

# DINNER DIPLOMATS

A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL HIERARCHIES AND CONNECTIONS IN AND  
AROUND THE NORWEGIAN COMMUNITY IN SHANGHAI, SEEN THROUGH  
A DINNER ARRANGED IN 1924



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**Vår 2022**

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Dinner Diplomats: A study of the social hierarchies and connections in and around the Norwegian Community in Shanghai, seen through a dinner arranged in 1924

May 2022.

## Forord

Først og fremst må mine veiledere Camilla Brautaset og Ines Prodöhl. Uten deres gode råd og innspill hadde ikke dette prosjektet blitt fullført. Jeg har lært veldig mye om jeg selv som *historiker* av å ha dere som veiledere. Det samme må sies om masterseminaret på *tvers av grenser*, der professorer og medstudenter alle bidro med å forme min oppgave.

Vil også takke de ansatte ved Spesiallesesalen i Nasjonalbiblioteket som var veldig hjelpsom med privatarkivene. Det samme går ut til bildesamlingen.

Jeg må også takke venner og familie som har alltid vært tilgjengelige og villige til å høre på mine lange monologer og frustrasjoner i stressende tider. Av familie vil jeg da spesielt nevne mine foreldre, mine søsken, min tante Berit Bae, og min morfar, som alle har vært konstante supportere. Vil også takke IKA Hordaland for å holde meg ansatt og tilpasse seg mine behov gjennom studietiden. Av mine venner vil jeg takke Fredrik Kommedal for lange kveldsturer, Dag Sverre Vassenden for lange prater på kvelden, og hele *KOBAC*. Til slutt må jeg takke min firbente assistent, som alltid fulgte med når jeg skrev analysekapitelene.

## Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven bruker en middag holdt av den Norske Generalkonsulen i Shanghai, Nicolai Aall, for den Norske Ministeren i Beijing i 1924 som ett eksempel på hvordan og hvor det Norske samfunnet i Shanghai stod i 1924. Det er sett gjennom privatarkivene avlevert av Generalkonsulen, som gir ett unikt innsyn i hvilke valg og prioriteringer som ble gjort når denne middagen skulle forberedes.

Middagen blir analysert først gjennom å gå gjennom hva som ble bestilt, hva den offisielle timeplanen var, hvordan middagen ble organisert, og hvor og hvorfor den ble holdt der den ble holdt. Gjennom dette får vi innsyn i hva nordmennene i Shanghai hadde lyst å presentere seg som, og hvem som affilierte seg med nordmennene. Det blir etablert at fransk eksklusivitet og luksus er ett tydelig tegn på at dette er en gruppe nordmenn ville være nær, men det var ingen franskmenn ved middagen. Det var hovedsakelig, briter, amerikanere, skandinavere og kinesiske gjester som var representert ved middagsbordet, dette viser hvem det norske samfunnet kunne fritt nå ut til.

Etter dette går analysen inn i selve bordplanen ved middagen. Først diskuteres det hvilke nordmenn som arrangørene prioriterte, og noen de ikke prioriterte. Her poengteres det at Norge prioriterte den økonomiske eliten, forhold mellom individer og posisjonerte enkeltmennesker for å klatre den sosiale stigen. Dette er gjort gjennom å analysere spesifikke grupper av gjester, delt inn etter nasjonalitet, ekteskap, profesjon eller utdanning. På denne måten blir det tydeliggjort hvilke prioriteringer det norske samfunnet gjorde, i forhold til andre grupper, og internt.

Oppgaven konkluderer med å samle analyse kapitlene inn i to kategorier. Den første er tilknytning, som oppsummerer hvor viktig det var å bli sett i lys av andre, og motivasjon, som oppsummerer hvorfor hvem ble invitert, ikke ble invitert og de som ikke godtok invitasjonen.

## English Abstract

This thesis uses a dinner arranged by the Norwegian Consul General in Shanghai, in honour of the Norwegian Minister to China and Japan in 1924, as a way to analyse the social hierarchies and position that the Norwegian Community were in at the time. This has been made possible by the private archives from the consul general, giving the thesis a unique perspective into the priorities and motivations that informed their decisions.

The dinner is analysed by going through what was ordered, what the official itinerary was, how it was organized and where it was hosted. Examining why this was done and what it represented, reveals who the Norwegian officials wished to be affiliated with, and who wanted to be affiliated with them. Judging by the dinner, the Norwegians were attracted to French exclusivity, but the guests present were not French. At the dinner table, there were mostly American, British, Chinese, and Scandinavian guests present, which displays the reach and social connections of the Norwegian Community.

The seating plan is also analysed to find out the priorities of the organizers. Here it is pointed out how the Norwegians prioritized economic development, private relationships all while positioning guests to be social climbers. This is done by analysing certain groups, sorted by nationality, marriage, profession, or education. This displays the prioritizes and motivations the Norwegian officials, and community had, which explains internal social structures, and the ones outside of the community.

It concludes by connecting the threads, into two specific themes which summarized why the decisions made were made. These are affiliation, used to describe how important it was to be regarded in the context of someone else, and motivation, which summarizes why people were invited, or not invited, or did not accept the invitation.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

### 1.1: Shanghai Gentlemen

In 1984, "*Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*"<sup>1</sup> opened with a set piece in 1935's Shanghai. It starts with the smashing of a gong which introduces Kate Capshaw performing a Chinese version of *Anything Goes*. Harrison Ford enters in a sharp white suit, to trade mysterious diamonds with mischievous Chinese mobsters. After a tense conversation over fancy drinks, our hero is poisoned by the Mobsters, which leads into a shootout. Indy escapes through a window and jumps into a fancy car in a narrow street, where he encounters a kid driving the car, rickshaws, food markets and crashes through rows of Chinese lanterns. The sequence ends with our heroes climbing aboard a freight plane secretly owned by the mischievous Chinese mobsters. It ends with the mobsters maniacally laughing to themselves as they have tricked our hero into what will certainly be his death.

