

Last issue we had an article on wellknown picture postcard publishers/photographers Lehnert & Landrock from Cairo (written/compiled by George Webber).

This issue I am happy to be in the position to present some news on another important postcard publisher of that time based in Egypt. It was "*Lichtenstern & Harari*" / "*The Cairo Postcard Trust*".

It was (again) David Pearlman who kindly supplied some background information he has found.

It is an article written by Rudolf Agstner (believed to come from Austria) on the occasion of an Lichtenstern postcard exhibition at the "*Cairo Berlin Art Gallery*", Yusuf el Gindy Str. 17, Bab el Louk in 1995.

Mr. Agstner begins his article with a general (historical) view of the situation in Egypt around the turn of the century, the reason why so many foreign ppc publishers/photographers started their business activities there; no taxes and only minor customs on "photographic material", and copyrights played absolutely no role.

He continues to list all firms busy in ppc trade in Egypt pre 1914 (from entries in the "Egyptian Directory" 1914), also those big firms from Europe who had many, many series of Egyptian ppc's in their programs. And, not surprising from my point of view, Mr. Agstner comes to the conclusion that the quality and especially the variety of picture postcards was much better and greater back then as today.

Then it becomes a bit more detailed. "*Lehnert & Landrock*" (see TPA 13) are mentioned as publishers of German and Austrian nationality. And there was another one from Austria (!) which Rudolf Agstner treats as the most important and leading ppc publisher in Egypt pre WW1:

JOSEPH MAX LICHTENSTERN was born in Vienna on March 19, 1876 as son of Simon Lichtenstern and his wife Jenne, née Bik. Joseph Lichtenstern came to Egypt in 1893 where he found a job with a Swiss businessman. His monthly salary of two pounds (?) allowed him to lead a comfortable life. In 1897 he chose Cairo as his permanent domicile.

Together with a local partner named *David Harari* he established the firm "*Lichtenstern & Harari*" not later than 1902. According an entry in the Egyptian Directory 1903, they were traders and commission agents residing in the Musky quarter. The 1904 edition lists also the import of safes as business activity.

Between 1904 - 1908 this firm was named "*Lichtenstern, Harari & Co.*". A new company address turns up in 1907: Ruelle Hotel du Nile. In 1908 the not named partner leaves the company again.

A 1909 directory entry describes "Lichten-

cards. Following example makes sense to Mr. Agstner. The coloured *Lichtenstern & Harari* post card with an **no.1** imprinted, shows the firebrigade of Cairo which was founded in 1905. So, coloured *Lichtenstern & Harari* cards could only be of post 1905 date according Rudolf Agstner.

The company changed its name into "*L. & H.*" and then to "*L. & H. - The Cairo Postcard Trust*". The latter name sounded of British origin, but it was a Austro-Egyptian joint-venture.

Joseph Lichtenstern dealt in postcards, printing trade machinery/supplies and safes at the old address until the outbreak of WW1. Now the sale of the firm turned out to be a wise decision. Max H. Rudmann was Rumanian, national of a country of the *Entente* and so was allowed to continue with his business. It even prospered as Rudmann sold plenty of cards to the British soldiers stationed in Egypt.

Back to Mr. Lichtenstern, who moved into his new villa (designed by Austrian architect Carl Schejnoha) located in the noble Cairo suburb Maadi in 1913. This "Villa Austria" still stands today. It belongs to the top houses of Maadi and Lichtenstern's oldest daughter still lives there.

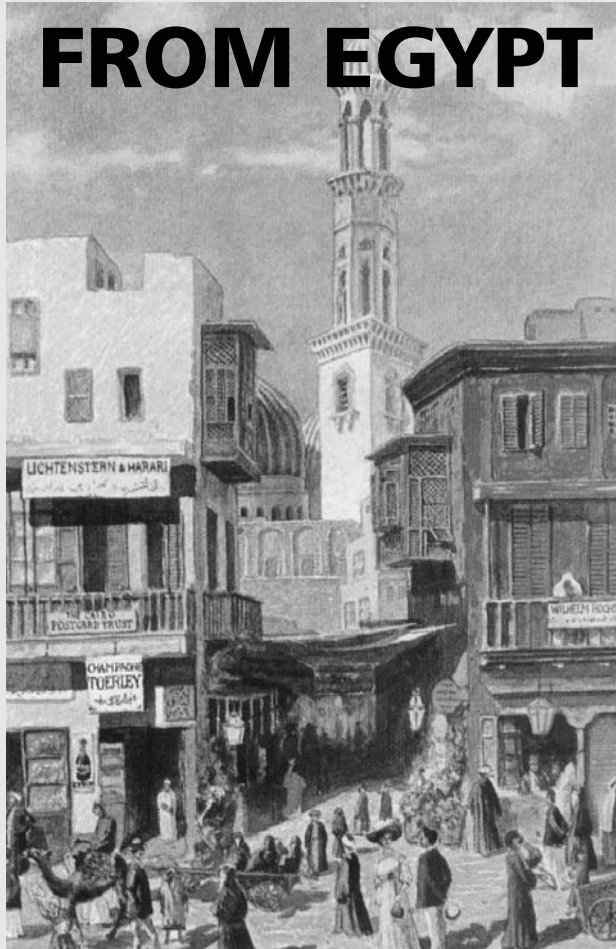
Joseph Max Lichtenstern stayed in Austria during the summer of 1914. At the outbreak of WW1 he volunteered for military service. Not surprisingly he served at the k.u.k. censor dept. of the fieldpost station Lemberg, Galizien.

