sophie von Hohenlohe-Weikersheim”, in *Neue Forschungen: Schloss Weikersheim*, ed. Sara Bernert (Oppenheim

10 Former garden gate pillar

Nowadays, in the Hauptstraße 53. is the entrance to the parking spot which is flanked by two pillars with two very steep obelisks (Fig. 11). These former garden gate pillars were made of sandstone in the 18th century.



Figure 11.
Obelisks in the Hauptstraße,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

There is also a gate in the city park with two pillars and obelisks with coats of arms (Fig. 12).



Figure 12.
Obelisks at the entrance of the city park,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

11 Conclusion

Jan Assmann writes about two modes of cultural memory: 1. potential modus, with all material that can be used as a source (texts, pictures, patterns of action) and 2. modus of topicality, which in contemporaneity gives a context and meaning to parts of the memorized past.³⁹¹ There is no comprehensive picture of the past, only constructs shaped by the mechanisms of memory. From all that is remembered, only a certain part is seen as relevant by society in a particular moment of time. In the case of the eclectic architecture at Weikersheim Palace, not having sufficient knowledge about the styles from past is only one part of the explanation. The architect Johann Christian Lüttich worked on the arcades and the orangery at Weikersheim in the 18th century, before Napoleon's invasion of Egypt and before the beginning of

³⁹¹ Jan Assmann, "Kollektives Gedächtnis und kulturelle Identität", in *Kultur und Gedächtnis*, ed. Jan Assmann and Tonio Hölscher (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), 9–19.

modern Egyptology, which means that his sources about Egyptian style were not as comprehensive as those that were available to younger generations of architects. On the other hand, Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik created eclectic works in the form of a mix of Egyptian, Greek and Roman styles in 20th century, when an abundance of literature was available not only from the sphere of Egyptology, but from numerous related disciplines. This approach could also be interpreted as an attempt to deepen the picture of the origins of European identity that aren't only rooted in classical Greece, but also in its predecessor Egypt as well as in its successor Rome. By combining well known architectural elements from previous civilizations, architects can achieve a sense of collective past from a bigger geographical frame and a wider time span. The diversity of examples of receptions of ancient Egypt at Weikersheim Palace – embodied in visual arts such as architectural elements (which are explicit), in scenes of the knight hall (that are more latent), and on abstract levels such as alchemy, with its origins in Egypt – shows the enormously important place that ancient Egypt possesses in the mental maps of Europeans.

Rezime

Recepcije starog Egipta u palati Vajkershajm:
alhemija, obelisci i feniksi

Grad Vajkershajm se nalazi na jugu Nemačke, na granici pokrajina Bajern i Baden-Vurtemberg. Istorija dvorca Vajkershajm počinje već u 12. veku, a njegova očuvanost nudi plodno tle za proučavanje arhitekture različitih epoha u kojima je na njemu rađeno, a posebno renesanse. Arhitektura dvorca je delimično dizajnirana pod uticajem holandske arhitekture, ali neki delovi su originalni i sami predstavljaju uzore za druge dvorce. Primeri recepcija starog Egipta u dvorcu Vajkershajm su raznoliki. Lako uočljivi obelisci dekorišu konstrukciju sa štalama na ulazu u dvorski kompleks, kao i na ulazu u dvorsku baštu. Obeliska je bilo i u poslednjoj fazi takozvane ruine, koja uništena 1945., a svakako najlepši primer predstavlja oranžerija arhitekta Johana Kristijana Lutiha koja kombinuje elemente antičke Grčke i Rima, sa egipatskim obeliscima, stvarajući harmoničnu eklektičnu celinu. Dosta apstraktniji primeri su dvospratna alhemijska laboratorija vojvode

Volfganga II od Hoenloe iz 1602. koja nažalost nije sačuvana, ali je sačuvano dosta podataka o njoj, pa čak i spisak knjiga koje je vojvoda imao u svojoj alhemijskoj biblioteci i narudžbina za laboratoriju. Jedan od najvažnijih delova dvorca je renesansna sala vitezova u čijim ilustracijama scena lova na ptice i ribe na stropu takođe postoje odjeci egipatskih ideja. Još jedan, na prvi pogled ne tako očigledan primer su prikazi feniksa na krevetu princeze Elizabete Sofije, koji je izrađen 1711. Različiti primeri recepcija starog Egipta u Vajkershajmu ukazuju na širi istorijski kontekst vremena u kome su nastali.

CHAPTER 5

Saarbrücken, the city of stylistic chameleons

Abstract

Saarbrücken, the capital of the Saarland, is a city in southwestern Germany. In the turbulent history of the region of Saarland, with constant changes of supremacy between France and Germany, many buildings in the city were destroyed. However, there are numerous examples of receptions of ancient Egypt in the architecture of Saarbrücken. Most of the examples derive from the architecture of residential buildings in the city, but there are also examples in memorial and funerary contexts. The earliest objects of interest originate in the second half of the 18th century (Obelisk fountain), while the newest are to be found in contemporary funeral parlors, which use Egyptian iconography. Saarbrücken is thus an exemplar of different contexts, old as well as new, that use Egyptian themes as a source of inspiration according to the *Zeitgeist* of the time of their origin. In Saarbrücken, stylistic mimicry of the obelisks, as elements of ancient Egyptian architecture that have found their way to many architectural styles in latter centuries, is particularly visible.

1 Introduction

Saarbrücken is the largest city and the capital of the Saarland, the smallest German state (Bundesland) disregarding the city states (Berlin, Hamburg, and Bremen). It is located in the southwest of Germany, near the border with France. Saarbrücken, as it is today, was founded in 1909 by the merger of the current districts Saarbrücken, St. Johann, and Malstatt-Burbach.

The history of the Saar region was marked by constant turmoil between the French, who tended to annex it, and the Germans, who wanted to keep it in possession. As early as 1542, the German county of Lothringen was given the role of a buffer zone to defend the left side of the Rhine³⁹². In the 17th

³⁹² Walther Zimmermann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Kreise Ottweiler und Saarlouis* (Düssel-

century, Saarbrücken, in the narrower sense, was annexed by France as part of the French department *de la Sarre*. After the Peace of Rijswijk (1697)³⁹³, France had to return most of the Saar territories, so they became a part of the Holy Roman Empire in 1697³⁹⁴. Only Saarlouis remained under French rule until 1815. The whole Saar was part of the French territory again under Napoleon and was liberated by Germans in 1815³⁹⁵. The industrialization of the Saar region began in the 18th century. Economically, the Saarland was a very important region during both World Wars, due to its coal deposits and as a strategic point between France and Germany (Figure 1). During, before and after the wars, the rulers of the Saarland changed a few times, and it was also independent for a short time. According to regulations of the Versailles Treaty, people of the Saar area had three choices: keeping the status quo, rejoining with France, or Germany³⁹⁶, and in 1935 the majority voted for rejoining with Germany. After World War II Saarland was a French Protectorate. On 1 January 1957, Saarland officially joined the Federal Republic of Germany, and it retains this status today.

The history of Saarbrücken is very rich and turbulent, which also shaped the look of the city. A very large percentage of buildings in the city were destroyed in World War II³⁹⁷, and it is possible that among the ruined buildings more examples of receptions of ancient Egypt were lost. However, exemplars that are preserved today are not particularly original as similar exponents of receptions are known from other European cities. On the other hand, every city possesses a distinct context for receptions of Egypt and thus has to be analyzed as a particular phenomenon. Most of the examples of the receptions of ancient Egypt in Saarbrücken known to the author are obelisks: large memorials or smaller ones that flank the gables of many buildings. The originality of the architecture in Saarbrücken was also conditioned by building regulations that have restricted freedom of architectural expression to a certain extent, as in the case of Ludwigsburg.

dorf: L. Schwann, 1934), 8.

³⁹³ Interestingly, an obelisk with a pyramidion, on a pedestal and with a simple decoration at its base, called Needle of Rijswijk (Naald van Rijswijk) was erected in Rijswijk, Netherlands onto the place where the peace treaty was signed.

³⁹⁴ Zimmermann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Kreise Ottweiler und Saarlouis*, 9.

