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MEETING EAST ASIA



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EDITED BY  
HELENA MOTOH

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## M E E T I N G   E A S T   A S I A : F O R E W O R D

The area of what is politically Slovenia today, has a long and complex history of meeting cultures and traditions from East Asia. At least since the time when the Jesuits established a mission in Beijing and a Carniolan Jesuit, Augustine Hallerstein, served as an official in the Qing imperial court we recognize continuous contact with East Asian cultures, religions and traditions. The religious practices Jesuits had to “accommodate” to be able to spread the Gospel among the Chinese and the classical books they translated into European languages brought the first systematic knowledge of Asian traditions of thought to Europe. As for the Carniola of that time, however, Hallerstein’s letters home did not include much of those topics, focusing mostly on the issues of astronomy and the practical realities of the Jesuits’ lives in Beijing. The nineteenth century was marked by Sino-European conflict, the two opium wars and the Sino-French war and a series of other politically turbulent events, while all through that time, the image of China in the eyes of European intellectuals was not of something to be admired, but rather of a decaying corrupt empire, unable to modernize itself. On the other hand, Japan after the Meiji restoration became a source of European fascination. Its prints, porcelain, lacquerware and aesthetics in general were admired by experts, artists and fashionable crowds alike. The interest in China was revived after the First World War, which roughly coincided with the end of the Qing imperial rule and the May Fourth movement for national sovereignty and the revival of Chinese culture. Due to many historical circumstances, Slovenia received more information about East Asian cultures, religions and traditions of thought only after the First World War. Several adventurous and fascinating life histories helped: the fact that Ivan Skušek Jr., a China-imprisoned Austro-Hungarian naval officer had a passion for collecting antiques, the decision of a young woman from Celje, Alma Karlin, to travel the world on her own, and a spreading into Slovenia of the all-European trend in studying and opening to the inspiration of the religions of Asia – Vedic, Confucianism or Buddhism. The col-

lections Skušek and Karlin brought back home and the availability of other East Asian objects and antiques on the market matched well with the growing interest in East Asian traditions of thought to result in one of the most remarkable periods of intercultural and interreligious intellectual climates in Slovenian history.

The current issue of *Poligrafi* focuses on this historical period and explores different aspects of the contact with East Asian religions at that time. The text by Chikako Shigemori Bučar focuses on the visits Alma Karlin made to the temples and shrines in Japan and the traces that remain of those visits in her work and her collection. Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik focuses on how Alma Karlin met with Chinese funerary rituals and mourning practices and how she interpreted them. In the third paper Byoung Yoong Kang provides a detailed reconstruction of the events behind an image in Alma Karlin's collection that depicts a Korean funeral. In the fourth paper, Klara Hrvatin analyses Japanese musical instruments from the collection of Alma Karlin and their relation to religious music. The last paper, by Helena Motoh, talks about the many ways in which Confucian tradition was understood and interpreted in pre-WWII Slovenia.

Although Slovenia was by many standards at the periphery of great historical entities and changed its political affiliations several times in the past century, the analyses presented in this volume paint an interesting picture of a perhaps surprisingly open intellectual climate in the interwar period. Even beyond the intellectual circles of the time, religions of East Asia were met with, reflected and reinterpreted, while the heritage of this fruitful exchange – in the shape of debates, books, articles or collections – continues to the present day.

*Helena Motoh*

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# ALMA M. KARLIN'S VISITS TO TEMPLES AND SHRINES IN JAPAN

Chikako Shigemori Bučar

## Introduction

Alma M. Karlin (1889-1950), born in Celje, went on a journey around the world between 1919 and 1928, and stayed in Japan for a little more than a year, from June 1922 to July 1923. There is a large collection of postcards from her journey archived in the Regional Museum of Celje. Among them are quite a number of postcards from Japan (528 pieces), and among these, about 100 of temples and shrines, including tombs of emperors and other historical persons - i.e., postcards related to religions and folk traditions of Japan. Karlin almost always wrote on the reverse of these postcards some lines of explanation about each picture in German. On the other hand, the Japanese part of her travelogue is very short, only about 40 pages of 700. (*Einsame Weltreise / Im Banne der Südsee*, both published in Germany in 1930). In order to understand Alma Karlin's observation and interpretation of matters related to religions in Japan and beliefs of Japanese people, we depend on her memos on the postcards and her rather subjective impressions in her travelogue. This paper presents facts on the religious sights which Karlin is thought to have visited, and an analysis of Karlin's understanding and interpretation of the Japanese religious life based on her memos on the postcards and the Japanese part of her travelogue.

In the following section, Alma Karlin and her journey around the world are briefly presented, with a specific focus on the year of her stay in Japan, 1922-1923.

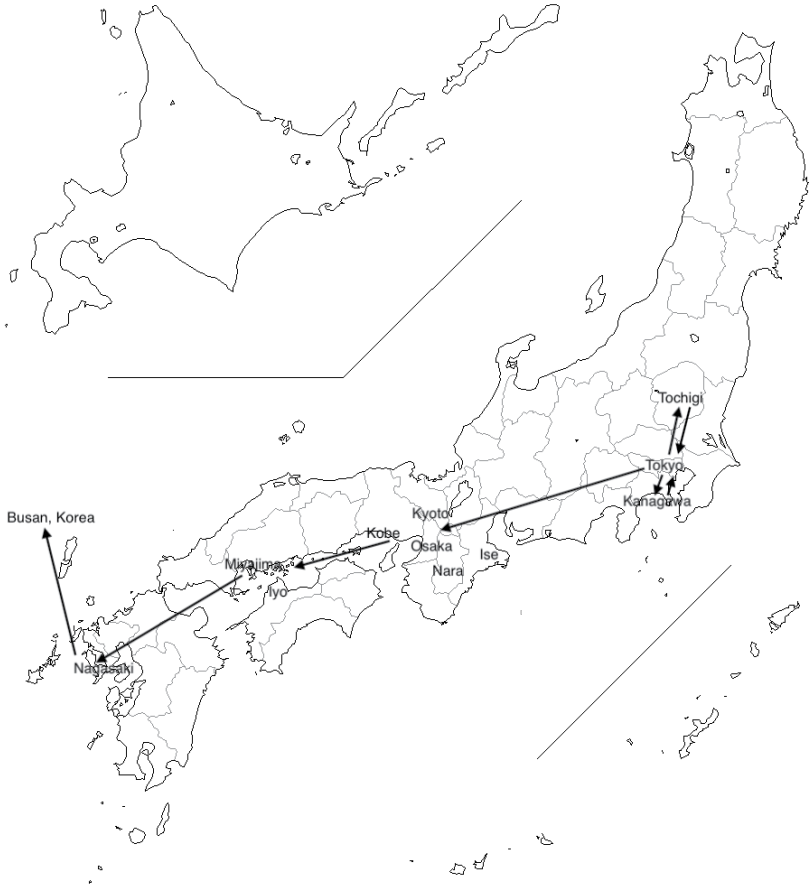
In the 3rd section of the paper, characteristics of religions in Japan and the religious life of the Japanese people at the beginning of the 20th century are summarised, particularly of the Taishō period (the reign of Emperor Taishō, 1912-1926).

The 4th and the central section of this paper presents the Japanese postcards related to religions, particularly those of temples, shrines and tombs, found in Karlin's collection in the Regional Museum in Celje.



Map 1: Tokyo (a: Asakusa Kanzeon, b: Kanda Myōjin, c: Yushima Tenjin, d: Kameido Tenjin, e: Yoshiwara Jinja, f: Takanawa Sengakuji, g: Meiji Jingū, E: German Embassy, L: Leybolds GmbH, Tokyo Office, M: Meiji University, S: Karlin's flat c/o Sugimoto).





Map 2: Japanese Archipelago and places Alma Karlin supposedly visited.

Wherever possible, Karlin's memos on the reverse of these postcards and her mention of these religious sights in her travelogue are connected and analysed. In the process of analysis, these places were geographically identified and located on maps. (Maps 1 and 2)

In conclusion, Karlin's observation and understanding of Japanese religious sights and people's religious life is summarised.

## Alma M. Karlin and the Taishō era

Alma Maximiliana Karlin, a writer, journalist, world traveller, amateur researcher, polyglot and theosophist<sup>1</sup>, was born to Slovene parents in the provincial town of Celje in Austria-Hungary. She was the only daughter of a retired Austro-Hungarian military officer and a teacher in a German girls' school, and raised strictly using the German language although both parents were of Slovene origin. After learning several European languages in England and Scandinavia, she returned to Celje and opened her own language school, but after a few years decided to go on a journey around the world. Her journey, Celje - Genoa - Peru - Panama Canal - Hawaii - Japan - Korea - Peking - Australia - New Zealand - Fiji - New Guinea - Indonesia - Siam - India and back home<sup>2</sup>, lasted from 1919 to 1927. Her original aim was to travel first to Japan, but as a result of circumstances - lack of money or the wrong papers - she instead took passage at Genoa on a ship bound for Mollendo, the southernmost port in Peru, reasoning that "if all roads lead to Rome, sooner or later they will surely lead me to Japan".<sup>3</sup>

From Peru, she travelled to Panama, the United States and Hawaii, and finally, she arrived in Yokohama on a ship in June 1922 and stayed in Japan till the first days of July, 1923.<sup>4</sup> That was the 11th and 12th year of the Taishō era in Japan. The Meiji era ended in July 1912, with the death of Emperor Meiji, and his son, Emperor Taishō, succeeded him to reign over Imperial Japan. Around the beginning of the Taishō era, the Japanese people probably still lived in the fresh memory of the victory over Russia in the Russo-Japanese war which was fought in 1904-05 in Manchuria and the Japanese Sea. Japan was the first Asian nation to fight and defeat one of the greatest powers of the world at

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Trnovec et al., *Azija me je povsem uročila [Asia Utterly Bewitched Me]*, *Catalogue of the Temporary Exhibition Marking the 130th Anniversary of Alma M. Karlin's Birth and the Centenary of Her Departure on Her Journey Around the World*. Celje (Ljubljana: Regional Museum Celje and University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 2019), 8.

<sup>2</sup> Janez Stanonik, "Alma Maximiliana Karlin," in *Australian Papers: Yugoslavia, Europe and Australia*, ed. Mirko Jurak (Ljubljana: University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts, 1983), 41-48.

<sup>3</sup> Trnovec, *Azija me je povsem uročila [Asia Utterly Bewitched Me]*, 8-9.

<sup>4</sup> Alma M. Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske [Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau]*, trans. Mateja Ajdnik Korošec (Celje: Mohorjeva družba, [1930] 2006), 269.

that time, and therefore, many western nations began observing Japan differently.<sup>5</sup>

The Taishō era is known in the history of modern Japan as a period of liberal movements and often remembered as a period of “Taishō democracy”<sup>6</sup>. Liberal movements meant to safeguard the Constitution, realize popular elections and observe workers’ rights. The period of Taishō democracy is usually distinguished from the preceding chaotic Meiji period and the following militaristic-driven first part of the Shōwa period. The great Kantō earthquake occurred on September 1st, 1923, several weeks after Karlin left Japan, so we can imagine that she experienced a rather peaceful and happy period for the Japanese people during her stay.

The Taishō era is also often associated with cultural freedom. It was a period of drastic changes in fashion, art, and popular culture in Japan. Japanese people began wearing Western clothes and hairdos in the former Meiji period, but that was still limited to a smaller circle. Together with the development of mass communication and democracy, the general public, including the working classes, started to enjoy the new waves of fashion, music, and similar facets of popular culture, mainly influenced by the western part of the world. Towards the end of the Taishō and in the beginning of the following Shōwa era, the words “moga” (モガ =modern girl) and “mobo” (モボ =modern boy) came into use in relation to clothing and modes of urban life. A typical “moga” wore a medium long skirt (which was still shorter than kimono length) with a simple top, a cloche hat and a short-cut hairdo.

A lady from Europe, and from an insignificant provincial city, but with knowledge of many languages and cultures (although fragmentarily), and full of curiosity about local folklore elements of each visited region, Karlin was surely welcomed by intellectuals in Japan. A rather small-built woman with a very “modern” hairdo – from the viewpoint of women in Taishō democracy, she could have been the real “moga”. (cf. Photos 1, 2 and 3)

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<sup>5</sup> See for example, Aleš Gabrič, “Slovenian Familiarization with Japan and the Japanese,” in *The 20th Century through Historiographies and Textbooks*, Zbirka Vpogledi 21, eds. Žarko Lazarević, Nobuhiro Shiba and Kenta Suzuki (Ljubljana: INZ, 2018), 167. “After the war, Japan became a country that could not be simply overlooked, not even in Slovenia.”

<sup>6</sup> This labeling of the period in Japanese history was coined by Shinobu Seizaburō around 1950.



Photo 1: Alma Karlin (Source: Spletni biografski leksikon celjskega območja in zasavja).



Photo 2: An interview with Alma Karlin in Tōkyō Asahi Shinbun 1922.



Photo 3: "Moga" style in Japan (Source: <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/モボ・モガ>).

## Religions in Japan and changes in the 19th and 20th centuries

It is generally known that Shintoism, Buddhism, Christianity and new religions coexist in Japanese society. The respected representative of the first pioneers of Japanese religious studies, Anesaki Masaharu (1873-1949) states:

The history of Japanese religions and morals shows [...] the interaction of various forces which manifested their vitality more in combination than in opposition. A saying ascribed to Prince Shōtoku, the founder of Japanese civilization, compares the three religious and moral systems found in Japan to the root, the stem and branches, and the flowers and fruits of a tree. Shinto is the root embedded in the soil of the people's character and national traditions; Confucianism is seen in the stem and branches of legal institutions, ethical codes, and educational systems; Buddhism made the flowers of religious sentiment bloom and gave the fruits of spiritual life.<sup>7</sup>

Shintō is primarily found in Japan, whereas Buddhism and Confucianism were introduced to Japan from China in the 6th century. Christianity was introduced to Japan much later, by the Jesuit missionaries in the middle of the 16th century. In the middle of the 17th century however, the Japanese government (shogunate) issued a total ban on Christianity and “all Japanese were compelled to produce certificates of temple registration (寺請証文 *terauke shōmon*)”<sup>8</sup>. “[The] practice of temple-parishioner registration became normative in all regions of Japan, [and] the nature of Japanese Buddhism changed significantly. [...] Many of [...] new parishioners chose their temple affiliations without doctrinal or faith considerations, but based on geographical proximity to a temple.”<sup>9</sup> Today, “most Japanese view temples simply as places where they hold funerary and memorial services.”<sup>10</sup> With the intro-

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<sup>7</sup> Masaharu Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1930, 1995), 8.

<sup>8</sup> Fumio Tamamuro, “The Development of the Temple-Parishioner System,” *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 36, no. 1 (2009): 21.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*: 21.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*: 25.

duction of Article 28 of the Meiji Constitution in 1873, the Japanese people were guaranteed the freedom of religion.

Added to the situation described above, “a new religion”<sup>11</sup> was invented in the beginning of the 20th century in Japan. According to Shimazono, a researcher in the field of modern history of Japanese religions, this was around the year 1912 and subsequent years, in the beginning of the Taishō era. Shimazono points out among others:<sup>12</sup>

- an article entitled “The Invention of a New Religion”, published in 1912 by Basil Hall Chamberlain, a Japanologist who resided in the Meiji Japan for 38 years. Chamberlain points out the veneration of Emperor Meiji by the Japanese people as a new system of religious practice;
- the death of Nogi Maresuke, a general of the Japanese Imperial Army, who followed Emperor Meiji by committing suicide (See also section *Fushimi Momoyama on p. 31* in relation to General Nogi);
- use of the word *seitoku* 聖徳 (=emperor’s virtue) and the construction of the Meiji Shrine between 1915 and 1921. Both the word and the construction of a shrine are limited to Emperor Meiji and do not apply to later emperors.

Alma Karlin stayed in Japan from June 1922 to July 1923. This was the 11th and 12th year of Taishō. Karlin brought back many postcards of temples and shrines, as well as some picture postcards of objects related to the Emperor Meiji (cf. *Meiji Shrine* on p. 19; *Heian Jingū* on p. 31 on Sōkaren, *Fushimi Momoyama* on p. 31 for Nogi Jinja).

### Postcards in Alma Karlin’s Collection in Celje

Among the picture postcards from Japan archived in the Alma Karlin Collection in the Celje Regional Museum, the following shrines, temples and similar religious sights were identified. They are presented

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<sup>11</sup> Susumu Shimazono, “Taishō Shōwa zenki no shūkyō to shakai,” in *Shunjū Haru to Aki* (1 and 2, September and October 2016): September, 1st chapter: ある新しい宗教の発明 (=invention of a new religion), <https://haruaki.shunjushoa.co.jp/posts/782>.

<sup>12</sup> Shimazono, “Taishō Shōwa zenki no shūkyō to shakai.”

in several groups according to their geographical locations: in the city of Tokyo, where she resided for most of her stay in Japan (pp. 12–19); Tochigi Prefecture and Kanagawa Prefecture in the Kantō region (pp. 20–28); the Kansai region (pp. 28–40); and other individual places farther southwest from Kansai (pp. 40–47).

Please also refer to two maps, one of Tokyo (Map 1 on page 4) and another of the Japanese Archipelago (Map 2 on page 5). Map 1 shows all the religious sights in Tokyo where Karlin visited in Japan, together with her residence and workplaces (a university, a machine factory and an embassy). Map 2 shows place names in Japan where Karlin visited individual temples, shrines and tombs. The arrows in the map show shorter trips from Tokyo and back (to prefectures Tochigi and Kanagawa), and her journey in July 1923 after she left Tokyo, towards the western part of Japan, and the last arrow shows the direction of the boat to Korea where she continued with her journey around the world.

## In Tokyo

Karlin lived for most of her stay in Japan in the centre of the city of Tokyo (former Edo)<sup>13</sup>, the capital of Japan since the beginning of the Meiji era. It is known that she worked for the Meiji University, a machine factory<sup>14</sup>, and the German Embassy, all of which were not far from her small rented room. The streetcar in Tokyo was a very common means of transport in the city at that time. She could reach all the following temples and shrines in Tokyo on foot or by streetcar. The first five sights (a. to e.) are in the so-called downtown “Shitamachi” 下町, the following two (f. and g.) are in the uptown “Yamanote” 山手 (today’s Shibuya-ku and Minato-ku) of the city of Tokyo. (See also Map 1)

<sup>13</sup> Her address was Yūrakuchō 3-chōme 有楽町3丁目 (Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele*, 226). For the New Year of 1923, she received a postcard at this address.

<sup>14</sup> This is most probably Leybolds GmbH, a company for vacuum and gas management engineering. In Japanese: レーボールド商會 (Tōkyō Asahi Shimbun, “うら若い女の身で冒険の世界無銭旅行 [Urawakai onna no mi de bōken no sekai musen ryōkō],” in *Getsuyō Furoku*, 31. 7. 1922: 1).





Photo 4: Asakusa Kanzeon.<sup>15</sup>

a) Asakusa Kanzeon 浅草観世音, also called Sensōji 浅草寺 [526/527]<sup>16</sup>

This is the oldest Buddhist temple in Tokyo, believed to have been established in the Heian period, in the year 942. Its existence is recorded in *Azumakagami* 吾妻鏡, a historical record edited in the Kamakura era (1185-1333). When the shrine in Kamakura (Tsuruoka Hachimangū, see page 25) was constructed in 1181, carpenters specialized for shrines and temples (in Japanese *miyadaiku* 宮大工) were summoned from Asakusa. The principal object of worship in Asakusa Kanzeon is *Kanzeon Bosatsu* 観世音菩薩 (Avalokiteśvara). On the hand-tinted photo of the postcard brought back by Alma Karlin, it is interesting to observe the visitors' clothes and hairdos of the time. Karlin is interested in the

<sup>15</sup> The postcards (photos 4 to 32) are from Alma Karlin Collection at the Regional Museum of Celje.

<sup>16</sup> The numbers in square brackets, all through this paper, are the numbers in the photo file of picture postcards archived and offered by the Celje Regional Museum.



Photo 5: Kanda Myōjin.

stone lanterns on both sides in front of the main hall of worship and the red roofs of the souvenir stalls.<sup>17</sup>

- b) Kanda Myōjin 神田明神 [786/787], formal name Kanda Jinja 神田神社

This is an old Shinto shrine believed to have been established in the 8th century. Japanese mythical deities, *Ōnamuchi no mikoto* 大己貴命 and *Sukunahikona no mikoto* 少彦名命, as well as the historical figure *Taira no Masakado* 平将門 (? - 940) are enshrined. It is known for the festival *Kanda Matsuri* 神田祭 which started as a display of the prosperity of the Tokugawa shogunate in the 17th century, and now unites the 108 neighbourhood associations of the downtown. Karlin's postcard is a hand-drawn depiction of the festival with a smaller photo of the neighbourhood and a printed Japanese explanation. On the re-

<sup>17</sup> Her remarks on the reverse (all Alma's remarks on the reverse side of her postcards will appear in her language - German - throughout the paper.): Laternen vor dem Tempel (Schrein) Verkaufsbuden mit roten Dächern aus Stoff.



Photo 6: Yushima Tenjin.

verse, we see her great interest in the festival, particularly the floats: the remarks are first in pencil, later added in ink.<sup>18</sup> We can imagine that Karlin herself was present at this festival.

c) Yushima Tenjin 湯島天神 or Yushima Tenmangū 湯島天満宮 or Ochanomizu Seidō 御茶ノ水聖堂 [854/855]

Also an old Shinto shrine, believed to have been established in the time of Emperor Yūryaku in 458. Since 1355, the historical figure Sugawara no Michizane 菅原道真 (845-903), a great master of classical Chinese as the patron deity of literature, has been enshrined. Karlin's postcard from this shrine is also hand-drawn with printed explanation in Japanese.<sup>19</sup> Karlin wrote on the reverse what she heard in Japanese,

<sup>18</sup> Kanda Miojin / Mikoshi oder getragener Gott / Dashi mit Kriegsgott nur Schmuck. / Ein Mikoshi & alles was dazu gehört kostet bis zu 30,000 yen.

<sup>19</sup> Seido Koshi / Confuciestempel in Ochanomitsu (Kōshi 孔子 means Confucius in Japanese.)



Photo 7: Kemeido Tenjin.

then added explanation in German, which was meaningful for her and perhaps also for the publishing houses to whom she wrote later.

d) Kameido Tenjin 亀戸天神 or Kameido Tenmangū 亀戸天満宮  
[708/709]

As the name indicates, this is also a Shinto shrine to worship the scholar and poet, Sugawara no Michizane (=Tenjin, the deified spirit of Sugawara no Michizane). It was established in 1661 in the Edo era in the time of the 4th Tokugawa shōgun. The precincts of the shrine are famous for the plum trees, wisteria flowers, and the drum bridge often depicted by Hiroshige, Hokusai, and others. Sugawara no Michizane was born in the year of the ox 丑, and thus related to oxen in several episodes. Karlin's postcard is a photo of the stone ox in the shrine garden.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Tenjin, der Gott der Schulkinder, einst ein ... Minister. Kameido.



Photo 8: Yoshiwara Jinja.

e) Yoshiwara Jinja 吉原神社 [810/811]

After the great fire in 1657 in Edo, all licensed brothels in the city were put together in one area, so-called Shin Yoshiwara (the new Yoshiwara) near Asakusa. Five former shrines worshipping the god of harvest Uganomitama no kami 倉稻魂神 were combined, and Benzaiten 弁財天 (Sarasvati, the Hindu goddess of music, eloquence, wealth and wisdom) is enshrined as well. The shrine is visited particularly by women who train in singing, dancing, and other arts. The shrine is also said to help improve business and art.

Karlin in her explanation on the reverse calls it "Love temple".<sup>21</sup> Also in her travelogue, she describes Benzaiten (Sarasvati) as the god of wealth and art.

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<sup>21</sup> Liebestempel im Yoshiwara.





Photo 9: Takanawa Sengakuji.

f) Takanawa Sengakuji 高輪泉岳寺 [770/771, 772/773, 774/775, 858/859]

A Buddhist temple in the upper town of Tokyo, today's Minato-ku, was constructed by the 1st Tokugawa shōgun, Ieyasu, in 1612. It is known for the tombs of 47 masterless samurais Akōrōshi, 赤穂浪士 who planned and succeeded to avenge their master's honour in the year 1703, but then later had to kill themselves by the shogunate's order. This story became popular among the Japanese, being symbolic of loyalty, sacrifice, and honour - i.e., the Japanese samurai spirit - adapted into plays in the *bunraku* and *kabuki* theatres. Karlin brought back three postcards of the photo of the graves of 47 warriors, and one showing dolls of the warriors probably exhibited within a temple building.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Die Gräben der 47 tapferen Ronin. / Die 47 tapferen Ronin.



Photo 10: Meiji Shrine.

g) Meiji Jingū 明治神宮 [105/106, 111/112, 486/487, 580/581, 592/593, 608/609, 714/715, 716/717, 718/719]

This Shinto shrine was built after the death of Emperor Meiji in 1912. He was buried near Kyoto (his mausoleum is mentioned on page 31), but people decided for the construction of a shrine in the uptown section of Tokyo, today's Shibuya-ku. The shrine is dedicated to the spirits of Emperor Meiji and his wife. Nowadays, the Meiji Shrine is the most popular place to be visited by Japanese for New Year.

Karlin brought back a set of several postcards from the Meiji Shrine. When she stayed in Tokyo, it had been only 10 years since the shrine was completed and we may guess that the citizens often visited or talked about the shrine. Her explanations on the reverse of these postcards go into some detail.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Der ganze Tempel, an dem 9 Jahre gearbeitet wurde. / Von den Priestern allein betreten. (Mikedono 神饌殿, the building in which offerings are prepared) / Das Museum des Meiji Tempels (des vorherigen Mikados), das wir einmal im Jahr (d.h. heute, den 30. VI.) geöffnet ist. / Haupteingang zum Museum das im Grunde ein Steintempel in Form ist. Ganz eigenartig

## In the Kantō region

Both Tochigi and Kanagawa Prefectures are located in the Kantō region. We can suspect that Karlin visited the following sights on shorter trips from Tokyo on some occasions when she had free days away from her work, and her acquaintance(s) invited her for such trips.

*Tochigi Prefecture*

h) Nikkō Tōshōgū 日光東照宮 [748/749, 910/911, 912/913, 914/915, 918/919, 920/921, 922/923]

Nikkō is located about 130 km north of Tokyo, in Tochigi Prefecture. The shrine Tōshōgū 東照宮 was established in 1617 to worship the deity of the founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, Ieyasu, and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This shrine has been and still is a very popular tourists' destination because of the brilliant gates, walls, buildings and the surrounding forests. Karlin brought back a series of postcards, together with the envelope for the set with the title *Nikkō Meisho* 日光名所 (= Nikko's Notable Sights). Karlin's memos on these postcards are quite detailed. In her travelogue,<sup>24</sup> she mentions that she was invited to Nikkō by a famous English poet and teacher by the name of E. Speight.<sup>25</sup> He and others who accompanied her would likely have been aware of the details and described aspects to her; however, her comment on the reverse of the postcard 910/911 that there is Russian influence to the temple-interior decoration sounds strange.<sup>26</sup> Was it her own impression, or someone's suggestion?

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in mitten eines lie.. Parkes. (宝物殿正門) / Die offene Terrasse des Museums. (宝物殿西倉) / Ein Torii mitten im Park von Föhren und Cryptogamia. (大鳥居及献木) / Resor derer Schrein, auch often zu heiligen Tänzen verwendet. (御神庫) / An der Pforte die Chrysantheme, das Abzeichen des Mikado und kaiserlichen Hauses. (中門) / Der allerein erste und heiligste Tempel. Das Dach trägt das Zeichen der Vornehmen. (御本殿)

<sup>24</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske* [Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau], 236-238.

<sup>25</sup> This must be Ernest Edwin Speight (1871-1949), who taught at the Tokyo Imperial University and the Fourth High School in Kanazawa. He was awarded the Fifth Class of the Order of the Rising Sun by the Emperor of Japan for services to teaching.

<sup>26</sup> Die reiche Pagode mit ihren fünf Stockwerken. Alles Holy ist mit "Lacquer" gedeckt, also sehr kostbar. (五重ノ塔) / Das Tempelinnere mit der Trommel und den Papierstreifen.





Photo 11: Nikkō Tōshōgū.



Photo 12: Nikkō (the envelope of the series).

She also mentions in her writing that her trip to Nikkō by train took about 4 hours. She also mentions the importance of Japanese mythology to understand the history of rulers of Japan, and mentions names such as Ashikaga, Fujiwara, Heke (sic: Heike), Toyotomi, and Tokugawa (the names of the first two shoguns, Ieyasu and Iemitsu).

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Die Wände und Decke sind reich schmückt und die Tempel Nikkōs alle prunkhaft überladen. Russischer Einfluß. (拝殿内部) / Das von Cryptomeriahainen umgebene Grab des Shoguns mit dem Kranich als Symbol des Glücks davor. (奥ノ院寶塔) / Das Heiligtum. Auf dem bankähnlichem ... streifen die Priester die Sandalen ab. (御厩) / Der Tempelhof und eine der Riesencryptomeria (eine Cedernart aus vor—lichen Zeiten nur noch in Japan zu finden) (廻り燈籠) / Die heilige Brücke über die nur einmal im Jahr der Hauptgott in seinem goldenen Tragsessel getragen sind und die sonst nur noch der Mikado betreten darf. (神橋) / Der berühmte Tempel des Shoguns in Nikkō der heiligen Stadt. (陽明門)



Photo 13: Ashikaga in Tochigi Prefecture.

i) Ashikaga 足利 [642/643, 648/649, 654/655]

The city of Ashikaga is also in Tochigi Prefecture, about 70 km southeast of Nikkō. Ashikaga, as the name suggests, is the home of the Ashikaga clan and famous for the Ashikaga School, the oldest academic institution in Japan, from the Middle Ages, to study Confucianism and Chinese medicine. The Buddhist temple Bannaji 鑿阿寺 was built on the site of the former Ashikaga residence in 1197. The three picture postcards are all black and white photos.<sup>27</sup>

j) Ōhirasan 太平山 [574/575, 620/621]

Between Nikkō and Ashikaga in Tochigi Prefecture is the Shinto shrine Ōhirasan Jinja 太平山神社 for which there are two postcards in

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<sup>27</sup> Landhaus der Priester, wörtlich: “Haus der Betrachtung” (行道山) / Banaji Tempel gegründet von Takamura Ono ... (Heian Periode) 800 N.C. (足利鑿阿寺) /Kirschblüten vor dem Banaptempel (鑿阿寺山門)



Photo 14: Ōhirasan in Tochigi.

the collection.<sup>28</sup> The shrine is said to have been established by the monk Ennin 円仁 (794-864) in 827 before he was sent to China during the Tang dynasty. Ninigi no mikoto 瓊瓊杵尊, Amaterasu ōmikami 天照大神 and Toyouke bime 豊受け姫 are worshipped, and the thousand steps are known to lead the visitors to the main building with the hall for worship. Karlin pays attention to the simple decoration of Shintoism with white paper slips on a rope, *gohei* 御幣. (See the later section *Ishiteji* on page 43)

### *Kanagawa Prefecture*

Kanagawa Prefecture, next to Tokyo Prefecture, is also very convenient for a short trip from the metropolis. Since the area is on the south side of Tokyo and faces the Pacific Ocean, it is known for its mild climate also in winter.