This is not a thesis about Indiana Jones, but this 12-minute sequence in a movie from 1984, summarizes the stereotypes when the movie was made, and in the 1920-30s, and today. The image of the sharply dressed Shanghai gentleman, amid a crowd of unseemly nightclub characters, armed with a cocktail and charming smile, is still prescient in many modern depictions of this era of Shanghai's history.<sup>2</sup> And while all stereotypes are based in some sort of truth, this image has been clouded by imperialist and colonial thinking about the place, period, and people of Shanghai.

Shanghai was a hub for cocktail parties and beautiful clothing during the 1920s. For many it was the epitome of the roaring twenties, but this was not all it was. There was never any universal life for the people of the city. The partygoers in tailored suits were the most visible in the media outside of Shanghai, both then and now, but most of these people were travellers, and/or expatriates in the city.<sup>3</sup> Shanghai was one of the earlier examples of a truly multicultural city, which in turn affected its architecture, culture, politics, history, and people fundamentally.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Spielberg, "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom," (USA: Paramount Pictures, 08.05 1984), Motion Picture.

<sup>2</sup> For more details see: Lisa Cheng Chu-chueh Bernstein, "Revealing/reveiling Shanghai : cultural representations from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries," (2020).

<sup>3</sup> Christian Shi Lu Aubrun Charlotte Henriot, "The population of Shanghai (1865-1953) : a sourcebook," (2019).

<sup>4</sup> Wen-hsin Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007). s. 9-27.

The role as the largest trading port in China attracted myriads of businessmen, entrepreneurs, and foreign officials. These were the ones that served as the foundation for the Shanghai gentleman stereotype we see today. They heard of the “Paris of the East”<sup>5</sup>, read about the “world’s longest bar”<sup>6</sup>, some came for the city’s infamous culture of gambling and legal alcohol<sup>7</sup>. This image and reputation of the city that was sold and created for western audiences. Westerners mental image of Shanghai was as an exotic and fashionable playground for gambling and drinking, to them it was the very definition of a modern city.<sup>8</sup>

Behind this image sold to western elites, the roaring twenties in China was a period of civil war. The Republic of China had been founded in 1912 and from 1916 to 1928, the country was stuck in a complicated civil war now called the Warlord Period.<sup>9</sup> The Civil war continued from 1928 up until 1949, now between the Nationalist Guomindang party and the Chinese Communist Party, it was interrupted only by a ceasefire during the Second Sino-Japanese war.<sup>10</sup> Shanghai itself was a hub of conflict. It was a place where labour movements were born, and ideological purges were held.<sup>11</sup> It was also city people went to as refugees and a city where people eventually left as refugees.<sup>12</sup>

There were still some nuanced contemporary representations. In Norway, for example, one of the many people, it attracted was famous poet, Nordahl Grieg, who during the late 1920s was commissioned to write a travelogue about China. This was before his more famous works, and it is considered as a precursor to his later anti-war and anti-Nazism works. It was collected as “*Kinesiske Dage*”, and in it he describes his first experience of Shanghai as seeing warships from four different countries that he can see from his cabin window, then moving on to the world’s longest bar, walking in streets of barbed wire, and then again describing the many rumours and gossip that was shared over a world class drink.<sup>13</sup> He repeated the

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<sup>5</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*, ed. The University Press (Shanghai: The University Press, 1935). p.1.

<sup>6</sup> «Clubland in Shanghai» North China Herald (N.C.H.). November 24, 1923.

<sup>7</sup> J. Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai* (W. W. Norton, 2020). P. 98-99.

<sup>8</sup> Leo Ou-fan Lee, *Shanghai modern : the flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999). p. 74-76.

<sup>9</sup> Pei-kai Cheng, Jonathan D. Spence, and Michael Lestz, *The Search for modern China : a documentary collection* (New York: Norton, 1999). p. 233-266.

<sup>10</sup> Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, *The Oxford illustrated history of modern China*, First edition. ed. (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2016). P. 163-190.

<sup>11</sup> Wasserstrom, *The Oxford illustrated history of modern China*. P. 139-148

<sup>12</sup> Helen Zia, *Last boat out of Shanghai : the epic story of the Chinese who fled Mao's revolution*, Ballantine Books trade paperback edition ed. (New York: Ballantine Books, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Nordahl Grieg, *Kinesiske dage* (Oslo: Gyldendahl Norsk Forlag, 1927).

image of the Shanghai gentlemen, while adding some of the harsher realities as contrasts to that lifestyle.

In the middle of this he names a few names, and in some editions, even pictures taken by and of Grieg are used. There is however one of these names that stand out. Grieg wrote: "*First and foremost, The Senior Consul, the Settlements highest authority, the Norwegian Nicolai Aall, one of the few that have kept a cool head during all the hostilities over here.*"<sup>14</sup> Which made me ask the simple question upon reading it the first time. Why was a Norwegian the highest authority in Shanghai?

## 1.2: Purpose and goals

The question of why Nicolai Aall became the person Grieg wrote about has a quick answer and a long one. The quick answer is that Aall was the Senior Consul, which by contemporaries was considered to be among the highest position any foreigner or local could achieve in Shanghai.<sup>15</sup> The title was given to the longest serving member of the Consular Corps in a city or diplomatic area.<sup>16</sup> Remaining in a position like this in Shanghai was not an easy task, and how Aall managed to do this requires a longer explanation.<sup>17</sup>

Aall was the original entry point to Shanghai for me, but as this thesis developed, he became a smaller and smaller figure. While trying to answer why and how Aall became the highest authority in Shanghai, I realised to understand this, I had to understand his community. This led the project to rather ask the question: why and how was the Norwegian community positioned in Shanghai?

Approaching this question led me to previous works written about Shanghai's history. Some of these informed my approach. The main one is James Carter's 2020 book *Champion's Day: The End of Old Shanghai*.<sup>18</sup> It depicts the events of November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1941, in Shanghai. It focuses on three different events on that day,

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<sup>14</sup> Grieg, *Kinesiske dage*. «Først og fremst The Senior Consul, settlementets høieste myndighet, nordmannen Nicolai Aall, en av de meget faa som har klart at holde hodet rolig under al ophisselsen herute.»

<sup>15</sup> James Porter Davis, "Shanghai: A City Ruled by Five Nations," *Current History* (1916-1940) 24, no. 5 (1926), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/45335730>.

