

Eleonore Haas: The Lost Chinese Heritage in Mozirje

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Introduction¹

In the first half of the 20th century, individual travellers and Austro-Hungarian sailors, who were among the first from the present-day Slovenia to travel to East Asia, returned with single pieces or entire collections of Chinese or Japanese objects. Among them were an Austro-Hungarian naval officer, Ivan Skušek Jr. (1877–1947), who

with his Japanese wife Tsuneko Kondō Kawase (1893–1963) brought back a large collection of Chinese objects in 1920, and the world traveller Alma Karlin (1889–1950), who returned to Celje in 1927. Both invited people to visit their homes, which were decorated with East Asian porcelain, textiles, sculptures, furniture and other everyday objects. Yet at the same time, not far from Celje, where people visited Karlin's house to see "exotic" objects, there was another collection of Chinese artefacts kept more or less secretly in the paint factory in Mozirje. It belonged to Eleonore von Haas (1866–1943), widow of Josef von Haas (1847–1896), a diplomat who represented Austria-Hungary in China for almost 30 years and served as Consul General in Shanghai from 1892 to 1896 (fig. 1).

Whereas Karlin, who, due to her financial constraints and the nature of travelling, could only acquire what were essentially souvenirs sold at famous tourist sites, the collection in Mozirje brought together valuable porcelain pieces, religious sculptures, bronze objects and beautifully embroidered textiles—objects that most museums at the time were trying to acquire. Nevertheless, the Mozirje collection was far less widely visited than those of Karlin and Skušek. Very few people were aware of its existence, and by and large, this is still the case today. Eleonore Haas, who brought the collection to Mozirje, also remains unknown, and apart from a short

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LEOPOLD BUDE
K. u. K. HOF-PHOTOGRAPH

GRAZ.

Fig. 1: Eleonore Haas with her father Friedrich Ritter Pertazzi and her husband Josef Haas. Photograph taken by Leopold Bude, Graz, 1889 (?). SI-ZAC/1008, signature 2. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

paragraph in the book by Ralf Čeplak Mencin,² nothing has been written about her life and collecting activities. Even the name of her husband, Josef Haas, who played an important role in diplomatic and trade relations between China and Austria-Hungary in the late 19th century and was one of the main suppliers of Chinese objects to several museums in Austria-Hungary, is not well known.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to reconstruct the life of Eleonore Haas, whom Josef Haas met in 1889 during one of the only two longer holidays he took during his nearly thirty years of service in China. After their marriage, she lived in Shanghai for seven years (1889–1896) until Haas's unfortunate death. She then travelled back to Vienna and Graz and in 1913 moved in with her relatives, the Goričar family, in Mozirje (then Prassberg), a small town in northern Slovenia, where she lived until her death in 1943.

Who was Eleonore Haas? What was her social life and network like in Shanghai? What role did she play in Shanghai society and to what extent was she involved with her husband's activities—above all, with his collecting? What is the size and the nature of the collection and what kind of objects did she or they favour? How and where were the objects acquired? How did the collection get to Mozirje and how did she live with the collection and the objects? What happened to the collection and where is it today? We pursue these questions by using documents and photographic material from Slovenian and Austrian archives as well as oral history methods and interviews with people from Mozirje who still remember her, to present the first study on the life and collection of Eleonore Haas.

In the Vivid Memories of Marija Janko

Eleonore Haas, widow of the Austro-Hungarian Consul General Josef Haas, was born *Edle*³ von Pertazzi. She died in 1943 in Mozirje, in Slovenia.

2 Čeplak Mencin 2012, 86, 90.

3 *Edle* (German), noble.

89-year-old Marija Janko, known as Pekova Marija, who as a child lived in the same house as Eleonore and continues to live there today, recalls:

She was sitting at the table in her room that morning, waiting for the bus. She was ready to travel, to move to Graz. She had all her things packed. I remember well that there was a plate with sliced tomatoes on the table in front of her. As every morning, breakfast was prepared for her by her *bedinar'ca*⁴ Urška Tavčar. Frau Haas suddenly leaned against the table and then fell forward. It was the first corpse in my life.⁵

Marija Janko was a nine-year-old girl at the time, but has vivid memories of Eleonore Haas, who lived in her parents' house, so that they communicated on a daily basis. As can be seen from the register of deaths, Eleonore died of a stroke on 23 August 1943, at her home at Prassberg 111 (as it then was), at the age of 77.⁶

Marija Janko is now the oldest resident of the old downtown in Mozirje. "I was born in this house, I've lived in this house all my life, and I hope I'll die here as well," she says. The house was built in 1911 for the Štrucl family, who lived in the United States of America at the time. They were economic migrants. They intended to return to Mozirje, but that did not happen. In 1929, the house was sold to the Mozirje baker Franc Pečnik, father of Marija Janko.

At that time, along with the house, my father also 'got' Eleonore Haas, or Lola, as she was called. She had lived in this house since 1913, when she moved from Graz to Mozirje. I don't know what kind of arrangement she had with the previous owners, nor what kind of arrangement she had with my father. The

4 *Bedinar'ca* or server, distortion of German, from the verb *bedienen*, to serve.

5 Marija Janko (b. 1934) was interviewed by Barbara Trnovec in Mozirje on 19 August 2023.

6 The information is listed in the Register of the deaths Mozirje 1942–1944 (*Mrliška knjiga umrlih Mozirje 1942–1944*).



Fig. 2: Pečnik's house in Mozirje, where Eleonore Haas lived until 1943. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

house was designed and built for the Štruel family, at their behest, by Lola's relative Matija Goričar. Since the house was empty, he probably agreed with the owners to rent a part of the house to his widowed relative.

Eleonore Haas then lived in this house for thirty years, until her death (fig. 2). According to Marija Janko, Eleonore was very kind, always very well groomed, had a distinctly upright posture, and commanded respect. She spoke German, never Slovenian, even though her mother was Slovenian. She is said to have known five languages, including English and French, but she certainly also knew Italian. Marija Janko remembers that on one occasion she translated something from German into Italian. Every day she went to lunch at the inn *Pri pošti*, in the centre of Mozirje, where she had her permanent table. At the same time, Eleonore Haas was considered to be something special and was the subject of rumours.

Rumours spread around Mozirje that she had lived in China and that she was a widow because her husband had been eaten by a shark. But what stuck in my memory the most was her tiger. In the room on the floor she had a carpet, a huge tiger, with a huge head and huge teeth. Every now and then, Urška hung it over the stair railing, at the entrance to the house, in order to 'cripple' it. The news of this spread like wildfire throughout Mozirje every time, and everyone came to see the tiger. How we children were afraid of it!

According to Marija Janko, Eleonore Haas lived in two rooms, to the right of the main entrance to the house. But she had another room upstairs where she kept things she didn't use. "We didn't go to her apartment as children, but I saw through the open front door that she had a lot of everything. I don't remember the details, but I know that her



| Fig. 3: One of two rooms with Chinese objects in Mozirje. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

apartment was furnished with furniture and objects that she brought from China.” This is confirmed by the photos that have been preserved of some objects and ambient photos taken in her apartment (fig. 3).⁷

Eleonore in Family Lore

How is it that the cosmopolitan Eleonore Haas, widow of the Consul General of Austria-Hungary—polyglot, interpreter for the Chinese language, sinologist, and collector Josef Haas, with whom she spent seven years in Shanghai—came to live in Mozirje in the first place? She was 47 years old at the time. “Economic reasons were most probably very likely behind this. We know that Eleonore, who returned to Vienna after her husband’s death, fought for his pension. For now, it is not known how successful she was. Based on the fact that she first moved from Vienna to Graz, and then to Mozirje in 1913, we can conclude that she did so because life was much cheaper here,” explains Matija Blagojevič.⁸

At that time, Mozirje was a small market town in the Savinjska valley. In 1900 it had only 537 inhabitants,⁹ but it had a cosmopolitan character. This was the home of Eleonore’s relatives, the enterprising, wealthy, successful, educated and influential Goričars, who welcomed her warmly. Mozirje was a popular resort at the time—there was a swimming pool, a tennis court, and a mountain hut in Golte—visited by holidaymakers from all over the monarchy, including many from Vienna. In such a milieu, Eleonore Haas certainly felt comfortable, according to Matija Blagojevič and Cvetka Marjanovič.¹⁰

Eleonore Haas was close to her Mozirje relatives. Even today, their descendants cherish her memory. “When I think of Lola, the first thing I think about is how tragically her husband died. He was eaten by a shark in China and only a bloody stain on the surface of the sea was left behind,” says Cvetka Marjanovič.