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<sup>28</sup> Tempeltor mit Gohei (den weißen Papierstreifen) und der Pest ...Schnur. / Soldatengrab bei Kagenai (?)



Photo 15: The Buddha in Kamakura.

k) Kamakura 鎌倉 [596/597, 650/651, 676/677, 678/679, 680/681]

The Shinto shrine Tsuruoka Hachimangū 鶴岡八幡宮, called also Kamakura Hachimangū, established in 1063 to protect the samurai warriors in the Kamakura era, is about 60 km south of Tokyo. Kamakura is also known for the great Buddha in the temple Kōtokuin 高徳院, which was, according to the historical records in *Azumakagami*, established in the 13th century. The shrine and the temple are about 2 km apart from each other. Karlin's postcard collection includes two photos of the Buddha<sup>29</sup>, two of a cave in Kamakura, only 900 meters away from the Hachimangū and 3.5 km from Kōtokuin, where in the year 1335 Prince Morinaga (護良親王, also called Moriyoshi, 1308-1335) was supposed to have been imprisoned by Ashikaga Takauji's order for 9 months. Karlin's comments on the postcard's reverse is rather focused

<sup>29</sup> Der Buddha zu Kamakura / Seitenansicht des Buddha zu Kamakura. Ginko, im Hintergrund, Teehaus.





Photo 16: The dungeon of Prince Morinaga in Kamakura.

on the Shinto decoration, and not on the legend.<sup>30</sup> In her travelogue, she mentions Kamakura in the earlier part where she describes the history of the town and the statue of Buddha.

1) Enoshima 江ノ島 [670/671]

If one goes farther from Kamakura along the seaside to the west for about 10 km, the popular small off-shore island Enoshima can be reached. Its naturally formed caves used to be a place of training and meditation for monks from around the 11th century onward. Karlin mentions monks on one of the postcards, though such an explanation is not originally printed.<sup>31</sup> Some person with knowledge of religious history must have commented on this sight. Karlin mentions in her travelogue Enoshima immediately after Kamakura. She must have visited these places on the same trip, or at least with the same accompanying person.

<sup>30</sup> Die geisterverscheuchende Schnurr vor dem Grabe Tsuchiros. / Die Schnurr dem halten di böse Geister ab.

<sup>31</sup> Hier steigte sich die Priestern der Iwamoto - in Tempels in das Meer.

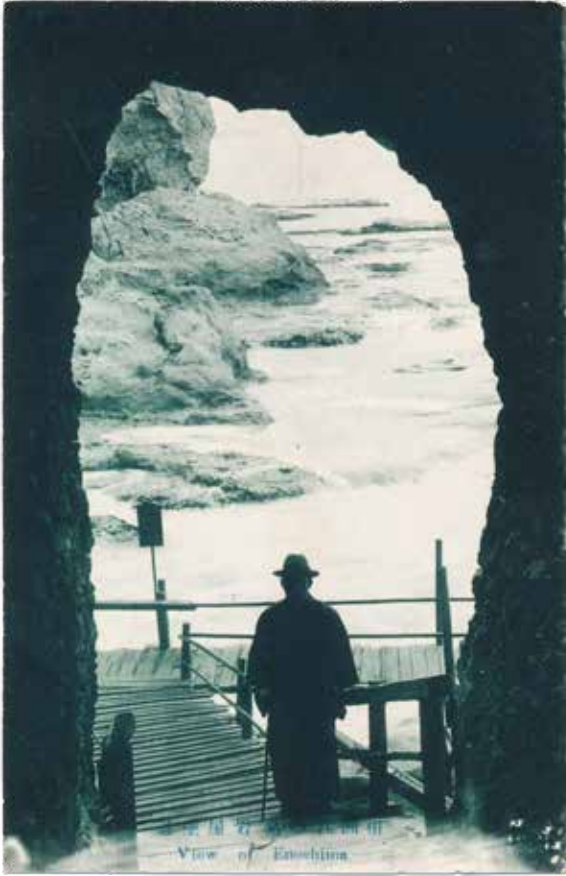


Photo 17: Enoshima.

m) Sagami Ōyama 相模大山 [644/645, 652/653]

Sagami Ōyama 相模大山 is also in Kanagawa Prefecture and one of the sacred mountains in Japan. Sagami Ōyamadera 相模大山寺 is popularly known as Ōyama Fudō 大山不動. The mountain top is given a sacred meaning and worshipped developing a special place for training and mysticism for the mountaineer priests<sup>32</sup>, *yamabushi* 山伏.

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<sup>32</sup> The expression and further explanation in Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, 139.



Photo 18: Sagami Ōyama.

Since there is usually much rain in this area, the mountain is also called Aburisan 雨降山 to worship the god of rainmaking. On one of the postcards, Karlin mentions Ashikaga, but the Ashikaga clan is not related to this temple.<sup>33</sup>

In the Kansai region

As can be observed on Map 2 (see page 5), there are still many postcards in Karlin's collection that show temples and shrines situated away from Tokyo, in the Kansai region; i.e. Kyoto, Osaka, Nara, Ise (today's Mie Prefecture) and Kobe. Based on Karlin's writing, we can guess that she visited these places, as well as other places in the southwest regions of Japan after saying goodbye to the German Embassy and acquaintances in Tokyo.<sup>34</sup> It may be that someone accompanied her on this

<sup>33</sup> Ryo Bendo / Die Bronzepagode oder der Schatzturm von Ashikaga.

<sup>34</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske* [*Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau*], 269.



journey and farther on to the Korean Peninsula. In Seoul, she was a guest of a Japanese family, perhaps a Japanese diplomat or some official of the Japanese colonial government at that time.

*Kyōto [945/946, 949/950, 951/952, 953/954, 955/956], Imperial Museum [664/665, 666/667]*

The number of temples in Kyoto is the largest in Japan due to the fact that the city was the nation's capital for a longer time in the periods important for the development of Japanese culture. In Karlin's postcard collection, there is again a series of picture postcards from Kyoto for which also the envelope is archived, titled "Kyoto Viewes (sic)".

n) Higashi Honganji 東本願寺

Often called casually O-higashi-san お東さん, this is the main temple for the Buddhist sect Shinshū Ōtani-ha 真宗大谷派 with the principle object of worship Amitabha Tathagata, in Japanese Amida Nyorai 阿弥陀如来. The temple was established in 1602. Most of the buildings were rebuilt during the Meiji period after a fire.

o) Kiyomizudera 清水寺

This temple with the formal name Otowasan Kiyomizudera 音羽山清水寺, is said to have been established in 798. It is particularly famous for the construction of the main hall of worship called butai, "stage", constructed by the order of the 3rd Tokugawa shōgun, Iemitsu, in 1633.

p) Kinkakuji 金閣寺

The real name of this temple is Rokuonji 鹿苑寺. It is Zen Buddhist, originally built as the summer residence of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408). Called the Golden Temple since the whole three-storied building is gilded, the original building was burnt in a fire in 1950. Karlin, if she visited it, must have seen the original building.



Photo 19: Kinkakuji (the Golden Pavillion) in Kyōto.



Photo 20: Kyōto National Museum - Sōkaren.

## q) Ginkakuji 銀閣寺

The real name of this temple is Jishōji 慈照寺. Built by Ashikaga Yoshimasa towards the end of the 15th century. The building is in the *shoin zukuri* style (書院造; i.e., traditional Japanese residential architecture) and the garden is in white sand, typical of Zen Buddhism.

## r) Heian Jingū 平安神宮

Built in 1895 (the 28th year of Meiji) to commemorate the 1100th year of the establishment of the old capital, Heian-kyō 平安京. It is a partial replica of the original Heian Palace called Daidairi 大内裏.

Karlin's memos on these postcards from Kyoto are meagre.<sup>35</sup> It may be that she acquired these postcards without actually visiting the sights.

There are also two picture postcards from the Kyoto Imperial Museum (today's Kyoto National Museum), showing objects related to religious rituals. A picture of *Sōkaren* 蔥花輦, the special palanquin for the emperor which was used in the first year of Meiji, and another showing a room in the Museum with statues of the Kamakura era, known for excellent wooden sculptures of Buddhism represented by Unkei 運慶 (?-1223). These two postcards are stamped with the date Taishō 12, July 2nd.

There are also postcards of Fushimi Momoyama and Hieizan, both of which are near Kyoto.

## s) Fushimi Momoyama 伏見桃山 [584/585, 590/591, 734/735, 736/737, 738/739, 740/741, 742/743, 744/745]

The mausoleum of Emperor Meiji (cf. *Meiji Shrine* on page 19) is in Fushimi Momoyama, about 10 km south of the city centre of Kyoto. In Karlin's collection, no postcard of Emperor Meiji's mausoleum is found, but instead there is one showing the mausoleum of Emperor Kanmu, who died in 806, which is located about 4 km south from Emperor Meiji's.<sup>36</sup> There is also an interesting postcard showing a small exhibition in Nogi Jinja 乃木神社 located next to Emperor Meiji's mauso-

<sup>35</sup> Wieder ein Tempel. / Auch ein Temple in Kioto. / Kinkaku-tempel / Der Heiantempel in Kioto.

<sup>36</sup> Grab des Kaisers Kanmu Gründer der Heianperiode.



Photo 21: Mausoleum of Emperor Kanmu.



Photo 22: Depiction of Family Nogi in Nogi Jinja.



Photo 23: Fushimi Inari.

leum. The shrine was established in 1916 by a parliament member and entrepreneur. The black and white photo on the postcard shows a scene of family education when Nogi Maresuke (1849-1912) was a young boy, using dolls in a typical Japanese room.<sup>37</sup> General Nogi was raised in a strict family of samurai tradition and was commander in chief during the Russo-Japanese War. He (and subsequently his wife) committed suicide on the day Emperor Meiji passed away. Karlin was in Japan only six years after the establishment of this shrine. Her acquaintance in Japan must have explained the history in detail.

t) Fushimi Inari Jinja 伏見稲荷神社

Five postcards, all black and white but later hand-tinted, are of a series to show Fushimi Inari Jinja 伏見稲荷神社, about 5 km south of the mausoleum. This shrine became the object of imperial patronage in the Heian period. The main god of worship is Ukanomitama no kami 倉稲魂神, also called Inari Ōkami 稲荷大神, god of five grains

<sup>37</sup> Elternhaus des Generals Nogi. Vater erteilt Unterricht.





Photo 24: Hieizan.



Photo 25: Shitennōji in Ōsaka.

and rich harvests. The fox is considered to be the messenger of Inari Ōkami. The shrine is also known for the mountain path with its many torii gates.<sup>38</sup> Karlin colloquially names the shrine “the fox shrine”. She also mentions in her travelogue the Inari shrines which she saw many times in many places. Her understanding of the fox as messenger of the god for rich harvests and good business is quite appropriate. Here, too, the existence of some well-educated person in her company can be felt.

u) Hieizan 比叡山 [646/647]

Mount Hiei or Hieizan 比叡山 overlooking the city of Kyoto is known for the temple Enryakuji 延暦寺, the monastery of the Buddhist school Tendai 天台, established in 788 by Saichō 最澄 (767-822), who was later dispatched to the Tang dynasty in 804-805. Karlin's postcard from Hieizan is in the same format as those of Kanda Myōjin (see page 14), a drawing depicting an event with a longer explanation in Japanese, accompanied by a small photo of the surrounding scenery. The Japanese explanation is about *yamabōshi* 山法師, the monk warriors, who were particularly active in the Heian period. Karlin's memo on the reverse is limited to the float which the monks are carrying in the drawing.<sup>39</sup> She may not have understood the description of the postcard.

Ōsaka [498/499]

v) Shitennōji 四天王寺

Among the picture postcards of several city landmarks of Osaka in Karlin's collection, the temple Shitennōji 四天王寺 is found. This is one of the oldest Buddhist temples in Japan built by Prince Shōtoku, established in 593, originally of the Tendai sect. The temple suffered many fires and today's buildings were rebuilt after the Second World War. This means that Karlin saw the former buildings which stood there in the Taishō period. Her memo is brief and of little interest.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Erinnerungshalle u. Templeamt. / Eine Straße von gewidmete Torii. / Kleiner Fuchsnebenschrein. / Honden oder Hauptfuchsschrein.

<sup>39</sup> Pagode, in der ein Gott “Ausgang hat.” (Von Priesters getragen).

<sup>40</sup> Berühmter Tempel.



Photo 26: Kōfukuji and the pond Sarusawaiké in Nara.

*Nara [656/657, 790/791, 794/795, 796/797, 798/799]*

Nara is the oldest capital of Japan (between 710-740 and 745-84) and known in relation to the first legal and political organization of the nation based on the Chinese model of Chang'an 長安 of the Tang dynasty. In Karlin's collection, a set of postcards is found again, this time of black-and-white photos with Japanese explanations in the classic Japanese language.

w) Kōfukuji 興福寺

This temple was founded as the temple for the Fujiwara clan in the year 710 by Fujiwara Fuhito. In Karlin's collection, there is one scene of the pond Sarusawaiké 猿沢池 beyond which the pagoda of the temple is viewed.<sup>41</sup> Another postcard is also a black-and-white photo showing a

<sup>41</sup> Arusawateich und dahinter die Pogode des Tempels Nara.





Photo 27: Shōsōin in Nara.

national treasure from this temple, Kagen no Hei 華原ノ馨, a musical instrument for religious ceremonies.

x) Shōsōin 正倉院

This was also built in the 8th century in the building complex of the temple Tōdaiji 東大寺 (known for the great Buddha in another building) and is actually a storehouse of the imperial treasures from the 8th century.<sup>42</sup>

There are also postcards showing the deer in and around the shrine Kasuga Taisha 春日大社, established in 768. These deer are believed to be secret messengers of Shinto gods.<sup>43</sup> In her travelogue, Karlin<sup>44</sup> also mentions the deer in relation to the shrine and temples in Nara. Her

<sup>42</sup> Shosuin kaiserliches Schatzhaus Nara.

<sup>43</sup> Rehe im Schatten. Nara. / Abschneiden der Hörner des Wildes als jährliche Zeremonie Nara.

<sup>44</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske, 1929* [Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau], 267.



Photo 28: Ise Jingū.

description of how the sacred animal comes close to the visitors is almost identical to the relationship between tourists and the deer in today's Nara.

*Ise* 伊勢 [892/893, 894/895, 896/897, 898/899, 902/903]

y) Ise Jingū 伊勢神宮

The Shintō shrine Ise, in Japanese Ise Jingū 伊勢神宮, is popularly called Oisesan お伊勢さん and believed to have existed since the time of the 10th Emperor of Japan, Emperor Sujin 崇神天皇 (97 BC-30 BC). The present area of this shrine is about 5,450 ha, including various buildings in the traditional Shinto style using the best timber from this region. The Inner Shrine Naikū 内宮 is dedicated to Amaterasu 天照大神 “the Sun-goddess”, and the Outer Shrine Gekū 外宮, which is about 8 km apart from the Inner Shrine, is dedicated to Toyouke no Kami 豊受大神, the Abundance-Bounty Goddess<sup>45</sup>. During the Edo

<sup>45</sup> Translation/interpretation of these goddesses by Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, 29, 32.



Photo 29: Nankō's tomb in Kōbe.

period, the Ise Shrine became extremely popular among ordinary people from all over Japan for pilgrimage, and “remains the holy of holies of the Shinto cult”<sup>46</sup>. In Karlin’s postcard collection, an envelope for a set of postcards from Ise is archived with the title Ise and Futami. Five hand-tinted postcards were found in this series.<sup>47</sup> We can discern that Karlin was particularly impressed by, or her attention was intentionally directed by some accompanying person to, the forests of *Cryptomeria japonica* (*sugi* 杉 in Japanese), and the wooden constructions of the Shinto buildings.

<sup>46</sup> The domination of the Sun-goddess over the numerous local deities and miscellaneous spirits. (Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, 32)

<sup>47</sup> Berühmter Torii aus duftendem Holze in Ise, der berühmtesten Tempelstadt. / Polizeihäuschen, Torii & Brücke zur Kirschblutenzeit. / Die Riesencedern vor dem Isetempel. (Cryptomeria) / Tempeldächer von Ise. / Das Museum von Ise.

*Kobe [840/841, 850/851]*

The city of Kobe is not far from Osaka and Kyoto. It was one of the first ports to be opened to the western powers. In the context of religion, similar to Kyoto, Osaka, and Nara, there are many shrines and temples in Kobe. In Alma Karlin's postcard collection, however, there is only one religious sight from Kobe.

## z) Minatogawa shrine (Minatogawa Jinja 湊川神社)

This shrine is popularly called Nankōsan 楠公さん, where the historical figure Kusunoki Masashige 楠木正成 (1294-1336) is enshrined. He fought against Ashikaga Takauji in the year 1336, but was defeated here in Minatogawa. The shrine was later established in 1872 (the 5th year of Meiji) according to the order by Emperor Meiji. Two postcards from this shrine are black-and-white photos.<sup>48</sup>

Karlin seems to have continued her journey farther to the southwest from Kansai, stopping at Miyajima, Iyo (today's Ehime prefecture), and Nagasaki.

Miyajima, also called Aki no Miyajima 安芸の宮島 [91/92, 788/789, 882/883, 884/885, 900/901]

## aa) Itsukushima Jinja 厳島神社

This shrine is located about 330 km west of Kobe. It is built on the sacred island Miyajima, off the coast of Hiroshima, and believed to exist since the 6th century. In the year 1168, the powerful head of the Taira clan, Taira no Kiyomori 平清盛, who was eager to trade with the Chinese Song dynasty, ordered the construction of Shinden-zukuri 寝殿造, the Japanese aristocratic architecture of the Heian period, which seems to float on water in high tide. The shrine is also considered the patron of the Taira clan. This shrine is often seen on photographs of

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<sup>48</sup> Das Grab Nankos / Nankotempel.



Photo 30: Miyajima.

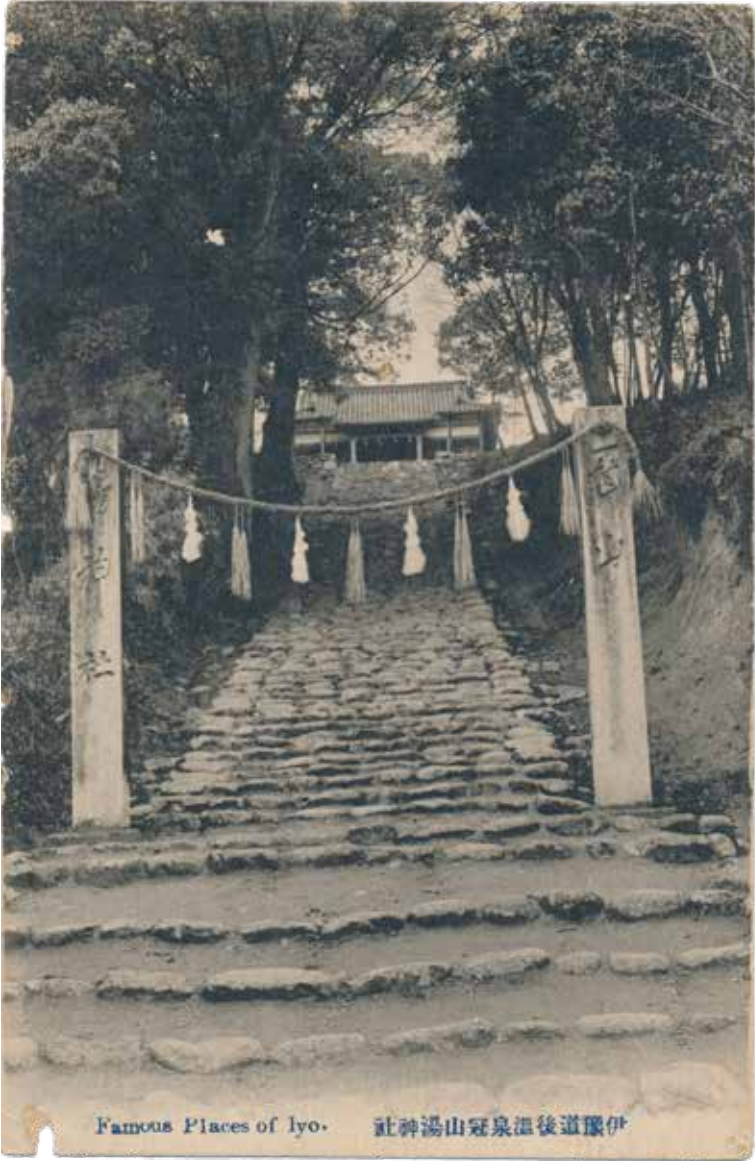
Austro-Hungarian navy members and other western travellers' visits to Japan.<sup>49</sup>

There are five hand-tinted postcards from Itsukushima Jinja in Karlin's collection.<sup>50</sup> With regard to her particular comments on the reverse, Karlin must have visited this shrine personally. She comments on the traditional arched bridge, and also adds some basic information about odd numbers used in Japanese tradition.

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<sup>49</sup> For example, see Bogdana Marinac, *Čez morje na nepoznani daljni vzhod: potovanja pomorščakov avstrijske in austro-ogrške vojne mornarice v Vzhodno Azijo* (Piran: Pomorski muzej Sergej Mašera, 2017), 153 (a photo of a group of seamen at Itsukushima in May 1914).

<sup>50</sup> Die Pagode, deren Stockwerke immer ungerade Zahlen sein müssen. / Die berühmte Inlandsee (Miyajima, die Insel auf der niemand sterben und geboren werden darf.) / Die Galerie und der Eingang. / Einfahrt zur Tempelstätte. / Eine echt japanische Brücke, über die man nur schwer geht.



Famous Places of Iyo. 伊豫後道温泉山湯神社

Photo 31: Yu Jinja in Iyo.



## Iyo 伊予 [508/509, 510/511]

The oldest spa in Japan, Dōgo onsen 道後温泉, is on the island of Shikoku, vis-à-vis the city of Hiroshima on the main island Honshū. Karlin may have visited Iyo, today's Ehime Prefecture, using one of the ferryboats between places facing the Japanese inland sea, Seto.

## ab) Yu Jinja 湯神社

This Shinto shrine is located on the top of the hill Kanmuriyama 冠山, and is said to have existed from ancient times. As the name already suggests ("yu" means hot or warm water), it is a Shinto shrine closely related to the hot springs in the area. The main gods of worship are Ōnamuchi no mikoto 大己貴命 and Sukunahikona no mikoto 少彦名命.

## ac) Ishiteji 石手寺

This is a temple which is only 1 km away from Yu Jinja, established in the 8th century by Gyōki 行基, later converted to the Shingon school of Buddhism by Kūkai 空海, another prominent figure in Japanese Buddhism known also as Kōbōdaishi 弘法大師 (774-835). It is Temple no. 51 of the Shikoku 88 temple pilgrimage.

Among several postcards from Iyo in Karlin's collection, one shows the stone stairs from the entrance to Yu Jinja, and another the temple Ishiteji, both black-and-white photos.<sup>51</sup> On the former, Karlin's memo is concentrated on the ritual decoration used in Shinto, *shimenawa* 注連縄 and *gohei* 御幣, a straw rope to ward off evil influences, and strips of white paper hung from a branch or a pole, also for the purpose to cleanse or bless places or objects<sup>52</sup>. Karlin uses the word "gohei" for both. She mentions these ritual decorations in her memos on the reverse of the postcard from Ōhirasan (see page 23) and Kamakura (see page 25).

<sup>51</sup> Strohschnur mit Gohei vor Schrein Iyo. / Pagode in Iyo.

<sup>52</sup> Anesaki, *History of Japanese Religion*, 42. For the straw rope, also see footnotes 24 and 26.





Photo 32: Sōfukuji in Nagasaki.

Nagasaki [876/877, 878/879]

It is known that Alma Karlin continued her journey around the world by a boat from Nagasaki to Busan, the southern-most port of the Korean Peninsula. (See Map 2 on page 5) Nagasaki is the old and only port which was open to Christian missionaries in the 17th and 18th centuries. Karlin most probably made but a brief stop in Nagasaki, but was eager enough to bring back postcards of two important religious sights.

ad) Nagasaki Suwa Jinja 長崎諏訪神社

This Shinto shrine was established in the 16th century.

ae) Nagasaki Kōfukuji 長崎興福寺

This is one of the old Chinese Buddhist temples worshipped by the Chinese inhabitants in Nagasaki. It was established in 1624 by Shin'en 真円 (Zhenyuan in Chinese), a Buddhist monk from China. This temple is the oldest Chinese-style temple in Japan.

Karlin's memos on both postcards are brief<sup>53</sup>, but the collection includes other postcards from Nagasaki, the port, hot springs, and so on. If Karlin left Tokyo on July 1st and visited Kansai and other places, we may guess that she actually left Japan, precisely Nagasaki on a boat, around July 10th. She sent a postcard from Seoul to Celje on July 11th.<sup>54</sup>

## Conclusion

By going through Karlin's postcards and travelogue in relation to shrines, temples and other religious objects and places, we have at least partly reconstructed her sojourn in Japan. By geographically grouping the religious sights depicted on picture postcards, and trying to match the descriptions of these places in the travelogue, we could also reconstruct her living style in Tokyo and her journey from Tokyo towards the West and subsequently to Korea.<sup>55</sup> The results are shown on Maps 1 and 2 (see pages 4-5).

We extrapolate from her memos on the reverse of numerous picture postcards the presence of a middle-class intellectual or intellectuals, perhaps experts on Japanese matters, or Japanese guides who spoke German or English, who provided her information about Japanese culture, customs, religions and ways of living. In her travelogue, she mentions several individuals, Japanese and foreigners residing in Japan, with whom she came into contact during her stay in Japan.<sup>56</sup>

In fact, we can read in the travelogue that she was invited to Nikkō by Mr. Speight, poet and teacher from England, and it was a com-

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<sup>53</sup> Der Suwashrein. / Haupteingang zum Sofukutempel Nagasaki auf der südlichsten Insel Kyushiu.

<sup>54</sup> Chikako Shigemori Bučar, "Alma Karlin in Korea: A Slovenian Woman's Observations of Land and People," in *Koreans and Central Europeans: Informal Contacts up to 1950*, Vol. 3, ed. Andreas Schirmer (Vienna: Praesens, in preparation to appear in 2019).

<sup>55</sup> In her travelogue, sections "In Kyoto" and "Nara" come after the section "Sayonara".

<sup>56</sup> Viscount Sh (Karlin had a recommendation letter to visit him), a German lady Dr. B (introduced Karlin to the newspaper Asahi Shimbun), Mr. Ishimoto (wrote a New Year's card to Karlin), Mrs. M (who grew up in France), Mrs. K, Mrs. F (an American acquaintance), court actress Suzuki, language learner Ito, Mr. A. All mentioned in Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske, 1929* [*Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau*], 225-271.

pany of several people with whom Karlin could discuss the Japanese culture, history and religious customs. Her description of Kamakura and Enoshima in her writing are also lengthier and include history and folklore, most probably offered by some accompanying person.

It is worth mentioning once again, that Karlin visited the Golden Pavilion, Kinkakuji in Kyoto, before it was burnt down in 1950, and the temple Shitennōji in Osaka before its destruction by a typhoon in 1939. Both are now rebuilt, but the postcards in the Regional Museum in Celje show their older images at the time of Karlin's visit.

Aside from these visits of religious sights, Karlin in her travelogue describes the festival *obon*, the Buddhist day for reunion with deceased family members, which she probably experienced in August 1922 with her acquaintances and neighbours in Tokyo.

Though not related to any certain place or person in history, particular practices were important for Karlin, and she observes carefully. In her writing, she mentions her language-teaching method.<sup>57</sup> For conversation, she often suggested Japanese topics; for example, Japanese seasonal events and customs about which the students were already well informed, providing additional motivation to speak the studied language. Those are the seven autumn flowers (秋の七草 *aki no nanakusa*), the chrysanthemum competition in Hibiya Park, preparations and decorations in and around the house for New Year, and so on. She also mentions the traditional custom for the beginning of spring, *setsubun* 節分, which she seems to have experienced in the temple Gokokuji. In the rainy season - i.e., in late May and June - she seems to have visited Yushima Tenjin and the graves of 47 *rōnins* in Takanawa. The short sections at the end of Karlin's writing about the Kansai area of Japan (Kyoto and Nara) are impressionistic, without mentioning any name of a shrine or temple. Only the deer, the sacred animal in Nara, is mentioned at length.

As characteristics of the Taishō era, there are many postcards of the Meiji Shrine and objects related to the deceased emperor: *sōkaren* (the palanquin) from the Kyoto National Museum, and the depiction of

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<sup>57</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske* [*Einsame Weltreise, Tragödie einer Frau*], 243.

General Nogi's family in the shrine Nogi Jinja. Most of the other temples and shrines in Karlin's postcard collection are of lasting importance and are visited by Japanese and foreign visitors even today in the 21st century.

Karlin was lucky enough to experience a rather peaceful and liberal period of interwar years in Japan, being able to associate with some individuals who were eager to offer help and information for these visits to temples and shrines. Picture postcards were practical means for travellers like Karlin to bring back memories from far places.

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DEATH IN BEIJING:  
ALMA M. KARLIN'S  
DESCRIPTION OF CHINESE  
FUNERARY RITUALS AND  
MOURNING PRACTICES

Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik

Introduction

Alma Maximiliane Karlin (1889–1950) was a traveller, writer, journalist, and collector from Slovenia who embarked on an eight-year journey around the world in November 1919. It is possible to reconstruct her journey from her watercolours of flowers and plants, which bear the date and place where they were painted, as well as from the postcards she sent to her mother and friends in Celje.<sup>1</sup> During her travels, which took her to at least 45 different countries, she supported herself mainly through work as an interpreter and journalist, but was often compelled to take on other jobs in order to make ends meet. Ultimately, she was to write about her travel experiences for more than thirty different newspapers and magazines across the globe, including the *Cillier Zeitung*, a local German-language newspaper in Slovenia. In her novels and other prose works she would continue to draw on her adventures and impressions from those years. Karlin's legacy is rich and varied. In addition to a large collection of artefacts that she brought back from her journey together with photographs, postcards, a herbarium, watercolours, sketches, and drawings, she also left behind both published and unpublished

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin [Columbus's Daughter: The Life and Work of Alma M. Karlin]* (Celje: Pokrajinski muzej Celje, 2011), 30–46.

works of fiction, journalistic writings, and extensive correspondence, all of which testify to her keen interest in foreign lands and cultures.<sup>2</sup>

In this paper we present and analyse two accounts of Chinese funerary rituals and ancestor-related practices written by Alma Karlin. From these early accounts we are able to glean a great deal of information about the burial and mourning practices that prevailed in China at the time—information that is invaluable for studying continuity and changes in that area of Chinese culture. It is, moreover, instructive to engage with the author's interpretation of the religious and funerary rites she observed, for her attitude was coloured by a range of socio-political, cultural and personal factors. We subsequently compare her accounts with those penned by other Slovenian travellers (mostly missionaries) in the early twentieth century, and attempt to put these accounts into their proper historical context.

### Background to Alma Karlin's accounts of Chinese funerary rituals

During her journey around the world, Alma Karlin published, between the years 1920 and 1928, a total of 136 articles under the generic title "Reiseskizzen von Alma M. Karlin" (Travel Sketches of Alma M. Karlin) in the *Cillier Zeitung*, a local German-language newspaper based in her native town of Celje in present-day Slovenia, which at the time was known by its German name Cilli.<sup>3</sup> In these articles, spaced over four consecutive series, she recorded her travel impressions, describing the everyday life and customs of the people in the countries she visited, as well as writing about the flora and fauna of various places. Except for the first series, which remained untitled, the other three have geographical subheadings—"Im Südseeinselreich" (Among the South Sea

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<sup>2</sup> For more on Alma's life and journey, see Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*; see also Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik, "A Lonely Odyssey: The Life and Legacy of Alma M. Karlin," *Orientations* 47/3 (April 2016): 50–55.