³⁹⁵ Zimmermann, *Die Kunstdenkmäler der Kreise Ottweiler und Saarlouis*, 11.

³⁹⁶ Statistisches Amt des Saarlandes, ed., *Geschichte und Aufgabe. Statistisches Amt des Saarlandes von 1935 bis 1985* (Saarbrücken, 1985), 11.

³⁹⁷ See “Flugzeugabstürze Zweiter Weltkrieg Saarland, Abstürze Forschungsgebiet”, accessed January 30, 2021, <http://www.flugzeugabstuerze-saarland.de/html/abstuerze.html>.



Figure 1.
Entrance to one of 17.800 bunkers of the
“Westwall” from World War II.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

2 Obelisks in Saarbrücken

Egyptian obelisks vs. European obelisks

Obelisks of various types and sizes were made from the fifth dynasty of the Old Kingdom of Egypt onwards³⁹⁸. The very first obelisks were found in the sun temples of kings Userkaf and Niuserre (5th dynasty) – Niuserre’s was more than 30 m in height³⁹⁹. The first obelisks were usually composed of several pieces of stone: with a limestone core and granite formwork⁴⁰⁰. They

³⁹⁸ Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long, and Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk. A history* (Cambridge/Massachusetts: Burndy Library, 2009), 20.

³⁹⁹ Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age* (Atlanta: Society of the Biblical Literature, 2005), 88.

⁴⁰⁰ Vera Vasiljević, *Senka Egipta* (Beograd: Dosije studio, 2016), 92.

were originally intended for the temples, but some of them also flanked the entrances of tombs. The oldest preserved obelisk made of one piece of stone and inscribed for a king, was made by king Teti⁴⁰¹.

Many obelisks were moved by Egyptians⁴⁰², and many were transported to Europe, where they became a source of inspiration for architects and various kinds of artists. Some of the obelisks that were made in Europe, like the obelisk on the cemetery of the Stumm family in Saarbrücken, had a commemorative purpose, and in their essence, they are very close to the old Egyptian archetypes. Egyptian obelisks had two main meanings: 1. religious, which was the most important and, 2. commemorative, for example on occasions of celebrating the Heb sed festival (celebrated by the king after 30 years of rule and repeated every 3 years thereafter). In the second case, the obelisk symbolizes the reunion of the sun god and king⁴⁰³. Obelisks made in Europe often have only a simple decoration, but their emblematic shape is distinctive. The obelisk became one of the favored expressions of European architecture, especially at the transition between the 19th and 20th centuries.

European obelisks often are also symbols of princely glory, and since the Renaissance they were extensively used on occasions such as parades, funerals, fireworks, and theatrical performances⁴⁰⁴. In 1895, for example, an obelisk was constructed for the festive decorations in honor of the Emperor and King Franz Joseph, who visited Zagreb (today the capital of Croatia)⁴⁰⁵. Even long before that event, in 1549, a ceremony was organized for the French King Henry II, where an obelisk standing on a rhinoceros was created as a decoration⁴⁰⁶. The top of the obelisk was crowned by the statue that symbolizes France with a drawn sword, which honored the return of the king.

⁴⁰¹ Stephen Quirke, *The Cult of Ra. Sun-worship in Ancient Egypt* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), 135.

⁴⁰² Curran et al., *Obelisk. A history*, 20.

⁴⁰³ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra. Sun-worship in Ancient Egypt*, 140.

⁴⁰⁴ Stefan Heinlein, *Wilhelm Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken und seine Vision vom Himmlischen Jerusalem. Ein Held in den Künsten des Friedens. Dem Fürsten zum 300. Geburtstag* (Heidelberg: arthistoricum.net, 2019), 217, <https://doi.org/10.11588/arthistoricum.444>.

⁴⁰⁵ Marina Bagarić, "Egypt as imaged by 19th- and 20th-century Zagreb. Buildings, monuments and street furniture", in *Egypt in Croatia: Croatian Influences with Ancient Egypt from Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Mladen Tomorad (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2020), 249–260.

⁴⁰⁶ Heinlein, *Wilhelm Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken*, 218.

Obelisk fountain

As a result of a competition, a fountain was built according to a design by Ignatius Bishop and Stengel in 1759/60⁴⁰⁷. The sculptures were created by J. Philipp Mihm and the iron grille by Sontag Bückelmann. The eight-sided middle pool is surrounded by four outer oval pools (renewed in 1880 and 1930). In the middle of the multi-carved middle pool is an obelisk. The location of the fountain has changed several times, but its original location with its point of intersection of the visual axes from the Obertor, from the Saarstraße as well as from the apartment of Prince Wilhelm-Heinrich⁴⁰⁸ is particularly interesting. After a pedestrian zone was set up in the 1970s, it was moved back to its original location.

The old nucleus of the city originates from the marketplace in the Middle Ages. In the 18th century, it received a baroque style appearance, but changes were made in the 19th and also the 20th centuries⁴⁰⁹. The architect Friedrich Joachim Stengel (1694–1787), together with Prince Wilhelm Heinrich (1718–1768), undertook a systematic modification of the city to transform it into a baroque residence⁴¹⁰. Stengel traveled with the prince to Paris and surrounding regions in 1739, and while traveling, he learned about architecture⁴¹¹. Between 1719 and 1724 the work of Bernard de Montfaucon “L’Antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures” was published in Paris in ten volumes that included representations of pyramids, sphinxes, and other Egyptian themes⁴¹². These books, for example, could have been one source of inspiration for Stengel. The 18th century in general was a time of fundamental change for the image of ancient Egypt, as the philosophical and historical sciences started to see Egypt as a phenomenon independent from

⁴⁰⁷ Josef Baulig, Hans Mildenberger, and Gabriele Scherer, *Architekturführer Saarbrücken* (Saarbrücken: Historischer Verein für die Saargegend, 1998), 180.

⁴⁰⁸ Baulig et al., *Architekturführer Saarbrücken*, 180.

⁴⁰⁹ Baulig et al., *Architekturführer Saarbrücken*, 180.

⁴¹⁰ “Stengel, Friedrich Joachim”, *Künstlerlexikon*, Institut für aktuelle Kunst im Saarland, last modified May 28, 2019, <http://institut-aktuelle-kunst.de/kuenstlerlexikon/stengel-friedrich-joachim>.

⁴¹¹ “Stengel, Friedrich Joachim”, *Künstlerlexikon*, Institut für aktuelle Kunst im Saarland, last modified May 28, 2019, <http://institut-aktuelle-kunst.de/kuenstlerlexikon/stengel-friedrich-joachim>.

⁴¹² James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival. Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2005), 141.

the Bible⁴¹³. The result was an increased interest in Egypt, and receptions that were the product of that a newly developed curiosity were more numerous.

Obelisks on the facades

Mainzer Straße

The free development of architectural styles in Saarbrücken was only possible in profane architecture, since the major confessions (Protestant and Roman-Catholic) had strictly determined styles of their sacral buildings in the 19th century⁴¹⁴. In 1896 an exhibition called “Kairo in Berlin” took place, with temples and a pyramid 30 m in height⁴¹⁵. The exhibition might have been a source of inspiration for contemporary German architects.



Figure 2.
Obelisks on the building in Mainzer Str. 45.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

⁴¹³ Florian Ebeling, “Ägyptische Freimaurerei zwischen Aufklärung und Romantik”, in *O Isis und Osiris – Ägyptens Mysterien und die Freimaurerei*, ed. Florian Ebeling and Christian E. Loeben (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf GmbH, 2017), 29–123.

⁴¹⁴ Edith Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland* (Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker Druckerei und Verlag, 1981), 9.

⁴¹⁵ Maxi Schreiber, *Altägyptische Architektur und ihre Rezeption in der Moderne. Architektur in Deutschland 1900–1930* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2018), 23.



Figure 3.
Obelisk on the building in Mainzer Str.
102.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Bricks dominate the facade of the building in Mainzer Str. 45 in Saarbrücken (Figure 2). Red bricks are commonplace of brick Gothic style (Backsteingotik) architecture in northern Germany from the 12th century onwards. They were used as a solution for deficiencies in building materials but then were also spread to other parts of Germany. Bricks were usually produced in red, ochre-yellow, or rarely in dark-green or turquoise color. Starting from the 19th century they were used unplastered for the faces of facades⁴¹⁶. A brick was usually combined with sandstone or plaster on facades⁴¹⁷. One roof window on the building in Mainzer Str. 45 has a small gable with three yellow obelisks. The same yellow plaster was chosen for the window frames on the lower two floors.