I talked about Lola with several relatives, but my mother-in-law Draga told me the most. Among other things, how she met her future husband. Josef was a friend of her father, Friedrich Ritter von Pertazzi, also a diplomat. Once, when Josef visited Friedrich in Graz, he met Lola by chance. She had just returned home to pick up the sheet music she forgot to take to her piano lesson. It was love at first sight on his part. They got married in Shanghai, dressed in tangerine-coloured clothes. He was more than twenty years older than her, but back then such age differences were commonplace. They had no children. We didn’t discuss why not.¹¹

Haas had been married before, to the Englishwoman Margaret Jane Wogan (the ceremony took place in Shanghai on 6 April 1874, in a Catholic church there)¹² but his first wife, who suffered from epilepsy and amnesia, had died.¹³ He married Eleonore von Pertazzi on 9 November 1889 in Graz.¹⁴

Diplomatic Families and their Biographies

Josef von Haas and Eleonore von Pertazzi both came from diplomatic families. Eleonore was the daughter of the Austro-Hungarian diplomat,

7 These photos are kept by Matija Blagojevič from Mozirje, a librarian, museum co-worker and expert on the history of Mozirje. He is the nephew of Marija Mary Blagojevič, née Goričar, great-granddaughter of Marija Goričar, who was Eleonore Haas’s aunt.

8 An interview with him in Mozirje on 19 August 2023—followed by several phone conversations—conducted by Barbara Trnovec.

9 Videčnik 1996, 13.

10 Cvetka Marjanovič is the widow of Nikolaj Marjanovič, son of Draga Marjanovič, née Goričar, great-granddaughter of the aforementioned Marija Goričar, Eleonore’s aunt.

She was interviewed by Barbara Trnovec in Mozirje on 19 August 2023.

11 Cvetka Marjanovič, interviewed by Barbara Trnovec in Mozirje, on 19 August 2023.

12 Deusch 2017, 309.

13 Ibid., 310; Josef Haas Personalia Folder.

14 Deusch 2017, 310.

Friedrich Ritter von Pertazzi, born in 1828 in Vienna,¹⁵ and Frančiška von Pertazzi, *née* Repin, in 1838 in Vojnik.¹⁶ Eleonore was born on 31 May 1866 in the city of Ruse (also Rostok, as written in the Mozirje Register of deaths 1942–1944), on the Danube River in Bulgaria, the present-day Romanian-Bulgarian border, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire.

According to Engelbert Deusch, author of a monograph on Austro-Hungarian consuls in the period 1825–1918, Friedrich Ritter Pertazzi graduated with honours from the Imperial and Royal Oriental Academy in Vienna (*k. k. Orientalische Akademie*)¹⁷ and in 1854 obtained a position as an interpreter in Constantinople. He was known in diplomatic circles as a noble, kind-hearted man, musically talented and extremely knowledgeable. In 1870, he was awarded the title of Knight of the Iron Crown III (Order of the Iron Crown of the third degree). In 1879–1880, however, he ruined his reputation due to drunkenness and debts. His daughter Eleonore and son Friedrich also suffered the consequences. He was initially sent on sick leave, and in 1881—at the age of only 53—he was retired.¹⁸

Josef Haas was the son of the Austro-Hungarian consul Ferdinand Haas, born in 1820 in Prague.¹⁹ A comparison of diplomatic biographies led to the interesting discovery that in 1857 both Josef's and Eleonore's fathers served at the consulate in the city of Ruse.²⁰ At that time, Josef Haas (b.1847) was about ten years old.²¹ In all probability, this was where the acquaintance between the two families originated.

The diplomatic biography of Josef Haas is extremely rich. In October 1865, at the age of eighteen, he applied for admission to the Imperial and Royal Oriental Academy (*k.k. Orientalische Akademie*) as an external student, highlighting his language skills: in addition to German, French and Italian, he had an excellent command of Greek and understood Turkish. He was accepted, and on 30 September 1866, by decree, he was sent to Hong Kong to learn Chinese. He arrived there on 18 December 1866 and thus began his extremely successful thirty-year diplomatic career in East Asia.²² From October 1888 to October 1889 he was granted longer leave. During this time, he attended, among other things, the Congress of Orientalists in Stockholm, but he also extended his leave in order to marry Eleonore Pertazzi, on 9 November of the same year in Graz. Together, they then travelled to Shanghai and lived there until his untimely death. He drowned on 26 July 1896 off the island of Putuo (普陀), at the age of 49.²³ Cvetka Marjanovič has a copy of a newspaper article published on 27 July 1937 in *The Shanghai Times*, from which we learn that on the 41st anniversary of his death, a few old friends gathered to commemorate Josef Haas at the French Cemetery in Shanghai on Avenue Joffre (now Central Huaihai Road 淮海路), next to the obelisk dedicated to “one of the leading Shanghai figures of the second half of the 19th century”.²⁴ The obelisk was commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary.

Life in Shanghai in the Early 1890s

When Eleonore arrived in Shanghai, the city had already become one of the largest cities in China and was the leading centre for trade, finance and

15 Ibid., 501. It is sometimes stated that her father came from Slovenske Konjice in Slovenia (Čeplak Mencin 2012, 86–87; Blagojevič, interview on 19 August 2023), but this is not true.

16 Krstna knjiga/Taufbuch, Vojnik, 1824–1840, 177.

17 The Academy of Oriental Languages was founded in 1753–1754 by Maria Theresia. This institution is the predecessor of the famous Vienna Diplomatic Academy.

18 Deusch 2017, 501.

19 Ibid., 307.

20 Ibid., 307, 501.

21 Neff 2020, 51.

22 Deusch 2017, 308–09.

23 In Memoriam: Josef Ritter von Haas, SI-ZAC/1008, Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje; Deusch 2017, 308.

24 Krause 1937. The same copy of the article is also held in the Celje Historical Archive.



Fig. 4: Postcard of Huangpu Road in Shanghai. Issued 1907–1918. From The New York Public Library. Accessed 7 February 2024. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/c261eb5f-965a-1446-e040-e00a1806116e>



Fig. 5: Eleonore and Josef Haas on the balcony of the consulate of Austria-Hungary in Shanghai, China. 1889–1896. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 7. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

industry. It was one of the five ports opened to foreign trade after the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842 and soon became the most important distribution point for more than half of the goods exchanged between China and the rest of the world.²⁵ The rapid economic development and growth of a mixed-nationality population also led to social, cultural and artistic activities in the city. The foreigners, whose number rose to more than 5,000 by 1895,²⁶ lived mainly in the Anglo-American Settlement (renamed International Settlement in 1899) and the French Concession, located north of the Huangpu River (黃浦江), formerly known as the Whangpoo River. Huangpu (Whangpoo) Road (fig. 4), north of the confluence of the Huangpu River and Suzhou Creek, was also the location of the consulates of Austria-Hungary, Germany, US and Japan. The Austro-Hungarian Consulate was located at 44–46 Huangpu Road in the immediate vicinity of the US consulate.²⁷ This was where Eleonore lived during her stay in Shanghai. Although some of the consuls and other diplomats lived in adjoining residential buildings, the Haases seem to have lived on the upper floor of the consulate, as we can see from the photograph showing Eleanore next to her husband on the consulate balcony, with the inscription on the back “am Balkon, Lola ü. ihr Mann im ihren Heim” (fig. 5).

This situated Eleonore close to the social and cultural centres where foreigners gathered. Nearby was the famous Astor House Hotel, Shanghai’s leading hotel, which also served as a dynamic hub for foreigners (fig. 6). Across the Garden Bridge (now Waibaidu Bridge 外白渡橋) over the Suzhou Creek were the HBM (British) Consulate, the Public Garden and several roads leading inland from the Bund (a waterfront area and historical district in central Shanghai), among which Nanjing Road (or Maloo Road) was the most important. The buildings of several banks, telegraph and telephone companies, business houses (*hong* 行) as well as the Kelly & Walsh bookstore, the Custom

House and the Shanghai Club were erected along the Bund. The townscape and public view that Eleonore Haas enjoyed in Shanghai must have been somewhat different from those of residents and tourists even in the early 20th century, as some of the buildings and monuments were constructed during her time in the city. There were several construction sites and opening ceremonies which she would certainly have known about, even if she did not attend them. Just one year after her arrival, a statue of the British diplomat Harry Smith Parkes (1828–1885) was unveiled. The new Custom House was built in 1893 in the Tudor style with a clock tower in the centre of the building and the Central Police Station was built in 1891–1894 in the early Renaissance style. Construction work would also have continued apace between 1894 and 1896, for the French Consulate and the new Town Hall and market were completed in the year of Eleonore’s husband’s death, 1896, when she left Shanghai.²⁸ The Yangtszepoo neighbourhood (now Yangshupu Road 楊樹浦路), the main industrial area of old Shanghai, with factories, docks and shipyards along the river, also made its appearance in the last decade of the 19th century, with spinning mills opening around 1897 and the Yangtszepoo police station in 1890.²⁹ In addition to the foreign buildings, Chinese-style buildings were also constructed during Eleonore’s time in Shanghai. These included the famous Shanse Bankers’ Guild House with three courtyards and four main buildings, built in 1892, which according to the 1904 Shanghai travel guide was a must-see.³⁰