<sup>3</sup> Vladimir Šlibar, "Članki Alme M. Karlin v Cillier Zeitung 1920–1928," *Celjski zbornik* (1988): 191–198. Alma herself mentions that she published around 200 articles in that newspaper (Alma M. Karlin, *Urok južnega morja* (Celje: Mohorjeva družba, 1996, 101)).



Islands), “Im fernen Osten” (In the Far East), and “Durch Australasien” (Through Australasia)—that indicate where she was writing from.

Her first account of Chinese funerary rituals, entitled “Ein Trauerfall in China” (A Bereavement in China), appeared in the series “Im fernen Osten” and was published in two parts, on 6 and 13 April 1924, respectively. An abbreviated version is to be found in the chapter “Der Sterbefall” (A Death) in the first volume of her travelogue *Einsame Weltreise: Die Tragödie einer Frau* (*Around the World Alone: A Woman’s Tragedy*), published in 1929. For after returning home in January 1928 she set about compiling her notes into a three-volume book of travels, published between 1929 and 1933 by the Wilhelm Köhler Verlag, which was based in North Rhine-Westphalia. While she craved recognition as a novelist, it was in fact her travelogue that would bring her fame. The first edition sold out quickly; overall, close to 100,000 copies were sold of the German-language editions.<sup>4</sup> The first volume of her trilogy was translated into English in 1933, and into Finnish one year later.<sup>5</sup>

As already mentioned, Karlin’s second account of Chinese funeral practice was published five years after the first and was a condensed version. Before we proceed to analyse the two accounts, it is important to note that they were both written in German. Although her parents were of Slovenian descent—her father had served as an officer in the Austro-Hungarian army, while her mother taught at the local German school in Celje for nearly forty years—she grew up speaking German and was to acquire only a limited knowledge of the Slovenian language. This has to be understood in terms of the socio-political situation at the turn of the twentieth century: Celje was then a provincial town in the Austro-Hungarian Empire with a large German-speaking population, which continued to predominate even after the town became part of the newly founded Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes in 1918.

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<sup>4</sup> Barbara Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči – Columbus’ daughter: Alma M. Karlin [kulturna, zgodovinska in antropološka razstava, 21. 9. 2017 –14.1.2018]* (Ljubljana: Cankarjev dom, kulturni in kongresni center; Celje: Pokrajinski muzej, 2017), 31.

<sup>5</sup> Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*, 55.

“Fortuitous coincidence” in Beijing:  
The article A Bereavement in China

Karlin herself tells us that her account was inspired by the funeral of the father of Mr. L., who had been her host during her stay in Beijing in the autumn of 1923. “It would be terrible to call it luck,” she admitted, “but for me it really was fortuitous coincidence (...) because I was able to witness a thousand customs and practices that would have remained hidden to me otherwise”.<sup>6</sup>

Despite her linguistic talent—she passed the English, French, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish language examinations at the prestigious Royal Society of Arts during her six-year stay in London (1908–1914), where she also began studying Japanese, Chinese, Sanskrit, Spanish, and Russian, and was later to compile a ten-language dictionary<sup>7</sup>—Karlin was not fluent in Chinese. Upon her arrival in Beijing, as she explained in her travelogue, she was able to say only two phrases in that language: “the unnecessary question ‘Are you Chinese?’ and the redundant answer (...) ‘I am Austrian’, which was not true anymore.”<sup>8</sup> Her conversation with the locals was conducted mostly in English, and she did not use Chinese written sources to put the rites that she observed into context. Whether she was familiar with the extensive writings on the Chinese religious system and funeral practices by the well-known Dutch scholar Jan Jakob Maria de Groot (1854–1921), is hard to say. Her description of Chinese funerary practice was based mainly on close observation of this particular funeral in northern China (Beijing) in 1923, though she must have enquired among her Chinese friends about the meaning of some of the ceremonies.

According to Alma Karlin’s two descriptions of a Chinese funeral, the preparations and rituals began immediately after a person’s death.

<sup>6</sup> Alma M. Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise: Die Tragödie einer Frau* (Minden, Berlin, Leipzig: Wilhelm Köhler Verlag, 1930), 244. “Es wäre zu grausam, es ein Glück zu nennen, aber es war für mich ein guter zufall (...) denn auf diese Weise konnte ich Einblick in die tausend Sitten und Gebräuche gewinnen, die dabei ans Tageslicht treten und die man nie erfahren, die man eben, vom Zufall begünstigt, sehen muß.”

<sup>7</sup> Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*, 21.

<sup>8</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 225. “Die unnütze Frage „Sind Sie Chinese?“ und die überflüssige Antwort, (...) „Ich bin Oesterreicherin!“, was gar nicht mehr richtig stimmte.”

She writes about the silken clothes of the deceased and the mourning garments, which were unhemmed and made of grass cloth, and explains how all silk garments would be packed away because the deceased's closest relatives could not wear them for three years. Such details are noted as the absence of any jewellery and other finery, the appearance of the mourners with their loosened hair and unwashed faces, and how the deceased's son would ruffle his hair before visitors came to pay their condolences. She further describes the arrangement of the room, with the coffin in the centre and a table set up nearby on which offerings to the spirit of the deceased were placed, including food, incense sticks, purple candles, and a green earthenware pot for the spirit paper money. A green curtain screened the coffin from general view. Referring to the custom of pulling the nails out of the walls of the room or wrapping them in purple silk in order to ward off evil spirits, Karlin explains that "when the deceased's soul returns to feast on the food on the offering table, it is accompanied by an evil spirit who, in the event of finding a free nail, would hang the soul on it and eat all the delicacies himself."<sup>9</sup> After describing how the body was sealed in an airtight coffin, she outlines the etiquette observed during condolence visits before turning her attention to the solemn ceremony of transferring the coffin to the temple, describing the cortège in detail. The coffin was carried out of the house and laid in a large chest, lined with red silk and gold embroidery. A Lamaist priest in a white robe led the procession, followed by boys in richly embroidered green cloaks with large paper lanterns and by attendants bearing paper money folded into various shapes. Men in picturesque ancient costumes carried an empty green sedan chair in which the deceased's soul was supposed to be reclining. Then came more lantern-bearers and, under a beautiful canopy, the deceased's son, hatless, wearing a grass-cloth dress, and supported by servants. Several pallbearers carried the large bier with the coffin on their shoulders. Close behind followed the deceased's daughter-in-law, his granddaughters, and other relatives in rickshaws and carriages with white venetian

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<sup>9</sup> Alma M. Karlin, "Ein Trauerfall in China, II," *Cillier Zeitung* 30 (13 April 1924): 2. "Wenn nämlich die Seele des Verstorbenen zurückkehrt, um den Speisen auf dem Opfertisch zuzusprechen, wird sie von einem bösen Geiste begleitet und findet er einen Nagel frei, so hängt er die Seele daran und ißt selbst die Leckerbissen."

blinds. Karlin devotes several paragraphs to the coffin, which was made of catalpa wood and had to be large, dry, and comfortable. (An attentive son would give his parents a coffin, which they would keep as a piece of furniture in the house; they would buy a mortuary silk garment in advance and watch over the manufacture of the ten blankets and silk cover that would eventually be put in the coffin.) Various objects, such as jewellery, souvenirs, and clothes were placed inside, and the body was surrounded by silk rolls filled with plaster so that no movement was possible. Upon arrival at the temple, the coffin received several coatings of lacquer and porcelain powder.

Once the coffin was inside the temple, the funerary rituals continued: every day, the mourners would bring offerings of food as they waited for the diviner to determine an auspicious date for the burial. Karlin notes that coffins were sometimes not buried until after several months; if burial proved to be too expensive, they might simply be “left outside”.<sup>10</sup> She briefly describes the magnificent final funeral procession, which was accompanied by the burning of various objects and figures made of paper or bamboo representing the deceased’s house with all its furnishings, the women folk and servants, his horse and wagon, and favourite foods. She also gives details of the different mourning periods for the deceased’s relatives and of the rules that had to be observed during that time.

Although her narrative does not reflect the exact ritual sequence, one can recognize the following distinct stages: a) washing the corpse; b) the preparations for mourning; c) the condolence visits, accompanied by music and elaborate ceremonies; e) the offering of food and the burning of paper money; e) the encoffining ceremony, during which a silver nail is hammered into the coffin; f) the transfer of the coffin to the temple, where it is housed until the date for burial has been fixed; g) the hiring of professionals for the funeral service; h) the burial itself; and j) the mourning period. It is clear that Karlin was describing the funeral of an elderly parent as organized by a dutiful son. The funerary rites for those who died childless or unmarried were different. When infants died, the

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<sup>10</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 227.

bodies might be buried in a shallow grave or simply abandoned to the elements.<sup>11</sup>

The sections on funerals and offerings in the local histories produced in northern China at the turn of the twentieth century yield many valuable insights. Drawing on Susan Naquin's survey of seventy such local histories from Hebei province, mostly written in the period 1870–1940,<sup>12</sup> we may trace the ritual sequence upon the death of an elderly parent as follows: a) the official wailing when the death occurred; b) washing and dressing the corpse; c) giving public notice of the death by pasting white paper streamers on the main gate of the house; d) hiring a diviner to help with most aspects of the funeral, such as protecting the family against the harmful influences of an unburied body, calculating the auspicious time for key events (encoffining, moving the coffin, burial), and determining the site of the grave according to geomantic laws; e) formal notification of the deceased's relatives and acquaintances, and also of the local gods by reporting the death at the nearest shrine; f) encoffining, followed by the ritual of "calling back the soul" so that it would remain with the body in the coffin, and the burning of paper replicas of objects that were to accompany the deceased into the afterworld; g) arranging for monks or priests to chant scriptures every seventh day for seven weeks to help the soul of the deceased travel through the dark underworld to its next rebirth; h) the receiving of condolences, which, like the rituals, involved considerable ceremony (all guests were expected to bring gifts, which usually included food or paper money offerings, ceremonial objects such as candles and incense, and money to help the bereaved family with the expenses); i) preparation of an ancestral or spirit tablet for the deceased; and j) moving the coffin from the home and the funeral procession. The funerary rites might vary in certain details, with striking differences observed between villages separated by only a few kilometres, but they were generally performed in this established sequence.

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<sup>11</sup> Susan Naquin, "Funerals in North China: Uniformity and Variation," in *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*, eds. James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 46.

<sup>12</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 37–70.

Although Karlin mentioned most of the above structural elements when describing the funeral ceremony, the highlights of her account are the encoffining, the condolence visits and associated rituals, and the removal of the coffin from the house. The encoffining and the removal of the coffin were indeed the most important ritual acts, in which guests, neighbours, and acquaintances were involved in addition to the deceased's family. It is understandable that Karlin focused on these two major moments, since she witnessed the proceedings as an outside observer. As already noted, her account was based on what she had seen of the funeral rituals following the death of the father of her host in Beijing. As an outsider to the family, she was, of course, not involved in the more intimate preparations. This explains why she only briefly mentions the washing and dressing of the corpse (*xiaolian* 小殮), which were carried out by the next of kin only. On the other hand, it is surprising that she does not refer to the so-called ancestral or spirit tablet (*lingpai* 靈牌), which was another key element of the funeral ritual. The wooden spirit tablet, intended to become a home for one aspect of the soul of the deceased, was a central ceremonial object in front of which offerings were performed and paper money was burned. It is unclear whether she attended the ritual of "completing the tablet" (*chengzhu* 成主), which symbolized the transfer of the deceased's spirit to the tablet, but we do know that she saw the altar table that would traditionally be set up near the body of a deceased person, and on which a temporary spirit tablet and lamp were placed. Thus, in her original account she wrote: "At the head [of the coffin] there is an altar table bearing two lit candles, an oil lamp in the middle, reminiscent of our sanctuary lamp, and also a bronze vessel with small votive candles. In the evening, as soon as food has been brought from the inn—some of which is offered to the guests—the deceased's favourite dishes are placed on the altar table inside porcelain ware of the finest quality."<sup>13</sup> A similar description of the altar table appears in the revised account

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<sup>13</sup> Karlin, *Ein Trauerfall in China*, II, 1. "Da zu Häupten steht der Opfertisch mit zwei brennenden Wachskerzen und einer Öllampe in der Mitte, die an unser ewiges Licht erinnert. In einem Bronzegefäß liegen außerdem die Weihrauchopferkerzchen und abends, sobald aus dem Gasthaus die Speisen gebracht wurden, die auch den Gästen geboten werden, sucht man die Lieblingsgerichte des Toten aus und stellt sie im besten Porzellan vorne auf den Opfertisch."

of the funeral in her travelogue *Einsame Weltreise*, but she again only mentions the purple candles and incense sticks.<sup>14</sup> A reference to the “Ahnentafel” (ancestral tablet) in her unpublished manuscript “Glaube und Aberglaube im Fernen Osten” (Faith and Superstition in the Far East),<sup>15</sup> indicates that she was aware of this important ritual object, and so it is remarkable that she omitted the spirit tablet in her description of the funeral. Many of the funeral rites were performed with a view to settling the volatile spirit immediately after death and facilitating its journey through the netherworld. They included the ritual referred to as “calling back the soul” (*zhaohun* 招魂), designed to secure the soul to the encoffined body; the chanting of scriptures to accompany the soul on its journey; and the offering of food and spirit-world objects made of paper. There can be no doubt that a spirit tablet—or at least a temporary one—was also on the altar table next to the body of her host’s deceased father. It is difficult to say why Karlin did not consider it necessary to include a reference to such a significant feature of Chinese funerary ritual in her two accounts.

Admittedly, in the first volume of her travelogue she explained that there were many more things she would have liked to write about, but “for now I shall relate only the things that deeply touched my heart during this endless educational journey, and describe how people’s lives unfolded before me.”<sup>16</sup> In fact, she also did not mention any white paper streamers pasted on the main gate of the deceased’s house or any wailing by his female relatives to announce the death. As pointed out by James L. Watson, the formal high-pitched wailing by women of the household was always required, while pasting white streamers was optional in some parts of China.<sup>17</sup> It is possible that her host family in Beijing did not employ such streamers, though it does seem unlikely,

<sup>14</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 245.

<sup>15</sup> I should like to thank Maja Veselič for drawing my attention to this manuscript. Alma Karlin, “Glaube und Aberglaube im Fernen Osten”, unpublished incomplete manuscript, manuscript collection of the National and University Library, n.d., 1–92.

<sup>16</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 249. “Ich erzähle indessen nur von dem, was – auf dieser endlosen Studienreise – mein Herz stark berührt hat und wie sich das Leben der Menschen gerade mir gegenüber entrollte.”

<sup>17</sup> James L. Watson, “The Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites: Elementary Forms, Ritual Sequences, and the Primacy of Performance,” in *Death Ritual in Late Imperial and Modern China*,



given that the descriptions of funerary practice in northern China in local histories from that period clearly refer to that custom.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps Karlin did not consider it sufficiently remarkable, since the custom of pasting strips of paper on doors is very common among the Chinese. At New Year's, in particular, people will paste auspicious couplets, written on strips of red paper, on both sides of the front door and affix above the lintel a horizontal scroll containing a four-character phrase to express wishes for health, happiness, good luck, and prosperity in the coming year. These red couplets are usually not removed until the next New Year, when new ones are put up; if a death occurs in the household, they are covered over with white paper. Karlin does mention the typical red banners decorated with gold characters when describing the alleys of Beijing in her travelogue, but pays little attention to them otherwise.<sup>19</sup> One might argue that restrictions of space led to her omitting the white paper streamers in her article for the *Cillier Zeitung*, but then again she did not mention the custom in her travelogue either, where she could write more freely and at greater length.

Alma Karlin was clearly more interested in how people felt and acted, as one may also infer from her description of the funeral rites. Thus, she failed to mention such important ritual objects as the spirit tablet and the white streamers, but, on the other hand, captured the characteristic appearance of Chinese mourners, who were supposed to keep their face unwashed and their hair uncombed, and to wear plain clothing without any ornaments, silk or fur. While the focus of her attention was on the bereaved family—particularly on the deceased's son, who during condolence visits had to remain kneeling beside the coffin behind the green curtain—she also registered the behaviour of the neighbours, close relatives, and other guests who came to pay their last respects. The arrival of each visitor, who was expected to bring gifts, was heralded by drumming. Visitors were expected to perform *koutou* 叩頭 both to the deceased and to his son; that is, to kneel and touch the ground with their forehead as a token of reverence. Close friends were

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eds. James L. Watson and Evelyn S. Rawski (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 12.

<sup>18</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 39.

<sup>19</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 230.

allowed behind the curtain so that they could offer their condolences to the son.<sup>20</sup>

We learn, moreover, that the family did not bury the coffin immediately after the funeral but, rather, left it in the temple for the time being: “The old gentleman’s corpse will later be transferred to Shanghai, and all his relatives from all parts of China are expected to come for that occasion. The funeral procession is then often several miles long and the poor son will have to walk for many hours before reaching the family graveyard.”<sup>21</sup> The practice of storing a coffin above ground, sometimes for months or years, until the auspicious date for burial had been determined, or until the deceased’s spouse had also died, was observed in northern China, but not in the south. Coffins were accommodated in temples, on vacant land or in remote spots.<sup>22</sup> The father of Karlin’s host must originally have been from Shanghai, since that is where the family graveyard was situated. This is further confirmed by her reference, in the later version of her account, to how the deceased’s widow had to be summoned from Shanghai before the family could begin organizing the funeral.<sup>23</sup> The fact that the grave site was in Shanghai explains why neither of Karlin’s accounts contains any information about the interment itself, the attendant rites, and the more elaborate follow-up ceremonies that the closest relatives of the deceased had to perform, such as returning the ancestral tablet to the family altar, “rounding off the grave” (*yuanfen* 圓墳) by piling up earth to make it a proper size and shape, and burning incense and spirit paper money on certain days and anniversaries.<sup>24</sup> She only makes the general comment that, no matter how lavish the coffin and the procession, the grave would always be very simple, consisting of a high mound of earth covered over with

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<sup>20</sup> Karlin, *Ein Trauerfall in China*, II, 1.

<sup>21</sup> Karlin, *Ein Trauerfall in China*, II, 2. “Die Leiche des alten Herrn wird später nach Shanghai überführt werden und dazu müssen alle Verwandten aus allen Teilen Chinas kommen. Der Trauerzug ist da oft meilenlang und der arme Sohn muß oft viele Stunden lang laufen, ehe der Familiengrabplatz erreicht wird.”

<sup>22</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 42.

<sup>23</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 244.

<sup>24</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 44.

cement for the wealthy and a smaller mound without a stone slab or flowers for the poor.<sup>25</sup>

Karlin's two accounts of funerary ritual in China were thus based on her observation of one particular funeral, that of her host's father, who died of a heart attack in Beijing in the autumn of 1923.<sup>26</sup> The deceased's son, Mr. L., who was married to a German woman, was the owner of a private guesthouse "Foo-Lai" near the Chuan Pan hutong, where she was staying.<sup>27</sup> It was not far from the Hadamen 哈達門 gate:<sup>28</sup> as she recalls in her travelogue, she would walk to Hadamen Street no less than three times a day to buy peaches.<sup>29</sup> Alma Karlin left Beijing in mid-November 1923 and travelled on to Taiwan, stopping at Tianjin, Dalian, Shanghai, and Fuzhou. She stayed in Shanghai for only a short period, though, and almost certainly was not there when the coffin of her host's father was finally buried.

### Ancestor worship and the burning of paper money

A central feature of Chinese funerary ritual and mortuary practice is the belief in a reciprocal relationship between the living and the dead, who could intercede with the deities on behalf of their living descendants. These were expected to care for the spirits of deceased family members and other ancestors, enabling them to continue to lead a comfortable life in the afterworld. If such worship was adequately performed, the ancestor would provide certain material benefits, such as wealth, good fortune, and health. This reciprocal obligation made the ties between living and dead family members even stronger. Immediately after a person's death, an elaborate ritual sequence would begin in order to settle the soul of the deceased and facilitate its transition from the corpse into spirit existence as an ancestor. All the funerary rites were in one way or another tied to this belief in ancestor worship and

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<sup>25</sup> Karlin, *Ein Trauerfall in China*, II, 2.

<sup>26</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 244.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>28</sup> Hadamen, known also as *Chongwenmen* 崇文門, was a gate in Beijing's city wall in the south-eastern part of the inner city.

<sup>29</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 228.

served to demonstrate family reverence—a cardinal value in the family-oriented Confucian society. The proper observance of mourning rites was not only a token of family reverence but also an important element of Chinese national identity. As discussed by Watson, rituals associated with death “constituted a kind of ‘cultural cement’ that helped hold this vastly complex and diversified society together.”<sup>30</sup> The standardization of rituals was key to a unified Chinese culture, but it is worth emphasizing that while the sequence of funerary rites was relatively uniform, burial customs varied significantly in different regions.<sup>31</sup>

Although Alma Karlin, as we have seen, failed to mention certain acts and objects, her description of Chinese funerary ritual clearly tallies with the sequence outlined by Watson:<sup>32</sup> a) public notification of death by wailing; b) donning of white clothing by mourners; c) bathing of the corpse; d) sending of food, money, and other goods to the dead; e) preparation of a spirit tablet for the dead; f) ritualized use of money and employment of professionals for the conduct of funerary rites; g) music to accompany the corpse and settle the spirit; h) sealing the corpse in an airtight coffin; and i) expulsion of the coffin from the community. Her two accounts therefore serve as further evidence that in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century China there was a uniform system of mortuary practices, which were centred on ancestor worship. Karlin does not specifically discuss ancestor worship or refer to the ancestral tablet (though they are mentioned in her unpublished manuscript), she does mention offerings of food and the burning of paper money and paper models of other everyday items to be transferred to the netherworld: this reflects her awareness of the importance of ancestors and their cult in China. Indeed, she observed how “(...) the desecration of the deceased body is quite unheard of. Fear of the [evil] spirit (...) and reverence for one’s ancestors make such a crime, which would surely be punished even more cruelly than parricide, impossible in the eyes of the Chinese.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Watson, “Structure of Chinese Funerary Rites,” 7.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 3–19.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 12–15.

<sup>33</sup> Karlin, *Ein Trauerfall in China*, II, 2. “(...) ist Leichenschändung völlig unbekannt. Angst vor dem Geiste (...) und Ehrfurcht vor den Ahnen überhaupt machen solch ein Verbrechen,

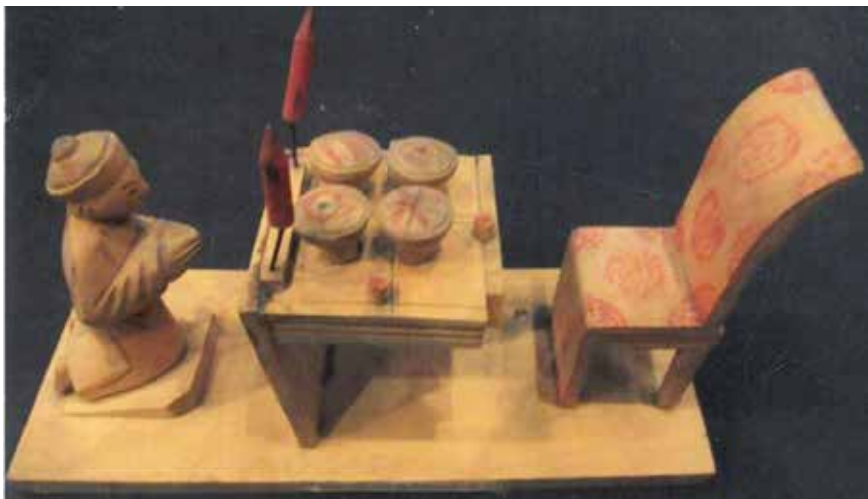


Figure 1: Wooden miniature sculpture showing ancestor worship, early 20th century, China (Alma M. Karlin Collection, Celje Regional Museum).

Among the wide range of objects that Alma Karlin collected on her travels<sup>34</sup> are a small wooden sculpture of a scene in which a son makes offerings to the spirit of the deceased, represented by an empty chair (Fig. 1), and a collection of paper money (34 pieces with red wax seals and imitation gold foil) together with her handwritten notes about the festivals during which the money was meant to be burned (Fig. 2).

Both the wooden miniature and the collection of paper money testify to Karlin's interest in ancestor worship. In her notes on the latter,

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das wohl noch grausamer als Elternmord bestraft werden würde, unmöglich in den Augen der Chinesen."

<sup>34</sup> Alma Karlin bequeathed her collection of objects to the Regional Museum in Celje. It consists of 1,392 items (Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*, 57), most of them gathered during her journey round the world and including such diverse objects as seeds, tropical plants, wedding and funeral garments, jewellery, baskets, weapons, Japanese *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, lacquerwares, and statues. Of the 840 items that have been inventoried, 267 are of East Asian origin. See also Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik, "Zbirateljska kultura in vzhodno-azijske zbirke v Sloveniji [Collecting Culture and East Asian Collections in Slovenia]," in *Procesi in odnosi v Vzhodni Aziji: Zbornik EARL*, eds. Andrej Bekeš, Jana S. Rošker and Zlatko Šabič (Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani and Raziskovalno središče za Vzhodno Azijo, 2019), 122.



Figure 2: Paper money with handwritten notes by Alma Karlin, early 20th century, China (Alma M. Karlin Collection, Celje Regional Museum; photo: Sanela Kšela).

she explains that “Geisterpapiergeld” (spirit paper money) is burned on a large scale at funerals and during the following three festivals: Qingming 清明, Zhongyuan 中元, and Xiayuan 下元. These were festivals during which “Geister” (spirits) would be released (*fanggui* 放鬼), counted (*diangui* 點鬼), and collected (*shougui* 收鬼).<sup>35</sup> The entire family of a recently deceased person was expected to visit the family graveyard on Qingming (in the third or fourth lunar month), on the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month (Zhongyuan, or Ghost Festival), and on the first day of the tenth month (Xiayuan) for the ceremony of “sending winter clothes”.<sup>36</sup> These were the three most important festivals during which dead ancestors were to be worshipped. Karlin’s notes therefore accurately reflect that practice.

Burning paper money (also referred to as spirit money) was an integral part of the funeral ceremony and of subsequent ancestor worship rites. Offerings were generally made before the wooden ancestral tablet at least twice a month, at major festivals, and on anniversaries of the ancestor’s birth and death. The descendants communicated with the departed souls in the netherworld by means of various material objects: mainly food, incense, and paper money, to which candles and firecrackers were sometimes added. C. Fred Blake’s in-depth study of the custom of burning paper money describes the sequence of the ceremony as follows: a) lighting candles to mark the beginning of the service; b) lighting incense sticks to establish communication with the spirits; c) offering food and burning paper money and other papermade objects in order to transmit these goods to the world of deceased family members; and d) setting off firecrackers to mark the end of the ceremony, thereby separating the living from any malevolent influences that might have arisen while they were communicating with their ancestors.<sup>37</sup> This ceremony was based on the belief that, via the medium of fire, paper could carry a precious metal (money) into the world of the dead, thereby securing the wellbeing of ancestors and ensuring that

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<sup>35</sup> Handwritten notes in German on a sheet of paper with Chinese paper money attached to it (Alma M. Karlin Collection, Celje Regional Museum).

<sup>36</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 45.

<sup>37</sup> C. Fred Blake, *Burning Money: The Material Spirit of the Chinese Lifeworld* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2011), 78.



they were favourably disposed towards their descendants. There are countless variations of paper money,<sup>38</sup> but traditionally the most common types are: a) copper paper money, consisting of a rectangular sheet of coarse paper, modified with rows of perforations to imitate strings of ancient copper coins; b) silver paper money, in which silver foil (a tin and lead alloy) is pasted to the paper; and c) gold paper money, in which gold foil is used. The different types reflect a hierarchy in the world of spirits, the copper paper money being offered to common ghosts, including the spirits of recently deceased family members; the silver paper money to more distant ancestors and family members who have been dead for longer (large amounts may also be burned during vigils and on the anniversary of a person's death); and the gold paper money to even more distant spirits and higher divinities. The burning of copper, silver, and gold paper money symbolizes different phases of etherealization of the worldly body as it becomes a pure spirit.<sup>39</sup>

This hierarchy of the spiritual world was closely linked to the notion of a dual soul, which had already been conceived by the time of the Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE). The Chinese believed that every person had a *hun* 魂 soul and a *po* 魄 soul.<sup>40</sup> While the *hun* soul was responsible for the spiritual life of a person and his or her perceptions, the *po* soul was associated with the physical body and its functions. Death occurred when both souls separated: the *hun* soul as a lighter and more ethereal aspect would move away from the body, travelling to the underworld to be judged and then released for rebirth or paradise. Most of the funerary rites were therefore performed under the guidance of Taoist priests or Buddhist monks, and were aimed at guiding the *hun* soul through the underworld to be purified of worldly blemishes so that it could emerge as a pure spirit. The *po* soul, on the contrary, would finally dwell with the body inside the grave or ancestral tablet. It was this soul that could affect the world of the living. When caring for

<sup>38</sup> It should be noted that the custom of burning paper money is also performed as part of the worship of various gods and deities. It is still widely practised in all parts of China and beyond.

<sup>39</sup> Blake, *Burning Money*, 28.

<sup>40</sup> On the *hun* and *po* souls, see Ying-Shih Yü, "‘O Soul, Come Back!’ A Study in the Changing Conceptions of the Soul and Afterlife in Pre-Buddhist China," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47/2 (December 1987): 363–395.

a grave or ancestral tablet it was therefore crucial to observe the correct procedures, as otherwise the offended ancestor might inflict harm upon the living.<sup>41</sup>

The practice of burning paper money began to excite the curiosity of Europeans particularly in the nineteenth century, and it was later to become the subject of academic study. However, in early travellers' or missionaries' accounts it tends to be dealt with in almost perfunctory fashion. The authors usually did not find this custom remarkable; they were more surprised by the credulity of its devotees.<sup>42</sup> Karlin likewise mentions it in passing in several places, but never provides the level of detail that would have helped her readers to understand it better. Nevertheless, she was aware of the three most important festivals for reunion with, and worship of, dead ancestors, as evidenced by her notes on the paper money that she collected during her stay in China.

Alma Karlin's accounts versus those of Slovenian missionaries:  
Discussions of ancestral worship and funeral rites

Funerals and ancestor worship rites have long occupied a prominent place in Western accounts of China. European readers first encountered Chinese death rituals and religious practices in the Jesuit missionaries' descriptions from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. As Nicolas Standaert shows in his book *The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange between China and Europe*, the missionaries were impressed by the elaborate burial practices and mourning rites they witnessed,<sup>43</sup> and recognized the relevance of such ceremonies for understanding Chinese social and cultural values. They provided the first of what Standaert calls "proto-ethnographic" descriptions of the funeral procession, mourning clothes, condolence rites, and burial methods. Some of the Chinese ritual elements were even incorporated into the funerals of Jesuit missionaries who died in China: the mourning proces-

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<sup>41</sup> Naquin, *Funerals in North China*, 55–56.

<sup>42</sup> Blake, *Burning Money*, 11.