The gable of the white three-storied building in Mainzer Str. 102 is also decorated with an obelisk (Figure 3).

The facades of the ground level of the two-storied building in Mainzer Str. 107 were made of red sandstone, which was also used for the window frames in the upper stores. The rest of the facade, made of ochre-yellow bricks, provides an effective contrast with the red elements. The roof windows have pointed pediments; the first of them is crowned with a small obelisk on a pedestal (Figure 4). Sandstone was the preferred material for the production of architectural sculptures, and among them obelisks. It was the most used, although it was the most precious kind of stone in Saarland. Sandstone was utilized in Elsaß-Lothringen, Pfalz, and Saarland⁴¹⁸.

⁴¹⁶ Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 99.

⁴¹⁷ Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 99.

⁴¹⁸ Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 98.



Figure 4.
Obelisk on the building in Mainzer Str.
107.

Photo by S. and T. Berger



Figure 5.
Obelisk on the top of the building in
Cecilienstraße 16.

Photo by S. and T. Berger

Cecilienstraße 16

The residential and commercial building in Cecilienstraße 16 was built in 1894 by Josef Stürmer. It bonds yellow bricks with a colored (reddish) sandstone – a typical combination for the Saarland⁴¹⁹. An obelisk made of red sandstone on the top of a window can be divided into three parts: the lower part with a three-dimensional rectangular ornament, the body of the obelisk with small ornaments, and the pyramidion (Figure 5). The obelisk is situated on a half-circle field with a schematized floral ornament, just like in the case of the gate of the stables at Weikersheim castle. All garret windows have pyramid-shaped roofs with a sphere on the peak.

⁴¹⁹ Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 100.

Nassauerstraße 10

The residential house in Nassauerstraße 10 has two gables with obelisks at their tops. This neo-renaissance building was built in 1893 by the plans of the architect Heinrich Güth. Güth's most important project was the Johannes Church in neo-gothic style⁴²⁰ that was chosen in a Germany-wide competition.

Nauwieserstraße 38a/38b

The residential houses in Nauwieserstraße 38a/38b were built by Albert Pitz in 1897. Each of these houses has three garret windows, the ones on the edges are double windows with obelisks on their top. The obelisks have two volute ornaments at their bases. Above the double windows are ornaments in the form of volutes, too, and a cartouche with the year of origin. The remaining four windows – two on each building – have pyramid-shaped roofs with small spheres on them. The ground floor show windows and the pediments of the windows on the first and second floor are decorated with red sandstone, the same material that was used for the obelisks. The facade was made of ochre-yellow bricks with two rows of red bricks on the first and the second floor.

Paul-Marien-Straße 4

This residential building and warehouse was built in 1899 by Heinrich Maurer. One of the roof windows is crowned with four obelisks, two on each side of the window.

Statistical Office of the Saarland

The Statistical Office of the Saarland (Statistisches Amt des Saarlandes) in Saarbrücken is responsible for generating official statistics in Germany. In its history from 1920 onwards, this institution has changed its residence many times, and sometimes different sections were in different buildings⁴²¹.

⁴²⁰ Baulig et al., *Architekturführer Saarbrücken*, 187.

⁴²¹ Statistisches Amt des Saarlandes, *Geschichte und Aufgabe*, 8–33.

Today the residence of the Statistical Office of the Saarland is in Virchowstraße 7 (Figure 6).



Figure 6.
Statistical office of Saarland, a detail.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Stylistically, this building synthesizes Jugendstil and German neo-Renaissance. The inclusion of elements of historical styles in Jugendstil architecture is commonplace – although at first glance it might seem paradoxical, as Jugendstil was determined by the philosophy of breaking with the old architectural styles and forming a new vocabulary of architectural expression. This results in the search for one national style, which necessitated some elements connected by common historical roots being included in the new style⁴²².

The windows divide the facades horizontally, while the *Avant-corps* with triangular gables determine the vertical rhythm of the building. Facades are plastered and white, contrasting the red frames of the windows and the edges of the Dutch gables (*Volutengiebel*) crowned with obelisks, that are made of red sand-

stone. The red Saar sandstone, also known as Britter sandstone, was broken in Britten in the northern part of the Saarland. Corner lesenes are also made of red sandstone and emphasize the edges of a building in opposition to clear surfaces of the facade. Some of the doors are located between a pylon-like obliquely lower part of the facade, that resembles ancient Egyptian paragons. Pylon-like parts and the regular rhythm of windows and *Avant-corps* give a monumental impression to the building, although there are much better examples of using monumentality as an Egyptian feature in the architectural styles of past centuries. Monumentality was a very common feature in examples of receptions of Egyptian architecture in modernity and its industrial buildings. There are numerous exemplars of monumental buildings

⁴²² Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 125.

like the central station in Stuttgart or the powder factory in Rottweil, both in Southern Germany. Stone or other similar solid materials (as opposed to glass and iron), a common feature within Egyptian monumental works, was often used in the construction process of such buildings. However, this is not the case with the Statistical Office of the Saarland. Plenty of its windows are actually in opposition to the aesthetics of Egyptian monumental buildings, that have windows mostly inside. Nevertheless, certain elements, pylons and obelisks, make a clear reference to the source of the ideas in the design of the Statistical Office of the Saarland.

The design of the building, where the Statistical Office resides, is in line with the idea of an Egyptian bureaucratic apparatus and the precision with which Egyptian scribes recorded information of importance to the state. This symbolism could also be an important factor for choosing Egyptian references in the design of the building.

Memorials and grave markers

“This complex of shared symbols might be called ‘cultural formation’, and when this has been established and, above all, passed on, it corresponds to a collective identity. The cultural formation, then, is the medium through which collective identity is created and preserved down through the generations.”

Jan Assmann⁴²³

Cemetery of the Stumm Family

Carl Ferdinand Stumm (1836–1901) was a Prussian mining industrialist and politician. He was one of the most influential and richest people in the German Reich. His properties were called the “Kingdom of Stumm”⁴²⁴. Stumm’s contribution to the economy was the introduction of large-scale industrial technology in the steel industry⁴²⁵.

The Stumm family, up to the father of Carl Ferdinand Stumm, had a burial site in Neunkirchen. On the Halberg, Carl Ferdinand Stumm and his family had a small private cemetery. The cemetery is located in the woods,

⁴²³ Jan Assmann, *Cultural memory and early civilization. Writing, remembrance and political imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 120.

⁴²⁴ Hans-Joachim Kühn, *“Freiheit, Brot, Gerechtigkeit!”: die Arbeiterbewegung an der Saar* (Saarbrücken: Stiftung Demokratie Saarland, 2007), 18.

⁴²⁵ Kühn, *“Freiheit, Brot, Gerechtigkeit!”: die Arbeiterbewegung an der Saar*, 18.

and the obelisk made of red syenite in its central part looks almost surreal in its surroundings (Figure 7). The cemetery was renovated in 2009. Carl Ferdinand Stumm, his wife Ida Charlotte Stumm, and their children are buried there. Another example of the grave-mark in the form of the obelisk erected for an industrialist is the iron obelisk of John “Iron-Mad” Wilkinson (1728-1808) in Lindale, England⁴²⁶.

The front side of the obelisk bears the inscription: “Joh 14.19 Ich lebe und Ihr sollt auch leben” (“I live and you should live, too”). This sentence could be understood as an echo of Egyptian ideas of the afterlife as a continuation of the earthly life. As noted by Stephen Quirke, the meaning of obelisk in the context of the graveyards of the Western world is close to the original idea of catching the first sun-beams, evoking regeneration⁴²⁷.