<sup>16</sup> Nicolai Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai," *Nordic Journal of International Law* 27, no. 1 (01 Jan. 1957 1957), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1163/157181057X00113>, [https://brill.com/view/journals/nord/27/1/article-p214\\_11.xml](https://brill.com/view/journals/nord/27/1/article-p214_11.xml).

<sup>17</sup> Details in Chapter 2.

<sup>18</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*.

the funeral of Liza Haroon, the birthday of Sun Yat-sen and the titular Champions Day horserace. These events are juxtaposed with what would happen only one month, the Japanese occupation of Shanghai's International Settlement, effectively ending the era of the city's history that this thesis focuses on.

What makes this book special however is in Carter's own words *"my role as an historian, over the past couple decades now is writing about China and the West but trying to do it from a more individual perspective and not from a state-to-state perspective"*<sup>19</sup>. To clarify, in Champions Day he uses the first two thirds of the book as background leading up to the Champions Day itself. He tracks the individuals in his book in detail and focuses on their individual stories that lead them to being where they were on that day. The book uses one specific day as a turning point which led to substantial changes in the life of individuals, communities, and Shanghai itself.

After reading and researching archival material, mainly from Aall's own private archive, I eventually realised I had enough research material to focus on a similar event where most of the Norwegian community was present. This was a dinner of honour held on Monday, January 21<sup>st</sup> in 1924. It was held for Minister<sup>20</sup> Johan Wilhelm Michelet, who was visiting Shanghai on his way back home to Norway.

This dinner became a unique perspective on the contemporary social scene and served as a way to further understand the social scene in Shanghai. The project developed in to being more and more interested in the social scene, and hierarchies of Shanghai. Which led to the research question being:

*How can a detailed analysis of a dinner party held in 1924, contribute to understanding the social hierarchies, relationships, and individuals of the Norwegian high society of Shanghai?*

### 1.3: Structure

This project is expansive, and due to the scale and number of people involved requires a lot of contexts. This begins already in this chapter, which in its latter half delves into the research literature used for all the different subjects brought up in this

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<sup>19</sup> James Carter, "Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai | James Carter," interview by Jan Berris, *National Committee on U.S.-China Relations' YouTube channel*, 2020, <https://youtu.be/YTQBJAUVQ1w?t=2721>.

<sup>20</sup> Also referred to as Sendemann.

thesis. It also establishes the primary sources used and the methodical approach that has been taken to approach them.

Chapter two focuses on the necessary historical context. It sets up details, terms, and events, preceding or following the dinner, as well as some of the major players in this thesis.

Chapter three starts interrogating the dinner itself, but before doing this on a personal level, it will establish most of the hard facts. This is done by looking at receipts, the booking of a venue and planning of the dinner, as well as establishing what we know happened at the dinner and how this was covered in local press. By looking at these details it establishes reasons for what was important for the organizers, and what this informs us about the larger social hierarchies.

Chapter four begins with examining the itinerary Michelet had leading up to the dinner. This is used as an example of who and what was prioritized by Norway's highest authority in China. The chapter interrogates the reasons why he prioritized them, and categorizes these reasons. It also establishes examples who did not get included in the itinerary and an example of how someone could not be as favoured in the community. From there the chapter seeks to establish how specifically the Norwegians, the largest nationality present were represented at the dinner. Specifically using the seating plan. It categorizes certain groups and tries to understand why they were seated where they were.

Chapter five builds on the conclusions and categories of four, but now introduces the international guests at the dinner. It begins doing this by establishing some of the numbers and statistics of the dinner, and what this tells us of the transnational diaspora within the room. It interrogates and establishes how subjects such as marital status, profession and language capabilities informed certain table settings. It investigates who represented which nation, and how many there were from each of the present nationalities. It is especially in understanding why specific people were invited, how that informed social connections and placing them within a social hierarchy. The chapter concludes by summarizing the conclusions reached in chapter four and five, while laying the groundwork for chapter six.

Chapter six deals with the absentees, those we either know were invited, or were considered to be in the same social circles as other guests at the dinner. It serves as

a contrast to chapters four and five, showing what it would mean if some of those were present, were not, and the other way around. It does this by looking into four distinct categories which serve as strawmen for. These are international relationships, outranking, social standing, and practical reasons. Together these weave a more complicated view of what the actual connections in Shanghai were in 1924, and further establishes just where the limits of Aall and the Norwegian official's social standing went. Looking at those who were not there helps us understand what it meant that other people were there.

The conclusion serves as the connective tissue of the project and will summarize major points and add them into a historical context. It combines the many established threads, into two specific themes which summarized why the decisions made were made. These are affiliation, used to describe how important it was to be regarded in the context of someone else, and motivation, which summarizes why people were invited, or not invited, or did not accept the invitation.

In the Appendixes are supplementary material including a few transcriptions of sources which are heavily used in the project, as well as a table detailing every guest's full name, nationality, profession affiliation and marital status. Then there are different versions of the table plan, one with full names, another with professions, one by nationality and finally one which is sorted by marital status. These appendixes are supplementary, but to further understand and conceptualize the dinner party I recommend that they are used by the reader as a helpful tool in what can quickly become quite tedious and detailed without it.

There are also larger scale versions of the pictures in the final pages, which have been digitized by the National Library of Norway.

#### **1.4: Theoretical foundation**

Writing about a dinner in Shanghai quickly brings up the question of where people met and socialized. The multicultural reality of the dinner became overly complex fast. It was hosted in China, in a French club, with a Norwegian guest of honour, with a German wife seated next to an American, and they spoke English.