<sup>43</sup> Nicolas Standaert, *The Interweaving of Rituals: Funerals in the Cultural Exchange between China and Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).

sions and burials were often sponsored by the emperor in recognition of their outstanding work and achievements at the Qing court.

Such interactions between European Christian and Chinese funeral rites are also recorded in a letter written by Ferdinand Augustin Hallerstein (1703–1774), a Jesuit missionary from a small town near Ljubljana who served as the Head of the Imperial Board of Astronomy at the Qianlong court from 1746 until his death almost thirty years later.<sup>44</sup> In this letter, addressed to his brother Weichard and dated 6 October 1743, he explains that, during a funeral procession in which he and other Jesuit missionaries had taken part, they had worn white robes instead of black and had performed *koutou* 叩頭, the act of bowing the head to touch the ground.<sup>45</sup> He continues: “Then, partly because of local customs, partly due to the length of the path, we ride horses and accompany the funeral procession to the burial place (...) Four mandarins dressed in mourning attire, who have been invited to the funeral, accompany the wagon at its side. They are accompanied by, to tell the truth, Chinese music.”<sup>46</sup>

While an in-depth examination of the Jesuits’ accounts of Chinese funerary practice is beyond the scope of this paper, we may note that these give quite a good idea of the funeral ceremony in China. They also allow us to point out some important differences between Chinese and European funeral practice during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. For the Chinese, the central feature of the ceremony was ancestor worship, reflecting the Confucian virtue of family reverence, and family members were the main actors during the funeral. For Europeans, on the other hand, the clergy played the leading role during the funeral ceremony, and the emphasis was on compliance with religious doctrine. One of the key questions that concerned the missionaries was whether Chinese who converted to Christianity might still be allowed

<sup>44</sup> On F. A. Hallerstein, see Mitja Saje, “The Importance of Ferdinand Augustin Hallerstein for Cultural and Political Relations with China and Korea,” *Asian Studies* 3/2 (June 2015): 13–32.

<sup>45</sup> Ferdinand Augustin Hallerstein, “Letter from Peking addressed to Brother Weichard, dated to 6 Oct 1743,” in A. Hallerstein, *Liu Songling* 刘松龄: *The Multicultural Legacy of Jesuit Wisdom and Piety at the Qing Dynasty Court*, ed. Mitja Saje (Maribor: Association for Culture and Education Kibla; Ljubljana: Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, 2009), 317–329.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 323.

to continue their ritual practices for honouring their ancestors. A considerable dispute on this point erupted between the Jesuits, who found some of the ancestral rituals acceptable, and the Dominicans and Franciscans, who rejected any adaptation to Chinese local practices.

The accommodation policy of the Jesuits is reflected in the tone of Hallerstein's letters, which tend to be descriptive and less concerned with passing judgment. However, it is worth noting that he focuses mainly on the ruling religions and worshipping practices,<sup>47</sup> and fails to mention the custom of burning paper money, which was generally labelled as superstitious by the Jesuits. Similarly, the Chinese literati and governing elites for many centuries dismissed the popular tradition of offering money to spirits as vulgar and wasteful.<sup>48</sup> Chinese intellectuals in the twentieth century would even adopt the European term "superstition" (*mixin* 迷信) to refer to it. Surprisingly, its devotees themselves accepted that label, as discussed by Blake.<sup>49</sup>

If early missionaries were willing to tolerate Chinese rituals as compatible to some extent with their own practices, later nineteenth-century missionaries tended to insist on strict adherence to Christian dogma. This should be understood in terms of changed political circumstances, as the balance of power had shifted to the Europeans after China's defeat in the Opium Wars in the mid-nineteenth century. The two most prominent missionaries from the Slovene ethnic territory who went to China in the early twentieth century, Peter Baptist Turk (1874–1944) and Jožef Keréc (1892–1974), also left accounts of Chinese religious, funeral rites and ancestor worship. Both of them emphasize the multitude of deities in Chinese religion. "I don't think there is any other country in which the gods multiply to such an extent as they do in far-away China," wrote Keréc in his article "Kitajski bogovi" (Chinese Deities). "Every house, every dwelling, every cottage is actually a temple in which superstitious locals piously worship their deceased, recording

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<sup>47</sup> For Hallerstein's views on Chinese religion, see Zmago Šmitek, "Pogled Avguština Hallersteina na kitajska verstva [Augustin Hallerstein's view of the Chinese religions]," in *Mandarin: Hallerstein, Kranjec na kitajskem dvoru*, ed. Viljem Marjan Hribar (Radovljica: Didakta, 2003), 149–158.

<sup>48</sup> Blake, *Burning Money*, 11.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

their names on the so-called 'lin-paj' tablet, which is the abode of the spirit."<sup>50</sup> His manner becomes more descriptive when introducing the spirit tablet, but he then concludes with a dismissive observation: "In this vacuous religion, every Chinese man becomes a demigod after his death, to be worshiped by his relatives."<sup>51</sup>

Peter Baptist Turk published a series of articles entitled "S Kitajskega" (From China) in the Slovenian Catholic journal *Cvetje z vertov sv. Frančiška* (*Flowers from the Garden of St. Francis*) between the years 1906 and 1909. In the November 1906 issue, he described in detail the death of a Chinese and the associated rites.<sup>52</sup> His account focuses on the ritual of "calling back the soul" immediately after death, the storage of the coffin, mourning practices, and the funeral procession. Turk does not cover all the structural elements required by Chinese funerary ritual but highlights, instead, practices that differed from the Christian norms. As such, they met with little tolerance on his part, as is evident from his critical, almost sarcastic tone. Referring to the custom of storing a coffin for a longer period of time, he wrote: "They are not in a hurry to get on with the funeral. If they reckon that in a few months someone else in the family will die, they agree to wait for that to happen and then do both [funerals] at the same time (...) [The coffin] certainly does not spread a pleasant scent around it, even though it is nailed and smeared."<sup>53</sup> He attributes the "cause of this negligence"<sup>54</sup> to the costliness of a funeral. Similar disapproval is also manifest in his attitude to the ritual of "calling back the soul," which was prohibited to

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<sup>50</sup> Jožef Keréc, "Kitajski bogovi [Chinese Deities]," in *Misijonarski koledar 1927* (Domžale: Misijonišče pri Domžalah, 1926), 61. "Mislim, da ni dežele, kjer bi se bogovi tako množili, kakor se množijo na daljnem Kitajskem. Vsaka hiša, vsako stanovanje, vsaka bajta je prav za prav tempelj, v katerem praznovorni domačini pobožno častijo svoje rajnike, katerih imena hranijo na tako zvani deščici lin-paj, t.j. bivališče duha."

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 61. "Po tej prazni veri postane vsak Kitajec po svoji smrti polbog, ki ga morajo častiti njegovi sorodniki."

<sup>52</sup> Padre Peter Baptist Turk, "S Kitajskega. Misijonska sporočila iz pisem p. Petra Baptista Turka [From China. Missionary messages from letters by p. Peter Baptist Turk]," *Cvetje z vertov sv. Frančiška* [*Flowers from the Garden of St. Francis*] 23, št. 11 (1906): 326–335.

<sup>53</sup> Turk, "S Kitajskega," 332. "Za pogreb se jim prav malo mudi. Če sodijo, da bo čez kakih par mesecev gdo umrl v družini, se pogovore, da bodo še tistega počakali in potem skupaj naredili (...) Gotovo ne razširjuje prijetne vonjave okrog sebe, čeravno je zabit in zamazan."

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* "Vzrok te nemarnosti".

Chinese converts to Christianity: “Summoning a priest<sup>55</sup> to the dying and listening to his dirty jokes is strictly forbidden. So is calling the soul and forcing it to remain.”<sup>56</sup> The “wrong world”, in the sense of inappropriate behaviour, is how he refers to the sewing of white mourning garments, and he describes the funeral ceremony as “a procession of virgins in white clothing.”<sup>57</sup> His account is indeed peppered with phrases that have negative connotations, such as “pall-bearers in rags” and “dishevelled” sons and daughters “rolling on the floor”, “scuffling with one another, shouting and screaming in all directions.”<sup>58</sup>

These later missionaries approached Chinese religion and its rituals from the perspective of their primary task of converting pagans to the Christian faith. Theological categories such as “superstition,” “idolatry,” and “atheism”<sup>59</sup> thus often explicitly or implicitly inform their accounts. Their attitude towards Chinese religious practices tends to be critical and disapproving, sometimes even strongly sarcastic.

By contrast, Karlin’s description of Chinese funerary ritual and the associated practices of ancestor worship was founded on her interest in, and admiration for, East Asian cultures, and also on her spiritual bent. The many international students she met during her stay in London (1908–1914) stimulated her enthusiasm for foreign cultures, especially for those of the countries of Asia and South America. A key encounter was with a Japanese student, Nobuji G., who described his homeland in very vivid terms, instilling in her a strong desire to see not only Japan but all of Asia. When she began her journey around the world,

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<sup>55</sup> Not only Turk but other Slovenian missionaries, too, often referred to Buddhist monks using the word “bonc,” which, according to Turk’s own explanation, derives from the Japanese “busso” (*bōsan* 坊 さん) (Peter Baptist Turk, “S Kitajskega. Misijonska sporočila iz pisem p. Petra Baptista Turka [From China. Missionary Messages from Letters by Padre Peter Baptist Turk],” *Cvetje z vertov sv. Frančiška* [Flowers from the Garden of St. Francis] 23, št. 7 (1906): 210).

<sup>56</sup> Turk, “S Kitajskega,” 334. “Bonca klicati k umirajočemu in poslušati njegove kvante, jim je strogo prepovedano. Isto tako ono klicanje in siljenje duše, naj še ostane.”

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 333. “Narobe svet!”, “procesijo belo oblečenih devic”.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 333. “Razterganih nosačev”, “razcapani” sinovi in hčere, “povaljajo po tleh”, “derviti eden čez drugega, kričati in vriščati vse vprek”.

<sup>59</sup> For more on this, see Eugenio Menegon, “European and Chinese Controversies over Rituals: A Seventeenth-Century Genealogy of Chinese Religion,” in *Devising Order: Socio-religious Models, Rituals, and the Performativity of Practice*, eds. Bruno Boute and Thomas Småberg (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2013): 193–223.

Alma Karlin had originally intended to travel first to Japan, but various circumstances led her to Genoa instead, where she embarked on a ship bound for Peru in 1920. That she was travelling for study purposes, among other things, is clear from the way that she had arranged for the painter August Friedrich Seebacher (1887–1940) to give her lessons in drawing and painting while still in Celje.<sup>60</sup> With her trained hand and keen eye she wanted to record the flora of the places she was to visit. It is quite legitimate to describe her as an amateur anthropologist and ethnologist who yearned to gain a deeper understanding of other countries and their customs. The collection that she accumulated was intended to present the natural and cultural heritage of foreign lands to her fellow country men and women.

Even though some of the articles she wrote for the *Cillier Zeitung* betray the influence of the all-pervasive Eurocentric framework of her time and age, it is surprising to observe that her account of a Chinese funeral is very descriptive: she avoids using words that might be seen as expressing condescension. Her tone becomes more intimate in the travelogue, where she also gives more autobiographical details, but even there we can hardly find any passages suggesting bemusement at, or disapproval of, Chinese customs. On the contrary, we may even discern a critical attitude towards the “enlightened” and materialistic “West”, which was incapable of making sense of some of the funerary acts. She relates the circumstances of the death of her host’s father to illustrate the spirituality of the “East”.<sup>61</sup> The father of Mr. L. was a retired diplomat in his late seventies, but still healthy and vigorous. One morning, he walked past a temple where one could enquire about the dead and their situation in the afterlife. Just as he walked past the door, he felt a sudden cold shiver down his spine. He returned home and ordered his servant to summon his son at once, as he sensed that he was about to depart for the next world. When his son arrived the next day, he found his father in perfect health and laughed at his story. Two hours later, at ten in the morning, the old diplomat suffered a heart attack and passed away.

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<sup>60</sup> Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*, 24.

<sup>61</sup> Karlin, *Einsame Weltreise*, 244.

As seen from material and textual sources, Alma Karlin was particularly interested in the spiritual and religious traditions, symbolism, and mythology of the places she visited. These inclinations would later manifest themselves in her literary works. Moreover, during her time in Norway in 1914 she had become acquainted with theosophy,<sup>62</sup> which may have contributed to her appreciation of Asian spirituality and thus to the neutral, descriptive (as opposed to evaluative) character of both her accounts of a Chinese funeral. Certainly, the genre of a travel sketch for a local newspaper would also have required a more detached attitude. The later version in her travelogue is less detached, but still free of any deprecatory personal judgments. Of course, it is not really possible to produce “pure” descriptions: even in the most detailed description the observer has to place certain elements in the foreground. Alma Karlin was drawing on her personal experience of the funeral ceremony for the father of her host in Beijing, and she focused on the behaviour of the people involved in that event. Since she could witness only the more public rites, it is understandable that she described these in greater detail.

### Conclusion

Socio-political developments forced the hitherto closed empires of China and Japan to open up and trade with Western countries at the end of the nineteenth century, accelerating the intensity of contacts between the Euro-American and East Asian regions. Not only missionaries, but also seamen, merchants, diplomats, and explorers often travelled to China, and returned with abundant stories, corroborated by various objects that they brought back. Accounts of the Far East were published more frequently, and the early romantic and fanciful notions of East Asian societies gave way to more sober assessments.

Among the many different religious and everyday practices of China, the funerary ritual and the burning of paper money attracted the attention of Europeans, eliciting accounts that ranged from summary descriptions to serious academic studies by anthropologists, historians,

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<sup>62</sup> Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: Življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin*, 22..



art historians, and theologians.<sup>63</sup> In most such writings from the late nineteenth century, one can perceive a tendency to compare the funerary customs of Europe and China. While in China the emphasis was on “orthopraxy”—that is, on getting the funeral procedure right, which was crucial both for the deceased and for surviving family members—Europeans laid stress on compliance with religious doctrine (“orthodoxy”). This led many of them, including various Slovenian missionaries to China, to express their disapproval and even condemnation of Chinese rituals.

Apart from the missionaries, Alma Karlin is almost certainly the only ethnic Slovenian to have written about Chinese funerary ritual and mourning practices in the press in the early twentieth century.<sup>64</sup> In this, she was guided by her profound interest in the spiritual traditions of Asia. The element of “fortuitous coincidence” also played a role of course, because it allowed her to gain first-hand experience of a Chinese funeral during her stay in Beijing. Unlike the missionaries, whose descriptions betray intolerance towards the rituals of their host country, Karlin produced two accounts that are remarkably objective—especially if we take into account the sociopolitical situation after the end of the First World War and, above all, the Eurocentric view that prevailed at the time.

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<sup>63</sup> In addition to the Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, among the pioneering European observers of Chinese funerary ritual were Justus Doolittle (1824–1880), an American missionary to China; Jan Jakob Maria de Groot (1854–1921), a Dutch historian of religion; Henri Doré (1859–1931), a French missionary to China; and William Joseph “Dard” Hunter (1883–1966), an American expert on papermaking.

<sup>64</sup> For the time being, no other is known to the author of this paper.

decipher Alma Karlin's handwritten notes in German about Chinese spirit paper money and for her helpful comments, to Dr. Maja Veselič for her valuable remarks, and to Luis Sundkvist for a thorough reading of the text.

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A DEATH IN THE PHOTO :  
UNDERSTANDING THE  
KOREAN EMPIRE THROUGH  
ALMA KARLIN'S BLACK AND  
WHITE PHOTOGRAPH OF THE  
FUNERAL PROCESSION IN  
FRONT OF DAEANMUN GATE

Byoung Yoong Kang

Prologue

It was June 1923 when Alma Karlin (1889-1950) first stepped onto the Korea peninsula.<sup>1</sup> The same year in January, Kim Sang Ok (김상옥, 金相玉, 1890-1923), an independent activist, ended his life by executing an honour suicide after resisting Japanese police.<sup>2</sup> That was the same year the first film ever made in Korea, *The Vow Made Below the Moon* (월하의 맹세), was released. The film marks a distinctive point in Korean film history because although the producer was Governor-General of Korea, the chief administrator of the Japanese colonial government, it was made by Korean staff.<sup>3</sup> Karlin travelled to Korea amid a whirlwind period in Korea, as the peninsula was gradually occupied by

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<sup>1</sup> Mückler, Hermann, "Von Celje nach Ozeanien: Alma Karlins Aufenthalt in der Südsee," in *Österreicher in der Südsee. Forscher, Reisende, Auswanderer*, ed. Hermann Mückler (Wien: LIT-Verlag, 2012), 273.

<sup>2</sup> Chŏn, Pongkwan 전봉관. *Kyŏngsŏng chasal kŭllŏp* 경성 자살 클럽 [*Gyeongseong Suicide Club*] (Paju: Sallim, 2008), 236.

<sup>3</sup> Kim, Sunam 김수남. *Chosŏn yŏnghwasa nonjŏm* 조선 영화사 논점 [*The Issue of Joseon Film History*] (Seoul: Wŏrin, 2008), 82-88.

Japan by means of ‘cultural rule (문화통치기)’.<sup>4</sup> The country was in a dynamic state: the undercurrents of repression occurring at the dawn of modernity.

The March First movement, also known as the Sam-il Movement (삼일 운동,三一 運動) was one of the earliest public displays of Korean resistance during the rule by Japan from 1910 to 1945. After the movement Japan decided to change the ruling strategy from military rule to cultural rule. Not much seemed saliently different from the decade before the nationwide protest. Korea was still under the governance of Japan; legal discrimination between Japanese and Korean did not cease; continuous resistance movements sparked in and out of Korea. However, from the year 1919 onward, Japanese rule was somewhat mitigated as the third Governor-General, Saitō Makoto (齋藤 実, 1858-1936), commenced his rule. Makoto allowed group gatherings and freedom of expression through media. He also encouraged education by expanding the opportunity to peasants in farmland. The overall atmosphere of Japanese rule was relatively less tense than during other phases. Karlin’s visit took place during a time when Japan was executing its most generous policies in Korea.<sup>5</sup> The Japanese Government promoted tourism in Korea, resulting in an increased number of foreign tourists, including the Japanese.<sup>6</sup> Karlin entered Busan after departing Japan, and travelled through Seoul and Pyongyang before leaving for China. Like other tourists, she packed her suitcase with authentic souvenirs of Korea. Some of the objects are now kept in the Celje Regional Museum, Slovenia. There are thirty-nine photographs in total that Karlin brought from Korea to Slovenia. Five of them are

<sup>4</sup> Sō, Chungsoek 서중석. *Chibaejaŭi kukka, minjungŭi narar han’gug kŭnhyōndaesa 100nyōnŭi chaejomŏng* 지배자의 국가, 민중의 나라: 한국 근현대사 100년의 재조명 [*State of the Ruler, People’s Country: Re-examination of 100-year Korean Modern History*] (Paju: Tolbegae, 2010), 32-39.

<sup>5</sup> Yun, Haetong 윤해동, Hwang, Pyōngchu 황병주. *Shingminji konggongŏng, shilch’ewa ūnyuŭi kōri* 식민지 공공성, 실체와 은유의 거리 [*Colonial Publicity: The Distance between Reality and Metaphor*] (Seoul: Ch’aekkwahamkke, 2010), 148.

<sup>6</sup> Cho Jung-min 조정민. “Ilchech’imnyakki sajin’gŭrimyōpsōro pon pusan kwan’gwangŭi p’yosanggwa rok’ōllit’i chibaewa hyangyuŭi pada 일체침략기 사진그림엽서로 본 부산 관광의 표상과 로컬리티 지배와 향유의 바다 [The Presentation and Locality of Busan Tourism as Viewed from Picture Postcards in the Japanese Colonial Era],” *Japanese Cultural Studies* 일본문화연구 67 (2018): 35-58.



Photo 1: Funeral Procession in front of Daeamun Gate.

funeral themed photos, and in one photo of the five, one can find a poignant story about a Joseonian woman's death and the Korean Empire. In the present paper, I will scrutinise the details of the photo and attempt to deepen the understanding of early twentieth century Korea as it is observed in the photo. (Photo 1)

#### A Photo Exhibited by the Korean-American Association of Tacoma

On August 15, 2014, the Korean-American Association of Tacoma in Washington, US, displayed 60 photographs that have captured early twentieth-century Korea. One of the photos exhibited is identical with Photo 1 that Karlin brought to Slovenia. Upon revelation, the association announced that the photos are “open to the public for the first time, in joint commemoration of Victory over Japan Day with other Korean communities in the US”. Regarding the acquisition source of the photo, a spokesperson explained, “an American resident in Tacoma

donated around 60 photos to the association, saying that the donor has kept for about 100 years since his/her grandmother lived in Korea during 1914-1919.”

However, the donor was reticent about more information about his/her grandmother. As I will explain in more depth later, the photo is not an image taken during the years 1914-1919. Rather, it is highly probable that the photo was taken before 1914. Moreover, given the identical photo found in Karlin’s collection, it is also highly probable that the photo is not an original but a reprint. Instead of regarding it as someone’s private work, it seems convincing to see the donor’s photo as one of the mass-produced photographs available for tourists at that time. Major South Korean presses, including JoongAng Ilbo (The Korea Daily) quoted James Yang, the president of the association at the time, that the photo is of “Gojong (the last king of the Joseon Dynasty and the first Emperor of Korea)’s state funeral” that shows the image of “procession starting from Daeannmun Gate, a prototype of Deoksugung Palace today (One of five royal palaces in Seoul. The name Deoksugung Palace means “Palace of Virtue and Longevity” in the spirit of praying for long life for Gojong.)”. The report then states, “it seems correct that the photo is taken from a scene of Gojong’s funeral, given the evidence on the internet”.<sup>7</sup> Another JoongAng Ilbo report on the same subject similarly explained the photo as “an image that is presumably a state funeral for the Emperor Gojong on January 21, 1919”.<sup>8</sup> Some other reports, despite admitting the limited information regarding the circumstances around the year when the photo was taken due to the lack of accurate accounts, also concluded the photo is “a scene from Gojong’s funeral that stimulated the March 1 Independence Movement.” In addition, the title of the report is inaccurate. Contrary to expectation there is no written sign naming the gate as Daehanmun Gate. Never-

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<sup>7</sup> The Korea Daily, “Hūigwi yen han’gug sajindūl 100nyōnmane ch’ōn konggae 희귀 옛 한국 사진들 100년만에 첫 공개 [Rare Old Korean Photos First Released in 100 Years],” *The Korea Daily* 중앙일보, August 15, 2014, American edition 3.

<sup>8</sup> JoySeattle, “Ilcheūi han’gugin ch’ongsal changmyōn’gwa kojonghwangje changnyeshing ōgahaengnyōi 일제의 한국인 총살 장면과 고종황제 장례식 여가행렬 [Shooting Koreans by Japanese Army and Gojong’s funeral],” *JoySeattle* 조이시애틀뉴스, August 15, 2014.



theless, the headline is “The funeral procession through Daehanmun Gate” and the sub-head “Fully armed Japanese force”.<sup>9</sup>

As I will explain further, the information used in the report is far from the truth. Speculative assertions without solid ground regarding the photo caused misleading interpretations, more than a false assumption regarding Gojong. There is speculation that the subject of the funeral in the photo is that of either Empress Myeongseong or Sunjong. Cho Poong Youn argues in his monograph “Exploring Joseon through Photographs”<sup>10</sup> that “unlike the general assumption, considering the details of the procession in mourning clothes, the image is not Gojong’s but probably Empress Myeongseong’s funeral, which took place in November 1897.” His claim is partially correct and partially false. He focuses on the funeral procession, rejecting the established theory about the photo that suggests it’s Gojong. Whilst the present paper takes a similar focus to his in regards to the procession, I will disprove his argument that the Empress Myeongseong is the subject of the funeral. The event in the photograph, I argue, took place later than Empress Myeongseong’s funeral on November 21, 1897. As I will address in the paper, some strong evidence clarifies the muddled accounts and confirms that the photo was taken later. There is also some speculation that the photograph shows the imperial Sunjong’s (the second and the last Emperor of Korea) procession. This, too, I reject: not only is there a discrepancy between the dates when the photo was taken and the death of Emperor Sunjong, but also the way people dressed in the photo does not correspond to this suggestion.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, the photo found in Karlin’s suitcase, along with the photo exhibited in Tacoma, US, stirred up many assumptions and interpreta-

<sup>9</sup> Choishiaer’ullyusū 조이시애틀뉴스, “Taehanmun chinaganūn kojong changnyeshik’aengnyōl ch’onggōmch’akyong ilbon’gun 대한문 지나가는 고종 장례식행렬 총검착용 일본군 [The Funeral Procession through Daehanmun Gate and Fully Armed Japanese Force],” *Internet News Shinmoongo* 신문고 뉴스, August 16, 2014.

<sup>10</sup> Cho P’ungyōn 조풍연, *Sajimūro ponūn chosōnshidae* 사진으로 보는 조선시대 [*Joseon Dynasty in Photos*] (Seoul: Sōmundang, 1986).

<sup>11</sup> “Taehanjegung hwangshil-sunjonghwangje 2 대한제국 황실-순종황제 2 [Imperial Empire of Korea-Emperor Sunjong 2],” Songp’ungsuwōl 송풍수월, last modified January 19, 2010, <https://m.blog.naver.com/PostView.nhn?blogId=ohyh45&logNo=20098235277&proxyReferer=h> (accessed August 10, 2019)

tions. In this paper, I designate the date when the photo was taken as November 5, 1904. Then I put forward a proposition that the image presented in the photo is neither the funeral for Gojong nor Empress Myeongsong nor Sunjong. The paper instead proposes that the subject of the funeral in the photo is someone who has a close relationship with those royal figures. The debate surrounding the photo is possibly attributed to the ambiguousness in the photo. Bearing that in mind, I will investigate the detail of the photo which has been less discussed in scholarship. In so doing, the paper aims to rectify sometimes misleading, sometimes obscured, truth about the event presented in the photo.

## Gojong, the first Emperor of Korean Empire

### Korean Empire

I designate November 5, 1904, as the day when Photo 1 was taken. The Korean Empire was the only 'nation' in the Korean Peninsula that year. The Korean Empire has the shortest history amongst those of other Korean dynasties, lasting from October 12, 1897, to August 29, 1910. As the title 'Empire' suggests, the Korean Empire is the name Emperor Gojong designated to proclaim the Joseon Dynasty as the first independent unified Korean state. Gojong rejected Joseon's position at that time as a perfunctory client kingdom of the Qing dynasty and inaugurated the era of Gwangmoo (광무, 光武, 17 August 1897 to 11 August in 1907). He also elevated his title from King to Emperor to proclaim Korea's equal position to China, executing what is known as Geonwonchingje (건원칭제, 建元稱制). He established the name of a different era from China and named the emperor as was done in China.

The enforcement of Emperorship and enactment of Gwangmu Reform with a focus on the well-equipped royal bodyguards was another of his projects. Despite the efforts, executing a pragmatic reformation was challenging, due to the conflict between the Independence Association and Citizens of Japan's Association, as well as the power struggle between Pro-Japanese and Pro-Russian groups. After the victory of Japan over Russia in the Russo-Japan War in 1904, the Governor-General of Joseon concluded the Eulsa Unwilling Treaty (을사조약, 乙巳條

約), which is also known as the Japan-Korea Protectorate Treaty between the Empire of Japan and the Korean Empire, in 1905. The event weakened the power of the Korean Empire, and despite Gojong's last effort to send a group of secret envoys to The Hague, Netherlands, to internationally appeal the abolition of the Treaty, the Korean Empire faded out in history with the announcement of the Japan-Korea Annexation Treaty in 1910.

Two Emperors reigned over the Korean Empire: Gojong and Sunjong. Gojong, the First Emperor and the 26th King of Joseon, was born in 1850 and died in 1919, and his reign spanned from 1863 to 1907. Sunjong, the son of Gojong and Empress Myeongseong (1851-1895), whose other title is Queen Min, ascended the throne and became the second Emperor. Born in 1874, he ruled from 1907 to 1910 and died in 1926. He had two wives, Empress Sunmyeong (1872-1904) and Empress Sunjeong (1894-1966). Neither of the couples produced children.

Gojong, Sunjong and Empress Myeongseong, who are often assumed as the subject of the funeral in the Photo 1, were a family. To refute the claim that Photo 1 is the funeral of Gojong, it is necessary to find out more about Gojong's state funeral.

### Gojong's State Funeral

Increasing attempts have been made over the years to research "Gojongtaehwangjeeojangjugam *Uigwe* (고종태황제 어장주감의궤, 高宗太皇帝 御葬主監儀軌, The official book which was written about Gojong's national funeral giving details like the date and time, published in 1919 by the palace.)", a record book about the details of Gojong's funeral, and "Deoksugunginsanbongdohoi Deungnok (덕수궁 인산봉도회등록, 德壽宮因山奉悼會臚錄, The non-official book on Gojong's funeral was published by people who dealt with the funeral biers.)", another record about the funeral which was made by the private community in charge of the procession.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> I Uk 이옥. "Kojongüi kukchang 고종의 국장 [Gojong's State Funeral]," in *2019nyöndo changsögagak'ademi wangshilmunhwagangjiwa* 2019년도 장서각아카데미 왕실문화강좌

The studies analyse the procedure of Gojong's state funeral, which, according to their argument, was marginalised and manipulated as it was supervised by the Governor-General of Korea, hence was ordered to be held in the Japanese style. This claim has been accepted both in academic circles and the media in recent years.<sup>13</sup> To raise awareness, the Palace Museum in Seoul holds a short film of Gojong's national funeral in the Room of the Korean Empire. The museum plays a central role in research, surveys, collection, preservation, as well as exhibitions about Gojong's funeral as the institution serves as a subdivision of the Korean Cultural Heritage Administration.<sup>14</sup> The present paper attempts to examine no further detail regarding the topic of the funeral as it does not have a direct relation to the photographs Alma Karlin brought to Slovenia, which is the central concern of the paper.

Nevertheless, it is important to scrutinise which specific passages the funeral bier took when it was heading toward the direction of the Royal Tomb after the ceremony. In order to clarify whether Photo 1 is a partial image of the procession for Gojong or not, one should take a close look into the objects in the photo. According to I Uk (이옥), "six teams took turns (carrying) big and small biers on their shoulders and carried the coffin from Daehanmun Gate to Hongyureung (홍릉, 洪陵) in Geumgok-Ri. There were 16 stops total, 17 including Daehanmun Gate, where they started, followed by Hunryunwon (훈련원, 訓練院), Sinseol-gye (신설계, 新設契), Yongdu-ri (용두리, 龍頭里), Nojeso (노제소, 路祭所) in Cheongnyang-Ri, Old Hwigyeong-Won (구휘경원, 舊徽慶園), Bonghwa Pass (봉화현, 烽火峴), Jujeong-so (주정소, 晝停所) in Bongwhang-dong (봉황동, 鳳凰洞), Upper Mangwoo Pass (망우현상, 忘憂峴上), Lower Mangwoo Pass (망우현하, 忘憂峴下), Lower Injanrijeom (인장리점하, 仁章里店下), Donong-Ri (도농리, 陶農里), Somiha-Ri (소미하리, 素味下里), Bunto Pass (

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[*Jangseoggak Academy: Royal Culture Course in 2019*] (Seongnam: Academy of Korean Studies, 2019), 149-171.