Neue Bremm camp

Camp Neue Bremm was established in the time of the National Socialist dictatorship (in 1943) by the Gestapo⁴²⁸. In January 1947 an obelisk was erected at the place of the camp⁴²⁹. The memorial was designed by French architect and city planner



Figure 7.
Obelisk at the Stumm family private cemetery,
Photo by S. and T. Berger

⁴²⁶ See “Iron Age Monument: The Wilkinson Obelisk, Lindale, Cumbria”, *The Folly Flâneuse*, posted October 30, 2020, <https://thefollyflaneuse.com/iron-age-monument-the-wilkinson-obelisk-lindale-cumbria/>.

⁴²⁷ Quirke, *The Cult of Ra. Sun-worship in Ancient Egypt*, 211.

⁴²⁸ Oranna Dimmig, “Saarbrücken, Sive, Poppensieker et al., Gedenkstätte Gestapo-Lager Neue Bremm”, last modified October 30, 2017, <http://institut-aktuelle-kunst.de/kunstlexikon/saarbruecken-sive-poppensieker-et-al-gedenkstaette-gestapo-lager-neue-bremm-1290>.

⁴²⁹ Armin Flender, *Öffentliche Erinnerungskultur im Saarland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1998), 112.

André Sive⁴³⁰. It is a narrow obelisk 30 m in height made of reinforced concrete, with the inscription “In Memoriam 1943–1945”. According to some interpretations, the monument has the form of a bayonet that symbolizes French resistance to the Germans and that it is a marker stone that serves as a barrier to new invasions⁴³¹. In November 1947 a war memorial was presented to the public. At the ceremony former deported French, civil and military management were present, but the citizens of Saarbrücken were excluded⁴³². A commemorative plate with an inscription only written in French was also presented as part of the memorial site. Interestingly, the plate with an inscription in German was only added in the 1980s⁴³³. Such a constellation points to the fact that this memorial was made by the French and only intended for the French public, and not for Germans. A similar example is notable at the cemetery in Subotica city, in Serbia, where obelisk-shaped gravestones for 34 unknown soldiers of the Red Army with a Russian inscription are present⁴³⁴ (see Chapter 1).

France was enchanted by obelisks even before the first ancient Egyptian obelisk from the Luxor temple arrived there on December 23, 1833⁴³⁵. It is also well known that obelisks played a very important role in the history of understanding the hieroglyphs, in which France made a significant contribution. The memorial on the place of the camp Neue Bremm can also be understood as a part of French receptions of ancient Egypt.

French architect André Sive, who constructed the obelisk, was a student of Auguste Perret, who made the first Art Deco building in Paris, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. As Art Deco artists used Egyptian themes in their work, there is a possibility that Sive was influenced by the work and tastes of his professor. There are other examples of memorials in the form of obelisks at places of former camps or concentration camps, like in Sachsenhausen or Bergen-Belsen. Understandably, an obelisk is a suitable symbol for the

⁴³⁰ Burkhard Jellonnek, “Die Hölle von Saarbrücken”. *Geschichte des Gestapo-Lagers Neue Bremm an der deutsch-französischen Grenze* (Saarbrücken: Schriftenreihe der Landeszentrale für politische Bildung des Saarlandes 1), 30, http://www.erinnert-euch.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Erinnerteuch/RV_Saarbruecken/PDF/Broschuere_NeueBremm_20-3-08.pdf.

⁴³¹ Dimming, “Saarbrücken, Sive, Poppensieker et al.”.

⁴³² Flender, *Öffentliche Erinnerungskultur im Saarland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 112.

⁴³³ Flender, *Öffentliche Erinnerungskultur im Saarland nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, 113–114.

⁴³⁴ Виолета Н. Обреновић, *Српска меморијална архитектура 1918–1955* (Докторска дисертација, Универзитет у Београду, Филозофски факултет, Одељење за историју уметности, Београд, 2013), 39.

⁴³⁵ Curran et al., *Obelisk. A history*, 246.

places connected with events in history that should never be forgotten: they are tall and visible from far away – they force attention. Sive was an architect of modernity, and his choice of material for the memorial is a product of the time in which he made the design for the Neue Bremm memorial.

Obelisk at Halberg Palace

Prince Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken spent his early years in Monplaisir Palace with his mother, princess Wilhelmine. The princely family fled from the French occupation, and Monplaisir was destroyed in 1793 by French troops. In 1976, the remains of Prince Heinrich were transferred from Cadolzburg, where he died and was buried, to the Halberg, following his will. Halberg Palace was built in 1883 in Gothic style, which spread in the Saarland in the last decade of the 19th century⁴³⁶ (Figure 8).



Figure 8.
Halberg Palace.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

⁴³⁶ Ruser, *Jugendstil-Architektur im Saarland*, 9.



Figure 9.
Obelisk and the grave-slab of the Prince
Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken.
Photo by S. and T. Berger

Prince Heinrich von Nassau-Saarbrücken was buried under the obelisk (Figure 9) at Halberg Palace. On the stone slab, in front of the memorial, the following inscription was carved:

“Heinrich Fürst Zu Nassau / Graf zu Saarbrücken / und Saarwerden / Herr zu Lahr / Wiesbaden und Idstein / (1768–1797) / Überführung / Cadolzburg-Saarbrücken / 7 Juli 1976 / Endgültige Beisetzung / 27 November 1976”.

(“Heinrich Prince of Nassau / Count of Saarbrücken / and Saarwerden / Lord of Lahr / Wiesbaden and Idstein / (1768–1797) / transfer / Cadolzburg-Saarbrücken / 7 July 1976 / final burial / 27 November 1976”).

The obelisk on a pedestal is in the shape of a pyramid with steep sides and made of five pieces of stone. The coat of arms of the principality Nassau-Saarbrücken is on the stone in the middle of the obelisk. Under the medallion with the coat of arms, the following golden letters are carved:

“Hier ruhet / die Asche des / Fürsten Heinrich / zu Nassau / dessen / einziger Wunsch war / das Wohl / seiner Untergebenen / befördern / zu können”.

(“Here rest / the ashes of / Prince Heinrich / of Nassau / whose / only wish was / to be able / to promote / the well-being / of his subordinates”).

3 Funeral parlors

The linking of ancient Egypt with death has played a great role in the development of new cemeteries in Europe and America. These cemeteries appeared at the beginning of the 19th century as a part of reforms caused

by the French Revolution⁴³⁷. The Père-Lachaise cemetery in Paris originates from the time of Napoleon. It was a model for other cemeteries as publications about this cemetery became available and popular⁴³⁸. Neo-classical and Egyptianizing elements dominated this cemetery and, perhaps, made ancient Egyptian motifs even more connected with modern funerary contexts. Egyptology itself probably contributed to this relation, as most of the excavations and new pieces of information about Egypt were from tombs and cemeteries. For the unscholarly public, a picture about Egypt as a civilization interested only in death and the afterlife was a product of Egyptological research.



Figure 10.
Display windows of the “Horus funerals” company.
Photo by S. and T. Berger.

This stereotype became commonplace so that the exploitation of Egyptian themes in contemporary funerary contexts is not unusual.

“Horus Bestattungen” (“Horus funerals”; a funeral parlor) in Paul-Marien-Straße 10 has large depictions of Horus with a pschent (a red and white double crown) in their show windows, which symbolizes the rule over the

⁴³⁷ Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 286–287.

⁴³⁸ Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 290.

whole of Egypt (Figure 10). Horus is depicted as a man with a falcon head, with a scepter in his right hand and an ankh in his left. They also display a small black and gold figure of Anubis and a marble pyramid in their show window. There are other types of decoration as well, like the picture of a beach on a sunny day and flowers, that all point to a positive image about the afterlife, which resembles old Egyptian notions.

The company Hubert Laubach Bestattungen GmbH (another funeral home) offers a burial in a “Pyramid of Cheops”, among other types of burials, as their catalog on their website explains⁴³⁹. This kind of step pyramid for urns already exists at the cemetery of Riegelsberg and the Saarbrücken main cemetery. The description on their website explains that the origins of western Christianity can be traced back to Middle Eastern civilizations that left impressive pyramids.

