



Austrian Hospice
of the Holy Family

Austrian Hospice News

Nr. 12 · 2013

EDITORIAL

Dear Friends

A veritable expert on the history of the Hospice, Dr. Helmut Wohnout chaired an academic conference in conjunction with Prof Wolfgang Bandion in the footsteps of the Austrian presence in the Holy Land. "There are no coincidences beyond the garden gate." It is perhaps no

entrance until 1938. In our archive we found an old illustrated postcard which a devout pilgrim had supplemented with the words: "Our Hospice".

Indeed, Austria has a House in the Holy Land, Austria is close to the Holy Places of the three monotheistic religions. It is not only our own modest efforts that make this House special, but Jerusalem herself that furnishes our House with a particular glow.



Just in time for the anniversary year, our former house-sign turned up again: gracing our entrance-portal until 1938 were to be found the words "Catholic Austro-Hungarian Pilgrim-House of the Holy Family."

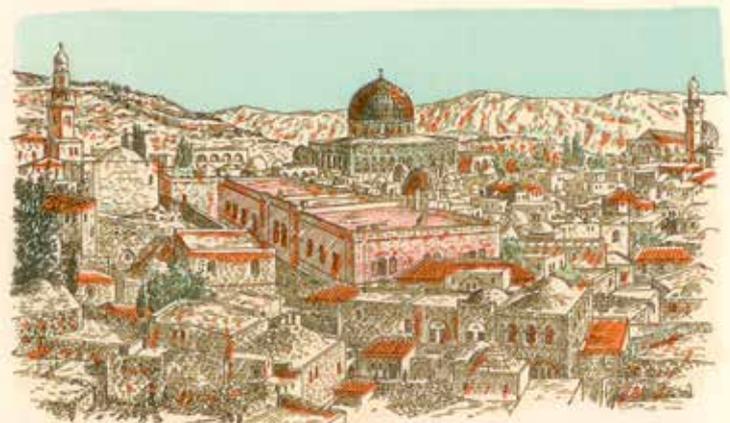
and Lili Arad (The Hebrew University) on the occasion of our 150th anniversary. We are able to provide resumes of individual lectures which focused on explicating the early years of our activity in the Holy Land.

We are grateful to Charles Habsburg for his courtesy in assuming patronage of the conference. His capacity as head of the imperial family mirrors the significant role played by Chancellor Franz Josoph at the time of our establishment.

On June 2nd the Archbishop of Salzburg, Dr. Alois Kothgasser, held a thanks-giving service which was graced by the attendance of Dr. Gustav Ortner, President of the Austrian Society of the Holy Land, our Friends Circle. The Society is planning a significant pilgrimage later this year

coincidence that our anniversary year marks the renewed appearance of the sign that graced our main

Rector Markus St. Bugnyar



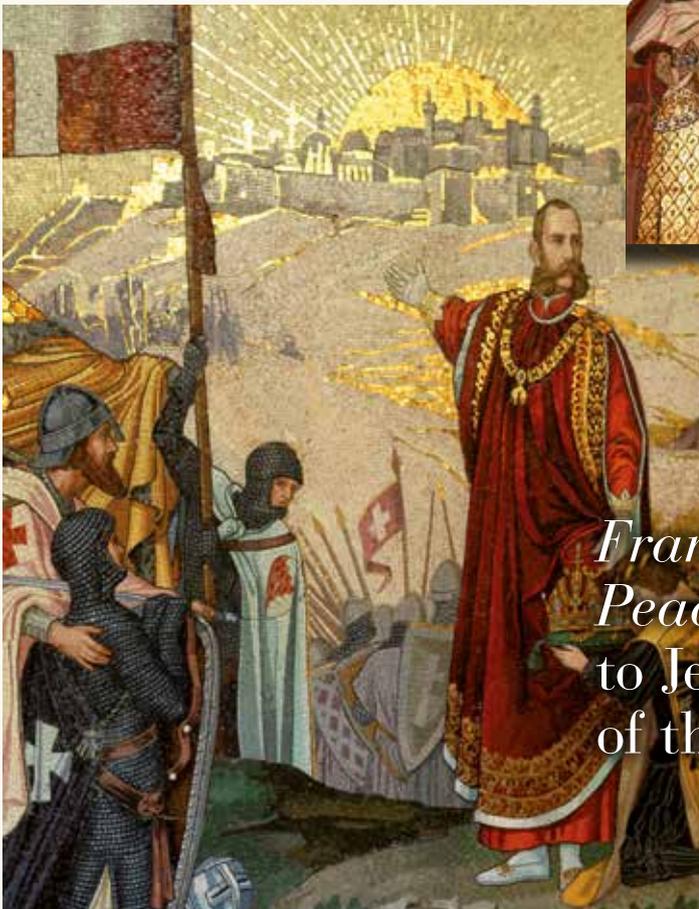
Jerusalem - A View of the Holy City

Unser Hospiz

An old coloured postcard - the Hospice at the foot of the Dome of the Rock - can be viewed in our archives. Unfortunately the person who added the words: "Our Hospice" remains unknown. Everyone can identify with that!