<sup>13</sup> Yun Tongsöp 윤동섭, "100yŏnjŏn, kojong hwangjeŭi kukchang öttök'e chinhaengdwaessülkka 100년전, 고종 황제의 국장 어떻게 진행됐을까 [100 years ago, What Happened to Gojong's State Funeral]," *Gukjeweus* 국제뉴스, March 1, 2019.

<sup>14</sup> "Sajinüro pon kukchang-kojong hwangje 사진으로 본 국장-고종 황제 [Permanent Exhibition 'Korean Empire' of the National Palace Museum of Korea]," Gogungmuseum 고궁 박물관, last modified March 19, 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiFFT5oWm\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiFFT5oWm_s).

분토현, 粉土峴), Rear Bongdu-chon (봉두촌후, 鳳頭村後), Upper Bongdu-chon (봉두촌상, 鳳頭村上) and Toegye-Ri (퇴계리, 退溪里)”<sup>15</sup>

The procession, as it is known, was ready to depart at the outside of Daehanmun Gate, specifically at the point where a tent was standing. The time was 5 a.m. when they started the procession. The record confirms the fact that it was Daehanmun Gate through which the procession passed as it commenced. Careful observation is needed here, since the other photographs that feature Gojong’s funeral also mention Daehanmun Gate in the caption. Evidence can be found in the publication by the National Palace Museum, titled “Gojong’s funeral in the photographs”. There the captions are as follows: “A scene in front of Daehanmun Gate upon the announcement of Gojong’s death”, “People wailing day and night in front of Daehanmun Gate”, “Crowd in front of Daehanmun Gate on the third day of the funeral”, “A scene in front of Daehanmun Gate upon the announcement of Gojong’s death”, “A small bier getting out of Daehanmun Gate”, “A funerary procession leaving Daehanmun Gate, with the Emperor’s coffin on the bier”. All of them highlight that it is Daehanmun Gate, not Daeamun Gate where the funeral procession began.

In contrast to the photos, Karlin’s photo as we discuss in the present paper does not have the image of Daehanmun Gate in it. Despite the virtual similarity in pronunciation, Daehanmun Gate and Daeamun Gate refer to completely different objects. If one pays attention to the Chinese characters written on the signboard in the image, it is not difficult to distinguish the letter *An* (安) from *Han* (漢). I would argue, unlike the other images of Gojong’s funeral, Karlin’s photo does not present the same event.

I also disagree with another assumption that was put forward by the media at the time of the Tacoma exhibition. Media reports are prone to deliver a false statement on this subject, as the case of the 2014 report of YTN (Yonhap News Agency, the world’s first 24-hour Korean news channel broadcast, which was founded in 1993 in South Korea)

<sup>15</sup> Uk 이육. “Kojongŭi kukchang” 고종의 국장 [Gojong’s State Funeral], 167.

shows.<sup>16</sup> In the news titled “The image of Empress Myeongseong’s coffin unveiled to the public for the first time”, the reporter states, “at the front of the procession, there seems Sinbaek (신백, 神帛, the mortuary tablet for the dead king and/or queen) and Sinju Gama (신주 가마, a palanquin for the mortuary tablet), an object known as a place where the deceased person’s soul resides, followed by the biers that just departed the Gyeongun-gung Palace of Daeamun Gate.” One should notice the discrepancy between the reporter’s verbal comment, Daeamun Gate, and the image in the footage: the corresponding object is absent. The report was made from the expert advice of Professor Yang Sang Hyun at Suncheonhyang University, who published a journal article about the photographs of modern Korea, titled “The Significance of Korean Photos in the William Elliot Griffis Collection at Rutgers University”, in the 2014 winter issue of *The Journal of Korean Modern History*.<sup>17</sup> In the article, he includes Photo 2 and calls it “Empress Myeongseong’s State Funeral”. He explains that the image shows “the funerary procession that is about to depart Daeamun Gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace”. His account, however, fails to offer a valid identification as the image of the signboard in Photo 2 is not clearly enough seen to support his statement. Moreover, there is no evidence that the photo he uses is of the same event as the one brought back by Karlin and displayed in the Tacoma exhibition.

The question we need to ask is, then, whether the funerary procession of Empress Myeongseong passed through Daeamun Gate as it is seen in Photo 1 (see page 79). Park Carey states the full route in which the coffin was carried: the carriers departed Gyeongun-gung Palace (경운궁) and proceeded to Donryemun Gate (돈례문), Geumchungyo Bridge (금천교), Inhwamun Gate (인화문), Sin-gyo

<sup>16</sup> Hwang Posŏn 황보선, “Myŏngsŏnghwanghu un’gu sajin ch’ŏn konggae 명성황후 운구 사진 첫 공개 [The Image of Empress Myeongseong’s Coffin Unveiled to the Public for the First Time],” *YTN*, December 9, 2014.

<sup>17</sup> Yang, Sang-hyun 양상현, Park So-yeon 박소연, and Yu Young-mee 유명미. “Kŭrip’isŭ k’ŏlleksyŏne sojangdoeŏ innŭn han’gung kŭndae sajinjaryoŭi haksulchŏng kach’ie taehan koch’al 그리피스 컬렉션에 소장되어 있는 한국 근대 사진자료의 학술적 가치에 대한 고찰 [The Significance of Korean Photos in the William Elliot Griffis Collection at Rutgers University],” *Journal of Korean Modern and Contemporary History* 한국근현대사연구 71 (2014): 7-50.

Bridge (신교), Hyejeong-gyo Bridge (혜정교), Yiseok-gyo Bridge (이석교), Choseok-gyo Bridge (초석교), Heunginmun Gate (흥인문), The Tomb of King Dong-gwan (동관왕묘), the front of Bojewon (보제원), Hancheon-gyo Bridge (한천교), Chunjangsang (천장상), Cheongnyangni and reached their final point Hongyureung.<sup>18</sup> Unlike the record on Gojong's funerary procession, there is no comment about which gate people passed through in the record on Empress Myeongseong's funeral procession: we only know that Gyeongun-gung is noted as a departure point. To put it in another way, Photo 2 does not provide sufficient evidence to show which gate the procession for Empress Myeongseong passed through. A partially correct account, Yang's research nonetheless made a contribution to scholarship as he used credible references to support his argument. The William Elliot Griffis Collection from which Yang studies his photos features various images about modern Korea. The book was planned and written by William Griffiths, who is renowned for his historical treatise "Corea, The Hermit Nation" (1882). Despite the rich potential in Griffiths's photos as a resource for historical inquiry, not many attempts have been made to look into the photos as they are, since Rutgers University published an introductory book of Korea in 1959.<sup>19</sup> In part, the shortage in research is arguably due to the current interest predominant in Griffiths' personal viewpoint about Korea or the political implications in his writing. Yang's research is exceptional in that it extends beyond Griffiths' implications and revisits the photographs, considering the value of the collection as a resource of historical research.

I would submit the proposition that Karlin's photo as we see in Photo 1 is not the image taken from Gojong's funerary procession. The other major theory, which proposes that the image is of Empress Myeongseong, is also debatable. My suggestion is to focus on the word

<sup>18</sup> Park Carey 박계리. "Myōngsŏnghwanghu parinbanch'adowa parin haengnyŏl <명성황후 발인반차도>와 발인 행렬 [The Funeral Procession of Empress Myeongseong - through the Illustrated Records]," *The Misulsabakbo : Reviews on Art History* 미술사학보 (2016): 7-26.

<sup>19</sup> Kim Soo-Tae 김수태. "Williŏm kŭrip'isŭi han'gug kŭndaesa inshik 윌리엄 그리피스 의 한국 근대사 인식 [William Griffiths's Awareness of Korean Modern History]," *Chindanhakpo* 진단학보 110 (2010): 125-156.

“Daeamun Gate” in the photo since it is the key to investigating the background of the photo.



Photo 2: Empress Myeongseong’s State Funeral.

## Daeamun Gate, the Main Gate of Gyeongungung Palace

### Deoksugung Palace or Gyeongungung Palace

Daeamun Gate, which appears as the background of the image in Photo 1 (see page 79), is the key here because the term is also mentioned in the scholarly accounts on Empress Myeongseong’s funeral. To understand Daeamun Gate correctly, it should be remembered that it was one of the main gates of Deoksugung Palace. Deoksugung Palace is one of the five royal palaces which remain today in Seoul. Deoksugung Palace, formerly called Gyeongun-gung Palace, was the main place for Emperor Gojong’s governmental administration. The time was tense, caught up in the struggle between Russia and Japan, which was then aiming for control over northeast China and Korea.



At first sight, Deoksugung does not seem to be a fitting place for state affairs. In terms of scale and facilities, Gyeongbokgung Palace and Changdeokgung Palace had more merits than Deoksugung Palace.<sup>20</sup> Why then, did Gojong choose Deoksugung Palace for his residence, despite all the shortcomings? A possible reason might have been his constant dread of assassination, which may have been triggered by notoriously traumatic events in his life: a few days before the Russo-Japanese War, the Japanese forces attacked Gojong's former residence in Gyeongbokgung Palace to put him under arrest. The next year, also in Gyeongbokgung Palace, his wife, Empress Myeongseong, was brutally killed by the Japanese forces. Gyeongbokgung Palace was distant from the British Embassy and the others, which means it was difficult to get help in case of emergency. Gyeongun-gung Palace had advantages that could contribute to the Emperor's safety. Its small size allowed the guards, small in number, to protect the palace. Its location, surrounded by the Legations of US, Russia, UK and France, ensured that the Emperor could use diplomatic power to remain relatively safe from a sudden attack by Japan. For Gojong, Gyeongun-gung Palace was a more secure place compared to Gyeongbokgung Palace, both psychologically and pragmatically. The Emperor fled to the Russian Legation in 1895 after the outbreak of Eulmi Sabyun (the murder of Empress Myeongseong by Japanese soldiers in 1895) and moved back to Gyeongun-gung Palace in 1897 as he returned to Korea. It was around the time of the Emperor's moving back in that he decided to build more court in the palace, which forms the grand scenery of the Royal Palace today. After his return the main palace buildings that accommodated the portrait of former Kings, namely, Jinjeon (진전, 眞殿), in addition to another main building, Joonghwajeon (중화전, 中和殿), were built. Western-style buildings such as Jeongwanhun (정관헌, 靜觀軒) and Dondeokjeon (돈덕전, 惇德殿) also were built at the same time.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Lee, Minwon 이민원. "Ilbonüi ch'imnyakkwa taehanjegugüi kyöngun'gung 일본의 침략과 대한제국의 경운궁 [A Study on Deoksugung Palace during the Korean Empire]," *Han'guktongnibundongsayön'gu* 한국독립운동사연구 22 (2004): 1-5.

<sup>21</sup> Kim, Tonguk 김동욱. *Han'gug könh'ugüi yöksa* 한국 건축의 역사 [*History of Korean Architecture*] (Seoul: Kimundang), 1997, 294.

Gyeongun-gung is important in Korean history not only because of its role as Gojong's residence. It is important because of the function it played as a royal palace for the Emperor of the Korean Empire, who lived and conducted national affairs there. The first day that Gyeongun-gung Palace began to serve as a royal palace was October 12, 1897. It was a month after he organised Wongudan (환구단, 圜丘壇, a site for the performance of the rite of heaven) in Sogong-dong in Seoul in September 1897. On the day, Gojong declared the commencement of Joseon's new title, the Korean Empire, and performed the coronation ceremony.<sup>22</sup>

To reiterate, the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace, the former name of Deoksugung Palace, was Daeanmun Gate. The fact contradicts the record that Gojong's funeral procession passed through Daehanmun Gate, not Daeanmun Gate. The film about the funeral, made and distributed by the Cultural Heritage Administration, also mentions the throng is in front of Daehanmun Gate instead of Daeanmun Gate.<sup>23</sup> Further investigation is needed regarding whether the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace is Daeanmun Gate or Daehanmun Gate.

#### Daehanmun Gate or Daeanmun Gate

The word that is written on the signboard of the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace, the former name of Geoksugung Palace, is Daehanmun Gate. Daehanmun Gate has a history that is distinctive from other palace gates.

The names of the other palace main gates in Seoul are as follows: Gwanghwamun Gate (광화문, 光化門) for Gyeongbokgung Palace, Donhwamun Gate (돈화문, 敦化門) for Changdeokgung Palace, Honghwamun Gate (홍화문, 弘化門) for Changgyeonggung Palace, Heunghwamun Gate (흥화문, 興化門) for Gyeonghuigung Palace.

<sup>22</sup> Han, Yöngu 한영우. *Myöngsöngghwanghuwa taehanjeguk* 명성황후와 대한제국 [*Empress Myeongseong and Korean Empire*] (Paju: Hyohyöngch'ulp'an, 2001), 227-242..

<sup>23</sup> “100nyönjön kojonghwangjeüi kukchang t'ükpyölichön 100nyönjeon gonghwangjei-ui guksang teukbyeollon [The Special Exhibition for Gojong's State Funeral 100 years ago],” Korea Cultural Heritage Administration 문화재청, last modified March 25, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPv9XFoV2o> (accessed August 10, 2019)

One can notice that, unlike Daeannmun Gate or Daehanmun Gate as the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace, all the other gates have the letter ‘hwa’ (화, 化) in the names. As Gyeongun-gung Palace was different from other palaces, the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace was different from those of other palaces. The original gate of Gyeongun-gung was Inhwamun (인화문, 仁化門). Notice that the name also includes ‘hwa’. It was 1902 when Daeannmun Gate was appointed as the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace, as in the same year Junghwajeon (중화전, 中和殿, one of palace buildings at the Gyeongun-gung Palace) was built and served as the major palace building of Gyeongun-gung Palace. Junghwajeon took a significant space in the courtyard as it was added to the established palace site, resulting in the whole site being packed. Thus, the walls on each side of Inhwamun Gate had to be moved further to the south whilst the main gate, Inhwamun, itself demolished.<sup>24</sup>

Simultaneously, Geuncheon, a stream inside Inhwamun Gate, was altered into the form of an embedded stream. As Inhwamun Gate was deconstructed, a single gate called Gungeukmun Gate was newly built in the southern part of the court to facilitate the passing by. The other two gates, called Jowonmun Gate and Junghwamun Gate, were also newly built as the middle gate since Daeannmun Gate began serving as the main gate. It is known that the palace gates during the Joseon era tended to have a three-gate system. Gyeongbokgung Palace had three gates: Gwanhwamun Gate, Heungnyemun Gate and Geunjeongmun Gate; Changdeokgung Palace had Donhwamun Gate, Jinseonmun Gate and Injeongmun Gate. Accordingly, Gyeongun-gung Palace had the three-gate system including Daeannmun Gate, Jowonmun Gate and Junghwamun Gate.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>24</sup> “Hanmanŭn taehanmun 한많은 대한문 [A Long Story of Daehanmun Gate],” Korean History Society 한국역사연구회, last modified December 14, 2007, <http://www.koreanhistory.org/%ec%84%9c%ec%9a%b8%ec%9d%b4%ec%95%bc%ea%b8%b0-%ed%95%9c%eb%a7%8e%ec%9d%80-%eb%8c%80%ed%95%9c%eb%ac%b8/> (accessed August 10, 2019)

<sup>25</sup> “Taehanmun 대한문 [Daehanmun Gate],” Academy of Korean Studies 한국학중앙연구원, last modified December 9, 2017, [http://dh.aks.ac.kr/sillokwiki/index.php/%EB%8C%80%ED%95%9C%EB%AC%B8\(%E5%A4%A7%E6%BC%A2%E9%96%80\)](http://dh.aks.ac.kr/sillokwiki/index.php/%EB%8C%80%ED%95%9C%EB%AC%B8(%E5%A4%A7%E6%BC%A2%E9%96%80)) (accessed August 10, 2019)

In short, Daehanmun Gate was originally Daeannmun Gate. Due to the change of the name, the photographs have often produced different interpretations including Daehanmun Gate and Daeannmun Gate, in front of which the royal procession is passing. For example, Photo 3 shows a clear image of the signboard that says Daeannmun Gate with royal procession, which is different from the funeral procession we see in Karlin's Photo 1. Photo 3 is a donation by the National Palace Museum to Yonhap News Korea.<sup>26</sup> Another photo of the same subject was revealed on August 1, 2016. Photo 4 was taken by an American named Sadie. It is known that Sadie gave the photo as a gift to a missionary named Arthur Welbon in 1904. The granddaughter of Arthur Welbon, Priscilla Welbon, kept it until recently when she agreed to donate the photo to The National Folk Museum of Korea. A specific date of the photograph is difficult to trace yet one assumption suggests the event in the photo may be a scene of leaving for a memorial ceremony at Wongudan after the Emperor returned from the royal refuge at the Russian legation.<sup>27</sup>

To sum up, without doubt it was Gojong's royal procession that passed through Daeannmun Gate several times. Given that Gojong reigned from October 12, 1897, to July 19, 1907, one can notice that during some part of the period the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace was called Daeannmun Gate, not Daehanmun Gate.

To understand the history of Daeannmun Gate more specifically, it is necessary to find out how the name on the signboard of Gyeongun-gung Palace has changed. From April 24, 2017 for 20 days, the Cultural Heritage Administration at the National Palace Museum exhibited 13 models of the signboards that were used for Gyeongun-gung Palace, a royal palace of the Korean Empire during its 10 years. In the exhibition, a signboard was found which confirms that the prototype of Daehanmun Gate was originally Daeannmun Gate. Gyeongun-gung Palace (of

<sup>26</sup> Park Sanghyun 박상현, "Hyŏnp'ani chŏnhanŭn tŏksugung yŏksa... 'taehanmuno'ŭn'taeannmun'oiŏtta 현판이 전하는 덕수궁 역사... '대한문'은 '대안문'이었다 [Deoksugung Palace's History conveyed by the Signboards]," *Yonhapnews* 연합뉴스, April 24, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> P'ok'ŏsŭnyusŭ 포커스뉴스, "Taeannmun nasŏnŭn kojong ŏga haengnyŏl sajin konggae 대안문 나서는 고종 어가 행렬 사진 공개 [Photo on Gojong's Royal Procession that did pass through Daeannmun]," *Seoul Shinmun* 서울신문, August 1, 2016.



Photo 3: The Royal Procession Passing through Daeannmun Gate, the Main Gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace.

which the current name is Deoksugung Palace) started to use Daeannmun Gate as its name of the main gate from March 1899 according to Gojong's decision to add the buildings; it was hung until April 1906. In 1906, the gate was reformed and renamed Daehanmun (대한문, 大漢門), according to the records made on April 25, the 43rd year of Gojong's reign in Veritable Records of Joseon Dynasty.

Several rumours augment the confusion about the name change of the gate. Most of them lack not only valid grounds but also any factual relevance.

The historical record found in "Daehanmunsanryanmun (대한문 상량문, 大漢門上樑文)" from "Gyeongungungjungeondogamuigwe (경운궁중건도감의궤, 慶運宮重建都監儀軌)" hints at the possible reason for such a change. The script says "Daehan (대한, 大漢) is a combination of two symbols: Sohan (소한, 霄漢), which means sky, and Woonhan (운한, 雲漢), which means the Milky Way. The Academy of Korean Studies agreed with the explanation thus written in the official online encyclopaedia, affirming that the account is most close to the fact.



Photo 4: Gojong's Royal Procession that Departs at Daeamun Gate.

Considering the circumstances addressed above, one can claim that Gyeongun-gung Palace is the prior name of Deoksugung Palace and it was used during the reign of Gojong. The main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace changed its name to Daehanmun Gate from Daeamun Gate. In other words, the name Daeamun Gate was used between March 1899 to April 1906, serving its role as the main gate until it was renamed again as Daehanmun Gate.<sup>28</sup> To conclude, the funeral that takes place in Karlin's photo, which is Photo 1 in our example (see page 79), is an event that takes place sometime between 1899 and

<sup>28</sup> I, Sang-hae 이상해, *Kunggwŏl, yugyo kŏnch'uk 궁궐, 유교 건축 [Palaces, Confucian Architecture]* (Seoul: Sol, 2004), 101-102.

1906 when the name Daeannmun Gate was used for the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace.

### Hotel du Palais

There is a notable image of a building on the left side of the image in Photo 1. The building, I would argue, is Hotel du Palais. The building provides crucial evidence toward understanding the historical circumstances of the time when Photo 1 was taken. According to the Korea Creative Content Agency, Hotel du Palais was often phrased as French Hotel, Beobguk-yeogwan (법국여관, 法國旅館) or Central hotel. The location is known to have been around ‘Taepyeong-ro 2 sa, 358 beonji, in front of Daeannmun Gate in Jeongdong. The advertisement, printed in Korea Daily News, also called Daehanmaeilshinbo (대한매일신보, 大韓每日申報), consecutively from August 4, 1904, is useful to find out more detail about the hotel. (The right bottom of Photo 5).

“The only and top-class hotel in Seoul, across from the Gyeongun-gung Palace, located in the city centre: fine dining under the supervision of skilled chefs: well-equipped ventilation, fully prepared facilities: pay according to price list: owned and run by Martin.”

One can identify the location and the class of the hotel as well as who the owner was. Although consensus today is that Hotel du Palais opened in 1901 and closed in 1912 due to the Taepyeongro expansion work, evidence is scarce. My speculation is that the building was demolished soon after 1912 when the Japanese government decided to conduct extension work. An American photographer-traveller Elias Burton Holmes’s account supports the claim. In the series of “The Burton Holmes Lectures”, published by The Little-Preston Company Ltd in 1901, he included a photo of the hotel with the caption ‘French Hotel’ and explained “... a new French Hotel just opened across the street”. According to the advertisement of the hotel, as seen in Photo 5, Holmes describes the hotel as a two-storied brick building with a “general store” running a business on the first floor.<sup>29</sup> The image of Hotel du

<sup>29</sup> Burton Holmes, *1901nyŏn sŏurŭl kŏtta 1901년 서울을 걷다* [*The Burton Holmes Lectures: Seoul, Capital of Korea. Japan*], trans. Lee Jinseok 이진석 (Seoul: P’urŭn’gil, 2012), 110.

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| <p><b>THE METHODIST PUBLISHING HOUSE.</b><br/>Little West Gate, Seoul.</p> <p>JOB PRINTING, TYPEWRITER PAPER<br/>CARBON PAPER, VISITING CARDS<br/>STATIONERY, BOOK BINDING<br/>BOOK PUBLISHERS<br/>AMERICAN SCHOOL BOOKS<br/>SPENCERIAN COPY BOOKS<br/>PEN CARBON LETTER AND BILL BOOKS</p> <p>S. A. BECK, Manager.</p> <hr/> <p><b>KAMEYA &amp; CO.</b><br/>GENERAL STOREKEEPERS<br/>Chinkokai - - - Seoul<br/>(Established 1895, Tokyo)</p> <p>*****</p> <p>Confectionery, Hams, Canned Goods,<br/>Cutlery, Hirano &amp; Tansan Water.<br/>Provisions, Gents, Furnishing goods,<br/>Toilet Articles, Travelling Bags,<br/>Tobacco, Cigars &amp; Cigarettes<br/>Kitchen Utensils, Coffee, Biscuits.</p> <p>*****</p> <p><i>Fresh Goods always kept in Stock.</i><br/>Prices Moderate<br/><i>Please come and inspect our goods.</i></p> | <p><b>E. MEYER &amp; CO.</b><br/>Chemulpo, Korea,<br/>Sole Agents</p> <hr/> <p>ROYAL INSURANCE COMPANY,<br/>Funds exceed £ 10,000,000</p> <p><b>FIRE</b><br/>AT CURRENT RATES.<br/><b>LIFE</b><br/>REDUCED PREMIUM.<br/>HOLME RINGER &amp; Co.,<br/>Agents, Chemulpo.</p> <hr/> <p><b>HOTEL DU PALAIS</b><br/>SEOUL.</p> <p>The only first class Hotel in Seoul.<br/>Situating in the centre of the city opposite the palace.</p> <p>Cuisine under the supervision of an experienced French Chef.<br/>Well ventilated and furnished throughout.</p> <p>TARIFF UPON APPLICATION</p> <p><b>L. MARTIN,</b><br/>Proprietor and Manager.</p> |
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Photo 5: The Advertisement of Hotel du Palais, Seoul.

Palais that Korea Creative Content Agency recently opened to public adds the specifics about the appearance of the building.<sup>30</sup>

Given the triangle-shaped roof and the shape of the chimney, one can understand that the Hotel du Palais in Photo 6 features the same image as the left side building seen in the left side of Karlin's photo-

<sup>30</sup> “P’allehor’el(p’urangũhor’el) 팔레호텔(프랑스호텔) [Hotel du Palais(French Hotel)],” Korean Creative Contents Agency, accessed August 10, 2019, [http://www.culturecontent.com/content/contentView.do?search\\_div=CP\\_THE&search\\_div\\_id=CP\\_THE001&cp\\_code=cp0710&index\\_id=cp07100211&content\\_id=cp071002110001&search\\_left\\_menu=3](http://www.culturecontent.com/content/contentView.do?search_div=CP_THE&search_div_id=CP_THE001&cp_code=cp0710&index_id=cp07100211&content_id=cp071002110001&search_left_menu=3).



graph. Thus, as a result of the investigation it's fair to assert that the funeral procession in Karlin's Photo 1 took place between 1901, the year when Hotel du Palais opened, and 1906 when Daeamun Gate was the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace.

For whom was it, then, as we see such a grand scale funeral in Photo 1 (on page 79)? What follows suggests a strong possibility that it was another figure from the dynasty.

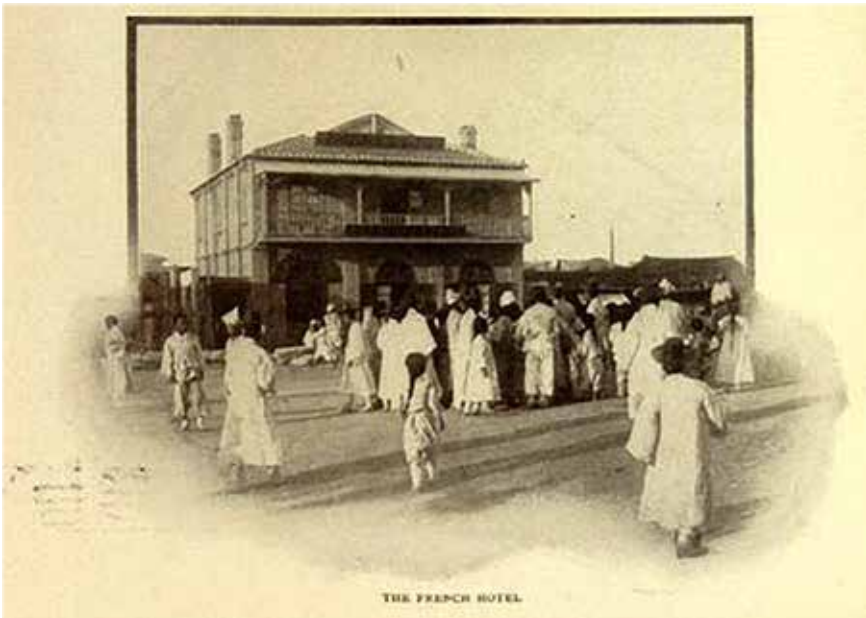


Photo 6: Hotel du Palais (French Hotel).

## Empress Sunmyeong

Sunjong, the son of Gojong and Empress Myeongseong, had two wives. The first wife was Empress Sunmyeong (1872-1904). Empress Sunmyeong (순명효황후 민씨) was born in Seoul on October 20, 1872. She was installed as Crown Princess according to Empress Myeongseong's order, and died on November 5, 1904, at the early age of 33. Her family, the Min-clan, whose city of origin is Yeosung, was already highly reputed and was gaining more power as Empress Myeongseong (whose family name was also Min) took the throne to augment her political power. Empress Myeongseong was in search of the future wife for her son from the Min family so that her clan could maintain their power. Her plan led to the appointment of Empress Sunmyeong, who was then the daughter of Min Tae Ho, a distant cousin of Empress Myeongseong. In short, Princess Sunmyeong was chosen to succeed the throne by Empress Myeongseong. Appointed when young, Empress Sunmyeong went through the whirlwind of the time she was living in. She had to flee from place to place; her fate was often shaken by the turbulent conflicts within the country. The Veritable Records of Gojong states her noble characteristics as follows: she is "innately obedient and wise. Her appearance is virtuous, which impresses other women as they refer to her correspondingly fair behaviours as exceptional." Princess Sunmyeong was equipped with attributes that the Palace was looking for. Her keen interest in history also consolidated her reputation as a descendent of a prestigious family. Her correspondence with a company officer, Kim Sang Deok, who was then a teacher of her husband Sunjong, serves as an important historical record today; the letters can be understood as a sign of her attempt to overcome mental sufferings after the loss of people close to her, including her parents, as well as Empress Myeongseong, at a young age.

According to the Veritable Records in Gojong era, Empress Sunmyeong had a serious injury to her back from her attempt to protect her mother in law, Empress Myeongseong, on the night when the Japanese armed forces attacked the palace to kill Empress Myeongseong in 1895. The event, known as Eulmi Sabyeon, may have contributed to her chronic illness, which lasted until her early death in 1904. The

public image of Empress Sunmyeong has been formed thus, of a weak Empress. However, from the letters and records she has left, one can see another side of her that is determined, solid and concerned for her country. In her letters to her husband's teacher, Empress Sunmyeong asked for his help to secure the safety of Korea. She died on November 5, 1904, at the age of 33, having borne suffering since she was installed on the throne, and alone but for her husband as there was no child between them. Emperor Gojong gave her the posthumous name of Sunmyeong on November 9, 1904, followed by the title of Empress and she has been addressed as Empress Sunmyeong since then. A few theories concern the cause of her death: stomach cancer or the effects to her after the catastrophic night of Empress Myeongseong's assassination. None has been yet been proven.<sup>31</sup>

Considering the records addressed above, I would claim the subject of death shown in Photo 1 (on page 79) is Empress Sunmyeong's funeral, which took place on November 5, 1904. I would reject the claim that the photo was taken on the day of Gojong's funeral since the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace was Daeanmun Gate. Gojong died in 1919 after serving his appointment as the last King of Joseon and first Emperor of Korea. It was 1906, over a decade before his death, when Daeanmun Gate as the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace was changed into Daehanmun Gate. The Veritable Records supports my argument, stating that the funerary procession passed through Daehanmun Gate. Empress Myeongseong was already deceased before Gojong's death, which means her funeral took place before Daeanmun Gate was built. She died on October 8, 1895, and her funeral was held on November 21, 1897. It was from March 1899 that Daeanmun Gate began to serve as the main gate. Hotel du Palais, as seen on the left side of the image, helps clarify the time of the photo taken. Hotel du Palais was an iconic French style hotel, opened in 1901 and it maintained its fame for around ten years until 1912. As Photo 1 demonstrates, the

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<sup>31</sup> Yu, Myeong-eun 유명은, "Sunmyŏnghyohwanghu hyosŏng kip'ŭn kojongŭi myŏnŭri sunmyeonghwanhu hyosŏng gup'ŭn kojongŭi myŏnŭri [Empress Sunmyeong, A Filial Daughter-in-law of Gojong]," *Sejong Newspaper* 세종신문, November 18, 2010.

hotel was in business on November 1904, when the funeral of Empress Sunmyeong was in process.