In other words, this has to be a transnational history. This is because the transnational approach to history is uniquely qualified to track contact and interactions between communities. It can acknowledge the foreign contributions to a society or group by highlighting the things that happened in-between cultures or nations. Its goal is to highlight what happened over the borders of nations and focus on the relations people made despite these borders. It does not mean it ignores them; it uses them actively to further understand the interconnectedness of the people who lived in these nations.<sup>21</sup>

For this thesis, the transnational connections are largely over a dinner table. It does not have to be a direct conversation between two people from different nations, it could be what food was served, music was played, which people were good friends, and who were enemies. Diplomats are the most visible part of this, it is a given that they connect with other cultures. For the Consuls, who had one foot in the diplomatic world and one in the economic, in some respects the Consul was not even representing their own nation.<sup>22</sup> These multicultural roles and backgrounds are complicated and makes it necessary for something like the transnational approach to be used. By using it, it is possible to analyse the diplomatic role the Consul had, as well as the economic role, the relationship with their home country, their social life and private life, to build a complicated and hopefully more honest representation of what their life was like. Especially in Shanghai, which is a city that has been described as one with a system of transnational colonialism by historian Isabella Jackson.<sup>23</sup>

When approaching the dinner another concept closely tied to transnationalism became relevant, namely *Contact Zones*. This relatively recent term was defined by literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt in a keynote address from 1991, which was written down in an article the same year.<sup>24</sup> She defines contact zones as social settings and situations where cultures meet, and often clash. She focuses on a power imbalance in these situations. This concept has helped contextualize the dinner as more than just a dinner and looking at it as a meeting point of cultures.

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<sup>21</sup> Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational history* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013). P. 1-12.

<sup>22</sup> Saunier, *Transnational history*. P. 41-43.

<sup>23</sup> Isabella Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

<sup>24</sup> Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession* (1991), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25595469>.

The research question brings up the concept of social structures. This is a term defined by Simon Middleton as “... *the relationships between different social groups and the significance of those relationships and groups in historical processes and change*”<sup>25</sup>. This is often attributed or compared to Marxist histories, which is what dominated the field after World War two, but this read was criticized as purely material. The criticism was that these structural studies largely ignored minorities. After this research was expanded to be more inclusive, but also more expansive.

This project uses Middleton's definition and combines it with discussing social hierarchies in Shanghai. This is a field that is often touched upon in Shanghai studies, there have been texts written about hierarchies in the working class, and how they were prioritized above all else.<sup>26</sup> The clubs of Shanghai have also been discussed as a social structure.<sup>27</sup> As well as the colonial institutions in the city.<sup>28</sup> These will become clearer in chapter 2.

Approaching the archives made me take a microhistorical approach. Historian Thomas Cohen described it in 2015 as a method of “...*close reading, looking for nuances in words, actions, and material conditions.*”<sup>29</sup> All of these methods have been used in approaching the source material, which will be more evident in the analysis chapters.

Microhistory is a broad field and has been used for many things. There have been analyses of communities and dinners, which this thesis takes inspiration from.<sup>30</sup> Especially the analysis of dinners and the social structure surrounding them. This form of microhistory uses diaries, letters that discuss the event itself, this is juxtaposed with the real-life facts and research. To use a specific example: in Penelope Hughes-Hallett's book, *The Immortal Dinner*, from 2004, she uses a dinner where several famous poets and artists in London in 1817 all attended. She used diaries and letters about the event to build a fuller understanding of the cultural elite, bohemian types at the dinner, one half is about their life, and the other half is about

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<sup>25</sup> Simon Middleton, "Class and Social Structure," *Oxford bibliographies* (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199730414-0081>, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199730414/obo-9780199730414-0081.xml#>.

<sup>26</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. p.88, 183.

<sup>27</sup> Dennis Askeland, *The Neutral Enemy - A study of Norwegian representation and diplomacy in China 1937-1947*, Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap (Universitetet i Bergen, 2018). P.35.36.

<sup>28</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. P. 18, 123, 127.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas V. Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 47, no. 1 (2017), <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-3716578>, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-3716578>. p. 5-7.

<sup>30</sup> Sigurður G. Magnusson and Istvan Szijarto, *What is microhistory? : theory and practice* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2013). p. 67-72.



contemporary London.<sup>31</sup> This book has a similar structure and subject, making its approach inspirational.

Microhistory tries to get to the core of what happened, but as Icelandic microhistorian Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, has stated it is “... *impossible to place oneself fully in the mind of someone who lived long ago*”<sup>32</sup>. In other words, every source is ambiguous in microhistory. Going down to a personal or individual level shows the cracks in the archival material in a much more visible way than a grand scale analysis would. Especially when writing about events or potential conversations the fundamental problem is that these do not leave records.<sup>33</sup> Making it impossible to recreate a true representation of what happened. A solution to this problem as presented by Magnússon is to take an emic approach.<sup>34</sup> To use this thesis as an example, Magnússon proposes to take what mattered to the subject for analysis, in this case the Norwegian community, and make the analysis about why this mattered to them.

Microhistory is also uniquely equipped to use both social and cultural history in conjunction with each other.<sup>35</sup> The cultural can explain the social. This is done in this text by focusing on what mattered to these individuals and groups and by attempting to understand how they responded to what happened too and around them. This will help further understand the larger structures, events, and understandings that later research has provided over the years. The narrower the subject matter gets, the more complex the study will become, as there are potentially infinite new aspects to introduce into the analysis.

## 1.5: Literature

### Finding the Central Figures

The most central individual in this project is Nicolai Aall. And given the lofty introduction Nordahl Grieg wrote, you would expect there to be written more about him than there actually is. He is not a presence at all outside of the Norwegian

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<sup>31</sup> Penelope Hughes-Hallett, *The Immortal Dinner: A Famous Evening of Genius and Laughter in Literary London, 1817* (Random House, 2012).

<sup>32</sup> "Do you know what microhistory is all about?," 2017, accessed 01, 2022, <https://youtu.be/OBSvBWJcWxI>.

<sup>33</sup> Cohen, "The Macrohistory of Microhistory." p. 44-45.

<sup>34</sup> Sigurður G. Magnússon and Szijarto, *What is microhistory? : theory and practice*. P. 103-106.

<sup>35</sup> Sigurður G. Magnússon and Szijarto, *What is microhistory? : theory and practice*. 104-105.

literature, and there he is usually delegated to a footnote.<sup>36</sup> Aall's own bibliography consists of a single article, which lays out his views on his time in China, with a focus on the time he spent as the Senior Consul and within The Mixed Court of Consuls.<sup>37</sup> More on what this means in Chapter 2. *Other than that, there* are a few interviews with him, but after he retired his presence seems to have disappeared publicly.