After the end of WW1 he returned to Egypt in 1919 and changed his family name to "Lister". J. M. Lister never entered the

postcard publishing business again. He died on June 13, 1958 in Cairo. A final note of the author is again of interest. Mr. Agstner makes clear that J. M. Lichtenstern never took any photographs himself, but that he bought all from professional photographers and only acted as publisher.

Well, so far with Rudolf Agstner's article. I am always happy to receive material like this. It is indeed hard to find. However, I am not very happy with this work. It does offer some interesting biographical information, the dates of the company names changes / partners / sale etc are indeed at bit confused. And the date when the first Lichtenstern postcard was published is also not clear. Col. card "**no. 1**" in 1905? This is definitely wrong. Lichtenstern did have cards (and with his name only imprinted) in 1900 and probably before. (*cont*)

PPC PUBLISHERS FROM EGYPT



Lichtenstern & Harari The Cairo Postcard Trust

stern & Harari's" business field as: trader and commission agents; illustrated postcards, graphic trade material/machinery, safes etc.

They moved to a new address in 1909. *Sharia Dessouki 6 (Jardin Rosetti)*. This location is illustrated above ("Native Quarter") and I decided to show it in not too small size to keep the signs "*Lichtenstern & Harari*" as well as "*The Cairo Postcard Trust*" readable. This card comes from the collection of Sally Fall, USA who kindly sent an laser copy for reproduction.

But let's continue with the article of Mr. Agstner. He presumes that the partnership ended around 1912 and that the business was sold the Rumanian born postcard publisher/owner of "Carto-Sport" *Max H. Rudmann*.

It is also not clear in which year "Lichtenstern & Harari" started printing (?) picture post-

Unfortunately I do only have a small collection of "Lichtenstern & Harari" cards of less than 50 cards. I have concentrated on the publisher "The Cairo Postcard Trust", and I must say that after reading Mr. Agstner's article I don't know much more on this firm. It is time to take a closer look at this ppc story and try to find some satisfying (reliable) answers. Especially the chronological order of the different company names worries me. —

We know nothing on the family background of Joseph Max Lichtenstern from Vienna. He came to Egypt in the age of 17 years and worked for a Swiss businessman. Some sort of business training or instruction I believe. "Businessman" is not very exact, can stay for many different activities. Did this Swiss probably work in the printed paper/art trade or import, or how did Joseph get in in touch with the ppc publishing world?

Lichtenstern decided to settle in Cairo in 1897 in the age of 20 or 21 years old. I think we can say this was about the start of his ppc publishing business. Not to forget his other business sidelines mentioned in later years in that business directory. Somehow I believe J. M. Lichtenstern did work as agent for a German printer/publisher in the beginning. All the early chromolitho cards look alike, all from one source. Such a job could earn your living and get you the necessary contacts for an own company. I know that the Berlin based printer/publ. Miesler always looked for persons like Joseph Lichtenstern in pre 1900 years; to sell their own Egyptian card series (many German artists on Lichtenstern's cards) and secure new printing orders. And there were others.

Around 1902 (local?) David Harari entered the stage. Why does a businessman look for partner? To bring in fresh capital, experience and helpful contacts. We don't know. But we see a wider variety of printing qualities and artists, several numbering systems, captions now also in English language. However, I do not believe that any of their cards were printed in Egypt.

Between 1904 - 08 the firm is named "& Co.". This is also a mystery. Could had been a bank, wealthy businessman etc. So far I feel the story is more or less understandable. With Lichtenstern & Harari's move to Sharia Dessouki 6 I think the difficult period starts. Here Mr. Agstner's article is more than unclear. We see the sign of "Lichtenstern & Harari" AND "The Cairo Postcard Trust". Was this one firm or two separate? How is this to understand? Did Lichtenstern & Harari concentrate on their non-postcard activities and the ppc business was run under Cairo Postcard Trust? Or was the latter a independent firm? Who did establish, who stood behind CPT? Confusing!