A final question remains. Under the pressing influence of Japan in 1904, was it possible for Korea to hold such a grand scale funeral of a Crown Princess who died young? Generally in the late Joseon dynasty three temporary institutions like Bingunghongungdogam (빈궁혼궁도감, 殯宮魂宮都監, responsible for keeping the coffins until they leave from the palace), Yejangdogam (예장도감, 禮葬都監, the role of making the mortuary tablet after the funeral) and Wonsodogam (원소도감, 園所都監, managing the tomb of the king) were installed in order to carry out the funerary affairs for the death of a princess. However Princess Sunmyeong's funeral had different institutions: Gukjangdogam (국장도감, 國葬都監, responsible for the protocol, finance and facilities), Binjeonhonjeondogam (빈전혼전도감, 殯殿魂殿都監, jurisdiction for the funeral ceremony) and Wonsodogam after her death. This is an exceptional case because Gukjangdogam and Binjeonhonjeondogam were normally performed in commemoration of a King or Queen. I believe that Empress Sunmyeong's funeral was an elevated affair, according to Gojong's order after he proclaimed the commencement of the Korean Empire in 1897. Princess Sunmyeong's funeral would correspond to those of the imperial class: the funeral was called Hwangtangtaejabisanje (황태자비상제, 皇太子妃喪制, the mourner for the Crown Princess). The funeral for Sunmyeong was arranged for a higher position than her then status as Crown Princess would normally have called for.

The bookkeeping record of Yooganwon Wonso account (유강원 원소, 裕康園 園所) in 1904 strengthens my assumption because the total expense allocated for Wonso costs five times more than the average expense for Hongyureung and Sanreung where Empress Myeongseong was buried.<sup>32</sup> One can assume the whole size of Empress Sunmyeong's funerary rite. Jang Kyung Hee suggests two reasons for Empress Sunmyeong's exceptional case: one, the Princess, later called Empress Sun-

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<sup>32</sup> Chang, Kyŏnghŭi 장경희, "Kojonghwangjeŭi kŭmgong hongnŭng yŏn'gu 고종황제의 금곡 홍릉 연구 [Study of Emperor Kojong's Hongreung, Imperial Tomb at Keumgok]," *Sach'ong* 사총 64 (2007): 13-14.

myeong, was a much-loved daughter in law of Gojong. Second, it was Gojong's attempt to restore the symbolic reputation of the Korean Empire in the face of the pressure of Japan. Both reasons seem to be valid for Empress Sunmyeong's grand funeral.<sup>33</sup>

The present study, therefore, reaches its conclusion that Photo 1, as well as the same photo revealed in Tacoma in 2014, is the funeral procession of Empress Sunmyeong, which took place on November 5, 1904.

### Epilogue

On November 5, 1904, the Crown Princess of the Korean Empire passed away. Her age was only 33. Appointed as a royal family member at 11, she experienced the difficult time of the Empire and ended up with a fatal illness after the attempt to protect her mother in law from the armed Japanese assassins. She sought to restore her country after it was invaded by foreign powers, but such was beyond her reach. When she died, the Emperor arranged an extra grand funeral ritual and appointed her posthumously as an Empress. The procession left the Imperial palace and the coffin reached and rested in Yugangwon. The Imperial palace was Gyeongun-gung Palace, and her funerary procession passed through Daeanmun Gate, which was then the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace. She was buried at the site of Yugangwon, located in what is known today as Neung-dong, Gwangjin-gu in Seoul today.

A photo (Photo 1 on page 79) that captures an image of the procession from Daeanmun Gate towards the direction of Yugangwon was found in Celje, Slovenia. It was Alma Karlin who acquired the photo in 1923, the year during which she was travelling on the Korean Peninsula. Making her first step in the land through Japan, Alma Karlin put authentic objects from Far East Asia in her travel suitcase. There are 39

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<sup>33</sup> Chang, Kyŏnghŭi 장경희, "Sunjongbi sunmyŏnghyohwanghuŭi saengaewa yurŭng yŏn'gu 純宗妃 純明孝皇后의 생애와 裕陵 연구 [A Life of Empress Sunmyeong, the First Wife of Emperor Sunjong, and the Construction of Yugangweon and Yureung]," *Han'guginmulsayŏn'gu 한국인물사연구* 12 (2009): 198-200.

photographs left at present, and five of them are related to funeral rites. The most impressive photograph is the image that captures the funeral procession of Empress Sunmyeong on November 5, 1904.

Because of the complicated circumstances, many accounts have speculated when and where as well as who the photo is about. The photo attracted global interest as it was revealed in the exhibitions not only in Slovenia but also in the US. It was debated in academia as much as the media. However, no distinctive research that has been published in the US and Korea suggested that the photo presents the funerary procession for Empress Sunmyeong on November 5, 1904.

Given the clues in the photo, this paper can confirm that Photo 1 is the image of the procession for Empress Sunmyeong. First, the formal rites shown in the image of the photo correspond with the historical record that Empress Sunmyeong's funeral was held on an extra grand scale to maintain the dignity of the Korean Empire. Second, the image of Daeannmun Gate, which was the main gate of Gyeongun-gung Palace at that time, was renamed as Daehanmun Gate after it had served its original function between March 1899 and 1906. The funeral of Empress Sunmyeong was the only funeral event arranged during that time period. Third, there seems a European style building on the left side of the photo. The building is Hotel du Palais, a popular hotel among European tourists, which operated from 1901 to 1912. It is known that the building was demolished due to the expansion work of Taepyeongro in 1912. In short, the photo caught the image of a funeral procession that was likely held sometime between 1901 and 1912. To reiterate, the only funeral arranged on such a national scale was that of Empress Sunmyeong.

The paper explored one photo taken from the Slovene traveller Alma Karlin's suitcase with a focus on historical particularities in Korea including architecture, the history of the palace and the signboard on the gate and the relations of the royal family. It confirmed a new theory that the image is a scene from the funeral procession for Empress Sunmyeong. This study leaves several other photos to be examined and discussed, and perhaps indicates to some degree methods of doing so, as surely this study of a single image supports the notion that a photograph may be both seen and read.

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ALMA KARLIN'S MUSICAL  
MINIATURES: JAPANESE  
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS  
FROM THE COLLECTION OF  
ALMA M. KARLIN AND THEIR  
RELATION TO RELIGIOUS  
MUSIC

Klara Hrvatina

“... the silence was from time to time broken only by a long and solemn hit of the temple gong.”<sup>1</sup>

#### Karlin as a collector of Japanese musical instruments

According to the inventory of the Alma Karlin collection<sup>2</sup>, with objects which were from the years of 1957 to 1960 presented to Celje Regional Museum by Karlin's friend Thea Schreiber Gammelin, Karlin brought home from her eight-year-long voyage some instruments. Some of them are small miniature instruments, souvenir musical instruments, such as a 17-centimetre-long miniature of horizontal

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<sup>1</sup> Alma M. Karlin, *Samotno potovanje* (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 1969), 168.

<sup>2</sup> The objects from the collection, inventoried by Milena Moškon in the year of 1964, were revised in 2014/2016 by B. Trnovec and N. Šmid. The inventory book itself was prepared by Barbara Trnovec in 2016. Most of Karlin's objects discussed in the paper are from the collection held by the Celje Regional Museum, while there is also an important collection with 840 items in the Celje Museum of Recent History, and a collection containing her manuscripts, etc., at the NUK (National and University Library) National Manuscript Collection. *Collection of Alma Karlin (Inventory book)* (Celje: Celje Regional Museum Archives, 2006); “Alma Karlin Collections in Slovenia,” *Alma M. Karlin Virtual Home*, accessed July 25, 2019, [https://www.culture.si/en/Alma\\_M.\\_Karlin\\_Virtual\\_Home](https://www.culture.si/en/Alma_M._Karlin_Virtual_Home).

plucked chordophone, probably a 7-string *koto*; an 11-centimetre-long model of a *shamisen* made from rope and wood with a small plectrum; an 11.5-centimetre-long Japanese bridgeless zither with two strings – a two-string *koto* or *yakumo-koto*, made from wood, rope and plastic; and a Chinese instrument *yue qin* or ‘moon lute’ commonly used in Japan and called a *gekkin*. From the natural size instruments there is a pellet drum, *den-den daiko*, types of which are found in Tibet, Mongolia, India, China, Taiwan and Korea, and elsewhere. Besides instruments themselves, there are many indirect objects related to music or musical instruments: small size coloured and framed prints with portraits of Japanese traditional theatre *kabuki* players, postcards depicting a woman figure with a *shamisen*, postcard with a similar motif in a small coloured print, and other postcards and photographs with the instrument motifs. From Karlin’s *ukiyo-e* collection we can find prints with the *koto* and other instrument iconography, and we should not forget as well a miniature bronze *tengu* mask. Those objects, directly and indirectly related to Japanese musical culture, form an interesting mozaic which may help us discover her relation to Japanese music and its iconography, or more specifically, to musical instruments that might show her relation as well to religious practices significant for Japan.

Besides the analysis of music/religion related objects from Karlin’s collection, another insight into her stance regarding the topic will be taken into consideration, her writings. One to start with would be the first part of her travel trilogy, *Einsame Weltreise: Die Tragödie einer Frau* (first edition, Minden in Westfalen: Wilhelm Köhler, 1929), translated in English as *The Odyssey of a Lonely Woman* (London: V. Gollancz, 1933); documented writings on her travelling (24 November 1919 to January 1928<sup>3</sup>), which was translated in Slovenian only in 1969 as *Samotno potovanje* (Lonely Travel), and again, in an expanded version and with a different editor in 2006. A short introduction to Japanese religious music, or better, a short classification and description of religious instruments belonging to Shinto and Buddhist tradition will be provided at the beginning, to present an overview of the

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<sup>3</sup> Jerneja Jezernik, “Afterward,” in *Japanese Novels* (Celje: Celjska Mohorjeva družba, 2006), 76.

subject and provide the frame in which Karlin's encounter with the music could be explicated.

Literal "mirror" of Karlin's actual stay in Japan  
versus her musical objects?

Alma Karlin's travelogue, known in Slovenian translation as *Samotno potovanje*, was already popular forty years ago in Germany.<sup>4</sup> In around 350 pages it provides an overview of her independent travel, which started on 24 November 1919: from Trieste to Genova, Peru, Panama, California, Hawaii, and from there finally to Japan, which was actually her primary destination. She reached Yokohama at the beginning of June 1922, and stayed in Tokyo until the beginning of July 1923 when she left for Korea, during her stay visiting places such as Kamakura, Nikko, Odawa, Fuji, Nara, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Hokkaido and Kyushu.<sup>5</sup> She mainly stayed in Tokyo in two locations, first in a Russian pension at Yūrakuchō Sanchōme 1, close to Ginza, and afterwards at her student's and his family traditional Japanese house close to Hongō.<sup>6</sup> From Korea, she journeyed to Manduria, China, Australia and New Zealand; in the year 1926 to Indonesia, Thailand and Burma, to India, back to Trieste and finally her hometown of Celje.<sup>7</sup> While staying in Japan, she obtained various jobs; she gave language courses at Meiji University in Tokyo, worked as a correspondent for Asahi Shimbun,<sup>8</sup> one of Japan's oldest national daily newspapers; but her most significant work was at the German embassy, which brought her economical security, as well facilitating her encounters with "many interesting and sophisticated people – especially Japanese artists attracted her attention"<sup>9</sup>,

<sup>4</sup> Read more in "On the Author," in *Samotno potovanje v daljne dežele: tragedija ženske* (Celje: Celjska Mohorjeva družba, 2006).

<sup>5</sup> Barbara Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči: življenje in delo Alme M. Karlin* (Celje: Pokrajinski muzej Celje, 2015), 33.

<sup>6</sup> Jezernik, "Afterward," 81.

<sup>7</sup> Cvetka Terezija Kovačič, "Short Bibliography on Alma M. Karlin (1889-1951)," in *Doživeti svet* (Celje: Celjska Mohorjeva družba, 2006), 252.

<sup>8</sup> Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči*, 33.

<sup>9</sup> Sources also suggest it was probably in Japan that she had enough money to buy a photo camera. Trnovec, *Kolumbova hči*, 33.

who no doubt aided her in her study of Japan. Relative to the other countries she visited in eight years, her stay in Japan was quite long, and that is reflected in the good impression she had of its people and culture. She dedicated some 40 pages to her living within and encountering Japanese culture, the section entitled “In the Far East”, consisting of short essays.

Her writing provides glimpses of some places she stayed, people she met, her work at the embassy in Tokyo. Most of all, she focused on cultural matters that attracted her interest. What most stands out from her time in Japan are the influential people she mentions in the text (despite the fact that she usually identified people she wrote about only with initials). In the story “Travelling to Nikko” she mentioned E. Speight (short for Ernest Edwin Speight), a writer, poet and English professor, who taught English at the University of Tokyo (at that time Tōkyō Imperial University) for fifteen years<sup>10</sup>; in “September’s Salon” she mentioned the Japanese writer and critic Tadaichi Okada. “My most beautiful experience during this time was a meeting with Japanese artists at Tadaichi Okada’s. Here I met the court actress Suzuki, many modern painters - some high official dignitaries, men and women who were widely open-minded and who could discuss many different matters.”<sup>11</sup> Thanks to him she also encountered the actor Fukuko Suzuki. Also of import was Dr. Wilhelm Soft, German ambassador to Japan, who respected Karlin and helped her even in organizing presentations on her travels and her literary works in Germany.<sup>12</sup>

We know that Alma Karlin had entered the Japanese world rather deeply, even without knowledge of the language (as she put it herself, she only knew two words in Japanese, *thank you* and *excuse me*<sup>13</sup>). From her writings, her unusual travelogue, and perhaps more so in her novels, she evidently had a “a bright and talented sense for observing the dif-

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<sup>10</sup> Ernest Edwin Speight, “Introduction,” in *Indian masters of English: An Anthology of English Prose by Indian Writers* (Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1934), xii.

<sup>11</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 173.

<sup>12</sup> Jerneja Jezernik, *Alma M. Karlin, državljanka sveta: življenje in delo Alme Maximiliane Karlin (1889-1950)*, (Ljubljana: Mladinska knjiga, 2009), 73.

<sup>13</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 161.



ferences and full appreciation of Japanese mentality”<sup>14</sup>, with which she depicted with a certain depth, in particular, Japanese mythology, supernatural beings and gods, traditional celebrations, fables, superstitions, aesthetics and ideals in Japanese art. The main point which the author would like to explore is whether Karlin’s writings offer a sense of her musical and religious interest in Japan, whether she was attracted to the aesthetics of Shinto and Buddhism in the form of their music.

Short prologue to instruments used in Shinto  
and Karlin’s miniatures

What could be considered religious music in Japan may be divided largely into Shinto and Buddhist music. Of primary importance in developing the topic is the close relation between Shinto and Buddhist music (not to mention the religions themselves); in many cases, when played in folk festivals, it is hard to tell the two apart, as they sometimes actually share the same music, incorporating the subtlest of changes. Malm emphasises this point to an extent, saying that “any categorical discussion of religious music in Japan is a semi-artificial organizational device and does not always represent actual musical or historical distinctions”<sup>15</sup>. And the second important fact regarding the music is that there are many new religions and sects born nowadays which use a mix of different styles of music or instruments derived from both practices.

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<sup>14</sup> Jezernik, “Afterward,” 85.

<sup>15</sup> William P. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2001), 48.



Figure 1: Calling the gods with the taiko drum, Meiji Shinto Shrine, Yoyogi Park, Tokyo, June 2014 (Source: Hubert Golle).

*Shinto* (or “the way to the gods/deities”), as a Japanese indigenous religion, with its practices first recorded in the written records *Kojiki* (“Records of Ancient Matters”) and *Nihon Shoki* (“The Chronicles of Japan”) in the 8th century, focuses on ritual practices related to the worship of various gods (*kami*), crucial in harvest, spring, and other festivals. It is not an organized religion, is without a founder, priest (only a ritualist), as well without sacred scriptures; but each Shinto shrine has its collections of prayers. The primary concern of its practices has remained the same; taking care of or purification of a certain place or thing, which can be done by any individual or a priest. As a symbol of purification, “pieces of bamboo, spring of *sasaki*, or rice-straw rope to which paper and flax pendants are attached”<sup>16</sup> are prepared and hanged at the purified places. The most common form

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<sup>16</sup> Sokyō Ono, *Shinto: The Kami Way* (Tokyo: Charles Tuttle Company, 1999), 52.



Figure 2: Gong in Naoraiden Hall and sacred millennial cedar tree, Kasuga Taisha Shinto Shrine, Nara, June 2014 (Source: Hubert Golle).

related to Shinto ceremonies which includes music is *kagura*, which serves as the generic name for all Shintō music and dances, with at least a thousand years of tradition. Broadly speaking, it is used in rites where purification followed by prayer offering takes place; and it appears in theatrical form tied to Japanese mythology.<sup>17</sup> We could literally translate it as “god music,” or as Hughes puts it “performances entertaining native deities to grant prosperity and long life”<sup>18</sup>. Malm proposes that *kagura* can be divided into three: *mikagura* or formalized *kagura*, adopted during the Heian period, featured with little

<sup>17</sup> Naoko Terauchi, “Ancient and Early Medieval Performing Arts,” in *A History of Japanese Theater*, ed. Jonah Salz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 9.

<sup>18</sup> David W. Hughes, “Folk Music: From Local to National to Global,” in *The Ashagate Research Companion to Japanese music*, eds. Alison Tokita and David Hughes (Aldershot: Ashagate Publishing Limited, 2008), 296–297.

change at the imperial palace<sup>19</sup>, *o-kagura* or *kagura* at national shrines, and *satokagura* of many different styles for local shrine events.

*Kagura* is connected to dance through the origins of Shintō music: derived from the myth of origin when Ama no Uzume with her famous dance convinced the sun Goddess (Ama-terasu-ō-mikami) to come out from a cave and bring the sun back to earth. Alma Karlin provided her own explanation of the mythology in the work *Samotno potovanje* and drew a line from the first (Jimmu Tenno) to the current emperor.

In ancient times, when God put his sword into the mud, he pulled Japan to the surface, but since the mud was still dripping from it, small islands were made, which make it difficult to approach Japan. Later, Amaterasu-o-kami (the Sun) sent her sun children Izanagi and Izanami to Japan to finish shaping the islands.<sup>20</sup>

Each festival takes its own particular form with its accompaniment of music. Instruments related to Shinto ceremonies, processions or dances in relation to court *mikagura* singing are the flute *kagurabue* or *yamatobue*, which can sometimes be replaced by *ryūteki* (an instrument used in court music ensemble) or *nōkan* (usually used in *nō* theatre), and another, double reed flute *hichiriki*; a 6-string zither *wagon* or *yamatogoto*, “one of the few completely indigenous instruments of Japan”<sup>21</sup>; a set of wooden clappers, *shakubyōshi*, which are also used for keeping the rhythm in some vocal forms of Japanese court or *gagaku* music, as well as in *kabuki* as an offstage instrument.<sup>22</sup> The larger shrine accompaniment for *kagura* consist of the *wagon*, *kagurabue*, *hichiriki*, and a few drums, some of them again borrowed from court music, while for *mikomai* or dance performed by a female Shinto officiant *miko*, the small tree of bells called *suzu* can be used. Significant for festivals or *matsuri*, usually in relation to seasonal change, harvesting and the like, music for local *kagura* which takes place during such events, has each its own small band of musicians called *hayashi*, “a generic term for

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<sup>19</sup> David Petersen, “Super Kagura: The Dramatic Rebirth of Shinto Performance in Japan’s Midwest,” *Kyoto Journal* 58 (2004): 39.

<sup>20</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 166–67.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>22</sup> Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 51, 249, 113.

percussion ensembles, with or without melodic instruments”<sup>23</sup>, mostly consisting of drums (one big drum or *ōdaiko*, and two smaller *taiko*, played with a slimmer cypress drumstick or *bachi*<sup>24</sup>), a hand brass gong called an *atarigane*, and a simple bamboo pipe flute with six or seven holes called *takebue* or *shinobue*. The characteristics, as well as the way of playing on those instruments may vary, depending on the group of players.

#### Miniature of two-string *koto* or *yakumo-koto*

Alma Karlin could probably hear some kind of *hayashi*, as Asakusa was one of the early visits she wrote about. She refers to it as a “Kwamon temple”<sup>25</sup> (actually Kwannon or Asakusa Kannon, or Sensō-ji), dedicated to Kannon Bosatsu, the Bodhisattva of compassion, the largest temple in Asakusa and the oldest in the city, one of the most important venues for festivals, as “its Shinto shrine and Buddhist Kannon Temple have been the locus of festivals and fairs for many centuries”<sup>26</sup>. The area around was very rich with entertainment places and traditional theatres, as she mentions: “Outside, around the temple there are numerous theatre sheds and bars, and behind them is the forbidden city of Yoshiwara, where you can walk to.”<sup>27</sup> She continues with her story from Yoshiwara, a theme which she later in her writings liked to come back to; but unfortunately, there is no other mention of music or festivals and the *hayashi* she heard.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>25</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 169.

<sup>26</sup> Bonnie C. Wade, *Thinking Musically: Experiencing Music, Experiencing Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 61.

<sup>27</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 170.

<sup>28</sup> One of the most important significant festivals, which she could have visited was the Sanja festival (三社祭, literally “Three Shrine Festival”), significant for the portable shrines and *hayashi* consisting of five members, playing on flute, small metal gong, and three drums. Another Shinto instrument, the *binzasara*, can be heard in the *binzasara* dance, bringing forward a prayer for prosperity and a good harvest. Its prominent parades revolve around three *mikoshi* (portable shrines referenced in the festival’s name), as well as traditional music and dancing. Wade, *Thinking Musically*, 62.

To Shinto religion we can tie one of Karlin's object, an 11.5-centimetre Japanese bridgeless zither with two strings, the two-string *koto* (*yakumogoto* (八雲琴), or, more commonly, *yakumo-koto* or *yagumo-koto*), inventorized as a "plucked instrument with two strings"<sup>29</sup>. The word *koto* or *kin* was originally the word generically used for all string instruments.<sup>30</sup> *Yakumo-koto*, or eight cloud zither, is generally, according to Piggott, 3 feet 7 inches long (around 109 cm) and 4.5 inches (around 12 cm) wide, with 2 strings tuned in unison to F sharp, usually played placed on a low table with cylindrical picks.<sup>31</sup> One good example of the instrument dating from 1917 can be seen at the online collection of the Grassi Museum für Volkenkunde Leipzig, under the name *Yakumo Koto*.<sup>32</sup>

It is a religious musical instrument, with an interesting history and applications. Its appearance can be traced back to the blind musician Nakayama Danjō (or Nakayama Kotonushi (1803-1880)), who created the instrument and in 1920 proposed to use it in the offertory music at the Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine,<sup>33</sup> the oldest and most important shrine, today a national treasure. At the beginning it was even called *izumo goto*.<sup>34</sup> It is based on a myth, the story of Susano-o-no-mikoto, brother of the Sun Goddess, and his wife Kushinada-hime-no-mikoto. He rescued her from an eight-tailed dragon and afterwards married her; they were happily married, she would often play music for him "by plucking on a bowstring with an arrowhead. She also fastened the bowstring to the bottom of a wooden tub and beat it with a stick."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> K143, *Collection of Alma Karlin*, 34–44.

<sup>30</sup> Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 193.

<sup>31</sup> Francis Taylor Piggott, *The Music and Musical Instruments of Japan* (Yokohama: Kelly and Walsh, 1909), 116–117.

<sup>32</sup> "Yakumo Koto," *Online Collection*, Grassi Museum für Völkerkunde zu Leipzig, accessed July 19, 2019, <https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/Index/1604490>.

<sup>33</sup> Robert C. Provine, J. Lawrence Witzleben and Yoshiko Tokumaru, eds. *The Garland Encyclopedia of World Music: East Asia: China, Japan, and Korea* (Routledge: 2001), 609.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Bill Roberts, "Utamatsuri," *Oomoto*, accessed July 16, 2019, <http://www.oomoto.or.jp/English/enVisitor/enBill11.html>.



Figure 3: Miniature which features the Japanese instrument *yakumo-koto*, today related to the Shinto sect Ōmoto-kyō. We can find its iconography in *ukiyo-e*, such as Chikanobu Toyohara's works *Current Beauties*, *Moon from the Ocean Pavilion*, *Evening Concerts*, and others. (Collection of Alma Karlin (K143), Celje Regional Museum Archives).

Some researchers even point out its relation to the Izumo cult and mention its relation to the Japanese intellectual movement *kokugaku*, translated as *native studies* or *nativism*, which turn to basic Shinto tradition and Japan's ancient literature.<sup>36</sup> Nowadays it is used in the Ōmotokyō (大本教) or Ōmoto (大本) Shinto sect, founded in 1892, during their processions and ritual practices. One of the important is a traditional poetry festival *Utamatsuri*, where they gather to recite or chant poems, and as well play a two string *yakumo-koto*, referring to the

<sup>36</sup> Fabio Rambelli, ed. *The Sea and the Sacred in Japan: Aspects of Maritime Religion* (London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018), 53–63.

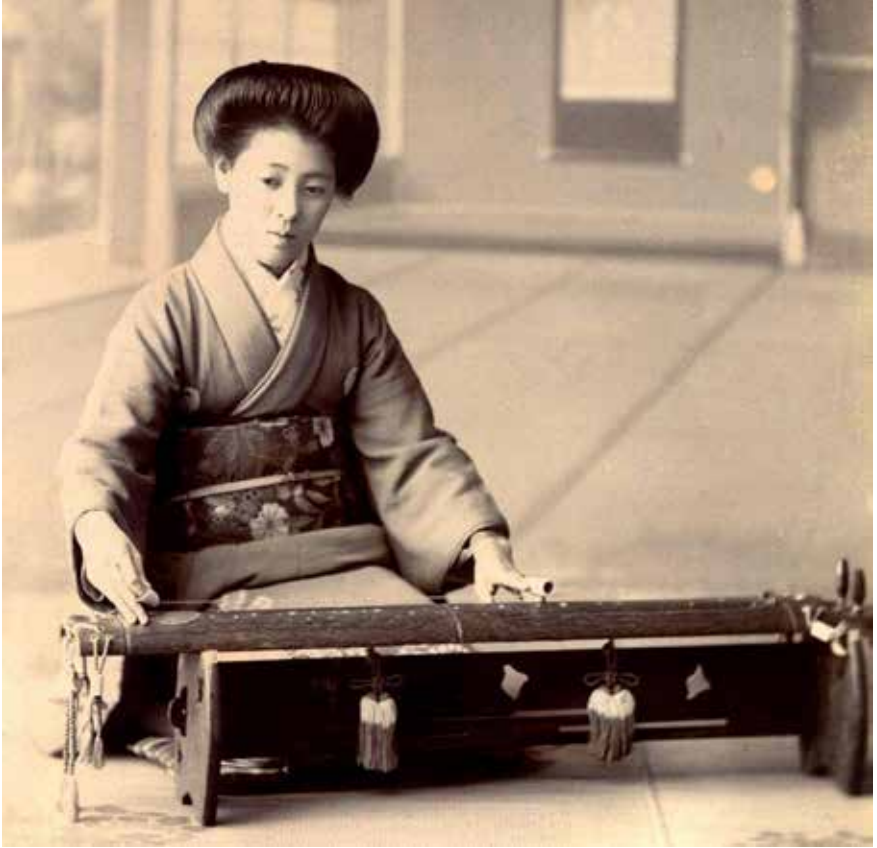


Figure 4: Yakumo-koto as played, using a low table and cylindrical picks (“Geisha playing on a yakumogoto” by Okinawa Soba (Rob) is licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0).

above mentioned myth.<sup>37</sup> The members of the sect and their spiritual leader believe that performing the arts is a religious practice, and they engage in such traditional arts as the tea ceremony, weaving, ceramics, *nō*, poetry, and martial arts. One of their main stances was in opposition to militarism from the start. Just before Alma Karlin came to

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*



Japan, in the year of 1921, they were first persecuted by the state, all its shrines and facilities burned down due to their failure to respect the authority of the Japanese Emperor.<sup>38</sup> The instrument was designated as an Intangible Cultural property of Japan (as municipal cultural property, under the category of performing arts) in Nara prefecture in the year of 2015, preserved under the Asuka Sound Preservation Society (明日香の響保存会).<sup>39</sup>

Karlin's miniature could as well be related to the *yakumo-koto* predecessor, *Azuma nigenkin* or *Azuma-ryū nigenkin* (東流二弦琴) often just referred to as the *nigenkin* (二弦琴). Sometimes the names *nigenkin* and *yakumo-koto* are used interchangeably, but actually they are not the same instruments.

"The *nigenkin* is an extremely rare two-string zither found only in the Asakusa suburb of Tokyo. The *nigenkin* is a fairly recent instrument adapted from the *yakumo-goto*, a two-string zither used exclusively in Shinto shrines. In the early Meiji Period (1868-1912), Tosha Rosen, a *yakumo-koto* player, started to use the instrument to perform the popular secular music of the time (*hauta* and *zokkyoku*), and as a result was asked to sever his association with the Shinto Shrine and was forbidden to play the *yakumo-koto*. He therefore created the *Azuma nigenkin*, with only subtle differences from its predecessor, notably an open back and less ornamentation."<sup>40</sup>

The *nigenkin* is played with a plastic or ivory pick and a large slide called a *rokan*, which is slid along the strings. Besides classical there is as well a popular song repertoire, while among the main preservers and performers of the instrument is a Canadian composer, performer and improviser, Randy Raine-Reusch.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> "Oomoto Japan's Religion of Peace," You Tube Video, 6:35, Oomoto Believers Association, July 29, 2007, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIho17Y3i\\_s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iIho17Y3i_s).

<sup>39</sup> "Yagumo-goto nitsuite (八雲琴について, On yagumo-goto)," Asuka Mura denshō geinō hozonkai (明日香村伝承芸能保存会, Preservation Society of the Traditional Performing Arts of Asuka Village), accessed July 13, 2019, <https://densyo.asuka.co/yagumo-goto/>.

<sup>40</sup> "Nigenkin," World Instrument Gallery, accessed July 9, 2019, <http://www.asza.com/Instruments/inigen.shtml>.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

Small bronze *tengu* mask with *tokin* headware

Another object from Karlin's collection we could link to the Shinto religion is a small *tengu* (天狗, 天 stands for heaven and 狗 for dog, or heavenly dog) mask, which is in Shinto considered as *kami* or *yōkai* (supernatural being), a bird-like mystical creature, which can take part in *kagura* performances, and is often used for a theme in a comic monologue called a *rakugo*. Its significant features, a long nose protruding from a red painted face, were inspired by the Japanese mythological figure Saruta Hikononikoto (猿田彦命).



Figure 5: Small miniature of *tengu* mask (bronze, 6.6 x 4.1 cm), black and in some parts coloured in red and gold, with a small box *tokin* (兜巾) on the top of its forehead, representing a hat or a drinking cup, headwear associated with mountain monks *yamabushi*, whose form they often assume. It could be used as a wall hanging, as it is said that the hanging of Japanese traditional masks can bring happiness. (Collection of Alma Karlin (K24), Celje Regional Museum Archives).



Figures 6 and 7: Actual size of *tengu nō* mask, made by the mask carver Hideta Kitazawa (Source: Hideta Kitazawa).