4 Conclusion

Saarbrücken is not among the most important cities on the map of receptions of ancient Egypt like Karlsruhe and Schwetzingen in Baden-Württemberg, or like Berlin, London and Paris, but it still offers a great number of examples. The pyramid in the city-center of Karlsruhe has become a symbol of the city. The Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, London, was not the main symbol of London before it was demolished in 1905, but it was surely one of the landmarks of the city. The fact is that there are numerous other cities that have lots of examples of receptions, although they are in most cases not impressive or monumental, but rather more subtle. Saarbrücken is not a city that is well known for its receptions of Egypt, although, like many cities, it has a rich heritage in that context.

The most common Egyptian element used in Saarbrücken is the obelisk. Egyptian sphinxes, pyramids and pylons are often easily recognizable as Egyptian in their origin, as opposed to obelisks that have become more universal. Stylistic mimicry of the obelisk, as a sign of ancient Egyptian architecture that was often translated into stylistic languages of later epochs, is notable in Saarbrücken. Obelisks in Saarbrücken are to be found camouflaged in Baroque contexts (like the obelisk fountain), Neo-Renaissance/Jugendstil (e.g. the Statistical Office of Saarland) and modernity (Neue Bremm camp). It is fascinating that the memorial for the concentration camp of World War

⁴³⁹ “Feuerbestattung, Friedhof: Cheops-Pyramide”, Bestattungsarten, Hubert Laubach Bestattungen GmbH, accessed January 30, 2021, <https://www.laubach-bestattungen.de/index.php?id=31>.

II has something in common with memorials dedicated to one industrialist and one prince and this fact illustrates the multiplicity of the symbolism of the obelisk.

Rezime

Sarbrücken, grad stilskih kameleona

Sarbrücken je glavni grad pokrajine Sarland u jugo-zapadnoj Nemačkoj, na granici sa Francuskom. Sarland je najmanja od šesnaest nemačkih pokrajina (izuzev pokrajina-gradova). Istorija ove pokrajine je prilično turbulentna, u stalnom previranju između Francuske i Nemačke, tako da je tek od referenduma 1957 ona trajno pripala Nemačkoj.

Sarbrücken obiluje obeliscima. Najstariji je konstruisan u okviru fontane, koju su projektovali Fridrih Joakim Stengel (1694–1787) i Ignatius Bishop (1759–1960). Ujedno je to i primer stilske mimikrije obeliska koji je preveden na jezik barokne arhitekture. Brojni su primeri obeliska koji u vidu arhitektonske plastike krase stambene zgrade u Sarbrückenu. Primer inkorporacije obeliska u arhitekturu moderne je vidljiv u koncentracionom logoru Novi Brem. Taj obelisk je podignut 1947, a konstruisao ga je francuski arhitekta Andre Sive. Interesantno je da je ovaj spomenik nosio natpis samo na francuskom jeziku sve do osamdesetih godina, kada je dobio i prevod na nemački jezik, što implicira da je „publika” kojoj je spomenik u prvom redu namenjen francuska, a ne nemačka. Analogan primer je poznat sa groblja u Subotici gde su sahranjeni nepoznati ruski vojnici, sa natpisom isključivo na ruskom jeziku.

Na Halbergu se nalazi malo privatno groblje porodice Štum, gde je sahranjen industrijalac Ferdinand Štum i njegova porodica. U centru groblja se nalazi crveni obelisk. Mošti princa Hajnriha od Nasaua (1768–1797) su 1976 prenešene i sahranjene ispod obeliska kod dvorca Halberg. Zgrada Zavoda za statistiku, izgrađena u kombinaciji jugendstila i neorenesanse takođe nosi elemente Egipatske arhitekture kakvi su piloni i obelisci. Na tom primeru se vidi kako su obelisci inkorporirani u jugendstil i neorenesansu. Fascinantna je činjenica da spomenik na mestu koncentracionog logora iz II Svetskog rata ima nešto zajedničko sa spomenicima izgrađenim u čast jendom princu i jednom industrijalcu.

Najnoviji primeri recepcije Egipta u Sarbrückenu se odnose na pogrebna preduzeća koja koriste egipatsku ikonografiju i simboliku.

CHAPTER 6

Stylistic mimicry and receptions: notes on the theoretical approach

As mentioned in the introduction, the main goal of this book was not to present a representative choice of examples of receptions of ancient Egypt, but rather to include some fresh insights into the paradigm, for which new examples were used. The key concept for understanding the persistence of receptions of ancient Egypt, among them the already well-known mnemo-history, is so-called stylistic mimicry. In this part of the book, not all possible aspects of receptions will be discussed; rather, it will mostly rely on architectural evidence, since most objects included in this case study are related to it. Nevertheless, the general notes given could also be used for other domains where receptions are to be found.

1 Stylistic mimicry and the potential of adaptation/ transformation

Works of art made in an Egyptianizing style can (and frequently do) preserve references to meanings contained in their paragons, but they are also transformed into new creations through their new contexts and social climates.⁴⁴⁰ The most advanced transformative potential can occur in objects that are inspired by Egyptian themes, that are both masterfully adjusted to the contemporary context of the artist, and whose “Egyptianess” is so latent that most of the public that comes in contact with it does not recognize its origins at first glance. These transcultural chameleons are masters of stylistic mimicry. They are adapted to the artistic tendencies of the time in which they were created, to a degree that their origins are not easily definable and

⁴⁴⁰ Ann C. Gunter, “Aegyptiaca. Investigating style and agency in the Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean”, in *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style and agency*, ed. Miguel John Versluys (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 71–86.

sometimes may even be perceived as part of an authentic contemporary stylistic diapason.

Stylistic mimicry has to be understood as a feature of artefacts that can be more or less pronounced. To illustrate the approach with a few general examples, sphinxes, pyramids and obelisks will be used. A sphinx has a relatively low potential for stylistic mimicry. It can be found in ancient Greece, but also in baroque style (like the sphinxes at the park at Schwetzingen Palace, Germany),⁴⁴¹ in historicism (like the sphinx in Zadar, Croatia, that was built in 1918), or as a relatively contemporary exemplar (like the sphinx at the Luxor hotel in Las Vegas, that was built in the last decade of the 20th century). The sphinx can be (and was) incorporated into styles of different epochs, but it still resembles its origins. The potential of adaptation of a sphinx is thus smaller than the potential of a pyramid, or to an even greater extent, an obelisk.

Sphinx	Pyramid	Obelisk
Modest potential of transformation	Middle-range potential of transformation	Large potential of transformation
High specialization	Medium specialization	Low specialization
Keeps much of its original ideas	Can be associated with its original ideas	Camouflaged to resemble the ideas of its new surroundings
Modest stylistic mimicry	Advanced stylistic mimicry	Master of stylistic mimicry

Table 1. Examples of stylistic mimicry and their transformative potential

A pyramid has a middle-range stylistic mimicry potential. As shown in this case study, it was equally successfully incorporated in architectural languages from ancient Rome (e.g. the Cestius pyramid) up until Jože Plečnik's

⁴⁴¹ See Kathrin Brauer, Julia Habich, and Anke Moch, "Obelisk und Sphingen im Schlosspark von Schwetzingen" in *Pyramide, Sphinx und Obelisk. Ägyptische Motive in Karlsruhe und am Oberrhein*, ed. Sabine Albersmeier and Anna Hofmann (Karlsruhe: Badisches Landesmuseum, 2002), 15–18.

creations in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in the 20th century. Indeed, the first association that comes to mind while thinking of a pyramid is often ancient Egypt, but to a lesser extent than is the case with a sphinx. Although seen in a positivistic manner, an analogy for that mechanism can be derived from evolutionary biology. Different species have diverse levels of specialization to a specific habitat from which their degree of flexibility is dependent upon. Species that are rather adapted to a specific habitat have a smaller chance of survival, in the case of environmental change, than less specifically adapted species. The same logic can be used for artefacts, as a habitat can, figuratively, be seen as a dominant style in a specific point on a time/space schema. On the one hand, architectural elements or sculptures with a high level of specialization, inherited through their original style, are more easily recognized in their original context; on the other hand, they are less flexible in the case of a change of style that gives them a context. Sphinxes can be thought of as very specific in their appearance and less flexible. Although they show some potential of adapting their features to a new environment, namely architectural style, they still preserve much of their associations from their original context. Pyramids are middle-range examples, as they show more flexibility and compatibility with new environments. To illustrate that point, it is easier to imagine a pyramid as part of the architecture of Brutalism, for instance, than a sphinx. A pyramid made of concrete without ornaments and highly stylized is more easily camouflaged than a sphinx.