Rudolf Agstner writes that Lichtenstern & Harari changed/renamed their firm several times. First into "L. & H." – indeed a drastical step – and then into "L. & H." - The Cairo Postcard Trust. Was there some sort of problem with the name(s)? I show a card from 1904 on next page where only the names were crossed out. This can mean nothing of course. Just an idea. But why change a wellknown (business) name?

It would be helpful to know the year when undivided postcards were replaced in Egypt by divided back ones. Most of my cards are postally unused. I do have one "L. & H." card (no. 89) with undivided address side. (con't next page)

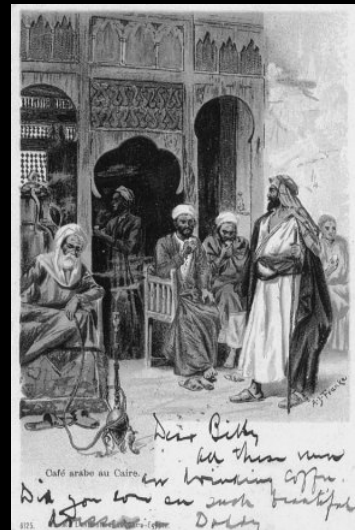


"M. Lichtenstern, Le Caire, Egypte", caption in French "Fantasia d'un mariage." Chromolitho. Printer no. 6127. P/u Nov. 1900 (see ill.) Sally Fall collection.



< Blown up logo used by Lichtenstern & Harari (from Rudolf Agstner's article). I have spotted this logo only three times so far, always put in front of imprint line.

> Another early "Lichtenstern-only" card from Sally Fall's coll., p/u 1900. Printer no. 6125. Signed "A. J. Franke". Caption reads: Café arabe au Caire.



> A "Lichtenstern & Harari" with printer no. 6126, imprints again in French language. P/u March 1904. Caption reads: "Visite de cimetiére". Cards no. 6085 + 6087, by the way, these are somehow different (the layout / fonts used), both signed "Franke". (Sally Fall coll.)



"Lichtenstern & Harari, Cairo, No. 2" reads the imprint on the address side of this fine animated street view. Caption: "Place ancienne Saptieh". Excellent coloured halftone printing without any hint who did this work. Guess it was this series from around 1905 (card not p/u - divided address side) which fooled Mr. Agstner. Highest no. in this series I have seen is 271. Includes b/w views.



From: "The Postcard Album" #14

I believe that "L. & H." initials were used on Lichtenstern & Harari cards quite early, from time to time, and not because the firm was renamed from an certain date on.

But the matter with the name changes is something which worries me. There is a good chance that there was a good reason for omitting the full name on cards and /or advertising. Especially the fact that *Lichtenstern* changed his name to "*Lister*" before he returned to Egypt in 1919 makes me feel that there was something of importance yet unknown.

The combined name "*L. & H. - The Cairo Postcard Trust, Cairo*" can be verified with cards from my collection for mid 1911. A series of cards showing views of Fayoum (have cards no. 2 illustr., 4, 5) was printed by "Dr. Trenkler & Co., Leipzig" in mid 1911 (sepia, plate-sunk version).

Rudolf Agstner believes that the partnership split up around 1912. And that the firm was sold to the owner of "Carto-Sport", Max H. Rudmann. Well, I think he means that the L. & H. ppc publishing line was sold to Rudmann. In another place Agstner writes that Joseph Max Lichtenstern (wealthy by now?) dealt in postcards, printing trade supplies/equipment and safes at the old address (Des-souki 6) until the outbreak of WW1. This is confusing! Did he not sell the entire business to Rudmann? Did he start a new ppc firm, or did he work for "The Cairo Postcard Trust"?

And what irritates me most? This ominous firm "*The Cairo Postcard Trust*"!! Who created this name? Who stood behind it? It is a perfect name for a ppc publ. firm at that time and region. It was important enough that Max Rudmann used it instead his old company name. Also he did not create a new name combination, added his initials etc. Strange!

Unfortunately I do not have any information on this ppc dealer & publ. other than his cards. Early cards (pre 1906) have following imprint: "*Au Carto-Sport, M. Rudmann & Fils, Le Caire*". Then the mass of cards without "& Fils" and *Cartosport* written in one word. A third version found on cards with divided back reads "*Papeterie & Imprimerie Au Carto-sport Max H. Rudmann, Cairo*". My earliest postally used card with "*The Cairo Postcard Trust*" imprint **only**, dates from Nov. 12, 1912. (illustr.) Card no. (3 digits) printed in grey ink but illegible because of heavy handwriting. So there must be earlier p/u cards around.

