

City-Forming Potential of the Suez Canal (The Middle of the XIX - The First Half of the XX Centuries)

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Abstract. This paper deals with the problems of cultural and civilizational character in the context of the construction and operation of the Suez Canal, which remains of great importance to Egypt more than a hundred and fifty years. The Suez Canal was commissioned in 1869 and has had a huge impact on the political and economic development of Egypt. The canal changed Egypt's position and role in the Middle East and North Africa, and in the international arena as a whole. Undoubtedly, this event had a great transformative impact not only on Egypt but the entire system of international shipping routes. The Suez Canal also impacted the further development of international trade and economic, cultural and civilizational ties. Cultural and civilizational processes in Egypt associated with the construction of the Suez Canal, were not spared nor was the sphere of urban development. At the initiative of the rulers, especially the Khedive Ismail Pasha, extensive work was carried out on the reconstruction and modernization of the main cities of Egypt - Cairo and Alexandria on the European model, but with the preservation of the Eastern and Muslim identity. In the same style were built new cities, including Port Said and Ismailia. All this gave further perfection of cultural and civilizational movements in the country.

1. Introduction

Relevance of the topic arises from the need for more detailed specification of the degree of influence of the Suez Canal as a transport and communication and culture and civilization, as well as the city-forming factor on Egypt.

The Suez Canal devoted a lot of intellectual efforts. Some specifically examined the history of the construction and operation of this facility [1-2]. Others, on the overall history of Egypt or international communication systems, which contained entire sections that shed light on certain aspects of the data structure [3-4]. The main object of the absolute majority of these studies are the military, political, economic trade, cultural, and civilizational aspects of the history of this truly strategic communications project. The attention of researchers to the unprecedented consequences caused by the canal's construction and commissioning for global development was not waning. Naturally, that they became the focus of numerous scientific studies.

A special place in the study of the Suez Canal is also given to its impact on the political and military [5-6] and the socio-economic development of Egypt [7-8]. However, there is the question of his

city-forming potential, one of the least studied aspects of the data structure, which has a high relevance for the determination of macroeconomic parameters of Egypt over a long historical period. Inadequate reflection of the subject in the research has already caused understandable problems: the power of the city-forming potential of the Suez Canal is not immediately apparent, and has gained dynamism for decades and accumulated potential to exert a decisive influence on the vectors of the socio-economic and cultural development of civilization of Egypt.

2.1 The influence of the Suez Canal on the socio-economic development of Egypt

It is known that one of the main factors of the emergence and development of new towns and settlements in all stages of human history was, in modern terms, innovation. In the XIX century the concentration of urban development in a particular area originally was largely dependent on the presence there of natural resources; minerals, railways, waterways, which all provided industrial production [9]. In this context, the Suez Canal could certainly be considered as one of the greatest innovative projects implemented in the XIX century. In fact, as history shows, the new city did not appear out of nowhere or, as the experts on urbanization, "the city cannot be grown in vitro» [10]. Rather, cities are the acquisition of existing settlements new features. Striking confirmation of this truth is the experience of the Suez Canal. Thanks to the Suez Canal, the eastern Islamic country that suffered under the pressure of the conquerors longer than any other nation in history, now has large European-like cities. [11] Egyptian enslavement of foreign capital and the establishment there of the colonial regime during the disintegration of medieval society deeply affected all aspects of socio - economic development of the country. They were affected by the process of urbanization that has changed its mechanism to bring into effect new growth of the urban population that is significantly different from traditional populations [12].

Commissioned in the XIX century. The Suez Canal made a great contribution to the urbanization. The Isthmus of Suez, which consists of the desert turned into a real economic area with ports, cities and labor [13]. First to write about it was Samoilovich, predicting as far back as the nineteenth century that the construction of the Suez Canal would lead to urbanization, who said, "surrounding desert will become, over time, into blossoming fertile plains, and along with the fertility of the soil will develop in these parts and civilization" [14].