Not only in the Chinese part of the city, but also in the foreign settlements, there were many other Chinese buildings, temples, opium shops, Cantonese teahouses, restaurants, theatres, and a variety of shops with fine Chinese silk and embroidery, clothes, headdresses, jewellery, shoes, Chinese antiques and curiosities, including second-hand shops and pawnshops where one could buy high-quality items cheaply. Moreover, Eleonore lived in one of

25 Cartwright 1908a, 368.

26 Xiong 2022, 26.

27 Darwent 1904, x.

28 Ibid., 7–15.

29 Ibid., 65.

30 Ibid., 54.



Fig. 6: Postcard of Astor House Hotel, Shanghai, circa 1890. Issued 1907–1918. From The New York Public Library. Accessed 7 February 2024. <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/c261eb5f-965e-1446-e040-e00a1806116e>

the busiest areas, with thousands of vehicles passing the Garden Bridge every day and a multitude of boats travelling through the arch.³¹ According to the 1904 travel guide, this district, which lies between the Suzhou and Hongkou (虹口) creeks (now Yujing pu 俞涇浦), boasted the most picturesque medley of foreign and Chinese life, not only in Shanghai but in any other treaty port. One could watch small animals being transported to market on bamboo trays, fruit and vegetables being landed from boats, people packing and carrying things away on bamboo.³² The shops near the Garden Bridge were mainly Chinese and Japanese, as the Japanese community also lived mainly in this part of the International Settlement.

This was the scene in which Eleonore found herself after moving to Shanghai in 1889. The cosmopolitan character of Shanghai as a place where

people from different countries came together, and the advantages it offered to foreigners, certainly made a great impression on the twenty-three-year-old, who had not been directly exposed to Chinese or Japanese culture or society before her marriage. We know little about her childhood, but the fact that she was born on the Romanian-Bulgarian border as the daughter of an Austro-Hungarian diplomat in the then Ottoman Empire and later moved to Graz, where she met Josef Haas, shows that she grew up in a cosmopolitan spirit of different cultures and suggests she could move between new countries with relative ease. Although Shanghai had no electric tramway in her time, there was a permanent water supply provided by two private companies and electricity had been in use since 1882.³³ All this enabled Shanghai residents to live comfortably and, according to H. A. Cartwright, author and assistant editor of a series of early 20th

31 Ibid., 27.

32 Ibid., 40–42.

33 Cartwright 1908a, 371.

century impressions of various countries, “enjoy every comfort and convenience to be found in the most progressive European cities”.³⁴ Exceptional facilities were created for all forms of outdoor recreation and numerous clubs were founded to encourage social interaction. In his impressions of Shanghai, H. A. Cartwright concludes that “the monotony which is characteristic of life in the East is absent from Shanghai, which is often styled the ‘Paris of the Orient’ in recognition of its gaiety”.³⁵

Eleonore Haas’s Network in Shanghai and her Social Activities

As the wife of a highly respected diplomat, Eleonore played a prominent role in the social life of the community and championed the interests of her compatriots in a variety of ways, thus supporting her husband’s activities. Josef Haas, who was appointed Consul General in 1892,³⁶ three years after their marriage, not only represented foreign trade abroad, protected Austrian citizens and thus served domestic interests, but was also highly praised as a beloved, friendly and respected personality.³⁷ It was common at the time to complain that consuls were poorly educated, that they did not speak foreign languages fluently, and that their social behaviour was inappropriate,³⁸ but none of this applied to Josef Haas. On the contrary, he was a highly educated man, who spoke fluent Chinese and was praised as the most knowledgeable sinologist.³⁹ In his mid-twenties, he had translated the programme of the 1873 Vienna World’s Fair into a very sophisticated semi-classical Chinese,⁴⁰ for which he was awarded the Golden Cross of Merit

with the Crown,⁴¹ and had gone on to compile a German-Chinese dictionary and publish many articles.⁴² As was ideally expected of consuls, Haas was also familiar with the law, domestic and foreign policy and the principles of business management. This was reflected in his appointment as foreign assessor at the Mixed Court,⁴³ which was responsible for trials against Chinese who had committed offences in the foreign settlements. According to Cartwright, an assessor sat six days a week: the British consular representative for three days, the representative of the United States for two, and the Austro-Hungarian (or, in his absence, the German) representative for one day.⁴⁴

We can therefore assume that Eleonore’s entry into Shanghai high society was certainly initiated by her highly esteemed husband, but the postcards and greetings sent to her many years later, after her husband’s death, by many important diplomats and other foreigners of all nationalities, show the genuine connections she made and the important role she played during the seven years she lived in Shanghai. Her personalia folder, where her personal papers are kept in the Celje Historical Archive, contains photographs, postcards and many other documents which she brought with her on her move to Mozirje. Researching these documents allows us to reconstruct her life and activities and thus unravel the mystery surrounding this woman and her collection in Mozirje. It also gives us an insight into the personal life of her husband, beyond what we learn from the official reports and correspondence that Haas submitted to the Austrian government.

Cabinet cards make up a large part of the contents of Eleonore Haas’s folder in the Celje archive. This is a specific style of photographic portrait that emerged towards the end of the 19th century. The rapid development of photography in the 19th century, followed by the proliferation of

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., 372.

36 In Memoriam: Josef Ritter von Haas, SI-ZAC/1008, Fond Eleonore von Haas, Celje Historical Archive.

37 Cf. Neff (2020, 52–53).

38 Frank Johnson 2018, 168.

39 Ibid.

40 The English programme of the world exhibition and Haas’s translation into Chinese are kept in Eleonore’s personalia folder in the Celje Historical Archive.

41 Deusch 2017, 308.

42 For more on Haas’s life and work see Neff (2020) and Obuchová (2009).

43 Deusch 2017, 309.

44 Cartwright 1908b, 401.

photographic studios, led to large businesses offering studio portraits in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Nagasaki, Yokohama and other major cities in Asia. Compared to the *carte de visite*, the photographic format widely used previously, the cabinet card was larger and featured a logo and the name of the photo studio on the back. Some of the cabinet cards in Eleonore's folder are decorated on the reverse with a large, ornate text in italics which, together with the signature, confirms that they were produced in the last two decades of the 19th century. Most of the cabinet cards show men, in the standard "western" format, with only head and shoulders. A few of them have beautifully designed backgrounds.⁴⁵ Of course, a fashionable photo portrait raises many questions about the person in the photo—when and where it was taken, what the occasion was, who would receive copies and on what occasions—but it nevertheless also reveals a connection between the subject of the photo and its owner. In the case of Eleonore's collection of cabinet cards, which are sometimes inscribed or signed, it is clear that they were given to the Haases by people who knew them. Among them were Madame Blondin, Bertha Blondin, Tomaso di Savoia, Häuler L. (?), Emil S. Fischer, Carl Pietzük, Josef Hay junior, officer Biera, G. Mailasher (?), Pierre Burg (?), Emil Hirsch, Arthur Rosthorn, Leopold Jedina, Max Eduard Goepfert (Göpfert) and many others whose identity requires further research.

While the list of members in the clubs or other public institutions in which Haas was active shows the many influential people he knew and worked with in Shanghai, the names on the cabinet cards allow us to reconstruct the network of people he and his wife socialised with and with whom they probably had closer relationships. It is illuminating to look briefly at the personalities involved.

Emil Sigmund Fischer (1865–1945) worked as an accountant at the Deutsch-Asiatische Bank in Shanghai from 1894 to 1898.⁴⁶ He was born in Vienna and moved to China in 1894 after living

for several years in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro and New York, where his parents had settled. He spent the next 50 years in China, mainly in Tianjin, where he worked in trade, accounting and finance and specialised in the Chinese economy. He was a member of the Board of Directors of the Hotung Baugesellschaft, a construction company founded in 1906 in the Austro-Hungarian concession in Tianjin.⁴⁷ He was also appointed advisor to the commissioner for China at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition of 1915.⁴⁸ He travelled extensively in China and wrote several geographical reports for the Austrian Geographical Society and also books about his travels. In one of his most comprehensive books, *Travels in China 1894–1940*, he described his first encounter with Eleonore and Josef Haas:

When I first had arrived from America in Shanghai, in the Spring of 1894, immediately on descending the gangplank of the Nippon Yusen Kaisha steamer which had brought me from Japan, I went to leave visiting cards at the Austro-Hungarian Consulate General in front of our Steamer's Jetty. The Consul General, the late Joseph von Haas, sent word that he would not hear of my going away to a Hotel. Haas knew of me and of my expected arrival; he made me stay, although a Consular party was just sitting down to Tiffin. Mr. and Mrs. von Haas had on that occasion an elderly Doctor at table, who that morning had returned from a Great Journey into the largest and westernmost of all Provinces of China, Szechwan.⁴⁹

This encounter sowed the seeds of a lifelong friendship. Fischer clearly remained in contact with Eleonore Haas after her husband's death and was aware of her situation after she returned to Europe, as is evident from an entry in the personal index of his 1941 travel book:

⁴⁵ Thiriez 1999, 80.