The largest resource on Aall's life is in the book *Møter med Kina*<sup>38</sup>, where Frida Brende Jensen wrote a chapter on his life and work in Shanghai.<sup>39</sup> The chapter focuses on the daily life that both Aall and the Consulate had, by looking at the individual, instead of the system he existed in. It does this by establishing his workday, social life, other passions, and lasting legacy. All themes and subjects that will be brought up later in this text. The chapter was my first encounter with, Aall and is therefore an important piece in forming my opinions.

*Møter med Kina* has been a central book for this project. Without going through every single chapter in full detail, I will lay out why and how the book was useful. Larger concepts such as the Sino-Scandinavian bank, General Munthe, the Norwegian perception of China as well as the history of Norwegians in China, are all laid out in detail in this book. It has also been an important book in tracking down and adding detail to some of the Norwegians guests at the dinner party.

There have also been a few master theses that also uses Aall as a central figure. Jens Tepstad wrote the closest to what I am trying to do in his thesis from 2015.<sup>40</sup> It is built on letters by Aall, from the National Archives. It is focused on the high levels of diplomacy, where Aall is one of the central figures, which led to Norway surrendering its extraterritorial rights. It is several steps removed from the dinner in 1924, but it does follow the diplomatic process that eventually led to the end of many of the guests that will be mentioned in this text's time in Shanghai.

For filling out the details on the Norwegian side, the most concise work available is Olga Medvedeva's PhD thesis *Norwegians Employees of the Chinese Customs*

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<sup>36</sup> Ivar Neumann and Halvard Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005* (Pax, 2005). s. 242, 272.

<sup>37</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai."

<sup>38</sup> Camilla Brautaset, Malin Gregersen, and Karina Hestad Skeie, eds., *Møter med Kina: Norsk diplomati, handel og misjon 1890–1937*, 1st ed. (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018).

<sup>39</sup> Frida Brende Jensen, "En Shanghai Gentleman," in *Møter med Kina : norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890–1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset et al. (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018). s. 75–88.

<sup>40</sup> Jens Einar Fauskanger Tepstad, "Norwegian extraterritoriality in China. A study of how and why Norway abolished its extraterritoriality in China" (Master Master, The University of Bergen, 2015).

*Service*, which has been a priceless resource.<sup>41</sup> This project compiled a database of all Norwegians that worked within the Chinese Customs, as well as detailing their working, private and social lives. For the database alone it has been important, but many points brought up about specifically the private and social scenes have been built on in this project to further understand how the Norwegians in Shanghai functioned as a community.

There is another published work that tries to establish the Norwegian community in Shanghai, namely the popular history book "*I Yangzidragens rike*."<sup>42</sup> It chronicles the history of Norwegians in Shanghai from the 1860s, up to 1949, when the CCP<sup>43</sup> came into power, and the reopening of the city in the 1990s. The book has garnered some controversy, as it among other things has no clear source work and a very limited bibliography.<sup>44</sup> It must have been extensively researched, but as there is no way to trace anything back to where it came from everything has to be read with a pinch of salt. It does however detail the organizations and businesses Norwegians in China had, and by extension also details lives and careers of many individuals in this text.

There are other works used to understand different nationalities at the dinner. For the Danish community, Christopher Bo Bramsen's book on the life of Vilhelm Meyer has been the main source.<sup>45</sup> The same book mentions some other figures from other nations, but there are no central works detailing the lives of people from every single nationality.

## Ministries and Consulates

The role of the Consulates was originally more central to this project than it is now. They were the employers of many of the present guests, but over time the project developed into something that focused more on the social scene, rather than their professional lives. This not to say that the professions of the people are unimportant, this is not the case at all, but that they have speaking taken the backseat.

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<sup>41</sup> Olga Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927" (University of Bergen, 2017).

<sup>42</sup> Stein Seeberg and Gunnar Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år* (Oslo: Schibsted, 2000).

<sup>43</sup> Chinese Communist Party.

<sup>44</sup> The authors criticizing this were Rune Svarverud and Elisabeth Eide. From: Ingvild Helle, "Med verdifull last. Norske rederiers deltagelse i frakt av kinesiske arbeidsmigranter i perioden 1895-1930" (Master The University of Bergen, 2012). s. 14.

<sup>45</sup> C.B. Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China* (Taylor & Francis, 2013).

To understand the Norwegian side of things there are two works that are especially central. One is the previous National Archivist<sup>46</sup>, Reidar Omang's two-volume collection simply called *Norsk Utenrikstjeneste*.<sup>47</sup> The other is Ivar Neumann and Halvard Leira's book *Aktiv og Aventende*.<sup>48</sup> These two have a lot in common, they are both commissioned by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry for the 50th and 100rd anniversary, they both use the same archival sources, and *Aktiv* even goes as far as citing Omang's volumes from the 1950s as their only predecessors in writing about the Ministry.<sup>49</sup> The books are different in their approaches. Omang is less scientific and sees himself as an objective source, he backs this up with archival material, but eventually also lets stories from the hallways or even gossip slide into his book. Neumann and Leira are far more methodological in their approach and depicts the daily working life of many figures within the ministry as well as establishing the larger trends and changes that happened over the one hundred years the Ministry had existed. Neumann criticized the ministry for editing the book upon its publication, especially the 1990s section, the Ministry disputed this.<sup>50</sup>

These books stand out as special as they are simply about the ministry and not Norwegian foreign policy, which has a much thicker bibliography. Ivar Neumann described the importance of this in an article critiquing the 6-volume, "*Norwegian Foreign Policy's History*"<sup>51</sup> which has been described as the central resource for reading about Norwegian foreign policy.<sup>52</sup> In his critique Neumann among other things pointed out how Norwegian historians are too interested in the politics surrounding the Ministry, rather than focusing on the institution itself.

This insider view was central to a book Neumann later wrote that also was quite inspirational for this project, *At Home with the Diplomats*.<sup>53</sup> This is a modern ethnographic study of the Norwegian Foreign Ministry and its day-to-day events and life. It humanizes the ministry, diplomacy, and diplomats by showing their faults aside

<sup>46</sup> Riksarkivar, served from 1961 to his death in 1964

<sup>47</sup> Reidar Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste I : Grunnleggende år* (Oslo: Gyldendahl, 1955). & Reidar Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste. II : Stormfulle tider : 1913-1928* (Oslo: Gyldendahl, 1959).