One of the best examples of stylistic mimicry is the transformative power of the obelisk. From objects dedicated to the sun-god in early Egyptian temples to discrete decorations on the gables of the residencies in European cities at the turn of the 20th century, obelisks evolved from a specific object, important for one society, and limited to use within a particular context (i.e. religion), to a universal letter in the architectural alphabet of contemporary global society. The most typical feature of Egyptian obelisks was the inscription on them, which is highly characteristic and makes a real or a wished identity of an obelisk instantly recognizable. When the inscription is removed from an obelisk, it becomes universal and compatible with every new context. As shown with examples in this case study, an obelisk can be found in eclectic works in historicist, baroque, neo-Renaissance, and Jugendstil styles, up to modernity. The obelisk has found its place within many different styles, and sometimes even within architectural styles with antagonistic philosophies, like Art Nouveau, whose idea of “secession”, which was comprehended by their proponents as to break with older historical styles, was

meant to be directly opposite to the historicized revival styles.⁴⁴² There are also other architectural styles in which an obelisk can be incorporated or, to put it in another way, there is no architectural style where an obelisk cannot be included in some way. That fact illustrates the advanced level of stylistic mimicry of the obelisk. A similar master of stylistic mimicry is the column. The element which indicates the style of the column is the capital. When the capital is removed, the shaft can be easily incorporated in new contexts.

By considering the potential of stylistic adaptation of a given object, it is possible to better understand why some elements of ancient Egyptian style are more utilized than others, and how some of them became part of an universal architectural language, while others still need a “good translator” to really become part of their new context. A subsequent question, following the given examples, is why some architectonical/sculptural elements (i.e. in our case) are more likely to be part of new receptions? And, why is the potential of stylistic mimicry variable?

What grants objects the power to act (i.e. *agency*) are identities. Identities should be viewed as dynamic processes and not as passive characteristics (as defined by essentialism). For example, the status and identity embodied in the crown (*agent*) of the Queen of England leads to different potentials of possible interactions between the owner (the Queen) and her subordinates and people who are not part of English society. That means that the degree of interaction depends on the belonging or non-belonging to a collective identity defined by *agents*. Identities can be considered as important features of representatives of receptions of Egypt, because they are connected with the adaptive potential of the objects. Obelisks are more capable of adapting to new environments and therefore to assume new identities, which leads to a different kind of agency than, for example sphinxes. The reason for that is, that an obelisk (without hieroglyphs) is a less specifically bearer of the “Egyptian style” than sphinxes, or just a nemes headdress as part of an ornamentation of sphinxes, and other Egyptian sculptures. External representations are publicly visible signs, and they are to be differentiated from mental or internal representations that are defined by a representational content or belief about those signs.⁴⁴³ Representational content in mental maps of viewers of receptions of ancient Egypt is, in that sense, more specific in the case of a sphinx than in the case of an obelisk.

⁴⁴² Despite the wish of “divorce” with all older styles, Jugendstil/Art Nouveau itself still has references to historical styles to a certain extent.

⁴⁴³ Lambros Malafouris, *How things shape the mind. A theory of material engagement* (Cambridge, London: The MIT Press, 2013), 26.

Style is kind of “a gateway to the past”,⁴⁴⁴ because formal and visual qualities of a given style show how past societies perceived themselves as well as older or contemporary “others“. As proposed by Bussels and van Oostveldt, it is not plausible to speak of “the” Egyptian style, because the time span in which Egyptian art was created is too long to subsume all the variations under one stylistic visual system. On the other hand, “an” Egyptian style is indeed easily recognizable for the broader public to a certain extent. Yet, from the moment where stylistic mimicry transforms the visual aspect of the object, the ease in attributing an Egyptian style to an object is no longer present.

2 Receptions vs. reception

As already discussed in Chapter I “Mnemohistories and Receptions of ancient Egypt in Serbia”, it is more reasonable to address the phenomenon as receptions than as just a reception of ancient Egypt, since the plural form emphasizes the scope of the changeable nature of receptions. Chapter II “Receptions of Ancient Egypt, focusing on the works of sculptor Ivan Meštrović and architect Jože Plečnik”, particularly well illustrates how a similar context may still lead to very different approaches to receptions. At first glance, Plečnik’s repeated use of the pyramid and the obelisk recalls ancient Egypt more obviously than Meštrović’s sculptural forms. However, Plečnik’s inspirations were mostly classical in their origins, while for Meštrović Egypt was a more immediate source of inspiration. This fact drastically changes the understanding of the receptions of these two artists. Even finer dissimilarities might be detected by a detailed analysis of the phases within the careers of both artists, which could be a subject of future study.

The perception as well as the factual basis for receptions are fluid for another reason: researchers, who are trying to understand receptions have different biases, live in differing contexts and are influenced by diverse mnemohistories. In the complex field of the reception studies of ancient Egypt no constant values exist; every single part of the formula must be investigated and still, that will not lead to one specific conclusion.

⁴⁴⁴ Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt, “Egypt and/as style”, in *Beyond Egyptomania. Objects, style and agency*, ed. Miguel John Versluys (Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2020), 219–224.

3 First-hand receptions or receptions of receptions?

Many scholars have seen their task in distinguishing Egyptianizing from Egyptian objects, although it wasn't always simple and sometimes not even possible to separate the two categories.⁴⁴⁵ In the case of Greek receptions of ancient Egypt, the feasibility of a distinction may be of importance, yet for receptions in modernity it seems that it is of no concern, as plagiates are more easily detectable. On the other hand, in modernity (as in earlier epochs as well) the concern is whether a direct reception of an Egyptian style took place or a reception of other receptions of an Egyptian style. If the latter applies, it can be even harder to distinguish between "original" and "imitation" of receptions, although the advantage is that there is a broader range of available literature and other evidence at hand that can be used to explore the context of receptions in modern times. In both cases, however, a change of perspective might be helpful: instead of focusing on a creation so as to decide whether a particular case is "genuine" or an "imitation", the main focus of attention should rather be the intention of the creator. The intention in the case of receptions can be either to create a stylistic mimicry, like an object that recalls Egyptian style and is incorporated into a contemporary style vocabulary, or to create a reference to some other reception of Egyptian style. In the process of understanding the intentions of the creator of receptions, the actual context plays an important role.

The context of receptions can be compared with the context of archaeological finds. Without any context artefacts have no meaning, or at least are of no great importance for scholars. Without the exact place of discovery, the conditions in which the artefact was found and the broader picture of the archaeological site, an object cannot be precisely validated by archaeological science. To give an example: we may find a Roman red gloss *terra sigillata* vessel without any context. In this case it might be possible to date the vessel to somewhere between the 1st century BC to the late 2nd century AD, that it was produced in Italy, and maybe even in which pottery workshop it was produced. Now imagine that the very same vessel had been found in 1922 in the tomb of Tuthankamun. It is not hard to envision that we'd have to rewrite history. The same applies to receptions of ancient Egypt, since the context that the product of the receptions is embedded in also has a huge influence

⁴⁴⁵ Gunter, "Aegyptiaca. Investigating style and agency in the Iron Age Eastern Mediterranean", 71–86.

on its meaning. It isn't enough if, e.g., we have the name of an architect and a modern building, equipped with pylons and obelisks, designed by him. Further important details might be his/her place of education and his/her professors, along with details as to whose work could have been a source of inspiration. Additionally, it might be crucial to know if he/she has visited Egypt himself/herself or has just seen an assemblage of Egyptian art from Egypt. When all the necessary information is finally gathered, only then we will be able to understand the possible motivation of the architect to create a work with Egyptian references. Considering an artefact's visual characteristics, its historical context must be necessarily analyzed as part of the research. This also applies to cases in which a visual aspect has not changed through time, since a broader context might be responsible for drastic differences in receptions.⁴⁴⁶ It is very important to recognize the context of every act of reception, the motivations and biographical details from lives of artists or purchasers of works inspired with ancient Egypt. One of the more notable examples that illustrates the importance of context is painter Paul Klee, who traveled to North Africa (including Egypt). His trip was specifically about the southern French-oriental origins of his mother since he only partially knew about her roots. That's why he, in a manner of speaking, was already in Egypt "with his spirit", even before his travels really led him there.⁴⁴⁷ This thread was very significant for Klee's work, which can be seen in his works inspired by Egyptian themes that were made before his journey to Egypt (e.g. "Mount Niesen - Egyptian night", 1915).