Cities and villages along its route, in some cases, have a long history, but many pined for lack of resources for their development, which was the beginning of this project, powerful energy for regeneration and growth. There were also new towns and settlements, organically fit into the overall picture of civilization, which was formed in the land of Egypt for centuries. [15]

The extraordinary scale of the city-forming potential of the Suez Canal indicates at least that, after the implementation of the project along its route, it originated or received a new impetus to the development of more than twenty cities and towns [16]. It is important that some of them present are so economically important for Egypt, like the industrial, commercial, transport, trade, and cultural centers such as Port Said, Ismailia, Port Fouad , El Kantara, Suez, Port Tawfik and dr.Krome, before dozens of settlements, such as Abu Sultan, Fayed, the Phanar, and others along the west coast of the Great Bitter Lake opened new horizons for growth. Also, for many large settlements and relatively small cities that are along the lines of four freshwater canals, "Suez," "Ismailia," "al-Abbas," and "Farouk," named buildings have become a major source of their continued operation and development. With the construction of freshwater canals, previously uninhabited territory acquired an important economic importance. Channels made fertile vast tracts of land in the eastern part of the Nile Delta. The construction of new cities, especially Port Said, Ismailia, Port Tawfiq, and an increase in the population of pre-existing cities, gave to the dynamism of persistent economic

processes. Thousands of people have work related to the canal and shipping. Egypt has become a meeting place for steamers sailing from west to east and east to west, by virtue of which it strengthened its role as a bridge between the European and Oriental civilizations. [17]

Entering the Suez Canal in effect gave a powerful impetus to the growth of cities in Egypt. The formation of many of them was solely the result of the migration waves caused by the construction of the Suez Canal and evolved in parallel with the construction work on it. It is noteworthy that a large part of migrants were Europeans, who, on the eve of the British occupation of Egypt, were already about 100,000 people. [18]. Special contribution to the architectural and structural development of Egypt was made by the Italians. One notable example of this was the construction of Clemente Busiri Vici's so-called "Italian home," (Casa d'Italia), in Port Said on the Suez Canal [19]. The Italians also played a dominant role in the building and reconstruction of Alexandria (1819-1848), built houses in Cairo, Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. [20]

In order to determine a more specific role of cities that have arisen along the route of the Suez and of the use of the transoceanic network of freshwater canals to ensure their drinking water and to develop new areas of agricultural land in the socio-economic development of Egypt, it seems appropriate to consider briefly the main characteristics of three of them, who later became administrative centers of the governorate of Egypt.

One of the most significant new cities which have arisen in parallel with the Suez Canal, Port Said is named in honor of the Egyptian ruler Said Pasha, who played a controversial role in the history of their country. The city was founded in 1859 on a sand spit that separates the Mediterranean Sea from the coastal salt lake Manzana. Originally, it was built as part of the infrastructure of the Suez Canal [21], but quickly evolved and attained the status of a free port city duty-free.

2. 2 Commissioning in the XIX century. Suez Canal and Urbanization

With the introduction of the Suez Canal, Port Said in operation turned into a major North Sea gate for Egypt. The whole economic life of the Egyptian city of associated mainly with the service passing through the Suez Canal and foreign vessels stationed in the Canal Zone of British occupation troops. [22] In the years of independent development, Port Said, with more than half a million people, became the administrative center of the homonymous governorate, which now occupies an important place in the economic structure of the country.

Receiving its name in honor of the Khedive Ismail Pasha, one of the rulers of the dynasty founded by Muhammad Ali in the XIX century, the city of Ismailia was designed in 1863 by the "father" of the Suez Canal, Ferdinand de Lesseps [23]. Last seen was his main purpose in it serving as a support base, located on the shore of Lake Timsah (Crocodile Lake) in the construction of the Suez Canal.

Ismailia grew mainly in the period of construction of the Suez Canal. Therefore, the architectural center of the city is different kind of colonial flavor characteristic of the XIX century with many buildings built in the British and French style.

During its development, Ismailia has become one of the major industrial centers of Egypt. It operates an assembly plant for television and radio. In the city the food, machine-building, and chemical industries all operate [24]. Ismailia, where the headquarters of the Suez Canal is located, is considered to be its capital.