<sup>48</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905-2005*.

<sup>49</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905-2005*. p. 33.

<sup>50</sup> Lin Beate Gabrielsen and Kristin Vold, "UD redigerte om bok," *NRK*, 29.08.2005 2005, <https://www.nrk.no/kultur/ud-redigerte-om-bok-1.540463>.

<sup>51</sup> The one most relevant for this is volume 2: Odd-Bjørn Fure, *Mellomkrigstid : 1920-1940*, vol. B. 3 (Oslo: Universitetsforl., 1996).

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Iver B. Neumann, "Norsk utenrikspolitikks historie - en kritikk," (1999), <https://doi.org/oai:nb.bibsys.no:999916828234702202> URN:NBN:no-nb\_digibok\_2015050809055, [https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb\\_digibok\\_2015050809055](https://urn.nb.no/URN:NBN:no-nb_digibok_2015050809055).

<sup>53</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats : Inside a European Foreign Ministry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012).

their successes. The book establishes the modern diplomat's life, but also informs the diplomatic life that came before.

The literature on the Norwegian Foreign Ministry is important to understand the framework Aall and Michelet worked within, by leaning and building on this it is easier to understand the larger implications and decisions they made in Shanghai.

Looking further than Norway there is more diversity. This project has not really utilized literature about different Foreign Ministries, but different Consular systems, and the role of a Consulate. This was done to simplify the amount of literature used.

Some of the books that I read early on was Aryo Makko's two books from detailing the Swedish-Norwegian Consulates. "*I främmande hamn*"<sup>54</sup>, from 2015 which he wrote together with Leos Müller and "*European Small States and the Role of Consuls in the Age of Empire*"<sup>55</sup>, which was released in 2019, and written only by Makko. Both are interested in the underlying role of a Consulate.

*European Small states* shares many of the same themes present in a master thesis on the Swedish-Norwegian Consulate in Shanghai by Ingrid Myrstad. It tracks the origins of the Consulate in Shanghai.<sup>56</sup> They do this by looking at the Consulate with an economic perspective and they also interrogate the role of Consuls as a tool in western soft-imperialism or secondary imperialism. They also warn against this being too exaggerated. They both point out that the nature of what they name soft imperialism, is sometimes too soft to notice.

This small state imperialism is a term with older roots than these examples. An early example was Philip D. Curtin who wrote about Consuls as a westernizing influence, comparing Consulates to the Hanseatic League or the East India Company, in his book from 1984.<sup>57</sup> He was specifically interested in Hong Kong when he wrote about China.

Informal empires were originally defined in an article by John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson in 1953.<sup>58</sup> This thesis, however, uses the term as it was defined by

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<sup>54</sup> Aryo Makko and Leos Müller, *I främmande hamn : den svenska och svensk-norska konsulstjänsten 1700-1985* (Malmö: Universus Academic Press, 2015).

<sup>55</sup> Aryo Makko, *European Small States and the Role of Consuls in the Age of Empire* (Malmö: BRILL, 2019).

<sup>56</sup> Ingrid Myrstad, "Generalkonsulatet i Kina - En studie av en svensk-norsk utenrikstasjon" (Master Masteroppgave, Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap, 2009). s. 91.

<sup>57</sup> Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural trade in world history* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

<sup>58</sup> John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *The Economic History Review* 6, no. 1 (1953), <https://doi.org/10.2307/2591017>, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2591017>.

Gregory A. Barton and Brett M. Bennett in 2010 as “... *that one nation’s elite or government exerted extraterritorial legal control, de facto economic domination, and was able to strongly influence policies in a foreign country critical to the more powerful country’s interest*”<sup>59</sup>. Sweden-Norway, or Norway or Sweden was never this in China, but they were closely affiliated with those who were, making them an informal part of an informal empire.

Makko grounds this concept in works written by Dutch historian Ferry de Goey who wrote about how western powers were convinced that the Consulates were central in foreign policy and commerce, describing the informal empire of the west as a family of nations.<sup>60</sup> Most importantly for this project is how de Goey describes the power a Consulate from this family had in a nation that was outside this western family, was far greater than in a country that also was part of the family of nations. In short, he underlines that a Norwegian Consulate in Paris, held far less significance than the one in Shanghai did.

These themes and subjects have long lines and large bibliographies, so this project has been selective as it does not directly concern it. These are utilized as themes, and as a way of looking at the Consulates and the foreign citizens of Shanghai. They were not formally colonizers or imperialist, but they held the same power as these positions did, even the smaller nations, could hold important positions that maintained the imperialist realities of Shanghai.

There are also voices opposed to reading all Consular history as westernization. Roy Bin Wong is one of the voices that opposes this in his book “*China Transformed*”<sup>61</sup>. He points out how economic theories and research regarding the decline of China as a nation, has showed that the decline halted or stopped during the 1800s. His specific criticism is of the Treaty Ports, and he points to them being humiliating to the Chinese, arguing that this is a western read on Chinese politics, and that the Chinese

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<sup>59</sup> Gregory A. Barton and Brett M. Bennett, "Forestry as Foreign Policy: Anglo-Siamese Relations and the Origins of Britain's Informal Empire in the Teak Forests of Northern Siam, 1883–1925," *Itinerario* 34, no. 2 (2010), <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0165115310000355>, <https://www.cambridge.org/core/article/forestry-as-foreign-policy-anglosiamese-relations-and-the-origins-of-britains-informal-empire-in-the-teak-forests-of-northern-siam-18831925/1BF1BC8DA28DC93BDD9075817EE96CD5>. P. 67.

<sup>60</sup> Ferry de Goey, *Consuls and the Institutions of Global Capitalism, 1783–1914* (Pickering & Chatto).