Many Renaissance artists mixed Egyptian objects and Egyptianizing products of ancient Rome in their drawings, which resulted in modern scholars not being able to detect the origin of the objects presented in those studies.⁴⁴⁸ One can assume that the aesthetic qualities of the depicted objects were of greater relevance for the viewers than their historical context and origin. This observation applies especially to obelisks: their origin and original meaning were of no importance for many of the architects in the 19th and 20th centuries who were incorporating them into their architectural plans.

⁴⁴⁶ Bussels and van Oostveldt, "Egypt and/as style", 219–224.

⁴⁴⁷ Frank Zöllner, "Paul Klees Reisen, Oswald Spengler und die Suche nach dem Ur-Symbol", in *Exotisch, Weisheitlich und Uralt. Europäische Konstruktionen Altägyptens*, ed. Thomas Glück and Ludwig Morenz (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 2007), 281–302.

⁴⁴⁸ Sabine Albersmeier, "Einführung", in *Pyramide, Sphinx und Obelisk. Ägyptische Motive in Karlsruhe und am Oberrhein*, ed. Sabine Albersmeier and Anna Hofmann (Karlsruhe: Badisches Landesmuseum, 2002), 9–10.

The Portugese vessel San Jago, that brought china into the homes of the Netherlands and at the same time the “Far East”, can be considered as an excellent example of material culture as a protagonist and catalyst of cultural change. Thereby it made the alien Chinese culture, now on the tables of the broader population, a part of everyday life.⁴⁴⁹ This illustrative example could be transferred to the obelisk, since a huge body of evidence of its presence in European architecture exists. After the period of Roman aspirations to acquire ancient Egyptian obelisks and transport them as well as erect them in their cities, there is a gap until the early modern period. A new contest between several Western European countries and the U.S.A. arose at that time, as the parties involved saw the possession of obelisks as a matter of prestige and a symbol of power. These events led to a process that resulted in Egyptian obelisks being part of everyday life, usually in the bigger cities; hence, they have influenced how people perceive place in the history of their nation and other parts of the Western world. Another consequence is that the obelisk became a part of everyone’s horizon of expectations, therefore its appearance in a lot of architectural works is not a surprise. Original Egyptian obelisks, like people with another cultural background that emigrate to a foreign country (and which don’t seem to be compatible at first), might have been perceived as different (i.e. alien) at the beginning. But like people, objects are also capable of transformation and assimilation, in other words, to adapt to new cultural contexts. Immigrants learn the language and the system of their new home, and objects arouse attention and curiosity, which makes people want to learn more about them. If the city we live in houses one or several obelisks for example, it might make us curious about similar exemplars or even their place of origin. The visibility of objects make them cultural actors in their cultural surroundings.

During the Victorian era in Great Britain there was a flourishing phase of historical paintings. The well-established painters Alma-Tadema, Poynter and Long were especially noted for their archaeological genre paintings. They were interested in representing details of the everyday life, habits and rituals of ancient Egypt,⁴⁵⁰ and were very well acquainted with archaeological details that were known in their time. The second half of the 19th century was marked by the expansion of archaeological explorations in Egypt, and

⁴⁴⁹ Miguel John Versluys, “Exploring Aegyptiaca and their material agency throughout global history”, *Aegyptiaca* 1 (2017): 122–144.

⁴⁵⁰ Stephanie Moser, *Painting antiquity. Ancient Egypt in the art of Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Edward Poynter and Edwin Long* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 12.

its great presence in the media. As Moser notes, paintings of these artists, that were inspired by ancient Egypt, were a prominent source of learning about Egypt at their time; hence, the achievement of these artists was that the image of Egypt was no longer exotic and unfamiliar.⁴⁵¹ In a sense, it became a part of everybody's past. The visibility via diverse "media", from arts to the sciences, has played a key role in the process by which ancient Egypt has become a unique place in the perception of contemporary identities.

⁴⁵¹ Moser, *Painting antiquity*, 22.

REVIEWS

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The receptions of the ancient world, including ancient Egypt, and the constant and varied conformation of the past and the present based on ancient Egyptian civilisation's examples are now a growing area of study, with a theoretical and applied reflexion of remarkable importance and significance.

Whether in the field of specific aesthetic or in concrete history, reception studies encompass multiple dimensions, objects, sources, and themes, through many theories and investigation methods, be it in texts or in material culture. Thus, the relationship between transmission, interpretation, transference, rewriting, and the recreation of ancient Egyptian materials in other cultural, chronological, and geographical contexts is being increasingly explored in-depth with numerous evidences or conjectural proposals.

With this in mind, the work by Tamara Berger, broadly titled *Receptions of ancient Egypt: a case study collection*, fits perfectly into this theme of theoretical concerns, with a clear assumption that we are before a manifold and multifaceted wide phenomenon. Because of that, instead of using the singular "reception", we should use the plural "receptions". "Reception" is an active appropriation of the past which meanings can be more or less clear in the moment of its appropriation-creation by the issuer(s) or they can result from the reading or interpretation-reconstitution of active receivers, regardless of the moment in time in which that reconstitution occurred.

The examples gathered by the Author in her book allow us to comprehend that the attribution of meaning to specific elements related to ancient Egypt, and its consequent decoding and interpretation, is a process that also calls for the contemporaneity in its search for meaning, legibility, and signification, some easier to grasp and understand, others more unfathomable and hidden.

Joining the curiosity and fascination for ancient Egypt the architects, the artists, and the modern and contemporary writers added new/other

dimensions, direct or indirect. It is, now, the researcher's job, particularly aware to the appropriation of Antiquity, to bring these dimensions to the surface, signalling, proposing, and valuing them.

We could say that some examples may seem a little laboured, therefore questionable, for being more conjectural or based in creative and plausible assumptions yet without documental evidence to support them in a definitive way. But the case studies of receptions in Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Germany compiled in this book by Tamara Berger are priceless contributions to understand how the ancient Egyptian cultural heritage survived through the years and has manifested itself in traits and expressions in the European culture, specially from the Middle Ages until today, whether in architecture or in sculpture. These case studies also help us to understand some of the underlying mechanisms of the many themes of receptions of ancient Egypt according to the contexts.

As the Author mentions, the field of ancient Egypt receptions knows a great diversity of allusive works, being hers another about examples of ancient Egypt reception in the contemporary society. In this regard, the support bibliography apparatus could have included more of those studies dedicated to Egyptomania, Egyptian Revival, Egyptian Style, Egyptian Taste or Egyptophilia. As paradigmatic examples, we may suggest some of the essential works by Jean-Marcel Humbert.

Noticeably, from Tamara Berger's reflexion results that, such as it happens in other places, in the cases that she analysed in the chapters of her book (the receptions in Serbia, the works of the Croatian and Yugoslavian sculptor Ivan Meštrović, and of the Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik, the cities of Ludwigsburg and Saarbrücken and the Weikersheim Palace) the main Egyptianized elements easily recognisable as signs reasonably associated to the architectural repertoire of ancient Egypt are the sphinx, the pyramids, the pylons, and the obelisk. The latter (of different dimensions) stands out by its vast use, isolated or combined with other elements, in urban architectonic contexts and funerary contexts, practical or commemorative-memorial, public and private, as a reflexion of individual or group beliefs. The obelisk is, as the author classifies, «*one of the best examples of stylistic mimicry*» (p. 93), with a great «*transformative power*» (p. 93).