⁴⁶ Fischer 1941, 278.

⁴⁷ Wright and Cartwright 1908, 751.

⁴⁸ Fischer 1941, 167.

⁴⁹ Fischer 1941, ii.



Fig. 7: Emil S. Fischer, photo in Sze-yuen-Ming studio, Shanghai. Hand inscription on the back: "Seinem geschätzten Gönner u. Förderer, Herrn General Consul v. Haas u. Frau, In tiefer Hochschätzung von Privato Emil S Fischer, Shanghai Voluntar Corps (?) 1894/1896". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 6. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Fig. 8: Emil S. Fischer, unknown photographer. Hand inscription on the back: "Emil S. Fischer nahe dem See Bad Strande von Pei Tai Ho in 1937". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 6. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Fig. 10: Max Eduard Göpfert with two Japanese women, Kōzaburō Tamamura studio in Yokohama, Japan. Hand inscription on the back: “Nicht der Sehnsucht nach japanischem Thee aber Japans Specialitäten habe das Opfer gebracht. To Mrs & Mr Josef v. Haas From M. Goepfert 2./3. 95”. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 15. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

in Vienna and glassworks in Bohemia, Moravia, Hungary, Russian Poland and the German Empire. We see him in three hand-coloured photos (two from 1895, one undated), wearing Japanese clothes and posing with stylishly dressed girls, probably geishas, in a typical Japanese setting of the time. These photographs come from the studio of Kōzaburō Tamamura (1856–1923?) in Yokohama, Japan, who specialised in tourist photographs and souvenir photo albums. On the reverse side Göpfert wrote his greetings or simply “Raritäten Specialitäten aus Japan” to Mrs & Mr Josef v. Haas. However, we cannot assume with certainty that they were sent to the Haases from Yokohama. It could be that the photos were presented when the friends met on a special occasion in 1895. Similarly, Bertha Blondin’s cabinet card was produced in the Japanese studio Kudanzaka in Tokyo, while the handwritten captions were written in Shanghai in 1890. In 1896, the Haases also received greetings in

French from Pierre Burg (?), sent from Tianjin on a cabinet card produced in the studio of the Japanese photographer Kusakabe Kimbei (1841–1934). This confirms that their circle of friends was not limited to the Austrian expatriate community in Shanghai—where in 1890 only 48 Austrians and Hungarians were living⁵⁴—but that they belonged to an internationally mixed community, living and working in various cities in East Asia.

Eleonore certainly knew the spouses of other diplomats, officials or Shanghai residents and socialised with them, as is shown by the few group photos portraying them at social gatherings. Her collection of menus—of which she was an avid collector—reveals a few more names, such as Mrs Sylva, Maria Malerie or Ms Kremer, but apart from these names her female friends mostly remain anonymous. The Japanese women whose portraits can be found in her collection have also

⁵⁴ Ibid., 448.



Fig. 11: Photograph of Japanese woman (Mori?) with a child. T. Suzuki in Shanghai, China, late 19th century. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 16. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Photographers

Fig. 12: Portrait of Chinese woman with two children. Inscription L. Yang. Late 19th century. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 16. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Fig. 13: Portrait of a Chinese woman at a table with a cut flower in a vase and a fan in her hand. Studio in Nanjing Road, China, late 19th century. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 9. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

lost their identities over time. Only a pencil inscription on the reverse (e.g. Ohana, Kikunoisan, Odaisan) sometimes gives them back the names by which they were known to Eleonore or by which she remembered them. The Japanese community lived in the same part of the international settlement, so it is not surprising that she also formed deeper friendships with Japanese women. A photo of Mori, a Japanese woman who was probably married to a foreigner, suggests that she and Eleonore must have had a special relationship (fig. 11).

This reinforces our conclusion that the Haases' circle of friends went beyond Europeans or Americans and included several Chinese and Japanese. It is interesting to note that while there are a number of portraits of Japanese women, Chinese women are largely absent from Eleonore's photographic legacy. Japanese women, who were also part of the expatriate community, had a different status from native Chinese women, who were mostly excluded from all activities outside the home and other social gatherings. There are only two photographs of Chinese women: one pictured with two children beside her in front of the entrance of a Chinese house or other Chinese building (fig. 12) and a beautiful young woman sitting modestly at a table with a cut flower in a vase and a fan in her hand (fig. 13).

While the former may have had a closer relationship to Eleonore, perhaps as the wife of one of her husband's Chinese colleagues in the consulate or other public service, the latter displays a standard pose for Chinese women, whose photos were initially commissioned for private use but soon turned into a commodity produced specifically for the foreign market, usually without the consent or even knowledge of the person in the photograph.⁵⁵ They were transformed into exotic objects, visually attractive for foreign buyers. This therefore makes it unlikely that the woman in the hand-coloured photo was an acquaintance of Eleonore. A similar colonial photographic trend also developed in Japan and many Japanese photographers depicted

Japanese women, in the tradition of the Japanese artists who portrayed beautiful women in ink and colour on silk or paper.⁵⁶ However, the photographs of Japanese women that form part of Eleonore's legacy are not representative of this commercial photographic tradition. They are more personal, and the sitters are mostly photographed in studios in Shanghai, dressed in a kimono, in a modest, elegant and respectful pose and without a pompous background (fig. 14). Handwritten inscriptions with names on some cards also bear witness to the fact that the women belonged to Eleonore's social circle in Shanghai.

While Chinese women are almost absent from Eleonore's legacy, there are several photographs of Chinese men, some with handwritten dedications, sent or given to her after she had already returned to Europe. The greetings are generally in German or French, but Li Dianzhang 李殿璋 (Litiantischang) also wrote a dedication in Chinese, “哈士夫人晒存李殿璋敬赠, 戊申三月” (“Mrs Haas, respectfully presented by Li Dianzhang in March of the Wushen year”) as well as German (fig. 15). This raises the question of whether Eleonore learnt Chinese during her time in Shanghai. In her personalia folder there are some Chinese documents and papers, one of which deals with the laws and regulations of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912), which could speak in favour of her knowing Chinese, but they could also have belonged to her husband, so it is difficult to say for sure. However, the fact that Li Dianzhang wrote the dedication and her name in Chinese indicates that she may have had at least a basic knowledge of the Chinese language or that she was expected to appreciate a note written in Chinese characters.

Li Dianzhang was the Qing government attaché at the embassy in Austria.⁵⁷ He and Eleonore probably met on 1 March 1908, as the signature on his photo indicates. It is difficult to say whether she already knew him from Shanghai or met him only after her return, but she certainly had friendly contact with representatives of the Chinese Qing

55 Cf. Thiriez (1999).

56 Cf. Wakita and Wang (2022, 11–48).

57 Jing and Tian 2020, 75.



Fig. 14: Portrait of a Japanese women Ohana (?), Ye Chung in Shanghai, China, late 19th century. Hand inscription on the back: "Ohana". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 16. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Fig. 15: Li Dianzhang, photograph atelier Franc Knes, Vienna, Austria, around 1908. Hand inscription on the back: "Frau General Consul L. Haas zur freundlichen Erinnerung an C. G. Litiantchang, 1 März 1908. 哈士夫人晒存李殿璋敬赠". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 16. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

government in Vienna, as evidenced by another two photographs in the collection. The official in the photo dated 4 June 1903 has not been identified, but the portrait dated 24 April 1905 (fig. 16) is of Yang Cheng (Yangtcheng), who according to Emil Fischer was “Shanghai’s Foreign Office Commissioner and ex-Minister of China to Austria.”⁵⁸ The inscription on the back of his photograph, dedicated to “Frau General-Consul von Haas”, reveals that it was given to her in Vienna in 1905, confirming that he was in Vienna at the time, most probably serving as the Minister to Austria. Fischer described him as an old friend who helped him obtain the necessary permits to travel to the interior of China.⁵⁹ Given Fischer’s close friendship with the Haases, it is very likely that they all knew each other from Shanghai and that Yang Cheng also belonged to their inner circle of friends.

Another prominent Chinese colleague, Yinchang 廕昌 (1859–1928), who signed his name as Yintchang on the back of his photo, with the dedication “zur freundlichen Erinnerung” and the date 21 May 1891, was a military official and ambassador to Germany who was also appointed the first Minister of War in the late Qing dynasty. He had previously enrolled at the Royal Prussian Military Academy and was sent to the 84th Austrian Infantry Regiment in Vienna as a lieutenant in 1883.⁶⁰ Upon his return to China, he played an important role in negotiating the German claim to Jiaozhou Bay 膠州灣 (Kiautschou Bay) and the harbour of Qingdao in Shandong as a result of the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895) and led the negotiations with Germany on the railway and mining agreements in Shandong Province and the Qingdao concession.⁶¹

Other Chinese colleagues whose photos or postcards are preserved in Eleonore’s folder include Ma Yongfa 馬永發 (Ma Yung Fah), a native of Nanhai (南海) in Guangdong, a diplomat in the late Qing dynasty and the Republic of China,

who held several positions in the consular service in Korea, including as consul there, in Chongjin,⁶² Yang Yulou (photo from the studio in Shanghai), Liu Weh Kwei (on horseback), Liu (?) Ching and several others whose identification is difficult due to the scarcity of data.