<sup>61</sup> Roy Bin Wong, *China transformed : historical change and the limits of European experience* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997).

were not as occupied with the western influence in these ports as western history suggests.<sup>62</sup>

## Shanghai Lifestyle

There has been a recent surge in studies of Shanghai and its International Settlement.<sup>63</sup> There are many reasons for this, one often seen is that Shanghai is more accessible than the rest of China culturally to typically western academics. The Concessions played a key role in that. But within the city and International Settlement studies of the large Jewish population<sup>64</sup>, its role as cultural and political cradle for larger political and literary movements, and even its early cinematic history is all examples of angles found within Shanghai studies. To put it mildly, the lives, peoples and systems of Shanghai were unique and complex, allowing for a myriad of different studies.

Therefore, a Microhistorical approach is useful. Other than Champion's Day by James Carter there are a few microhistorical studies about this period in Shanghai's history. The most famous one is "*The Last Boat out of Shanghai*" from 2019 by Helen Zia, which is about the Chinese refugees, focusing on children of middle to high class, fleeing Shanghai on the eve of the communist taking power in Shanghai.<sup>65</sup> This project uses substantial amounts of interviews combined with heavy academic research to build complex biographies of their lives. While it focuses on the 1930s and 1940s, it informs the Chinese side of a Shanghai in a vivid way, as well as being an example of how one could write something on a microhistorical level about a group of people.

Shanghai history however is especially important and in focus for this project. Some of the books used here are "*Shanghai Splendour*"<sup>66</sup> from 2007 by Wen-hsin Yeh and "*Shanghai, Past and Present*"<sup>67</sup> published in 2014 and written by Niv Horesh. Both are economic histories. Horesh tells the longest story, from beginning to end, and is focused on large trends seen over decades than over days, it is a particularly reliable

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<sup>62</sup> Wong, *China transformed : historical change and the limits of European experience*. s.21.

<sup>63</sup> Joshua A. Fogel, "The Recent Boom in Shanghai Studies," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 71, no. 2 (2010), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40783634>.

<sup>64</sup> Irene Eber, *Voices from Shanghai : Jewish exiles in wartime China* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

<sup>65</sup> Zia, *Last boat out of Shanghai : the epic story of the Chinese who fled Mao's revolution*.

<sup>66</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*.

<sup>67</sup> Niv Horesh, *Shanghai, Past and Present: A Concise Socio-Economic History, 1842-2012* (Brighton: Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2014).

source of the colonial institutions that existed at the time. It has been used to inform larger trends in Shanghai.

In *Splendour*, Yeh takes a smaller approach, focusing on the middle-class workers<sup>68</sup> and the bourgeois of Shanghai. It does this by using companies such as the Wing-on Department Store or the Bank of China as examples that contextualize the class relationship and realities of working-class Shanghai. It is mostly based on archival material and magazine articles from the time. The book maps the cultural, economic, and urban transformation that happened within Shanghai, around the same time of this thesis, making it a central perspective on trends surrounding the dinner.

A cultural perspective on Shanghai is used by Leo Ou-fan Lee in their book *Shanghai Modern*.<sup>69</sup> This focuses on the late 1920s up to 1949 and focuses on the role of Shanghai as a cultural hub, especially the Chinese culture. It establishes several centrepieces in the cultural life of the city and informs what was popular and why.

On how the international part of Shanghai functions, many works have been used, but Isabella Jackson's *Shaping Modern Shanghai* is a standout.<sup>70</sup> The book focuses on the ruling body of the International Settlement, the SMC, and analyses their rise and fall. It uses the term Transnational Colonialism to describe Shanghai and does not simplify any actors in the city. The book has been used to understand the wider political structures of Shanghai.

## 1.6: Printed sources and Internet resources

In finding details about the dinner and its guests, newspapers have been a central source. They have mostly been utilized to track down specific details on individuals. This was the case for the Consular body, whose members in 1924 I was able to reconstruct by using the North China Herald (N.C.H.) database. Which has recently been made available through the Internet Archive. BRILL has also digitized the Herald and its daily edition the North China Daily News, which is accessible behind a paywall. These two were the newspapers that were read by the foreigners who

<sup>68</sup> She calls them «Petty Urbanites» Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P. 31.

<sup>69</sup> Lee, *Shanghai modern : the flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945*.

<sup>70</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*.



attended the dinner, making them important sources.<sup>71</sup> They were both English language newspapers, and was very pro-settler, it was not a neutral publication.<sup>72</sup> This as well as local newspaper clippings Aall preserved in his private archives, has been used in this thesis.

On the Norwegian side of things enormous amounts are digitized and readily available through the National Library. Here many details of Norwegian nationals, as well as a few interviews have been used to flesh out how Norway viewed Shanghai and its Norwegian community. Several different newspapers have been used.

Accessing the Chinese perspective on the dinner has proven more difficult. This is due to the current pandemic, language barriers and lack of material. This does not mean that it was not attempted. An example is the 4 Chinese women's magazines published by the University of Heidelberg.<sup>73</sup> This is an extensive database, that sadly does not overlap with the dinner in 1924, but if one were to focus on the Chinese women's perspective on the dinner, it would be a fruitful resource. It was side-lined for this project as there were too few Chinese women at the dinner, making this thesis lean on other literature to understand their perspective. Here book such as Jung Chang's *Big Sister, Little Sister, Red Sister*, have been used to flesh out the understanding of the lives of prominent Chinese females, even though it does not directly refer to those who were at the dinner.<sup>74</sup>

There are other databases that have been used extensively in this project. *The Hathi Trust* and the website *VirtualShanghai.net* have made substantial amounts of local and contemporary resources from Shanghai available. This includes several directories, who is who books, maps, pictures, and films. Academics lead both projects, the Hathi trust being a non-profit with contributions from over two hundred libraries and universities, and the Virtual Shanghai project is led by historian Christian Henriot, who also shows up in the bibliography. There is also the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies (NIAS), whose Asia portal has given me access to substantial amounts

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<sup>71</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. p. 65.

<sup>72</sup> Christopher A. Reed, *Gutenberg in Shanghai : Chinese Print Capitalism, 1876-1937* (Vancouver, CANADA: UBC Press, 2004). p. 137-139.

<sup>73</sup> "Chinese Women's Magazines in the Late Qing and early Republicam Period," University of Heidelberg, 2022, accessed 12.12, 2021, <https://uni-heidelberg.de/womag/index.php>.