Symbols of the ancient Egyptian civilisation and its technical mastery, the obelisks present a universality that allows them to adjust well to the expression of power that many cities and places intend to convey, namely in Germany. Although some pieces mentioned by Tamara Berger for the cities

of Ludwigsburg (the “city of obelisks”, as the Author calls it to emphasise the idea of obelisks as connective architectural structures) and of Saarbrücken can, by their small size, fall short from that majestic idea of political power and strength, its assiduity in the architecture of the cities invoke a model of the past that, in some way, served its purposes, particularly in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Moreover, the obelisks of the cities in funerary context, petrified memorials, resemble the Egyptian monuments, their aspiration for longevity and their beliefs of eternity, symptoms of a significant dialogue with the collective memory. The advanced level of stylistic mimicry of the obelisk makes them part of the universal architectural language, and its ability of assimilation and adaptation to new environments and cultural contexts potentiates new identities that it can assume or offer.

Regarding the sculptures of Ivan Meštrović, the search for archaic models and the echo and inspiration of the art of ancient Egypt in those works, today spread throughout various European and North American cities, is clear. The artist's trip to Egypt, in 1927, seems, in this case, to establish a direct link with the universe of aesthetic shapes and the representation models of ancient Egyptians (sited scribes, notion of straightforwardness, statues-cube, etc.) that he transported, intentionally, to his repertoire. The symbolic connotations of that artistic transference are a powerful form of reception that the sculptures do not hide but rather express.

Also, the incorporation of obelisks and pyramidal forms (pure or in steps, with or without *pyramidion*) in Jože Plečnik's architecture, as true marks of his artistic language, testify to other reception of the ancient Egyptian forms, in different contexts, although also with a clear tendency to the monumentality.

We should also highlight in Tamara Berger's work, alongside the illustration of most Egyptianized evidence cited, the constant concern to demonstrate how the phenomenon of receptions of ancient Egypt that she addressed are related to the dynamic concept and process of identity or identities (national, regional, or local). Moreover, all these Egyptianized themes must be considered and understood amongst the mnemohistory (history of the event's reception or the history of the memory of events), a way to achieve an enlightenment about the past as valid and useful as the traditional and most prosaic approach *événementielle*. The mnemohistory is, potentially, the methodological and conceptual key to understand many of the receptions of ancient Egypt in the places studied by Tamara Berger and in many other places.

As the author so well asserts (regarding the Weikersheim Palace orangery): *«Mnemohistory as a remembered part of past events is a valuable concept that gives us not just a deeper understanding of ancient Egypt artifacts and art, but of the individuals that chose some of its aspects to show their good taste, identity, or place in society»* (p. 76).

It is also worth mentioning what she calls *«stylistic mimicry and the potential of adaptation/ transformation: Works of art made in Egyptianizing style can (and frequently do) preserve references to meanings contained in their paragons, but they are also transformed into new creations through the new contexts of social identities. The most advanced transformative potential can occur in objects that are inspired by Egyptian themes, that are both masterfully adjusted to the contemporary context of the artist, and their “Egyptianess” is so latent, that most of the public that comes in contact with it does not recognize its origins at first glance This transcultural chameleons are masters of stylistic mimicry. They are adapted to the artistic tendencies of the time, in which they were created, to a degree that their origins are not easily definable and sometimes may even be perceived as part of an authentic contemporary stylistic diapason.»* (p. 92).

Monuments, signs, and symbols have only become eloquent in the messages that they aim to convey or that they convene by the echo that they have in us and by the net of relationships that they establish with the past, and they may present modest, middle-range, or very high potential of transformation. In these processes, the collective memory and the cultural memory have vital roles, for the relationships that they establish, enhance, or eliminate with the “pasts”, the distant and the recent. The alterations, the breaks, and the continuances are *nuances* of the relationship with the past that the collective memory and the cultural memory have, although not always identifiable and recognisable by everyone.

In many examples, T. Berger tries to suggest or demonstrate that the identity of the German cities mentioned, for example, has shaped itself by reconstructing its past with elements alluding directly to the ancient Egyptian civilisation, permanently constructing and reconstructing, thus, a social and cultural European self-image but with roots that go beyond time and space. The mnemohistorical access to the past establishes, thus, the identity and historicity claims of many of those places.

When applicable, Tamara Berger emphasises the thematic and aesthetic aspects, and the ideas (of spirituality, immortality, and eternal life) associated with those Egyptianized elements with which she was confronted when

gathering the examples, establishing, also, some connections to seminal artefacts or monuments of the Egyptian ancient civilisation.

The impact of ancient Egypt reception is still an important challenge to Egyptologists and experts in reception. Works such as this one by Tamara Berger are an effective mean to give it a solid academic and scientific approach. The case studies that she assembled are cultural remarks about the reinterpretation of ancient Egypt and its influence, with new meanings, on different contexts and sensibilities, working towards a mental structure of acceptance and reconstruction, more or less creative and informed, of a shared past.

The diversity of examples of reception from ancient Egypt that Tamara Berger collected demonstrates how important was the presence of the symbols of the ancient civilization of the pharaohs in the mind map of Europeans. As Tamara Berger, we can say that *«in the complex field of the reception studies of ancient Egypt exist no constant values, every single part of the formula must be investigated and still, that will not lead to one specific conclusion»* (p. 95).

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Tamara Berger's *Receptions of Ancient Egypt: A Case Study Collection* is an insightful survey of ancient Egypt as a source of inspiration in particular locales across Serbia, Croatia and Germany. Berger is particularly interested in how ancient Egypt inspired artists and architects, art and architecture; her detailed case studies of the German cities of Ludwigsburg and Saarbrücken, along with Weikersheim Palace in the city of the same name, combine cataloguing with lucid analysis. Further elements of particular interest in this study are the works of the Croatian sculptor Ivan Meštrović and the Slovenian architect Jože Plečnik, to whose work she dedicates one of several chapters, each of which can be read as standalone and self-contained, or as part of the book's wider picture.

Berger's project is indebted to Jan Assmann's concept of 'mnemohistory' as outlined in *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western*

Monotheism (1997), and Berger is particularly attune to the individual and collective experiences that make up our understanding of ancient Egypt not as it was, but how it has since been remembered. Berger's acknowledgement of her how her own education and career has shaped the particular receptions to which she has been exposed and in which she is interested offers a refreshing insight into the author that other studies of receptions tend to lack. Indeed, Berger evidently understands herself to be just one 'receiver', interpreting the subject matter of her study through an individual's eyes; she also notes several places in which she hopes other scholars might take up the mantle and further particular areas of her research. Perhaps Berger's most compelling claim is that rather than 'reception', scholars should speak instead of plural 'receptions'. The products of the reception of ancient Egypt are themselves received by audiences from different places, or social and political backgrounds, and audiences that shift over smaller or greater periods of time. Receptions have lineages which sometimes include original ancient Egyptian artefacts or even other receptions that have since been destroyed, complicating our understanding of influence. Receptions, Berger underlines, are plural and always in flux.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tamara Berger completed her bachelor's and master's degrees at the Department of Archeology of the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. She is the author of the book "Boats in Everyday Life and Religion of the Old Kingdom" (2014) and "Essays on Ancient Egypt" (2017), as well as of scientific and professional articles. She worked as an archaeologist at the Cultural Monument Protection Institute in Belgrade, as editor of the scientific journal *CASCA* as a research associate on the project "Cyril and Methodius" in the Research Center for Collective Identity and Political Mythology.

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She is also a painter and author of genre literature. She has exhibited her work in solo and group exhibitions in Europe and beyond, and her short stories have so far been published in several countries.

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Tamara Berger je završila osnovne i master studije na Odeljenju za arheologiju Filozofskog fakulteta u Beogradu. Autor je knjiga „Barke u svakodnevnom životu i religiji Egipta Starog carstva“ (2014), „Ogledi o starom Egiptu“ (2017), kao i više naučnih i stručnih članaka. Radila je u Zavodu za zaštitu spomenika kulture grada Beograda, kao urednica naučnog časopisa *CASCA*, i kao stručni saradnik na projektu „Ćirilo i Metodije“ u Centru za istraživanje kolektivnih identiteta i političkih mitologija.

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Takođe se bavi slikanjem i pisanjem žanrovske literature. Slike izlaže samostalno i na kolektivnim izložbama širom Evrope, u Americi i Aziji. Kratke priče takođe objavljuje u više zemalja.

Tamara Berger

RECEPTIONS OF ANCIENT EGYPT:
A CASE STUDY COLLECTION

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