News

CHRONICLE



Emperor Franz Joseph at the Gates of Jerusalem. The mosaic can be found in the chapel of the Hospice.

Franz Joseph and the Idea of Peaceful Crusade to Jerusalem in the Footsteps of the Emperor

Professor Dr. Lily Arad

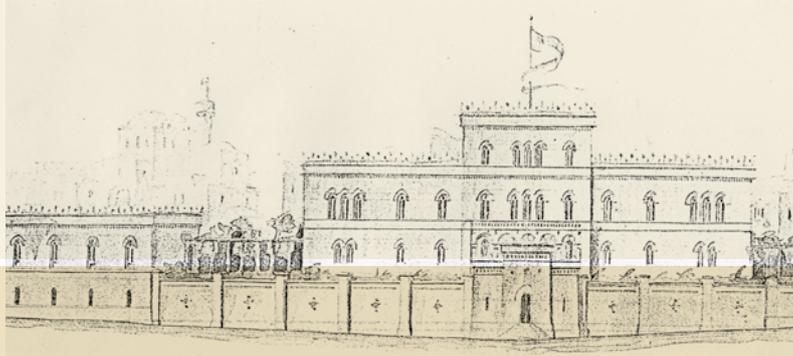
A unique allegorical mosaic in the Chapel of the Austro-Hungarian Hospice in Jerusalem portrays Emperor and Apostolic King Franz Joseph I majestically showing the Holy City that crowns the high hills at the horizon, to Crusaders and Peaceful Pilgrims that follow him to the longed-for destination. The haloed image of the city dressed in the white light of the rising sun sheds its aura of holiness on the monarch, suggesting his House's title to the Kingdom of Jerusalem by God's Grace, and evokes its perception both as an eternal heavenly city and an earthly one – the object of an intense contest between the many pretenders to its crown.

Its reading together with the apse mosaic, which shows saints and saintly-kings related both to Jerusalem and the Dual Monarchy, sheds light on the meaning and value of the Holy City in the construction of an ideal image of the Austrian Empire; this image would awaken national pride and loyalty at a time of ardent struggles of particular nations for independence.

Moreover, the perceptions and preconceptions of Jerusalem as an exotic locale were examined, highlighting orientalist and colonialist imaginations exceptionally conditioned by the Habsburg's deep religious feeling.

Univ. Prof. Lily Arad teaches art history in Jerusalem.





First hand-drawn designs for the Hospice in Jerusalem 1854.

The Establishment of the Austrian Hospice in the Context of Political Rivalries

Dr. Helmut Wohnout

Between 1831 and 1840 the entire province of Syria, and thus also Palestine, was under the control of the Egyptian vassal of the Sultan, Mehmed Ali, who engineered



Dr. Helmut Wohnout (Univ. Graz) wrote the definitive work on the Austrian Hospice, published by Bohlau-Verlag.

the de facto independence of his territory vis-a-vis the Porte.

In 1840 the fate of Jerusalem became a matter of global politics for the first time in the modern era. In 1838 the ambitious, power-hungry Ali had declared himself an independent monarch, prompting the Sultan to attack with French support. As the Ottoman Empire threatened to break apart after its defeat at Nizip, the

desertion of the Turkish fleet to Mehmed Ali and the death of Sultan Mahmud II in 1839, Britain, Prussia, Russia and Austria intervened militarily on the side of the Sultan.

In the 1840s State Chancellor Metternich was busy trying to strengthen Austria's ecclesiastical and political influence in Jerusalem at the same time as the Turks were sovereign over Palestine.

Before the Austrian project could be realised, the conflict over supremacy over the Holy Places unleashed one of the bloodiest European wars yet. If supremacy claims were not the real cause, they certainly provided a fertile pretext for the hostilities.



Charles Habsburg-Lorraine did not hesitate to take on the patronage of the symposium. His presence brought history alive.

In the spring of 1853, ie at a time when the European conflict was drifting towards war, Vienna approved the purchase of land in Jerusalem.