Eleonore probably formed most of her Chinese acquaintances through the network of her husband, whose diplomatic work certainly required cooperation with Chinese representatives of various public and state institutions. He is photographed with his Chinese colleague, Judge Cheng (Tseng), whose close relationship with Haas and whose work with him at court sessions are described in the books by Leopold Jedina and Gustav Kreitner, writing about their experiences and contact with Asia.⁶³ They depict Haas as fulfilling his duties as foreign assessor, assisting the Chinese magistrate in the Mixed Court (as mentioned above) in a friendly, conscientious, righteous and impartial manner, so that he was held in high esteem not only by foreigners but also by the Chinese. Not only was Eleonore’s husband respected, however, but the many greetings and dedications she herself received after her return to Europe show that she was also held in high esteem by the Chinese.

Naval officers or commanders of the Austro-Hungarian ships that sailed to East Asian waters also played a special part in the Haases’ life. Not only Josef but also Eleonore was photographed several times with ships’ officers. In one photo, she is sitting on a wooden desk chair, wearing an elegant white dress, a modern round hat and holding a fan in her hand (fig. 17). The inscription reads: “Lola Haas am Bord der ‘Zriny’ 90. Nanking”. Another group photo shows her in the same dress, surrounded by the Zrinyi crew, with Josef Haas in the background. Apart from visiting the crew on the ship, the Haases also invited them to the consulate, as the next two photos from Eleonore’s legacy show (figs. 18 and 19). Here, we see the officers or other crew members of the *Fasana*, who had probably been invited to a party at the consulate

58 Fischer 1941, iii.

59 Ibid.

60 Seuberlich 1971, 569–83.

61 MacMurray 1921, 236–63.

62 *Waibu Zhoukan* 1934, 36.

63 Kaminski and Unterrieder 1980, 275.



Fig. 16: Yang Cheng (Yangtcheng), atelier Thurmann, Vienna, Austria, around 1905. Hand inscription on the back: "Frau General-Consul von Haas Zum freundlichen Andenken Yangtcheng. Wien, den 24. April, 1905". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 16. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.



Fig. 19: Sunday party in front of the Austro-Hungarian Consulate, Shanghai, China, 1888. Hand inscription on the back: "Sonntagspartie vor dem austr.-ung. Ge. Consulate, Shanghai 1888". SI-ZAC/1008, signature 7. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

by Consul General Haas. The same group of people is photographed again in front of the building in a wittily placed vertical composition with Haas in the front. The inscription reads, “Sonntagspartie vor dem austr.-ung. Ge. Consulate, Shanghai 1888”. Although this photo was taken before Eleonore’s arrival in Shanghai, Haas’s friendly attitude, which was praised by many officers and seamen,⁶⁴ certainly continued after his return from holiday in Europe with his new wife. Eleonore’s personalia folder contains further photographs or documents confirming his and/or their friendly relations with the crews of the *Aurora*, *Zriny*, *Fasana*, and *Kaiserin Elisabeth* and the Spanish warship *Ulloa*.

The naval officer and author Leopold Jedina (1849–1924) seems to have had a special relationship with Josef Haas, as he appears several times in Eleonore’s photographic material, although it is not certain whether she had the opportunity to meet him. Leopold Jedina was an officer on the corvette *Fasana* in East Asia in the years 1887–1889, just two years before Eleonore moved to Shanghai. He was also an instructor of Archduke Leopold Ferdinand, a member of the Habsburg ruling family of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, who was on board the *Fasana* at the time. Jedina later wrote a comprehensive book, *An Asiens Küsten und Fürstenhöfen. Tagebuchblätter von der Reise Sr. Maj. Schiffes ‘Fasana’ und über den Aufenthalt an asiatischen Höfen in den Jahren 1887, 1888 und 1889*, which was published in Vienna and Olomouc in 1891 and in which he vividly describes the voyage of the corvette *Fasana*. He praised Haas as a self-sacrificing, friendly host and accomplished sinologist who, thanks to his 23-year stay, knew the language and customs of the country like no other.⁶⁵

We get a good picture of Josef and Eleonore’s organised social life and the network of people and institutions with which they interacted from the photographs of their activities (e.g. playing tennis, visiting the botanical garden, attending theatre performances and weddings) and—a

special feature indeed—from a collection of more than 40 menus. This certainly deserves to be explored further. For the purposes of this chapter, we will deal only with the various institutional social structures with which the Haases identified. The most interesting—and the one that does not appear in any of the official or state reports—is Freemasonry. The three menus of installation banquets and dinners, all held at the Shanghai Club in December of the three years 1892, 1893 and 1894, show that Josef Haas served as a “Worshipful Brother” in the Northern Lodge of China, No. 570 E.C. and the Tuscan Lodge, No. 1027 (fig. 20). Both lodges were English lodges under the District Grand Master of Northern China, with their headquarters in the Masonic Hall on the Bund, built in 1867.⁶⁶ The Masonic Club, founded in 1882, had a library, reading room, billiard room, bar and other facilities. In the late 19th century, Freemasonry was so influential and flourished in Shanghai to such an extent that plans were made to expand it.⁶⁷ One of its important tasks was running the charity fund, which supported the public schools, known as Masonic schools by 1893, and awarded scholarships.⁶⁸ According to the 1904 travel guide, “the Masonic Body has taken a prominent part in the most striking public functions in Shanghai, such as the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria.”⁶⁹

Membership of two lodges is a clear indication of Haas’s role in these activities. Josef and Eleonore Haas were thus active members of their social circles and cultivated good relations with prominent and representative personalities from England, Scotland, North America, France and other countries. The menu collection reveals they were invited to several important events organised by Shanghai’s international high society. One of these was the Caledonian Ball, held at the Shanghai Club on 1 December 1890. The menu shows the badge of the Order of the Thistle with

64 Benko 1892, 48; Kaminski and Unterrieder 1980, 193.

65 Kaminski and Unterrieder 1980, 193.

66 Cartwright 1908a, 386.

67 Ibid., 390.

68 Ibid.

69 Darwent 1904, 152.

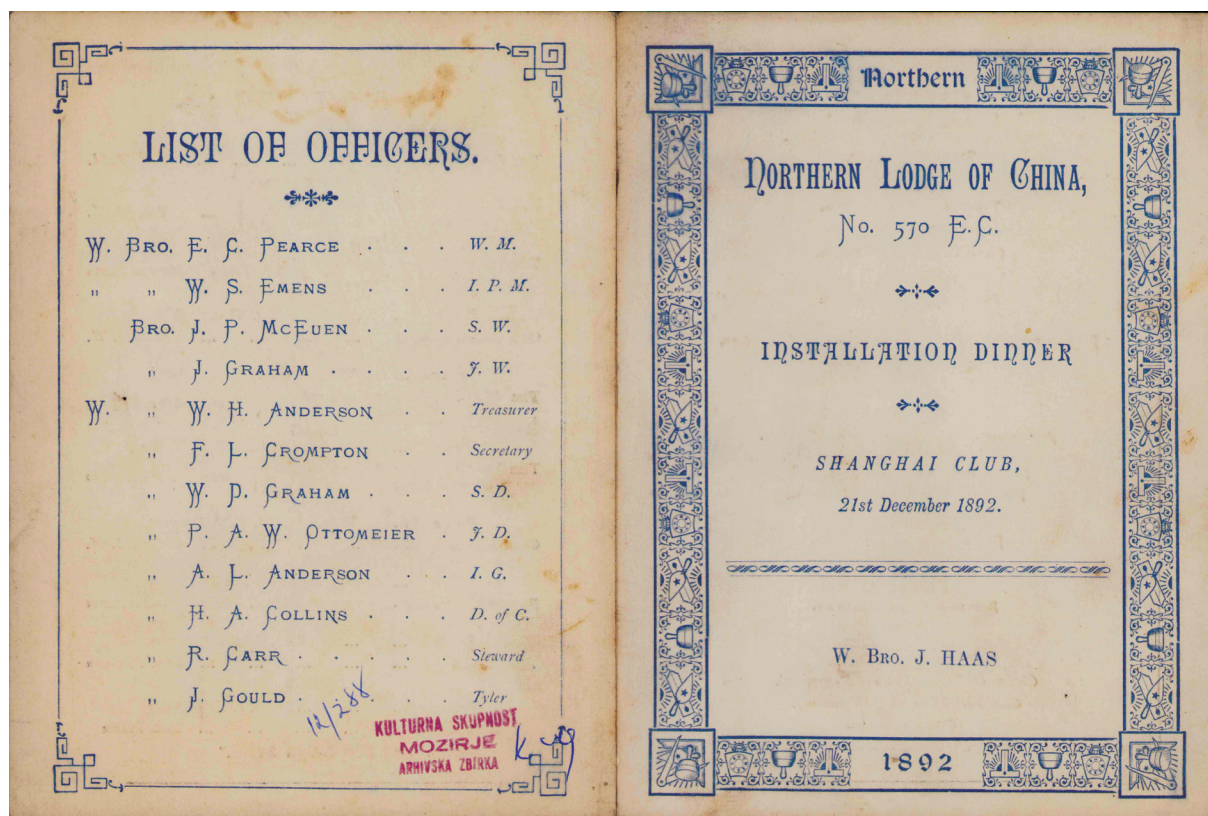


Fig. 20: Front and back cover of the invitation to the installation dinner of the Northern Lodge of China, No. 570 E.C., Shanghai Club, Shanghai, China. 21. 12. 1892. SI-ZAC/1008, signature 29. Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