Lichtenstern, Harari, The Cairo Postcard Trust and Max Rudmann (& Co.) ordered their cards from various printers. Early chromolitho's came from Germany (and Italy I believe). Then we have Dr. Trenkler & Co. and Mehner & Maas, both from Leipzig and others from Germany & Europe. An Italian printer from Milano produced coloured cards for the Cairo Postcard Trust from about the outbreak of WW1 on. Very characteristic type for **POST-CARD** "Post Card" used (see ill.). There was another Italian firm supplying collotype printed cards.

I have no idea how long Max Rudmann and his Postcard Trust (or successors) stayed in business. Have poor quality view (from WW2 days) is postmarked 1948. More research to follow. Readers help very appreciated.



(Below) "L. & H. The Cairo Postcard Trust, Cairo" imprinted on this card series with views of *Fayoum*, printed mid 1911 by "Dr. Trenkler & Co, Leipzig". (they publ. own series with Egyptian views in 1908).



> The Post Card Trust / Max H. Rudmann (& Co.) handled the full range of postcards popular at that time. This included also cards like this here. Photo card. no. 16, company initials only. Was this one a bit risky? There are others, typical "folklore" cards with semi-nude girls. Series 218 for example and others without numbers.



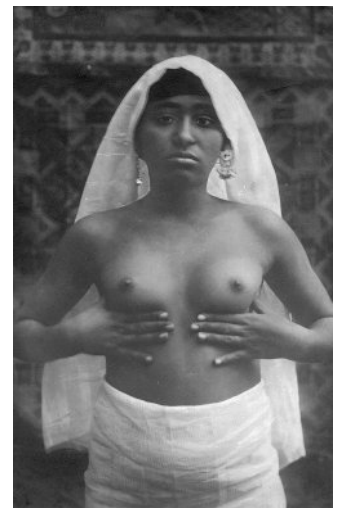
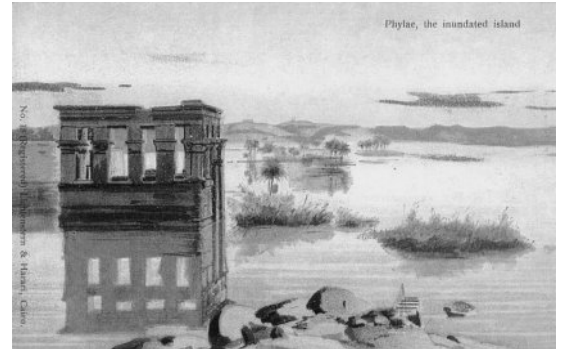
The logo of "Max H. Rudmann & Co" found on a postcard booklet with 12 views of Jerusalem. They covered the whole area indeed. And a advert from "The Palestine News" of 1918 listing two addresses. (David Pearlman collection)

The Lichtenstern & Harari / Max H. Rudmann / The Cairo Postcard Trust postcard publishing story is comprehensive. A lot of matters are unclear and need research. They published thousands of different views over a long period. And there were many other publishers busy in Egypt. Most people collecting views from Egypt don't care much on the publishers. The earlier chromolitho artist-signed cards are really wanted. But there is still a lot to discover, interesting views and also information on the publisher's who provided this great variety of cards.

Here the previously mentioned card where the names "Lichtenstern & Harari" are carefully crossed out, but "Commission-Agents, Cairo" not. The company name changes and the later family name change to "Lister" = all a bit strange. Card no. 286, b/w collotype, p/u April 1904 from Cairo to Germany. Message in French.

286 ~~Lichtenstern & Harari~~ Commissions-Agents, Cairo. 25/4/1904

(Below) Fine coloured card with caption in English "*Phylae, the inundated island*". Card no. 18. Not p/u. Notice the word "Registered" set in brackets in front of publ. imprint. Highest card no. found in this series is '495'. (Sally Fall coll.)



< *Le Caire, tombeaux des Califes*, published by "Au Cartosport Max H. Rudmann, Le Caire" as no. 255. Very good coloured halftone printing by unknown firm. What puzzles me is the handwritten date on picture side. I have a second card (no. 253) with the same date on: "26. - 29. XII. 1894". Could be a typical visiting date of tourists. Did Rudmann start his business that early? I am not sure. Also wondering which firm had this almost perfect coloured halftone process at that time.

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