One of the immediate consequences of the war was that Austria faced a severe recession at the turn of the decade. It was first and foremost a crisis of public finances. This was why construction of the pilgrim house could not be brought to a speedy conclusion by a hefty financial injection by the State. On the contrary, a re-dimensioning of the original construction project had been necessary: the proposed side-wing had to be omitted, as well as the entire second floor, which was only completed in 1932/33. Artistically, the construction had to be simpler than originally intended. After years when funding from the monarchy had virtually dried up and income flowed in only through Church avenues, the day of its inauguration finally arrived: on 19 March 1863 the pilgrim house opened with the consecration of the Chapel. Patriarch Joseph Valerga, who had opposed the project until the end, took it upon

A cross section
of the foundations in 1856.



himself to undertake the solemn inauguration of the house.

The continued importance of the Pilgrim House is in no small measure the result of a series of particularly efficient and enterprising consuls and rectors. Among the latter group, two are singled out: the late Rector of Vienna University and Auxiliary

Bishop of Vienna, Hermann Zschokke, and the late Bishop of Jerusalem, Franz Fellingner.

All this explains why, despite changing political circumstances, the Austrian Hospice remained until 1918 the symbol of the Habsburg monarchy in its self-conception as a Catholic power in the Holy Land.

King of *Jerusalem*

Professor Wolfgang Bandion

First let's briefly go to Europe of the late Middle Ages, which was already imbued with the spirit of the Renaissance: genuine and adopted ancestors, role models and heroes



Prof. Wolfgang Bandion has published on historical themes and on the city of Vienna.

alike were placed in an ideal lineage.

Even among the statues that stand around the cenotaph at the funerary monument to Emperor Maximilian we find Godfrey of Bouillon next to King Arthur. Out of humility, Godfrey never took the title

King of Jerusalem, but called himself *Advocatus Sancti Sepulchri* – "Protector of the Holy Sepulchre."

The shield of Godfrey of Bouillon shows the familiar cross, which we generally know as the Jerusalem Cross today.

Many Catholics see Rome today not only as the seat of the Pope, but also as the capital of their Christian existence. Thus, they fail to recognise the early Christian and medieval conception of Jerusalem as the centre of the world and of Christianity.

The importance of Jerusalem for Christianity in Europe took concrete shape under Charles the Great. On 23 December of the year 800, the day before the Christmas holidays, an emissary from the Patriarch of Jerusalem, accompanied by two monks from the monastery of St. Saba, handed the Frankish king the key to the Holy Sepulchre, to Calvary and Mount Zion, and a flag of the city of Jerusalem.

The first Habsburg who claimed the title „King of Jerusalem“ for himself was Charles V – who, by the way, also enjoyed the title Charles the Great.

Godfrey of Bouillon as King of Jerusalem with the "crown of thorns."



How much Jerusalem meant to Charles V can also be inferred from the magnificent grave inscription on his monument in the Escorial. Charles' main interest, however, was naturally the reinforcement of the western Mediterranean.

When the title and coat of arms of the Austrian Emperor were installed in the nave and the aisles of the Votive Church in Vienna during its construction, the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was also among them.

With the death of the last emperor in exile in Madeira, the tradition of a reigning monarch from the House of Austria came to an end.

Thus, the crown of thorns on the monument to Emperor Charles in St. Michael's Church in Vienna became a metaphor for his life. There we find the words: "He sought peace, and found it in God."

On 3 October 2004 Emperor Charles was beatified in St. Peter's Square in Rome by Pope John Paul II.

The Austrian presence *in the Holy Land*

A short resumé of the great symposium of 1995.

The peace treaties between the Austrian and the Ottoman empires, of Karlowitz (1699) and Pessarowitz (1718), opened the eastern part of the Mediterranean to Austrian trade, and brought Austrian citizens, diplomats, merchants, travellers, pilgrims who stayed in the



Cardinal Franz König with Rector Franz Sauer

Ottoman countries, under the overall protection of the Capitulations.