St Andrew with the saltire and the Latin motto *Nemo me impune lacessit* ("No one attacks me with impunity"). On 19 December 1894, they attended the Jubilee dinner 1844–1894, which also took place at the Shanghai Club and was most probably organised by the American community, according to the inscription "John A. Lowell" and "Boston, USA" on the left-hand side of the menu.

Both events were held at the Shanghai Club, which was formed in 1862 and was soon to become the largest and most influential gentlemen's club in Shanghai.⁷⁰ In the 19th century, social life was organised around various institutional sports, music, theatre, and masonic and other clubs. In addition to the Shanghai Club, there were many others, such as the Country Club, the Club Concordia, the Masonic Club, the Recreation Club, the Polo Club (to name but a few), which provided

opportunities for the promotion and exchange of political, social and cultural views and, above all, gave people the chance to meet others. The Shanghai Club soon became the centre of business and social life in the foreign settlement. To become a member, a candidate needed either to have lived in Shanghai for six months or to have been a member of another recognised club.⁷¹ Josef Haas was certainly eligible for membership, if not even for honorary membership, a position reserved for ministers, consuls-general, consuls and judges, who could become honorary members at the invitation of the committee,⁷² as confirmed by invitations to several distinguished events in the three-storey red-brick building in the Bund.

The collection of menus in Eleonore's folder thus offers an unparalleled insight into the world of

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Wright and Cartwright 1908, 166.

⁷⁰ Cartwright 1908a, 388.

official social gatherings, dinners, inaugurations and balls, giving a glimpse into the network of institutions and individuals in which the Haases moved. Furthermore, a sketched seating arrangement drawn on the back of two menus shows that Eleonore was also the hostess of such dinners, at the consulate or other venues. Grand diplomatic lunches and receptions were held at the consulate, as confirmed by the handwritten inscriptions on the postcards from Shanghai that Emil Fischer sent to Eleonore (fig. 9). We also get an idea of the Haases' friendly relations with the French community from an invitation to the "Grande Fête Champêtre"—Great Country Festival—organised on Sunday 28 June in honour of Pierre Paul Mignard by the Friends of Duty and Pleasure, under the patronage of the established authorities and with the support of the Orphéon Municipal de Shanghai. The event, which took place in Wusong 吳淞 (Woosung), a treaty port about 20 km north of the present-day city centre of Shanghai, celebrated the inauguration of Pierre's Dock, which was followed by a large banquet in the guardroom and the planting of the first trees in Paul Park. We can infer that the Haases took part in other inauguration ceremonies of newly constructed buildings or parks, too. Their attachment to the French community is also reflected in the menus of the first-class Hôtel des Colonies, situated in the French settlement in Rue Montauban.⁷³

Eleonore Haas would probably have climbed even higher in the social ladder, had it not been for a tragic swimming accident. While on holiday on the island of Putuo, opposite Ningpo, with Eleonore and their friends—Italian consul Ernesto Ghisi, his wife, Mrs Dr. Edkins, Pastor Hackmann, their friend Brandt from the customs department, and a few others—Josef Haas drowned in the sea on 26 July 1896.⁷⁴ The newspaper report preserved in Eleonore's legacy blamed Haas's death on the same typhoon that caused the death of the crew of the German ship *Itis*, which was shipwrecked off the

coast of Shandong.⁷⁵ In November 1898, the *Itis* monument was unveiled in Shanghai to commemorate the death of the crew,⁷⁶ as was a stone obelisk in memory of Josef Haas in the old French cemetery, erected by imperial order of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry. Eleonore did not see the monument, but she was surely aware of it. Haas's popularity and the lasting respect in which he was held is abundantly clear from the fact that some of the Haases' surviving friends gathered here 41 years later, to mark the anniversary of his death.⁷⁷

The Path of the Valuable Collection of Objects

After her husband's death, Eleonore Haas left China. From Shanghai she travelled to Vienna, from there to Graz and then in 1913 to Mozirje.⁷⁸ She and her valuable collection of objects probably travelled by ship from Shanghai to Trieste, and from there by train to Vienna. Later, they would again have been taken by train to Graz and then Celje. From Celje the journey continued by wagon to Mozirje. According to Matija Blagojevič and Cvetka Marjanovič, "Lola came to Mozirje with huge boxes".⁷⁹ This is also indirectly confirmed by Marija Janko's testimony.

Eleonore deposited any boxes with items she did not need or could not use in the paint factory in Mozirje, which was then owned by the Graz industrialist Friedrich Hocke⁸⁰ and which passed

⁷³ Ibid., ix.

⁷⁴ In Memoriam: Josef Ritter von Haas, SI-ZAC/1008, Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

⁷⁵ Drowned at Sea, SI-ZAC/1008, Fond Eleonore von Haas, Historical Archive Celje.

⁷⁶ Darwent 1904, 6.

⁷⁷ Krause 1937.

⁷⁸ Čeplak Mencin 2012, 90.

⁷⁹ Interviewed by Barbara Trnovec, in Mozirje, on 19 August 2023.

⁸⁰ The company Kemična industrija Mozirje was founded in 1898 by the Graz industrialist Friedrich Hocke. After the First World War, it was taken over by Alojz Goričar, who lived locally, and who then, together with his companions, founded the company Savinjska tovarna barv in lesnih izdelkov Goričar & drugi, which produced earthen paints and wood products. It was nationalised in 1948 and the state company Kemična industrija Mozirje was founded.

to her relative Alojz Goričar after the First World War. She completely furnished the apartment in Štrucl (see above), or Pečnik's house, in which she lived later, with furniture and decorative and useful items that she brought from China. She kept part of her collection in an extra room in this house, while the remaining boxes remained in the factory.

In all, Eleonore kept the objects she brought from China for almost four decades, or until the end of her life. On the basis of the collected testimonies and the preserved material—mostly photographs and documents, and few objects—we can conclude with a very high probability that she was well aware of the value of this collection. At no time in her life did she attempt to sell or give away any objects that she brought to Mozirje, making only the occasional gift of an individual item, and she cared faithfully for it through peace and war. In the 1940s, she intended to take it with her to Graz, but death overtook her.

In 1943, immediately after Eleonore's death, part of her collection was taken by truck to Graz by her relative, Olga Kieslinger, née Goričar. According to Matija Blagojevič and Cvetka Marjanovič, this part of her collection was later fragmented, and the greater part is now most probably preserved somewhere near Innsbruck.⁸¹ Photographs of some of these objects in Graz are kept by Cvetka Marjanovič in Mozirje. The part of the collection that remained in the factory in Mozirje passed into the hands of the last owners of the factory, Bruno (1894–1972) and Fani Goričar (1899–1979). According to various, more or less credible testimonies,⁸² they took from the factory several wooden crates containing items from the collection to their house in the centre of Mozirje after the factory was nationalised in 1948. During Bruno and Fani Goričar's lifetime and especially after their death, the items from the collection were scattered

in many different directions. It is said that objects from the house were also carried around by children from the town, who even organised several flea markets. It is very likely that further research along these paths will lead to the discovery of some objects from the Haas collection, but the only objects from Eleonore's collection in Mozirje currently known to the authors are a few items that she gave to Ani Goričar, Nikolaj Marjanovič's grandmother, which are now in the possession of his wife Cvetka Marjanovič. A textile with embroidered orchids is also in the possession of her daughter Sergeja Marjanovič Pregelj. Apart from that, Matija Blagojevič has some photos and documents that he inherited from his aunt Marija Mary Goričar, the Mozirje Library possesses a translation of the programme of the Vienna World's Fair of 1873 into Chinese by Josef Haas, dated 1872, and some handmade drawings, while Eleonore's personal papers, photographs, postcards and other documents are kept in her personalia folder in the Celje Historical Archive, as discussed above.