It is usually pictured as taking the shape of some sort of priest as it became associated with the mountain ascetics called *yamabushi*, who practice Shugendō, a syncretic religion dating back to the Heian period; a combination of influences from local folk-religious practices, pre-Buddhist mountain worship, Shinto, Taoism and Vajrayan. According to Hideta Kitazawa, a woodcarving artist specialized in masks and Shinto shrines, its appearance is characteristic of the *Edo sato kagura* (江戸里神楽), a pre-modern Shinto theatrical performed at shrine festivals in the Tokyo area since the Tokugawa period.<sup>42</sup> It is also used in the kagura *Sanjin* (山神), purification of the stage after day's programme, where rice cakes (*mochi*) are passed out to visitors. There are Shinto shrines worshipping *tengu* all around the country, but the closest to Tokyo and one of the most famous for its *tengu* is at Mt. Takao, at the Takaoyama Yakuōin (高尾山薬王院).

We know Karlin mentions in her travelogue that you can “sense *tengu*” in Japanese woods, which indicates that she was familiar with its figure and character.

#### Buddhist *narimono* depicted in Karlin's travelogue

Buddhism, which arrived, so to speak, in Japan in the Nara period, inspired its own instruments and music, gradually influencing other forms of music and its instruments. Malm points out that Japanese music is based “on two theoretical foundations, the music of ancient China and the music of Buddhism”.<sup>43</sup> One of the best examples is the origin of *shōmyō*, the Japanese Buddhist chant, used mainly in the Tendai-shū and Shingon-shū sects, fundamental for all later music in Japan.

Instruments serve or have functions mainly as simple accompaniment for Buddhist chants, signalling or time-marking the actions of monks within their services and daily activities at the temple. In the West most musicologists refer to those as instruments, sound instruments, sound producing instruments, idiophones, while monks them-

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<sup>42</sup> Hideta Kitazawa, E-mail correspondence, 19 July 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 66.

selves classify or relate to those as *narimono* (鳴物, directly best translated as “objects which make sound”) or *hōgu* (法具, ritual implements).<sup>44</sup>

As Karlin attended a Buddhist ceremony at the Tendai temple in Asakusa<sup>45</sup>, about which she wrote in her travelogue, she would have heard the Buddhist *bonsō* bell, which calls the priests to their services. What distinguishes it from the bells we know is that it is hit with a wooden hammer from the outside, meaning the bell does not have a clapper. Then there is the *kei*, a chime made of bronze, the *uchinarashi* or *kin*, and *rei*, or a small hand bell in the shape of a bowl, which are all used as markers for “certain special moments in the ceremonial movement of the head priest.”<sup>46</sup> The *kin* is especially very well known in the West, as it is used in Western music, while its shapes are reminiscent of musical healing bowls. Gongs, like the *nyō* and *dora*, signal “major sections of the ceremony”<sup>47</sup>. Other instruments related to Buddhist music are two percussive instruments: the *mokugyo* or “wooden fish”, which bears the shape of a bent fish or a bird in a backward position<sup>48</sup>, and is struck with a padded stick, used in the Jōdō and Nichiren sects, and a frame drum called an *uchiwadaiko*, significant for the Nichiren sect. Buddhist ceremonies and services are accompanied as well by large drums called *ōdaiko*, while in some cases as well in court music *gagaku* instruments are added.<sup>49</sup> There are numerous sound-producing instruments used in zen Buddhism temples, such as we can read about in Suzuki’s *The Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk*, an illustrated transcription on twenty five sound instruments, which call monks to certain times or events.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> For a more detailed classification, see Sōkyū Gen’yū, *Zendera monogatari* (Tokyo: Shinjūsha, 2012).

<sup>45</sup> The mention of the instruments are linked to Malm’s visit to the Tendai temple. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 70–72.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

<sup>48</sup> Piggott, *Music and Musical Instruments*, 176.

<sup>49</sup> Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 73.

<sup>50</sup> Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki, *The Training of the Zen Buddhist Monk* (Rutland and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Company, 1994), 155–159, <https://tereless.hu/zen/SuzukiTraining.pdf>.

The sound of *bonsbō* and *waniguchi*

In “Travelling to Nikko”, Karlin notes the gongs, writing of this current UNESCO World Heritage site, while discussing the formative myth of Japan, and providing insight into the Shinto shrines (Futarasan Shrine and Tōshō-gū) and Buddhist temple (Rinnō-ji). Nikko had been developed into a mountain resort during the Meiji period, and became particularly popular among foreign visitors. Karlin would spend the night in the Japanese style house of Speight, who lived close by. In the morning, astonished at the calmness of the place, she mentioned the sound of the gong: “... the silence was from time to time broken only by a long and solemn hit of the temple gong.”<sup>51</sup> This was probably the sound of the *bonsbō* (梵鐘, Buddhist bell), or *ōgane* (大鐘, large bell), also known as *tsurigane* (釣り鐘, hanging bell), the largest bell in the monastery, hung within the separately designed bell house built outside, at the west side of the monastery. Struck with an external wooden bell hammer, its sound is used to mark the gatherings of monks for prayer, as well as to indicate various times. It’s of greatest significance during New Year rituals, when it is stricken 108 times to symbolize the 108 worldly desires, or to expunge the destructive feelings people had over the past the last year.<sup>52</sup>

A gong also appears in “In Yoshiwara”, at the temple Kwannon or Asakusa Kannon (in the text referred as a “Kwamon”) describing the way people visit the temple and pray to the god: “each [ ] pulls a rope at a gong, clutches his hands, shares his joy with the deity...”<sup>53</sup> Here she probably had in mind the *waniguchi* (鰐口), a gong at the entrance of the shrine. Regarding the actual description of worshiping at the temple, it is unclear whether she actually meant the shrine and not the temple itself.

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<sup>51</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 168.

<sup>52</sup> Read more on the bell in Wei-Yu Lu, “The Performance Practice of Buddhist Baiqi in Contemporary Taiwan” (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2012), 146–51.

<sup>53</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 169.



Figure 8: Bonshō (3.3 x 2.7 meters) and the Daishōrō (Great Bell Tower), Chion-in, Kyoto, Important Cultural Property (Photo: Klara Hrvatin).

Karlin's descriptions of musical instruments with indirect religious connotation: insights into Japanese folklore, iconography and theatre

In general, Karlin does not pay attention to or provide detailed information about, for instance, the sound of events, with the exception of occasions when an object or description of the object is closely related to some instrument to which she pays slight notice or provides some explanation. Such is the case for example, when she describes the *tanuki* or Japanese raccoon dog, which has a reputation as a master of disguise and carries a strong ancient folkloric significance and is often used as a common theme in Japanese art. She mentions the *tanuki*'s stomach in utility of a drum: "he has as well a huge stomach, on which he beats, when he is happy"<sup>54</sup>. This kind of description of *tanuki* is common in Japan. *Tanuki* has a long history in Japanese folklore as a *tanuki yōkai* or some kind of supernatural being, and had been depicted in classics as a creature who can turn into humans and sing songs; in some cases they became as well the subject of rituals. A *tanuki* may be shown with their scrotum depicted at their back like travellers' packs, or used as drums. Most typically, they are depicted as having large bellies, sometimes drumming on their bellies, and as such brought forward in the classic literature, *ukiyo-e*, *netsuke* motif and even depicted on *tsuba*, etc. There is also the phenomenon of the so called *tanuki-bayashi*, presenting a mysterious sound of a drum heard in the middle of the night in Edo, on which the very popular nursery rhyme *Shōjō-ji no Tanuki-bayashi* (証城寺の狸囃子) is based.<sup>55</sup> We can see them displayed in Buddhist temples throughout the country.

Another passage when she mentions an instrument is when she provides brief insight into the celebration of *setsubun* (which she refers to as "persecution of spirits"); she pictures the sculpture of the goddess Benten, as of Japan's Seven Lucky Gods, representing music, art, literature, performing arts, etc., holding a Japanese lute called a *biwa*<sup>56</sup>. Here

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 174.

<sup>55</sup> "Tanuki in Japanese artwork," Japanese Buddhist Statuary, accessed July 2, 2019, <https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/tanuki.shtml>.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 181.



Karlin for the first time gives an explicit name of the instrument in relation to the goddess, but without further information on the instrument itself.



Figure 9: *Kiryu Kannon Benzaiten* 騎龍弁財天 (*Goddess of Music and Good Fortune*)  
*Seated on a White Dragon* (Aoigaoka Keisei, 1832).



Figure 10: *Hyōshigi* (拍子木), a simple percussion instrument Karlin paid special attention to when visiting the theatre. It is very distinctive in kabuki, seen often as well in Shinto festivals, and used in some forms of Buddhist practice, as well as in the new Japanese religion Tenrikyō. (Hyōshigi by ja:User:Miya is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0).

The most interesting part, where she wrote of music a little bit more, is surely on Japanese theatre and dance performances in “In the fishing villages”:<sup>57</sup>

In Japanese theatre, there are musicians on stage and in addition to Japanese instruments, they also use two ‘harmonious wooden blocks’, which play an important role in music, and actors often represent yorose from the houses of joy and old knights, or they celebrate, as for example, in the play ‘Kirare Yosaburo’, a man who became a hero out of love and pain.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> The title itself presents Asakusa, which used to be a fishing village. Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 192.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

The theatre play Alma Karlin actually visited was probably kabuki, regarding the play she mentions *Kirare Yosaburo* (Scarface Yosaburo), which is short for the play *Yowa Nasake Ukina no Yokobushi*, more often shortened to *Kirare Yosa*, a kabuki adaptation of *kōdan*, a traditional form of story-telling with its origin in the 17th century. As it is domestic drama presenting the lives of commoners, and was more realistic in style, it belongs to *sewamono*, a genre in contrast to *jidaimono* which features historical plots. The “two harmonious wooden sticks” she mentions are at first hard to define, but what she probably had in mind was the so called *hyōshigi* (拍子木) or simply *ki* (木), a simple percussion instrument well presented in kabuki, made from two hard wood blocks, sometimes translated as “wooden time beaters”<sup>59</sup>. Those are used at first to signal the beginning of the performance, accelerating to produce more rapid sounds until the curtain rises, when they end with a sharp final clack.<sup>60</sup> In the set it is used as well to indicate a pause before a certain action takes place, a single strike after which some seconds of pause follow.<sup>61</sup> During the play itself, the *tsuke* (付 • 附), another set of wooden clappers is used, struck on a wooden board, which adds dynamics or reinforces a certain part of the play. Outside the theatre, in the past, they would use them as well for fire-alerting signs, or to attract the public during juggling, athletic or other performances, as well as for night inspection or patrolling of the streets.<sup>62</sup> We can also find the instrument on the list of those used in zen monasteries, for a time marker of specific events in the life of monks.<sup>63</sup> It is also the first instrument to be used in the new religion Tenrikyo. Most often we can see them as a marker for signalling the *omikoshi* or a portable Shinto shrine’s movement and reinforcing and supporting the *kakegoe* of the carriers of the *omikoshi*, or to announce the entry in *sumo* tournaments.

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<sup>59</sup> Piggott, *Music and Musical Instruments*, 177.

<sup>60</sup> Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music*, 247.

<sup>61</sup> Ronald Cavaye, Paul Griffith and Akihiko Senda, *A Guide to the Japanese Stage: From Traditional to Cutting Edge* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 2005), 88–89.

<sup>62</sup> Piggott, *Music and Musical Instruments*, 177.

<sup>63</sup> Suzuki, *Training of the Zen*, 155–159.

## Conclusion

From the Celje Regional Museum's Collection of Alma M. Karlin we could put in the foreground two objects which relate to Japanese religious music, a small miniature of *yakumo-koto*, nowadays used in a Shinto sect called Ōmoto, and a small bronze miniature of a *tengu nō* mask, used as well in *kagura* plays. Both of these objects show Karlin's preferences for small souvenirs. What would be interesting is to attempt to determine where or how Karlin obtained the objects and what they were used for, especially in the case of the *yakumo-koto*. Moreover, it would be interesting to research the overall collection of Alma Karlin's music-related objects in order to obtain better insight into the subject matter.

The author's search for correlations between Karlin's musical objects from her collection such as *yakumo-koto* and her writing from *Lonely Travel*, focussing especially on the parts depicting her stay in Japan, did not bring about any discoveries of great importance. Unfortunately none of the objects were mentioned in her travelogue. On the other hand, what we can realize from her writings is her stance and insights into music and religion related themes. More than the direct depiction of music and religion related objects and topics, they were part of Karlin's broader context of her windows into Japanese culture.

According to her travelogue, she was particularly fond of or paid attention to the sound of the temple's gongs, and sound producing instruments with symbolic connotation to Shinto or Buddhist figures; such as her *tanuki's* depiction with a drum *taiko*, and a bodhisattva holding a Japanese *biwa*. Attention was drawn as well to *hyōshigi*, an instrument which she could encounter when visiting the theatre, but which is as well widely used in religious-related events. Knowing and spending time with the artists such as the poets, writers, painters and actors, she had good opportunity to be directly introduced to Japanese culture and arts, which is as well evident from her travelogue.

Alma Karlin herself mentions that this was a busy period for her, as she "in a year, spent in Japan, did not write even one literary work, even if she was a correspondent for one of the most important magazines for

textiles in Germany,..."<sup>64</sup>; in another passage she writes "I could write a whole book about Japan, but I had to really try hard to shorten the description..."<sup>65</sup> What's necessary is to analyse other of Karlin's works that involve Japan, many of which are not yet translated. Among them, particularly, *Singende Blüte: Ein Roman aus dem vorgeschichtlichen Japan* (Singing Blossom: A Novel from Ancient Japan) and an art novel *Im Haus der Menschen: Ein Künstlerroman aus Japan* (In the People's House), which was never published and in regard to which Jerneja Jezernik wrote that Alma said it contains "reflections on Japanese art and philosophy."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Karlin, *Samotno potovanje*, 183.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 189.

<sup>66</sup> Jerneja Jezernik, *Nisem le napol človek: Alma M. Karlin in njeni moški* (Ljubljana: Sanje, 2016), 116.

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CONFUCIUS, A  
YUGOSLAV NATIONALIST  
- REPRESENTATIONS  
OF CONFUCIANISM IN  
PRE-WWII SLOVENIA

Helena Motoh

“The story about baby Jesus in the barn is already well known to everybody,” runs the opening sentence of the newspaper article entitled “The Christmas of a Yugoslav Nationalist”, published in the 1935 issue of the political newspaper *March* [Pohod],<sup>1</sup> only to urge the reader to ponder alternative possibilities of engaging his thoughts in pre-Christmas days: What should a Yugoslav nationalist think about instead of baby Jesus? It takes a few more sentences for the answer to become clear. He should, surprisingly enough, think about Confucius.

The combination of a Yugoslav nationalist, Confucius and Christmas makes for a very odd mix, sounding more like the beginning of a bad joke about at least two of them walking into a bar. The idea behind the article, however, is not at all for amusement. It starts with a bitter reflection on the “sad times” the generalized “Yugoslav nationalist” found himself in. What follows is a several-paragraph-long summary of Confucius’ life. In it, Confucius is presented as a politically active sage, who tries to persuade the rulers to govern more successfully, to make China more unified and the Chinese nation more prosperous. According to the article, one of the biggest obstacles Confucius aimed at overcoming were the tribal conflicts within China, which destabilized the country and only gave an advantage to its outside enemies.

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<sup>1</sup> All quotes of this article from: “Božič jugoslovenskega nacionalista,” *Pohod*, 23. 12. 1935, vol. 4, no. 36.

This image of Confucius as a protagonist of Chinese unification and national strength, who is then being pushed aside and ushered into exile by his short-sighted contemporaries, hints at a topic which has markedly less to do with a Confucian or even Chinese context than with the Yugoslav political circumstances, which the article is addressing. “The actions of a Yugoslav nationalist and those of Confucius are completely alike,” it states bluntly, going further in falsifying the Confucius’ alleged biography. “Both struggled, suffered and died a violent death.” Presented as a martyr of early Chinese political history, Confucius is said to have “endured numerous disappointments”. Ultimately, he was even “abandoned by his own emperor”. The Yugoslav nationalist, we are told, suffers a similar fate of animosity and rejection, while finally even being “abandoned” by his ruler. This “abandonment”, of course, hints at King Alexander Karadjordjević’s assassination in Marseille in October 1934.

The style of the article, clumsy and pompous as it is, yet leads us to a very important question. How is it possible that the three not even loosely related notions of Yugoslav nationalism, Christmas expectations and Confucius, end up – so to speak – walking into a bar together? What narrative contexts enable the (anonymous) author of a 1935 article to casually combine them in his openly political statement?

The aim of the paper is to analyse the intellectual framework within which such an article was made possible. The analysis of the status of the image of Confucius and the representations of Confucianism in the early 20th century Slovenia provide a backdrop for this discussion, together with a number of seemingly external factors. Among these, historical and political events of the time play a crucial role, alongside other Yugoslav internal and external political developments, social and economic changes, and, importantly, the rise of what is often called *Kulturkampf*, the harsh opposition between two political and cultural spheres in pre-war Slovenia. In the virtual absence of books on the topic, the main source for assessing the representations of Confucianism in Slovenia at the time are journal and newspaper articles. These form a rich depository of more than 500 texts<sup>2</sup> in a varied host of genres, including marginal genres such as jokes and satire.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: [www.dlib.si](http://www.dlib.si) (Digitalized library of Slovenian language publications).

The material analysed is limited by the time of publication to encompass the last two decades of the 19th and the first four decades of the 20th century. The reason for this selection is mostly historical. An important breakthrough, which can also be understood as a starting point of the new or revived interest in the East Asian cultures, is a book published in 1893 by Josip Stare, *Kitajci in Japonci* [The Chinese and the Japanese]<sup>3</sup>. Politically a liberal, Stare as a publicist was not a specialist on Asian topics at all, but he took on the task to provide an introduction to these two East Asian peoples, their histories and their cultures. The second half of the 19th century is also a period of proliferation of journal and newspaper publications in the Slovenian language. Many major publications were started in those decades, such as *Slovenec* in 1873, *Slovenski narod* in 1868, *Ljubljanski zvon* in 1881, *Zgodnja Danica* in 1848, *Učiteljski tovariš* in 1861, and *Dom in svet* in 1888. In addition, this period coincided with the Sino-French war of 1884–1885 as one of the first series of events in Chinese history which was regularly and extensively represented in the Slovenian press. The choice to end the period of research in 1941 hardly needs explaining. The onset of the Second World War and the occupation of Slovenian territory by the Italian and the German armies caused an almost complete stasis in the cultural sphere, resulting in a radical transformation of the journal and newspaper landscape. Many of these publications stopped completely, while others were under close scrutiny by the occupying forces with their political agendas. On the other hand, the newly formed resistance movement was producing its own publications, but much of this material was lost or is not easy to reconstruct. The analysis of wartime publications on this topic would require extensive separate research.

Spatially, my focus in this paper will be exclusively on Slovenian territory, insofar as this term can be used anachronistically. In the mentioned period, except for a stint from 1920 to 1922, the political entity of “Slovenia” did not as yet exist. Before 1918, the territory of present-

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<sup>3</sup> Josip Stare, *Kitajci in Japonci* (Celovec: Družba sv. Mohorja, 1893). This book formed a part of a larger plan to write similar introductory texts for other topics in geography and ethnography that Stare made together with colleagues.

day Slovenia belonged to three administrative units of the Austrian Empire; i.e., Carniola, Styria and the Littoral. In inter-war Yugoslavia, the administrative unit of Slovenia only existed between 1920 and 1922, while before and after this short period, the administrative divisions were again different. Since the administrative and political history of the territory is rather complex, for the needs of this paper the criterion for the selection of publications is primarily linguistic and, secondarily, regional. It includes newspapers and journals published in Slovenian and on the territory of today's Slovenia (excluding for example, German language local publications as well as the newspapers and journals of the Slovenian overseas communities).

So far the topic under consideration has not received any scholarly attention or been researched in its own right, though studies on the representations of Confucius in earlier periods are many. A great number of them<sup>4</sup> focus on the period of the most intense exchange between Europe and China in the 17th and 18th century, where the Jesuit Chinese mission was playing an important role as "cultural translators" or mediators between the two sides of the continent. Some of the key texts focus in particular on the representations of Confucius and Confucianism in Europe, such as Rule's *K'ung-tzu or Confucius* (1986)<sup>5</sup> or Jensen's 1998 *Manufacturing Confucianism*<sup>6</sup> (along with the critical comments in Standaert's 1999 review<sup>7</sup>). The topic of the 20th century representations, however, has been much less explored, although some of the works touch upon the topic of the 20th-century representations of Chinese thought as well<sup>8</sup>. The discontinuity between the Sinophilia of the Enlightenment period and the fascination with East Asia in the late

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<sup>4</sup> E.g., J. J. Clarke, *Oriental Enlightenment, The Encounter Between Asian and Western Thought* (London/ New York: Routledge, 1997); Julia Ching, Willard Oxtoby (eds.), *Discovering China, European Interpretations in the Enlightenment* (New York: University of Rochester Press, 1992); and Charles E. Ronan, Bonnie B. C. Oh (eds.), *East Meets West, The Jesuits in China* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1982).

<sup>5</sup> Paul A. Rule, *K'ung-tzu or Confucius, The Jesuit Interpretation of Confucianism* (Sydney, / London, Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Lionel M. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism: Chinese Traditions & Universal Civilization* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Nicolas Standaert, "The Jesuits Did NOT Manufacture Confucianism". EASTM 16 (1999).

<sup>8</sup> Most notably Clarke in *Oriental Enlightenment* (op. cit.).

19th and the early 20th century also makes analogies and trajectories riskier and more problematic. By analysing the 1884–1941 representations of Confucianism and Confucius in the Slovenian press, the present paper aims to partly fill in this gap, while also exploring a host of external factors which had an impact on the type of discourse produced about Confucius and Confucianism during the period.

The motivations behind the representations of Confucius and Confucianism were, however, two-sided. Many of them were indeed intended to help the reader better understand China and the functioning and potential role of this immense but little-known country in the changing world of the late 19th and the early 20th century. Many others were serving a different purpose – in a fashion not unlike the appropriations of Confucius and Confucianism in the previous centuries. As seen in the example where the anxious Yugoslav nationalist is being comforted with the biography of Confucius, the intent of these representations was often not to aid our understanding of China, but rather to be in the service of problems and dilemmas that societies and people were facing *here*, be it in Yugoslavia, Europe, or the loosely defined “West”.

For structural reasons, the paper will follow this duality by dividing the analysis of Confucius and Confucianism into two parts. In the first part, I focus on the representations which were stimulated by historical events or situations, provoking a wider discussion of Confucianism and its role in China’s past and present. I will also make a mention of other, perhaps less political and more educational attempts to extend knowledge about China. The second part of the paper will focus on the representations of Confucius and Confucianism which were made with the intention of helping solve local problems, tackle difficult topics via an intellectual bypass or simply provide an inspiration to open new possibilities of thinking about pressing issues. The final part of the paper reflects upon the connection between the two and considers the narrative structures deployed and which can be seen to hold wider purchase in analysing similar phenomena.

## Understanding China through Confucius

As mentioned before, the last two decades of the 19th century were the first period in which events in China were represented in up-to-date reports in the Slovenian press. The first of these events to be extensively reported upon was the conflict between China and France resulting in the Sino-French war of 1884–1885. Most of the reports were favourable to French attempts and several tried to explain away the strong resistance of the Chinese armies in terms of a particularly sturdy Chinese national character, which they related to the Confucian tradition. In one of these we read:

Everybody knows that Chinese are stubborn – and how very stubborn! For a whole year they were playing tricks with the French and who knows for how long they would continue if the French had let them. The French, who in Cathay represent not only French trade but educated Europe as a whole, will not let them do that, because they know these Confucius' relatives too well and they understand that they must be spoken to in a harsh tone.<sup>9</sup>

The Catholic journal *Zgodnja Danica* was even more specific in describing the type of religious imagination peculiar to the Chinese and linking it to their behaviour in military conflict:

The Chinese does not like to think about things that do not bring profit. He does not care much about God or the soul (...) Such were the teachings of the sage of the Chinese, Confucius. It is the teaching of the people who are completely buried in the secular: they think good and right is what brings them profit. Therefore, the Chinese are difficult to deal with. Missionaries have big problems with them, as we have reported. Let us hope that the French army wakes them up a little and makes them interested in the teachings of the Christian faith. Hopefully, the French soldiers will behave in a Christian way as well.<sup>10</sup>

Apart from the interesting turn in the last part of the quoted section, the equation is simple and straightforward. Chinese are an utterly pragmatic and this-worldly people, for whom transcendental concerns

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<sup>9</sup> "Vnanje države," *Slovenec*, 05. 07. 1884, vol. 12, no. 153: 2.

<sup>10</sup> "Modroslovje," *Zgodnja Danica: katoliški cerkveni list*, 12. 09. 1884, vol. 37, no. 37: 294.

of religion have no value whatsoever. Confucius is seen as the source of such an all-pervasive worldview and practice.

While the Sino-French conflict was developing, the newly provoked interest in China also led to a number of publications on China and the Chinese culture in general. Most notable and extensive of these was a feuilleton partial translation<sup>11</sup> of *Les Chinois peints par eux-mêmes*, a book published in Paris in 1884 by a Chinese diplomat in France, Chen Jitong (陈季同), presenting the Chinese and their culture in a seemingly unbiased attempt at intercultural translation.

The next historical event reported on was the First Sino-Japanese war a decade later (1894–1895), although not nearly as much as the Sino-French conflict, perhaps because it did not involve any European powers. The subsequent Boxer uprising, on the other hand, attracted much more attention. Especially religious press, most notably *Zgodnja Danica*, reported on how the Boxers attacked Christians in China. It is interesting to note the shift in interpretations, when compared to how the Sino-French conflict was reported on in the same journal only a decade and a half earlier. In a September 1900 article on the topic,<sup>12</sup> they stressed that the reason for the violent actions of the Boxers should not be sought in the fact that they were either Buddhist or Confucian. Instead, they identified the source of their hatred towards the Christians in their anti-foreign sentiments. These, according to the *Zgodnja Danica* article, are a consequence of the colonial politics of the European powers in China and have nothing to do with religion itself – either of the Boxers or their victims. According to the article, the revenge of the Boxers against the missionaries is also nothing but an extension of anti-European sentiment, since the Chinese cannot distinguish between European missionaries and European merchants.

Nevertheless, the news on the anti-Christian actions of the Boxers seemed to have resulted in some of the earliest attempts to understand the religions of Asia in order to be able to discern the intentions of the people who followed them. A surprisingly long and systematic account

<sup>11</sup> “Kitaj in njegove naprave,” *Slovenski narod*, 03. 09. 1884, vol. 17, no. 203: 1.

<sup>12</sup> “Vojska in preganjanje kristijanov na Kitajskem,” *Zgodnja Danica: katoliški cerkveni list*, 28. 09. 1900, vol. 53, no. 39: 307.

on the topic by Přemysl Hájek was published in *Ljubljanski zvon* in 1901.<sup>13</sup> The text “Leaders of the Chinese Spiritual Life” was divided into three parts, dedicated to Confucius, Mencius and Laozi respectively. The interest in studying Chinese thought, says Hájek, springs from two sources. One reason to study the philosophical ideas of these great men is to better understand “China and its vast population”<sup>14</sup>. This point on its own is typical of the turn of the 20th century, when the Boxer rebellion and the changes in China awoke the awareness of the role that this large country might potentially play on the world stage. Hájek adds a meaningful quote, saying that “tout comprendre, c’est tout pardonner”. Confucianism especially, says Hájek, is “a practical morality (...) originating from the Chinese nation, morality that has influenced and continues to influence the nation as its civilising element”<sup>15</sup>. The second reason why one would want to know Chinese philosophy better, however, has more to do with Europe than with the Chinese – but I will return to this point shortly.

Hájek starts with Confucius’ biography and continues with some of the semi-mythological accounts of his life - e.g., the episode of meeting with Laozi - and touches upon Confucius’ alleged role in the composition of the classics. Then he presents some of the key aspects of his teachings, the central role of the ideal of *junzi* and the correct relations between husband and wife, parents and children, and among friends. He closes the presentation of Confucius’ teachings with his views on political ethics – the obligation of both the ruler and his subordinates to be moral and act first and foremost for the benefit of the people. Hájek’s conclusion of the section about Confucius is interesting in its “nationalist” implications as well as being far more thorough than those of the other two thinkers, Mengzi and Laozi. For Laozi, for example, he only mentions that he was the speculative counterpart of Confucius’ practical philosophy. For Confucius, though, he states that his “practical but elated philosophy” was enough for the nation of 400 million people to:

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<sup>13</sup> Přemysl Hájek, “Voditelji kitajskega duševnega življenja,” *Ljubljanski zvon* 21, no. 11 (1901).

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 688.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*



peacefully work on its own culture, slowly and diligently, always looking back. While this was going on in China, beyond its borders and far away, in the West, deathly weapons were used, thrones were overthrown and countries fell apart – while philosophical systems were constructed in a senseless and mindless fashion, only to be a toy and fun for a few in search for some spiritual indulgence.<sup>16</sup>

The practical philosophy of Confucius, continues Hájek, taught how to let things be as they were, instead of constantly trying to change them as is done here, in the West. Prevention of regrettable phenomena, such as “inquisition and anarchism”<sup>17</sup> would have been another side benefit of practical thinking, a mindset which according to the author was not limited to select intellectual circles but characterised the Chinese people as a whole.<sup>18</sup>

Another semi-scholarly article was published on the topic of Chinese (and in this case, Japanese) thought in the 1911 edition of the *Čas* [Time] journal, published by a Catholic scientific society. On the other side of the political spectrum from the previously mentioned *Ljubljanski zvon*, they published an article by Franc Terseglav with the title “Buddhism and East-Asian National Religions”.<sup>19</sup> Although allegedly focused on Buddhism, this topic is covered in less than a quarter of the text, while the main stress is on presenting the indigenous religions of the Chinese and the Japanese. For the Japanese, this means Shinto, while for the Chinese Terseglav presents a complex picture of syncretically interconnected religious traditions as they would all form part of the same system. Daoism, for example, is interpreted as part of the Confucian religion as well, and the whole religious system of the Chinese he interprets as a type of “natural philosophical monism”, or, elsewhere, as “monism with socially practical implications”. When explaining the role of this “Confucian” religion for the Chinese society, he stresses similar points as Hájek in the previously analysed text. “Confucianism

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 696.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Franc Terseglav, “Budizem in vzhodnoazijska nacionalna verstva,” *Čas* 5, no. 4/5 (1911): 145–161. As the main source for his writing he lists De Groot’s *Religious System of China* (1906 edition).

is a morality of social solidarity” and the “sense of social responsibility is what the Chinese traditionalism and conservatism are based upon.”<sup>20</sup> The religious form which informs and shapes this traditionalism is to be found in ancestral worship, claims Terseglav, who continues that Confucian morality is “in all aspects adapted to the agrarian nature of the Chinese state”<sup>21</sup>, using the rituals to ensure good harvest and to prevent natural disasters and epidemics.

The most interesting equation Terseglav draws, however, is that between religion and matters of the state. “The history of the country is the only divine revelation that a Chinese knows. The state is his God.” Hinting at the agrarian past of the Chinese political organisation he explains that the birth of the religion was closely connected to the aspirations that religious rituals would help prevent natural disasters. This religion which Terseglav equates with Confucianism, had an “immense impact on the development of the Chinese nation”. It made the country incredibly enduring throughout the centuries, stable without being stagnant, and provided it with good prospects for the future. In a fashion, surprisingly similar to authors such as Liang Shuming<sup>22</sup>, Terseglav compares Chinese culture with those of India and of the West.