It seems that the Austrians' main interest was to maintain a presence and influence in the entire region, which also included the Holy Land and Jerusalem. They aimed to do so by developing trade relationships, engaging in diplomatic activity, providing scientific and economic assistance, and protecting the religious and economic interests of Austrian

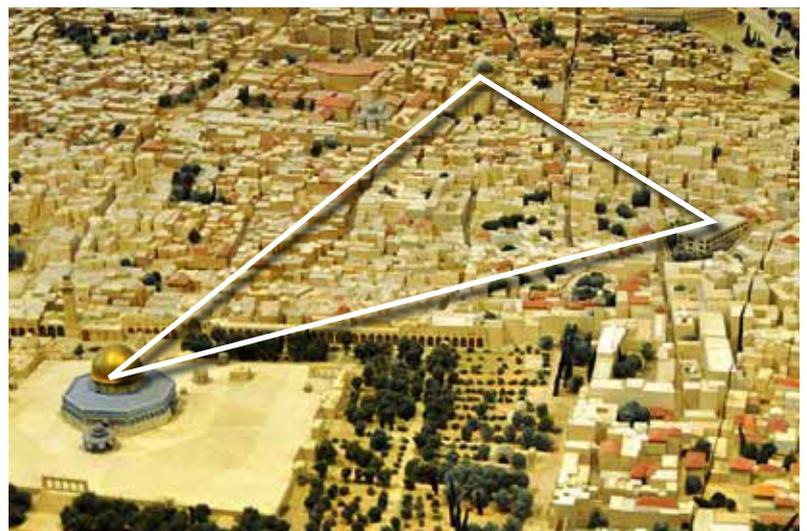
citizens in the East. This policy was directed mainly by groups with an economic or religious interest, and by some individuals, including travellers and scientists, who focused their interest and activity on the East, and sometimes also tied their destiny to the region. Characteristic of this approach was Joseph Russeger's request to be one of those who, because of their scientific research, hoped that the "honor of the Austrian name would never disappear from the eyes, also in the farthest countries".

Holy Land, more than in any other period in history, within the reach of the European powers.

It was not only Catholic Austria trying to secure a Catholic presence in the Holy Land, though this was naturally one of the main motives to this activity. In addition to this religious cause, both related to and independent from it, one should consider the existence of some other motives. Among them, were the international developments, the crisis in and around the eastern basin of the Mediterranean, that affected the whole European world, which led to Austrian intervention. Some prominent Austrians found special interest in the East, and were the primary agents in developing a stronger Austrian connection with and involvement in the region. Their motives were religious, strategic, economic, scientific, and also romantic.

Besides the economic interest,

© City Jerusalem model. Model of Jerusalem in the town hall. Holy Sepulchre - Rock and Hospice form a triangle.



It was generally believed that the crucial part played by European powers in restoring the Ottoman regime in the region, after its crisis during the early 19th century, caused a new situation, bringing the

there were strong ambitions to restore Austrian cultural (and political) influence in the Middle East, based on a long and proud tradition. After all, the Habsburgs were Kings of Jerusalem.





The French were first and foremost the European power which was acknowledged by the Porte to support and further matters Catholic. What the Habsburgers achieved over the centuries was that their voice was added to that of the French. It is a fact that the Habsburgers took their role seriously; they financed the building of churches, schools, missions stations, hospitals, painted in Imperial Yellow and built in an architectural style unmistakably Austrian peasant baroque, and pre-

sented to other Latin church establishments, notably the Franciscans in Jerusalem gifts, paintings, gold and silver church plate, liturgical vestments, bells etc.

The pilgrimages of the family members of the dynasty of the Habsburgs included their personal concerns as well as the prestige of the imperial family and the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. One was sure that no dynasty on earth had more Jerusalem pilgrims than the one of Habsburg-Lorraine. The highlight

HISTORY

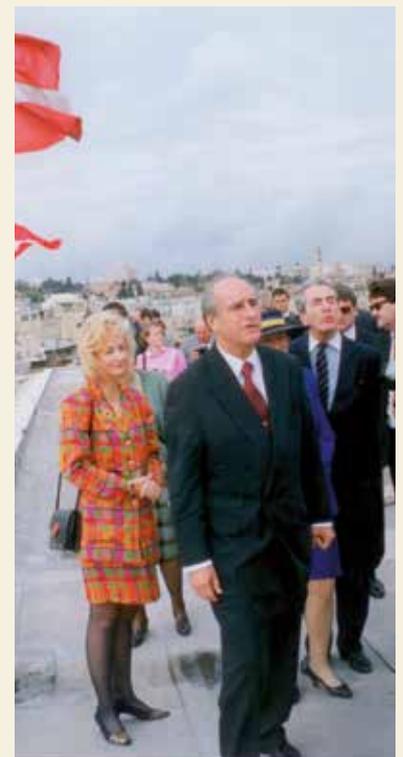
As early as 1990, former Crown Prince Otto visited the Hospice with his Wife Regina

Chancellor Franz Vranitzky 1993

President Thomas Klestil and Foreign Minister Alois Mock 2004

The Protector of the House, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, still regularly visits his Hospice on the Via Dolorosa

constituted doubtlessly the pilgrimage of the Emperor Franz Joseph I in 1869. To the shouts of "Long live the Emperor", Franz Joseph dismounted before Jaffa Gate. Writing to his wife Empress Elisabeth: "At the victory arch we first caught a glimpse of the holy city. We dismounted and I knelt in the road and kissed the earth. I shall never forget this moment."