Ismailia has a special place in the political history of modern Egypt as the birthplace of the founder of the movement "Muslim brothers" Hassan al-Banna [25].

At the site of the modern city of Suez, located in north-eastern Egypt, in ancient times there was a

settlement of Cleopatra Arsinoe [26], whose inhabitants mostly engaged in fishing and hunting wild animals. When the Fatimids ruled, Kulzum existed where the modern city of Suez does today, which was the main port on the Red Sea [27]. In the era of Islam, especially during the reign of the Umayyad, Suez, along with Alexandria, became famous as a center of shipbuilding, due to the dynamic development of navigation and much sought after by the court. At the time, seafaring was highly valued and encouraged by the central authorities of Arab Caliphate.

Suez, since the seventh century, was known as an important trading port: Here ends the canal that connects the Red Sea and the Nile, here are Muslim pilgrims going to the Hijaz. In the later Middle Ages, Suez's value increased because of the fact that in this area were discovered rich deposits of gold and emerald. Destinations were rich forests of valuable timber Nile acacia, suitable for the construction of ships. Salahuddin al-Ayoubi drew more attention to this feature of Suez by the critical importance of this material for the development of the fleet. The need to strengthen the fleet was due to expansion of the Crusades in Syria and the Mediterranean Basin. With the latter property, Suez ensured its important place in the reign of the Mamluks, and camel caravans with acacia wood from the Nile virtually stopped its movement in Egyptian shipbuilding centers. Suez, because of its strategic location and as one of the main centers of Port of Egypt, maintained its important place in the Ottoman Empire. And with the end of the century, it was used as the Turkish naval base. During the construction of the Suez Canal, the city has turned into a major port. The report of the Commission for the construction of the channel noted the need to create two harbors at Port Suez route for safety. [28]

The value of Suez has further increased in acute Anglo-French colonial rivalry for strengthening their positions in Egypt in the XIX century. This fact was an additional impetus to the development of communication associated with the Suez's major political, economic and cultural centers of Egypt then. In particular, it became the first city in the Suez Canal zone, connected in 1858 with Cairo 125 km along the railway line.

Today Suez, with more than half the population is the administrative center of the homonymous governorate, is one of the most important transport and industrial, commercial and economic units in the Suez Canal. It has a developed network of rail, road and air routes, oil refineries, petrochemical, timber, and other industries. With two harbors, Port Ibrahim and Port Tawfiq, Suez serves as a major seaport on the Egyptian Red Sea. It is connected by railway lines and highways with Cairo and Port Said. From here, the pipe delivers the capital refined petroleum products. The city, as well as in the Middle Ages, continues to be a major international transit point for Hajj pilgrims. All this determined the highest place in the Suez implementation of macroeconomic reforms in the past decades in order to balance the economic processes in modern Egypt, providing its role as one of the key points of the country.

Conclusion

Thus, the processes of formation of urban agglomerations that are typical of many modern states in Egypt, through the Suez Canal project, started in the middle of the XIX century. This fact has left its indelible mark on the character and content of socio-economic development of the country. Throughout the past period, the Suez Canal is a major factor in determining the basic vectors of economic development and cultural and civilizational processes in Egypt.

As a general conclusion it should be emphasized that the long-term beneficial effects of city-forming potential of the Suez Canal were manifested not only in giving further impetus to physical growth along its route settlements and the formation of new cities, but also in the fact that it laid down the conditions necessary for the formation of Egypt's new urban agglomerations. Through this

channel, it has contributed to the relative reduction of the load on the traditionally crowded old cities, Cairo and Alexandria, the development of which is distinguished by constant concentration of a disproportionate amount of population and economic activity. Reducing the negative effects of demographic factors for the traditional centers, the channel has created the conditions for the expansion of geography of urban agglomerations, which "pull together" economic space in Egypt. In this sense, it laid the foundation for the emergence of mega-cities of the future, projecting for decades "growth poles" or "nodal points of" the Egyptian economy.

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