The Nature and Acquisition of the Collection: Eleonore's Role in Collecting Activities

Besides enquiring into the current whereabouts of the items in Eleonore's collection, we should also consider how she acquired them, and whether she played an important part in assembling the collection alongside her husband. Although the surviving documents in Celje reveal Eleonore's network of acquaintances and close friends and the significant role she played in Shanghai high society, they tell us nothing about her collecting activities. And yet she managed the transport of many boxes full of all kinds of Chinese artefacts not only to Vienna, but also to a small provincial town in Styria in what was then Austria-Hungary. Although only a few smaller objects are currently known to the authors of this chapter, the surviving photographs of her house and the house of her relatives in Graz, who took over part of her

After joining Cinkarna, the company was renamed Kemija Celje and became a unit of Cinkarna (Kamra 2013).

81 Interviewed by Barbara Trnovec, in Mozirje, on 19 August 2023.

82 They are based on conversations with various interlocutors from Mozirje, conducted by Barbara Trnovec in the period July–September 2024.



Figs. 21a and 21b: Set of porcelain and of decorative plates, photographed in Mozirje or Celje. 1913–1943. Collection of Eleonore Haas. Photographs kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

collection after her death, show a wide variety of objects, including porcelain vases and plates, Buddhist sculptures and other religious artefacts, incense burners, bronze bells, silk robes with embroidery, embroidered screens and even carved furniture (figs. 3, 21–29). Were all these objects acquired by Eleonore or are they an inheritance from her husband? Were they both closely involved in the collecting activities?

Further research in Josef Haas's personalia folder, which is kept in the State Archives in Vienna, shows that he bequeathed several boxes of Chinese artefacts, books and other curiosities to his wife. In the section of his Will entitled *Verhaltung bei Ausführung meines Testamentes* ("Conduct in the execution of my Will"), he clearly instructed the

Schönbergers, who kept the boxes, to hand them over to his wife:

The Schönbergers also have a few boxes that should be given to my wife without further ado; they contain artefacts (?), books and curiosities. The Schönbergers have kindly taken custody of the boxes; there is also a box of mine in the Court Museum for safe-keeping (books, bronze drum), which my wife is to take with her. I ask my wife not to give it to the Court Museum. I have done more for the museum than any other consul. The museum [those responsible there] lacks gratitude.⁸³

83 Josef Haas Personalia Folder. Austrian State Archive.



Fig. 22: Bronze incense burner. China. Qing dynasty (?). Collection of Eleonore Haas. Kept in Graz (?). Photograph kept by Cvetka Marjanovič in Mozirje.

In the same document we also read the instructions to his wife to “take the boxes in the custody of Mr Eiter to Europe”, while another box of precious bronzes was placed in the custody of Giuseppe Bassevi in Trieste, a businessman who had founded a large sugar export company.⁸⁴ This makes it very likely, therefore, that many of the boxes Eleonore brought to Mozirje were bequeathed to her by her husband. Josef Haas was one of the main suppliers of Chinese objects to the Natural History Museum in Vienna and other museums in Austria-Hungary. The shipping documents kept in the archives of the Viennese Natural History Museum show that he sent at least 68 crates of natural history, ethnographic, zoological and other museum objects

from Shanghai or Hong Kong to Trieste via the Austro-Hungarian Lloyd’s Steamship Company.⁸⁵ During his one-year service in Korea (1883–1884), he also acquired Korean objects for the Natural History Museum, including three Korean skulls from graves in or near Seoul.⁸⁶ According to the *Chronicle & Directory for China, Japan & the Philippines* of 1877, Haas was also the only representative for the Art Union of Bohemia.⁸⁷ His input can also be seen in Budapest in the garden of the Ferenc Hopp Museum of Asiatic Arts, where he supported Ferenc Hopp (1833–1919) with the construction of the Chinese Moon Gate, the most representative part of the villa’s garden, by helping him to buy roof tiles, decorations, stone lions and stone tablets directly from China.⁸⁸

It is safe to assume that Josef Haas was also the author of the anonymous 52-page study in the Celje Historical Archive on Chinese numismatics and the early history of China from the legendary Chinese ruler Yandi 炎帝 to the middle period of the Tang dynasty (618–907), given his excellent command of the Chinese language, and the fact that he was also a member of the Numismatic Society in Vienna and the renowned North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in Shanghai.⁸⁹ Although it was difficult to become a member of the Royal Asiatic Society, as members had to be recommended and approved by the Council, Haas joined as early as 1869 and served as Vice-President from 1882, later even being appointed Honorary Librarian.⁹⁰ His contribution to the Society is also mentioned by Arnold Wright and H. A. Cartwright, in the context of

85 1 box of scientific objects, 7 boxes of natural historical objects, 3 boxes of sundries, 2 boxes of Chinese household items, 5 boxes of museum goods, 6 packages of zoological objects, 29 packages of ethnographical objects, 14 packages containing ethnographical and zoological objects and 1 case containing herbarium (Haas Josef, Archive of the Natural History Museum, Vienna).

86 Neff 2020, 60.

87 “The Shanghai Directory” 1877, 291.

88 See chapter in this book by Gyorgyi Fajcsák.

89 Deusch 2017, 308.

90 Neff 2020, 52, 55 and 64; Deusch 2017, 308.

84 (*Neuigkeits*) *Welt Blatt* 1909, 8.

the detailed description of the treaty harbours in China which they published in 1908.⁹¹

Josef Haas was thus certainly the main agent for the Austro-Hungarian institutions in their search for Chinese artefacts. In recognition of his achievements in enriching the collections of the Natural History Museum in Vienna, he was even awarded the Order of the Iron Crown III Class in 1889.⁹² It is interesting to note, however, that the correspondence between Haas and the Natural History Museum intensified after 1890, one year after his marriage to Eleonore.⁹³ Moreover, all 68 crates of objects sent to the Natural History Museum, whose shipping records have been preserved, were sent between 1890 and 1895, the time when Eleonore was with him in Shanghai.⁹⁴ Was he supported and encouraged by his wife after her arrival in Shanghai? As Haas was busy with numerous commercial, business, diplomatic and other matters and worked intensively from morning to night,⁹⁵ it is quite possible that Eleonore took over some of his responsibilities related to the selection and acquisition of objects.

When Eleonore arrived in the multinational and cosmopolitan city of Shanghai, she will have found herself at the centre of a dynamic art market, with numerous Chinese and Japanese shops selling various types of objects. This must have made a significant impact as she started a new life, trying to adapt to a new culture that was so different from anything she had experienced before. The 1904 travel guide to Shanghai directs the tourist to many Chinese, Japanese and Indian “curiosities” with “high-class goods”, mostly located along Nanjing Road, with some also on Jiangsu (Kiangse) or Sichuan (Szechuen) Roads. They offered a variety of items, such as silver and gold, but also “Cantonese silks, blackwood and porcelain, ivory, jewellery,

Ningpo inlaid work.”⁹⁶ The guidebook specifically mentions shops with Chinese brass, porcelain, inlaid work, cloisonné bamboo, and lacquerware, and refers to Lee Tai on Nanjing Road or shops on Jiangsu and Sichuan Roads. There were also shops in the French settlement, and the guide advises travellers to visit the numerous pawnbrokers, too.⁹⁷ Eleonore would certainly have been familiar with the variety of merchants, from whom she most probably bought beautifully embroidered silk robes, as we can see from the surviving photographs and four pieces of embroidered textiles preserved in Mozirje. One of them shows a woman’s jacket embroidered with flowers on blue silk (fig. 23), two others present decorative ribbons with flowers, bats, butterflies, pavilions and other motifs with auspicious meanings, while a silk embroidery in frame depicts orchids. The inscription (*Guangxu jiu nian xing yue* 光绪九年杏月) dates this piece to February of the ninth year of the Guangxu Emperor (1875–1908), i.e. 1883. The inscription below (*Shenmen shenshi zhu* 沈門沈氏助) indicates the workshop, or that it was made in the Shen embroidery style. This is one of the traditional craft traditions of embroidery, which originated in the city of Suzhou in southern China, near Shanghai. Other photographs showing Eleonore and her friends in Chinese clothing and with fans indicate that she had quite a large collection of Chinese clothing, shoes, hats and other textiles, including imperial and official robes with rank badges. She must have chosen many of these herself. She was surrounded by high society, in a milieu in which it was customary to decorate one’s home with Chinese antiques.