Enduring and persevering, the Chinese progresses slowly, but surely; the future of Asia belongs to him. Indians, this dreamy and feeble, self-absorbed nation, was never able to create a country. The Chinese, on the other hand, this prosaic being who does not even know epic poetry, but only dry historical chronicles, established one of the strongest countries in the world that stands as stable today as it has been standing for centuries.<sup>23</sup>

The power of Confucianism to hold the country together is what Terseglav seems to admire the most, although to claim its stability and endurance in 1909 was hardly historically accurate. However pragmatic the Confucian religion might be for the Chinese political and social prosperity and its expansion in Asia, there is still something missing in it compared to Europe. According to Terseglav, the main reason for the

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Liang Shuming, 东西文化及其哲学 [Dongxi wenhua ji qi zhexue], Shanghai renmin chubanshe, Shanghai 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Terseglav, “Budizem in vzhodnoazijska nacionalna verstva,” 153.

slow development of the Chinese nation is that the otherwise efficient political religion is “utterly positivistic and materialistic”, preventing it from attaining the rapid progress achieved by the Christian nations of Europe. At the time of Terseglav’s text, the continuous development of the Chinese state was only a few years away from its radical break. Surprisingly enough, the end of the imperial rule and the establishment of the republic did not resonate in the Slovenian press at the time.

An interesting article was also published in *Edinost* [Unity], the journal of the Slovenian political society in Trieste, on November 13, 1911. Inspired by what was apparently a fairly up-to-date report about the revolutionary movement in China, the article is entitled “Revolts in the Heavenly State”.<sup>24</sup> It describes the despotic and outdated Manchu rule and relates it to the fact that under the Qing dynasty, the Chinese are effectively ruled by “Tatars”. A cultural difference which seemingly makes this rule unjustified is then justified by recalling the long literary tradition of the Chinese, the classics and Confucius. Surprisingly, the argument then goes into the justification for the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty with what can be discerned as Mencius’ theory of the Mandate of Heaven (天命). Presenting it in the wider framework of Chinese culture and Confucianism, the article purports that revolutions are viewed differently in China:

In China, revolutions are not uprisings in the sense of rebellion as interpreted by European laws. The Emperor (or his temporary regent) rules with an absolute power, but the rule over his nation is that of a father over his family. He has to obey the will of the nation, which according to the sacred books is the same as the “will of Heaven”. In China, every revolution is therefore justified by this claim in the sacred books and has the right to overthrow an emperor if he opposes the will of the nation.<sup>25</sup>

Surprisingly, it takes a whole decade after the May Fourth events for the Slovenian press to catch up with the political and cultural changes of post-imperial China and to notice that the role of Confucius has radically changed. In January 1929, the *Jutro* [Morning] newspaper brought out a long article on how “the nationalist government of China

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<sup>24</sup> “Revolte v ‘nebeški državi,’” *Edinost*, 13. 11. 1911, vol. 36, no. 315: I/II.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

threw Confucius' teachings out from schools". "We cannot imagine a more far reaching change in the conservative Far East,"<sup>26</sup> the author comments before proceeding to present the teachings of Confucius, and, for good measure, also those of Laozi and Indian Buddhism. Finally, the article seeks to provide an explanation regarding why the nationalist government decided to undertake such a radical cultural and educational reform:

What happened to Confucius is the same as what had happened to the Kur'an. It has not developed the idea of progress the way Christianity did.<sup>27</sup>

In the idea that Asian religions and Islam alike (Buddhism and Daoism are not even mentioned in this vague claim) are characterized by some kind of innate ahistoricity, we may trace some echoes of the orientalist paradigms of the 19th century. From this viewpoint the westernisation of China and its rejection of Confucianism-based traditions can only be seen as a logical move. On the other hand, however, we can find differing views on how China could navigate the relation between its tradition and Western influences. The article "Chaos," published in *Slovenec* [Slovenian] in April 1930,<sup>28</sup> describes the political crisis in the period of disintegration of central rule and the widespread corruption and usurpation of power. The description of Confucian teachings which follows to present the traditional way of thinking of the Chinese, emphasizes especially the role of family, close social ties and strict hierarchy. On the other hand, claims the article, the Confucian framework causes the "mental horizon of a citizen to be limited to the narrow circle of family, municipality or, at the utmost, province." Because he is not made responsible for the country as a whole, "his feelings for the country are limited". The only one responsible for the country is the emperor, and without him, the state system falls apart into a network of local and family alliances. Because of this rigid system, China was late at adapting to the influx of Western ideas and resisted them with uprisings such as that of the Boxers, the text continues. China was thus in a state of crucial delay compared to Japan, where a "genius emperor"

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<sup>26</sup> All quotes from this article: "2400-Year-Old Traditions Are Falling," *Jutro*, 16. 1. 1929.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> All quotes from this article: "Chaos," *Slovenec*, 11. 4. 1930, vol. 58, no. 84.

managed to “quickly accomplish the assimilation to Western culture, by planting it into the healthy and genuine substratum of the national essence.” It was only with Yuan Shikai that the Western influences were invited, but they were planted in a rootless substratum where all Chinese traditional culture had previously been abolished and destroyed.

Interestingly enough, it only takes few more years for the comparison between Japan and China to turn the other way. Just three years later, a year after the official establishment of the puppet state Manchukuo in the Japanese invaded Manchuria, the same newspaper paints a completely different picture of the peaceful Chinese people, compared to the war-loving Japanese. In the article “Peacefulness – the foundation of the Chinese nation,” we read that the Chinese are the most peace-loving people in the world, due primarily to their moral philosophy, which allegedly teaches them that “all people between the four big seas are brothers”. Moreover, the article claims that “this can be the starting point for working on a new world peace”. The peacefulness is said to be a result of the doctrine of Confucius “which completely matches the teachings of Christian love”, namely “that you should not do to the other what you do not want done to yourself”.

### The global role of Chinese thought

In the article quoted above, the familiarity between the basic premises of the Christian (and thus “Western”) ethics and those of the Chinese is seen as an incentive for building a cosmopolitan alliance toward world peace. The form of this argument is of course hardly a novelty. Asserting an inherent similarity between Chinese and “Western” thought is a philosophical and popular trope which can be traced back as far as the writings of the Jesuits upon their surprising discovery of what they believed was the original monotheistic Chinese religion and related ethics. In these cases, the similarity between Chinese and Western traditions serves as a reinforcement of the belief in the universality of ethics and of religious ideas. On the other hand, Confucianism was also interpreted the very opposite way in Europe – using the example of the traditional Chinese thought as a direct opposite – as an antidote that provides an inspiration for the

“West”. Both attitudes can be found in the writings of the pre-WWII Slovenian press.

The 1901 text by Přemysl Hájek is an example of the latter. Although written during a time of increased anxiety about the Chinese attitude towards the outside world stimulated by the Boxer rebellion, Hájek’s text paints a surprisingly positive image of China. Moreover, it sees China as an inspiration for change in the spiritual and moral collapse of the modern mind.

I dare emphasize the importance of Chinese philosophy and the study of old philosophical views for the modern people of today, who only read the most modern things and are inclined towards the most eccentric views (...) And the results: relieved from “old” views the modern soul roams aimlessly in feverish confusion (...)<sup>29</sup>

In order to save the soul from threats of nihilism, a return to “old books” is the only solution, and Hájek sees his own contribution in presenting the “old books” of the Chinese tradition.

If the view of Chinese philosophy as a remedy for the nihilist disease of the modern “Western” mind may seem surprising for 1901, attempts to look to Asia for inspiration become much more commonplace in the decades after the First World War. The times of political instability in China after the war coincided with the renewed intellectual interest in the role of Asia in the world and in Asian religions and traditions. In the press of the 1920s a lot of journal and newspaper articles focus on what could potentially be called the “Asian issue”, the strategies and ideas regarding how the different cultures of Asia and Europe could or should work together in the new globalised world. The intercultural reality, which seemed more distant and theoretical before the First World War, was becoming more politically prescient, especially in the wake of political changes in China and the rising power of Japan in East Asia. In 1922, an article in *Socialna misel* [Social Thought] posits:

In many ways, the West and the East are coming closer together than ever before in human history, and the task of serious cultural workers is to transcend the great conflicts this clash of two worlds might cause and to seek

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<sup>29</sup> Hájek, “Voditeljki kitajskega duševnega življenja,” 689.

foundations for their future peaceful coexistence on the basis of great common cultural principles.<sup>30</sup>

Confucius is noted in this remark as the main source of Chinese social ethics that the West could also learn from. Similar to the quoted statement in *Socialna misel*, throughout the 1920s the speculation and fear about the developments in East Asia were commonly present in the press, although not all of the suggested solutions were as conciliatory as the quoted one. In 1922, the journal *Tabor* published a translation of the text "Humanity" [Človeštvo] by E. Rade,<sup>31</sup> which discusses the demands by the nations of Asia and Africa for equality:

Now Indians and Chinese (not to mention the Japanese) want to have a say; they want to contribute to and decide on the fate of humanity. We (the West) only have one duty: to draw consequences out of our democratic ideal and give all people the full right to enter the family of humanity with their rich past and their ideals about the future.

The problem, however, is that the size of Europe compared to the great nascent powers of Asia puts the West in a potentially risky position. "Will we be forced to sacrifice our culture and what will we get in return?" asks Rade. What follows is an interesting set of arguments and a predictable conclusion. "People talk about 'yellow peril', but in the East I saw no signs of that danger," says Rade, although the "ideals of the Indians", the "life of the Chinese" and "the inspirations of the Japanese" can lead to such an issue. The ideal of the new common humanity, he then goes on to speculate, does not mean that the West is wrong in relying on the ideals of the Greek, the Roman and the Christian world. We should not replace Greek culture with its Chinese equivalent. If a tolerant or even relativist view might now be expected, Rade on the other hand, is surprisingly straightforward in his final answer to the problem of what we today might call intercultural dialogue:

The new humanity, whose foundations were laid by the world war, will develop under the influence of Western culture and only those who will reach and develop this culture will have a role in the future of the new humanity!

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<sup>30</sup> V. Šarabon, "Največji socialni eksperiment narave," *Socialna misel* 1, no. 10 (1922): 283.

<sup>31</sup> All quotes from this article: E. Rade, "Človeštvo," *Tabor*, 29. 08. 1922, vol. 3, no. 194: 2-3.

Similarly, in 1925, in an article “Asia Is Waking Up”,<sup>32</sup> the journal *Socialist* interprets the uprisings and the political instability in China and in Asia as a whole as a sign that “Asia is waking up” and is prepared to modernize and free itself of the shackles of backwardness imposed upon it by the colonial rule of the European powers. In a more conservative paper, *Slovenec* [Slovenian], the “yellow peril” theme soon reappears. In a 1931 article under the title “Chinese Danger”,<sup>33</sup> the Bolshevik Soviet Union and the different anti-colonial movements in India, Burma, the Philippines, etc., are all summed up as dangerous developments in Asia and are all said to pose a threat to Europe. The more recent topic, however, that has motivated the author of the article, is more specific – the catastrophic floods in the Yangzi river basin. The issues of refugees from these areas and the large population migrations in the wake of these floods have led the author to finish on an alarmist note:

A nation that lives such an unspeakably pathetic life is doubtlessly a great threat. When we read about large-scale invasions of “barbarian” nations into Europe in history we have to be aware that they were led by hunger and economic crisis. In the 13th century Mongols stormed into Europe (...) Who knows if Europe will not face a similar invasion again?

### Frameworks and misunderstandings

When trying to review the different ways in which Confucius and Confucianism were represented in the pre-WWII Slovenian press, the rather small sample of articles and the variety of different newspapers and journals with their different political agendas make it difficult to discern any set pattern. What is, however, clear from even such a small sample is that the views on China and its culture and how they might impact international politics and European culture depended greatly on the political views of the publisher or the author of the text. It is also interesting to note that both views related to the importance of Confucius for China and those related to the impact of Confucian China on Europe seem to follow

<sup>32</sup> “Azija se probuja,” *Socialist*, 12. 06. 1925, vol. 3, no. 26: 2.

<sup>33</sup> All quotes from this article: “Kitajska nevarnost,” *Slovenec*, 02. 10. 1931, vol. 59, no. 223: 1.



a similar general trend. Following the conflicts between China and European powers in the second half of the 19th century and all the way to the Boxer rebellion, the first three decades of the 20th century seem to witness a turn towards a more profound and detailed interest in Chinese thought. Perhaps indirectly aided by the parallel rise of Japan as a serious military and political power and the political weakness of the Chinese state, China is seen as an inspiring locus of philosophical and religious traditions, ethics and universally translatable and/or understandable worldviews. Especially in the 1920s, the complexity of political changes and their impact on the modernisation and Westernisation of Chinese thought are understood with much more refinement than they had ever been previously. For a brief decade after the great political changes in China, the Slovenian press seems to have become aware of the complexities of the relations between Confucius, Confucian tradition and Chinese politics, the temporal dimension of these, and the development of Chinese religions and traditions of thought. A mere decade later, a progressively militarized image of the world in general and Asia in particular (especially after the Japanese invasion of north-east China), seems to have had a regressive impact on the information presented about China and its traditions of thought. The 1930s articles flatten this awareness back into a monolithic and anachronistic portrayal of the Chinese character and culture, where the ancient traditions and current developments seem to follow the same unchanging principles of 'Chineseness'. However mismatched the message to the Yugoslav nationalist cited at the beginning of this paper might seem to the critical reader today, it nevertheless engages both strands discussed; namely, it provides some information about Confucius while using this very information to express a position on the current Yugoslav political situation. The representations of Confucius and Confucianism were reflective of the larger rhetorical frameworks in which they appeared, while also providing some information about this tradition of Chinese thought. The accuracy of the information was of varying priority to the writers – and perhaps also to the readers – of these texts. The inaccuracies and falsifications are nonetheless valuable, since they tell us a lot about the time

and the contexts in which they were written, other texts with which they were in communication with, and the agendas of the writers, the editors, and the journals.

What brought the three unlikely fellows, a Yugoslav nationalist, Confucius and Christmas expectations, into the proverbial bar together might be a mere historical coincidence, the fact that all three needed the drink at the same time, although perhaps for different reasons. The drinks they drank were mismatched, the debate they had was confusing at best and most of what they each said was not entirely true. They also left early, for the next day in their corners of the world they had a war to fight, a tradition to keep and a religion to defend – none of them being exactly successful in doing so. The next time they met, however, they found it much easier to strike up a conversation.

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## A B S T R A C T S

Chikako Shigemori Bučar

*Alma M. Karlin's Visits to Temples and Shrines in Japan*

Alma Maximiliana Karlin (1889 - 1950) was a female adventurer and journalist from Celje, a small town in the Slovenian part of Austria-Hungary and later the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Today in the Regional Museum in Celje, many picture postcards are archived as a part of Alma Karlin's legacy. There are more than 500 Japanese postcards and among them about a hundred showing various religious places: temples, shrines and tombs. Based on her memos on the reverse of these postcards and the Japanese part of her travelogue, her sojourn in Japan is reconstructed. Karlin lived in the centre of the capital city of Tokyo and was acquainted with some Japanese and foreign intellectuals. She visited important and popular religious sights, made short trips to Nikkō, Kamakura and Enoshima. She observed Japanese people's customs and beliefs in relation to their religious and seasonal events in the liberal and peaceful atmosphere of the Taishō era. In the first days of July 1923, after visiting some other older cities and religious sights in the eastern part of Japan, she headed for the Korean Peninsula on a boat from Nagasaki.

*Keywords: Shinto, Buddhism, emperors, Japanese customs, Taishō era, Alma Karlin.*

Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik

*Death in Beijing: Alma M. Karlin's Description of Chinese Funerary Rituals and Mourning Practices*

Alma Maximiliane Karlin (1889–1950) was a world traveller, writer, journalist, and collector from Slovenia. She embarked on an eight-year journey around the world in November 1919, in the course of which she published a series of travel sketches in the *Cillier Zeitung*, a local German-language newspaper. In one of these she reported on funerary rituals and mourning practices in China. After returning to Europe, she was to cover the same topic in her three volume travelogue, published between 1929 and 1933.

In this paper we analyse these two early accounts of Chinese funerary rituals by Alma Karlin. We also consider some material objects linked to mortuary rites and

ancestor worship that she brought back from her voyage in order to gain a broader understanding of her views on Chinese attitudes towards the dead. Supported by a close reading of material and textual sources on Chinese funeral practices, we compare her treatment of the subject with other accounts written by Slovenian missionaries to China in the early twentieth century. In addition to discussing certain personal elements in these accounts, we attempt to place them in their socio historical context.

*Keywords: Alma Karlin, Chinese funerary ritual, ancestor worship, spirit paper money, missionaries, newspaper Cillier Zeitung, travelogue Einsame Weltreise.*

Kang Byoung Yoong

*A Death in the Photo: Understanding the Korean Empire through Alma Karlin's Black and White Photograph of the Funeral Procession in front of Daeannmun Gate*

In June 1923 Alma Karlin (1889-1950) first stepped onto the Korea peninsula at Busan. The peninsula was in turmoil, gradually occupied by Japan by means of 'cultural rule'. From Busan, Karlin travelled through Seoul and Pyongyang before leaving to China. Like other tourists, she packed her suitcase with authentic souvenirs of Korea. There are thirty-nine photographs in total that Karlin brought from Korea to Slovenia. Five of them are funeral themed photos, and in one of the five one can discern the poignant story of a Joseonian woman's death amid a troubled Korean Empire. The photo attracted global interest as it was exhibited not only in Korea, but Slovenia and the US.

In the present paper, I scrutinise the details of the photo and attempt to deepen the understanding of early twentieth century Korea as it is observed in the photo. The paper explores one photo with a focus on historical particularities in Korea including architecture, the history of the palace, the signboard on the gate, and the relations of the royal family. It confirms a new theory regarding the image, that it is a scene from the funeral procession for Empress Sunmyeong, who died tragically as a Crown Princess during the era of the one and final Korean Empire.

*Keywords: Alma Karlin, Joseon dynasty, Hotel du Palais, Empress Sunmyeong, Deoksugung Palace, Daehanmun Gate, funeral, funeral procession, Korean Empire.*

Klara Hrvatin

*Alma Karlin's Musical Miniatures: Japanese Musical Instruments from the Collection of Alma M. Karlin and their Relation to Religious Music*

The following article serves as an introduction to one of recent history's great travellers, Alma Maximiliane Karlin (1889–1950), and the music-religion related objects she brought back to Europe from Japan, where she stayed from the beginning of June 1922 to July 1923. Not numerous, but in comparison to similar objects brought from other countries, the largest in number, the collection shows Karlin's preference for simple instrument miniatures such as models or miniatures of the instruments *shamisen*, *koto*, *yakumo-koto*. Also interesting and indirectly related to Japanese music are objects such as *ukiyo-e* postcards and small coloured prints on postcards, depicting themes related to Japanese traditional instruments, small bronze *tengu* mask and others.

In order to better define those instruments and find a possible relation of these instruments and their religious practices to Karlin's life, the article focuses as well on the Karlin's non-classical travelogue, Slovenian translations of *Einsame Weltreise: Die Tragödie einer Frau* (Lonely Travel, 1929), in particular where she depicts her travel and stay in Japan. From her collection of instruments and her writings, the author searches how and to what extent Karlin developed a sense of, or was devoted to certain instruments which express some relation to Shinto or Buddhist religious practices.

*Keywords:* Alma M. Karlin, Japan, Buddhist instruments, Shinto instruments, yakumo-koto, hyōshigi.

Helena Motoh

*Confucius, a Yugoslav Nationalist – Representations of Confucianism in pre-WWII Slovenia*

The aim of the present paper is to analyse the representations of Confucianism in early 20th century Slovenia and reflect on the role of external factors – historical and political events of the time, Yugoslav internal and external political developments, social and economic changes, etc. – in these interpretations of Confucian tradition. In the virtual absence of books on the topic, the main source for assessing what the representations of Confucianism were like in the period will be journal and newspaper articles (more than 500 texts in a vast array of genres). The material analysed is limited by the time of publication to encompass the last two

decades of the 19th and the first four decades of the 20th century, and only publications published in Slovenian and on the territory of today's Slovenia are used. The topic of the paper, early 20th century representations of Chinese thought, has not been explored extensively in scholarly works. By an analysis of the 1884–1941 representations of Confucianism and Confucius in Slovenian press, the present paper aims to partly fill this gap, while also exploring the outside factors which had an impact on the type of discourse produced about Confucius and Confucianism in the period.

*Keywords: Confucianism, Confucius, representations, Slovenia, early 20th Century.*



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## P O V Z E T K I

Chikako Shigemori Bučar

*Templji in svetišča, ki jih je Alma M. Karlin obiskala na Japonskem*

Alma Maksimiljana Karlin (1889–1950) je svetovna popotnica in pisateljica iz Celja, mesteca v Avstro-Ogrski in poznejši Kraljevini Jugoslaviji. Danes hrani Pokrajinski muzej Celje več kot 500 ja-ponskih razglednic iz njene zbirke, okrog sto med njimi pa jih prikazuje templje, svetišča in druge znamenitosti, povezane z religijami na Japonskem. Na osnovi Alminih zapiskov na teh razglednicah in japonskega dela njenega potopisa lahko rekonstruiramo njeno bivanje in opazovanje religioznih obi-čajev. Živela je v strogem središču Tokia in spoznala nekaj Japoncev in tujcev, ki so jo poučili o japon-ski zgodovini, kulturi in običajih. Obiskala je pomembne in priljubljene znamenitosti ne samo v Tokiu, temveč tudi v Nikkōju, Kamakuri in Enoshimi. Opazovala je lokalne religiozne običaje ob različnih praznikih v sorazmerno liberalnem in mirnem vzdušju v obdobju Taishō. V prvih dneh julija 1923 je zapustila Tokio in po obiskih krajev v zahodnem delu Japonske končno zapustila deželo, ko je z ladjo odplula proti Koreji.

*Ključne besede: šinto, budizem, cesarji, japonski običaji, obdobje Taishō, Alma Karlin.*

Nataša Vampelj Suhadolnik

*Smrt v Pekingu: kitajski pogrebni rituali in navade žalovanja v opisih Alme Karlin*

Alma Maximiliane Karlin (1889–1950) je svetovna popotnica, pisateljica, novinarka in zbirateljica iz Slovenije. Na osemletno potovanje okrog sveta se je odpravila novembra leta 1919. Med potovanjem je v lokalnem časopisu *Cillier Zeitung* v nemškem jeziku objavljala članke pod skupnim naslovom Popotne skice Alme M. Karlin. V enem teh člankov je opisala tudi pogrebne navade in prakse žalovanja na Kitajskem, po povratku domov pa je to temo vključila tudi v tridelni potopis, ki ga je objavila med letoma 1929 in 1933.

V prispevku bomo analizirali omenjena zgodnja opisa kitajskih pogrebnih navad, ki jih je zapisala Alma Karlin. Za poglobljeno razumevanje njenega pogleda v kitajske običaje v odnosu do mrtvega in smrti bomo analizirali tudi posamezne materialne predmete, povezane s pogrebnimi rituali in čaščenjem prednikov, ki jih

je prinesla s potovanja. Na osnovi temeljite analize materialnega in besedilnega gradiva bomo njen pogled na kitajske pogrebne navade primerjali z opisi slovenskih misijonarjev iz začetka 20. stoletja, pri čemer bomo obravnavali določene osebne elemente, hkrati pa bomo tovrstne opise poskušali umestiti v širši družbenopolitični kontekst.

*Ključne besede: Alma Karlin, kitajski pogrebni rituali, čaščenje prednikov, obredni duhovni denar, misijonarji, časopis Cillier Zeitung, potopis Einsame Weltreise.*

Kang Byoung Yoong

*Smrt na fotografiji: razumevanje korejskega cesarstva skozi črno-bele fotografije Alme Karlin, ki prikazujejo pogrebni sprevod pred vrati Daeannmun*

Junija 1923 je Alma Karlin (1889–1950) prvič stopila na korejski polotok pri Busanu. Korejski polotok je tedaj preživel težke čase, postopoma ga je s pomočjo »kulturne vladavine« zavzemala Japonska. Iz Busana je Alma Karlin potovala skozi Seul in Pjongjang, nato pa naprej na Kitajsko. Kot drugi popotniki je tudi ona napolnila kovček s pristnimi korejskimi spominki. Med njimi je v Slovenijo prinesla tudi 39 fotografij. Pet od teh fotografij prikazuje prizore, povezane s pogrebi, in na eni od njih lahko prepoznamo pretresljivo zgodbo o smrti joseonske ženske v težavnih časih za korejsko cesarstvo. Fotografija je pritegnila zanimanje v globalnem merilu, saj ni bila razstavljena le v Koreji, ampak tudi v Sloveniji in ZDA.

V članku analiziram podrobnosti te fotografije, da bi prikazal poglobljeno razumevanje Koreje v zgodnjem 20. stoletju, kakršno lahko vidimo na tej fotografiji. Članek proučuje to fotografijo s poudarkom na zgodovinskih posebnostih Koreje, ki se navezujejo na arhitekturo, zgodovino palače, napisne table na vratih in povezave s korejsko vladarsko družino. V njem se potrди nova teorija glede omenjene fotografije, in sicer da prikazuje prizor iz pogrebnega spreveda za cesarico Sunmyeong, ki je tragično preminila kot kronska princesa med obdobjem enega in zadnjega korejskega cesarstva.

*Ključne besede: Alma Karlin, dinastija Joseon, Hotel du Palais, Cesarica Sunmyeong, palača Deoksugung, vrata Daehanmun, pogreb, pogrebni sprevod, korejsko cesarstvo.*

Klara Hrvatin

*Glasbene miniature Alme Karlin: Japonski glasbeni instrumenti iz zbirke Alme M. Karlin v povezavi z religijsko glasbo*

Članek predstavlja glasbene miniature z religijsko konotacijo iz zbirke ene najpomembnejših popotnic novejšje zgodovine Alme Maximiliane Karlin (1889–1950), ki jih je po vsej verjetnosti pridobila oz. prinesla iz Japonske, kjer je bivala od začetka junija 1922 do julija 1923. Zbirka teh predmetov ni številčna, v primerjavi s podobnimi predmeti, ki jih je prinesla iz drugih držav, po katerih je potovala, pa je najobsežnejša. Izraža Karlinino predanost preprostim miniaturam, modelom ali miniaturnim glasbilom, kot so dvostrunsko glasbilo *yakumo-koto*, *shamisen* in *koto*. Prav tako lahko v zbirki najdemo z osrednjo temo članka neposredno oziroma ikonografsko povezane predmete, kot so lesorezi, razglednice, barvni odtisi malega formata, fotografije in miniaturna bronasta maska *tengu*.

Da bi bolje opredelili glasbila in njihovo povezavo z religijo ter prav tako mogočo povezanost teh z življenjem Karlinove na Japonskem, se članek osredinja na neklasične potopisne prispevke, predvsem na slovenska prevoda dela *Einsame Weltreise: Die Tragödie einer Frau*, zlasti na mesta, na katerih Alma Karlin oriše svoje potovanje in bivanje na Japonskem. Iz njene zbirke glasbil in njenih zapisov iz Japonske poskuša avtorica ponazoriti, kako in koliko je Karlinova razvila občutek za glasbila in glasbene vsebine in naklonjenost do njih, kar potrjuje povezavo s šinto ali budističnimi verskimi vsebinami.

*Ključne besede: Alma M. Karlin, Japonska, budistična glasbila, šintoistična glasbila, yakumo-koto, hyōshigi.*

Helena Motoh

*Konfucij, jugoslovanski nacionalist - reprezentacije konfucijanstva v Sloveniji pred 2. svetovno vojno*

Namen članka je analizirati reprezentacije konfucijanstva v slovenskem prostoru v zgodnjem 20. stoletju in premisliti vlogo zunanjih dejavnikov – sočasnih zgodovinskih in političnih dogodkov, zunanje- in notranjepolitičnih dogajanj v Jugoslaviji, družbenih in ekonomskih sprememb itd. – v teh interpretacijah konfucijanske tradicije. Glede na to, da na to temo tedaj skoraj ni bilo knjižnih izdaj, so bili glavni vir za to raziskavo članki v revijah in časopisih (več kot 500 člankov v širokem razponu žanrov). Analizirano gradivo je omejeno s časom izdaje na zadnji desetletji 19. stoletja in prva štiri desetletja 20. stoletja, uporabljene pa so le obja-

ve v slovenskem jeziku, ki so bile izdane na ozemlju današnje Slovenije. Tematika članka v znanstvenih delih še ni bila podrobneje raziskana. Z analizo reprezentacij Konfucija in konfucijanstva med letoma 1884 in 1941 želi članek zapolniti to vrzel, ob tem pa raziskati tudi zunanje dejavnike, ki so vplivali na ta tip diskurza, ki je nastajal o Konfuciju in konfucijanstvu v tem obdobju.

*Ključne besede: konfucijanstvo, Konfucij, reprezentacije, Slovenija, zgodnje 20. stoletje.*

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Doc. dr. Kang Byoung Yoong je diplomiral in magistriral na univerzi Myongji v Južni Koreji. Doktorat je opravil iz ruske književnosti na moskovski državni univerzi (Moscow State University). Od leta 2013 poučuje na Oddelku za azijske študije Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Njegovo znanstvenoraziskovalno delo zajema sodobno korejsko književnost, ustvarjalno pisanje in diasporsko literaturo. Je tudi eden bolj priljubljenih pisateljev v današnji Koreji in je do zdaj objavil že deset knjig v korejščini. Leta 2016 je v soavtorstvu objavil tudi Ko Uno-vo poezijo v slovenščini.

## KLARA HRVATIN

Klara Hrvatin, PhD in Humanities, Osaka University, Japan; works as a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Asian Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Her research focus is mainly on Japanese music and music aesthetics (Tōru Takemitsu), the Sōgetsu art movement, cross cultural research in music, ethnomusicology, cultural history and art related topics. Currently she is involved in a research project East Asian Collections in Slovenia and a joint international study "A Survey on the Music and Rituals in East European Countries".

Klara Hrvatin, doktorica humanističnih znanosti univerze v Osaki, dela kot lektorica in raziskovalka na Oddelku za azijske študije Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani. Področja njenega raziskovalnega zanimanja vključujejo japonsko glasbo in glasbeno estetiko (skladatelj Tōru Takemitsu), japonska povojna umetniška gibanja, medkulturne raziskave na področjih glasbe, etnomuzikologije, kulturne zgodovine in umetnosti. Trenutno sodeluje pri projektu Vzhodnoazijske zbirke v Sloveniji in mednarodnem projektu »A survey on the music and rituals in East European Countries«.

## HELENA MOTOH

Helena Motoh is a Senior Research Associate at the Science and Research Centre Koper. She has a BA in Sinology and Philosophy and defended a PhD in Philosophy with a dissertation on the philosophical dialogue between China and Europe during the Enlightenment period. Her research focuses on intercultural philosophy, the history of Asian-European contacts and contemporary Chinese political discourse.

Helena Motoh je višja znanstvena sodelavka pri Znanstveno-raziskovalnem središču Koper. Diplomirala je iz sinologije in filozofije in doktorirala iz filozofije z disertacijo na temo filozofskega dialoga med Kitajsko in Evropo v obdobju razsvetljenstva. V svojem raziskovalnem delu se posveča predvsem temam medkulturne filozofije, zgodovine stikov med Evropo in Azijo in sodobnemu kitajskemu političnemu diskurzu.





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