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(Austrian Hospice)
Via Dolorosa 37 · POB 19600 91194 Jerusalem

For donations for the renovation of the House

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News

ANNIVERSARY YEAR



150 Years
Austrian Hospice
of the Holy Family

Trip with the Austrian Society of the Holy Land *In the Footsteps of Austria in the Holy Land.*

Date: 18-27 October 2013

Guide: Dr. Alexander Kragora

This special pilgrimage organised by the Austrian Society of the Holy Land can justifiably be called a jubilee trip. On the occasion of the "150th Anniversary of the Austrian Hospice" we plan to visit not only the traditional pilgrim sites, but also those places and institutions which are in some special way connected with Austria.

In Jaffa we visit the port at which Chancellor Franz Joseph landed in 1869 after a stormy crossing on his way to opening the Suez Canal. Jaffa's historic old town still houses the residence of Vice-Consul Franz Zitterer and the former Austrian postal building; the clock-tower, the city landmark, was constructed by an Austrian architect.

Acco, birthplace of the Austrian flag, is also on the itinerary. Safed and Tiberias are former Austrian protectorates whose Jewish citizens to a great extent heralded from the Danube monarchy.

In Nazareth we admire the three new organs made by the firm Rieger, the artistic latticework in front of the Grotto of the Annunciation made by Austrian artisans and the splendid stained glass windows from Upper Austria. When visiting the city, Crown Prince Rudolf became ill with malaria – the current hospital invokes the name his foundation. Here, and in Jerusalem too, we remember the many Austrian soldiers who fell in the First World War while fighting on the side of the Ottomans.

Until recently pilgrims were not able to travel by train to Jerusalem as had been customary in the nineteenth century. The landscape along the route is unique and enables us to approach Jerusalem in a special way.



A stained glass window in the Cathedral of Linz shows the Hospice before the addition of the second floor.

The Holy Sepulchre houses the altar of Chancellor Maximilian of Mexico, the younger brother of Franz Joseph, who visited Jerusalem in 1854. Cardinal Franz König consecrated the Sepulchre's organ. The Franciscan chapel bears a memorial plaque which was mounted on the occasion of Franz Joseph's visit in 1869.

Everyone is familiar with the Austrian post office that was located at Jaffa Gate until 1914. But we also visit the Tiferet Israel synagogue in the Jewish Quarter which was re-established with Franz Joseph's help, the Lämél school and the Rothschild Hospital. Tantur on the way to Bethlehem was opened in 1876 as an Austrian hospital; today it is an ecumenical centre belonging to the Holy See.

A celebratory reception at the Austrian Hospice is a special highlight. Equally special is the celebratory mass in the Con-Cathedral of the Patriarch on an altar endowed by Austrian pilgrims.

Inclusive price: 1,660 Euro

Information and reservations until end of July:
gesellschaft@austrianhospice.com



150 Years
Austrian Hospice
of the Holy Family

Austrian Society *of the Holy Land*

Since our re-opening as a ,Centre for Encounter and Pilgrims' in 1988, the Austrian Society of the Holy Land has been recruiting friends for the Austrian Hospice of the Holy Family in Jerusalem.

For an annual 25 Euro membership fee you will be contributing to renovation and maintenance expenses, as well as to specific projects undertaken by the Hospice.

Membership fees and any donations please remit to the account of the Austrian Society of the Holy Land at Bankhaus Schelhammer and Schattera BLZ 19190 No. 204339 or No. 100204338

You will receive regular updates and information about developments on the ground and are encouraged to bring your own ideas and suggestions to our General Assembly in Vienna.

The honorary president of the Society is Ambassador Dr. Georg Hohenberg; President Ambassador Dr. Gustav Ortner

The office, under the reliable direction of Dr. Eva-Katharina Trauttmansdorff, is located at Habsburgergasse 12, 1010 Vienna. It is open to members on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10am and 12 noon; it can also be reached by phone at the same times on 01 513 9755 or by **email: gesellschaft@austrianhospice.com**

Please direct your requests and applications for membership to this address.

Many thanks for your friendship!

**Ambassador Dr. Gustav Ortner
Dr. Alexander Kragora**