Considering how Eleonore furnished her home in Mozirje—and the effort she must have put into transporting the objects across the globe, given the long distance, long journey time and paucity of travel options—it is very likely that Chinese objects also found their way into the decoration of her married living quarters in Shanghai, although there are no photographs to confirm this. We do

91 Cartwright 1908a, 386.

92 Deusch 2017, 310.

93 See Haas Josef, Archive of the Natural History Museum, Vienna.

94 Ibid.

95 Kaminski 1980, 274.

96 Darwent 1904, xviii, xix.

97 Ibid, xix.



Fig. 23: Woman's jacket embroidered with flowers on blue silk, China, Qing dynasty. Collection of Eleonore Haas. Kept by Cvetka Marjanovič in Mozirje.

have a photograph of Eleonore posing with a friend in Chinese dress in front of a four-panel folding screen with embroidered bird-and-flower motifs, but it is not clear where it was taken. It could be from Shanghai, but her flats in Vienna or Graz are also possible locations (fig. 24).

The two black-and-white photographs of Eleonore's house in Mozirje do, however, provide a valuable insight into how she displayed Chinese objects, which objects she favoured and how her collection defined her living space (figs. 3 and 25). Both are undated and they contain no information about the precise location, but it is clear that two different rooms were furnished with Chinese artefacts. This is consistent with the statement by Marija Janko, who mentioned that Eleonore lived in two rooms, while at the same time she had another room upstairs where she kept other artefacts. In addition, the arrangement of the furniture and the framed pictures on the walls confirm that two of the photographed rooms were her living quarters. In both living rooms, there was a western-style

table in the centre of the room with several pieces of porcelain on it. The display cabinets next to the wall in both rooms were filled with porcelain and cloisonné vases, jars and bowls, as well as Buddhist sculptures. Various types of vessels were also placed above the two cabinets. The display cabinet with the Buddhist sculptures is richly carved and decorated with many motifs and has numerous open shelves, cabinets and drawers. It features a type of furniture known in China as *duobaoge* 多寶閣 ("shelf of many treasures or display cabinet"), which appeared in the Qing dynasty and was used specifically to display antiques in multiple compartments, while still giving the whole arrangement the appearance of a single unit. Eleonore achieved a similar effect by placing two Buddhist figures in the centre of the two open shelves and placing other objects next to them. Next to the cabinet was a large porcelain vase with a large porcelain bowl on top. In the other photo, with four friends in Chinese dress, we see a large porcelain plate on the wall above the silk hanging depicting immortals.



Fig. 24: Eleonore and her friend in front of the panel. Photographed in Shanghai, Vienna or Graz, late 19th or early 20th century. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.



Fig. 25: One of two rooms with Chinese objects in Mozirje. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

Four further black-and-white photographs show four different sets of objects: porcelain vases, decorative plates, Buddhist and other religious sculptures, and textile pieces (figs. 21, 26 and 27). The photographs were taken in Mozirje or Celje. It seems that Eleonore grouped the most representative objects into four sets, probably in order to take photographs. The photograph of sculptures reveals quite a number of seated Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, that might date back to the Ming dynasty (1368–1644). One of them is Cundī, a female Indian Buddhist deity who is depicted with eighteen arms, each wielding a tool symbolising skilful means, while eighteen arms also represent the eighteen merits for attaining Buddhahood. There are also some other sculptures of popular belief, such as the god of longevity Shouxing (壽星), one of the three stellar gods collectively known as Fulusou (福祿壽). He is usually depicted as a bearded old man with a high forehead. Other attributes

include a curved staff, a peach of immortality, a tortoise and a stag as further symbols of longevity. While these are all old black-and-white photographs, the colour photographs from Graz give an insight into the richness of colour in her home as well as the type of objects she displayed. As far as porcelain is concerned, she seems to have favoured blue-and-white porcelain, although several other coloured porcelain vases also adorned her living spaces (fig. 29).

All this places Eleonore among the more systematic collectors who are able to organise and compare their acquired objects in order to distinguish some details and make identifications.⁹⁸ She was clearly personally attached to the objects and probably played an important role in their acquisition. Moreover, although she gave some objects to her friends and relatives on special occasions, she did not give or sell a single object from her

⁹⁸ Pearce 1992, 84.



Fig. 26: Set of Buddhist and other religious sculptures. Photograph in Mozirje or Celje. 1913–1943. Collection of Eleonore Haas. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

extensive collection to museums—which would certainly have been interested in acquiring them—but preferred to keep the collection in its entirety at home despite her financial issues. There is only one object in the Weltmuseum (formerly a department of the Natural History Museum) in Vienna that Eleonore sold after her husband's death. It is the bronze drum (fig. 28). This must be the drum that Haas had mentioned in his Will with the request that it not be given to the museum, as he had already sent and donated more to the museum than any other consul. As it was already in the Natural History Museum together with European, Japanese and Chinese books at the time of Haas' death, Eleonore probably decided to sell it for practical reasons. She also sold books to the



Fig. 27: Set of textile pieces with embroidery. Photograph in Mozirje or Celje. 1913–1943. Collection of Eleonore Haas. Photograph kept by Matija Blagojevič in Mozirje.

Natural History Museum and the Court Library, as can be seen from the correspondence of 1898 between Franz Heger (1853–1931), the Head of the Anthropological-Ethnographic department of the Natural History Museum, and Rudolf Geyer, who worked in the Court Library.⁹⁹

Conclusion

We can conclude that Eleonore Haas was not just a passive observer of her husband's collecting activities for the museums but must have played an active role in selecting the objects, probably also those that were packed in the boxes for the Natural History

⁹⁹ Heger 1898; Geyer 1898.

Museum. Most of these “ethnographic” objects, as they were labelled in the shipping documents, are now in the Weltmuseum in Vienna. It is interesting to note that the Haas collection in the museum today (e.g. porcelain and cloisonné vases and other vessels, religious sculptures, and silk embroideries) contains objects similar in type, style and decoration to those Eleonore kept at home. Her personal taste and her preference for blue-and-white porcelain, Buddhist sculptures and silk embroideries are thus also reflected in the collection of the Weltmuseum.

How large Eleonore’s collection was, how it was dispersed and where it ended up will be the subject of further research. As already mentioned, she brought so many objects to Mozirje that she had to store them in the factory. Part of the collection went to Austria, part was scattered around Mozirje. How many pieces she had already passed on to her friends and relatives in Vienna and Graz is difficult to say, but as is so often the case when objects are

transported and moved—in her case not just to one place, but to several—some were most probably lost. What kind of objects were kept in the factory also requires further investigation, but we can infer from the selection with which Eleonore furnished her house and from the Haas collection in the Weltmuseum that the boxes would have contained similar types of objects, or simply objects that did not fit into the furnishings of her home because of their size, value or character. There must also have been more valuable bronzes. According to Haas’ Will, Eleonore should have taken charge of another box of bronzes that was kept in Trieste. Questions relating to the numismatic collection also remain unanswered. A comprehensive study on numismatics, which deals in detail with coins from different periods and contains sketches of various coins, is kept in Eleonore’s personalia folder in Celje. This would indicate that the Haases had also acquired a coin collection. A letter from the Austro-Hungarian



Fig. 28: Bronze drum. D. 47,7 cm; H. 28 cm, China. Collection of Eleonore Haas, inv. no. 63484. Weltmuseum Wien. Photograph by Clemens Radauer. ©KHM-Museumsverband.



Fig. 29: Porcelain vase. China, Qing dynasty. Collection of Eleonore Haas. Kept in Graz. Photograph kept by Cvetka Marjanovič in Mozirje.

consulate in Shanghai dated 30 November 1897 reveals that Eleonore was to receive a box of coins from Shanghai, as they had not managed to sell them after Josef Haas's death.¹⁰⁰ Whether or not she received them remains a mystery. Perhaps they were stored together with many other objects in the paint factory in Mozirje.

A more in-depth analysis of the size and value of her collection will therefore not be possible unless the items from her collection which have been scattered across Slovenia and Austria can be discovered and identified, piece by piece. In addition to the textiles mentioned above, there are currently only a few objects left in Mozirje: a small porcelain cup set into a metal mug, a metal vase and a wooden plaque with the inscription expressing blessing

and hope that the moon will always be round and people will always be healthy (*yue xi chang yuan ren xi jian* 月喜長圓人喜健).¹⁰¹ The rest can only be seen in old photographs, which makes it difficult to accurately assess the collection. However, the surviving photographs show that the collection comprises blue and white porcelain, some of which was probably made in Jingdezhen (景德鎮) during the Kangxi period (r. 1661–1722), bronze and porcelain sculptures, that might date back to Ming dynasty, embroidered textiles, particularly Qing imperial and official robes with rank badges and richly carved furniture from Qing dynasty. The objects were systematically arranged in sets that show a preference for four types of objects: porcelain, plates, sculptures and textiles. Whilst some of them, such as embroidery, furniture and some porcelain vases, were contemporary and date from the 19th century, others—especially Buddhist sculptures and blue-and-white porcelain—date from earlier periods. All in all, we hold out hopes that one of the many trails we are pursuing will lead to the missing treasures that will allow us to analyse Eleonore's collection in more detail.

100 Letter from General Consulate in Shanghai, dated 30 November 1897. Josef Haas Personalia Folder.

101 There were a pair of wooden plaques, one was taken to Graz.

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