<sup>74</sup> Jung Chang, *Big sister, little sister, red sister : three women at the heart of twentieth-century China* (2019).

of academic writing on Asia as well as access to some newspaper databases, like the North China Daily News.

How these resources were used was inspired by how historian John Tosh defined three categories describing what newspapers can be used for in history.<sup>75</sup> Tosh's first category, names newspapers as a prime source for political and social thoughts at the time. This has been done by using newspapers from Norway to exemplify the perception Norway had of Shanghai and its Norwegian community. The same can be said about how the Herald exemplifies the foreign view on Shanghai. Tosh's second category is also connected to the N. C. H. as it gives us insight in the newspapers the people attending the dinner party were reading at the time. Tosh uses the phrase "day-to-day"<sup>76</sup> to describe what his second category can tell us about the past. Tosh's last category is regarding investigative journalism, which for the papers available sadly go no further than an interview.



Picture 1: Nicolai Aall seated at his desk at the Norwegian Consulate in 1922.

<sup>75</sup> John Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2010). s. 93-98.

<sup>76</sup> "Day-to-day" Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition*. s. 97.

## 1.7: Archival material

The Archival material for this thesis is kept in two different institutions, Aall's already mentioned private archive is currently at the Norwegian National Library and the official archive from the General Consulate is at the Norwegian National Archives.

The Consular archive is sorted in a typical dossier system and in accordance with the protocol in 1924. This means that files were sorted by a case number and with a corresponding yearly journal showing us all the cases in one place.<sup>77</sup> From the archival material available today, the regulations were largely followed, with some exceptions. I will circle back to this in Chapter 4.

The Consular archives have been used to track the events surrounding the dinner in detail. They will be most used in Chapter 3, to lay out what the receipts, bookings and letters that were necessary to arrange the dinner. The material is exclusively professional and official. There are also gaps in the archives, the reason for this is largely human error. This might be because the rules and regulations in practice, were very distant in the Shanghai Consulate. Materials could disappear based on who was filing them.

It should also be mentioned that the archives themselves had a turbulent journey. They were merged with the Beijing legation's archives in the early 1930s, hastily evacuated during WWII and what was left behind after this was left in a pile in the attic, where it was rediscovered in 1945. The national archives do not have a complete overview for what was lost.<sup>78</sup>

This leads into an issue that is relevant to both archives. Namely the question of why something has been preserved in an archive. John Tosh discusses this among other things, pointing out that archives are not created for historians, but as a way of supporting governments.<sup>79</sup> If we apply his writing on archives and public records to those used in this thesis from the National Archives, we can see that everything regarding issues with personnel, unofficial official business, and many responses to

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<sup>77</sup> Gunnar I. Pettersen, UD - Arkivnøkler 1906-1924-1937, (<https://www.arkivverket.no/utforsk-arkivene/departementene/utenriksdepartementet>: Arkivverket, 2020).

<sup>78</sup> "S-2611 - Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina," Arkivverket, 2012, accessed 03.02, 2021, <https://www.arkivportalen.no/entity/no-a1450-01000000006010?ins=RA>.

<sup>79</sup> Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition.* p. 108-110 & 117-118.

letters or invitations have not been preserved, as the Norwegian Government would function very well without preserving.

Questioning this preservation bias<sup>80</sup>, brings us to the Private Archive. Per definition they are not official sources, which means there are no rules for what is preserved.<sup>81</sup> To use material used for this thesis as an example, the folder containing most of the material regarding the dinner planning, consists of roughly 200 documents, receipts, seating plans, menus, and invitation, of those 200, there are 56 that specifically refer to the dinner in 1924. Making it the event that has the largest amount of archival material preserved by a sizeable margin. This could imply a few things. Firstly, it implies that the 1924 dinner held an exceptional value over the others for Aall, potentially something of which he was especially proud. Secondly it could be a logistical reason, it could be sent home earlier than the rest and other dinner plans were thrown out. Thirdly it could be pure coincidence.

The reality of the private archive is that we do not know why what is there has been preserved. There are a few reasons, some parts of it were meant for publication, mainly his many manuscripts, which he tried to get published during the 1960s.<sup>82</sup> These have a clearly defined reason for being preserved, but by talking to the National Library regarding what they knew about the history of the private archive itself they explained that it was delivered in two batches. The first was given to the Norwegian Foreign Ministry in 1971, which was still within Aall's lifetime, the second batch was given to the Foreign Ministry in the late 1970s, and stayed there until 2010, when the archives were collected at the National Library.<sup>83</sup> The second batch was presumably given by Aall's family after his death, as this batch has no reference at all to being published, this is where most of the archival material for the dinner is. If this is the case, this batch is the least edited by Aall.

While these sources are a unique chance to discuss the dinner, it also forces most of it to be from the perspective of Aall, as he is the one that has produced most if not all the materials from the dinner.

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<sup>80</sup> A term used by Tosh to summarize the issues of why something has been preserved in an archive. Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition.* P. 108-110.

<sup>81</sup> Astri Andresen et al., *A Gripe Fortida* (Bergen: Det Norske Samlaget, 2015). s. 55-56.

<sup>82</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordning\_Eske 1/3/ & Ubehandlet\_171/Eske\_2/3/.

<sup>83</sup> E-mail received 11.03.2022.

The many manuscripts, diaries, letters, and notebooks are also hard to approach as objective sources. John Tosh touches upon this, referring to material specifically created in private by an individual, and how these were written without thinking of a wide readership.<sup>84</sup> He especially points out that if the diaries were meant for Aall's eyes only, it would greatly inform his private thinking and processes, he also points out that keeping diaries updated requires time and effort, and they are most often filled with missing days and hurriedly scribbled down details, Aall's diaries are guilty of this. The manuscripts are the outlier, but these are in many different editions and with edits in the margins, making them more private than intended. Still, the manuscripts were heavily edited, and omitted certain details, an example is that Aall never names anyone he had an uneasy relationship by name but does give more than enough context clues for a reader to figure out who he is referring to.

There is also the photo collection at the National Library, which is currently in a separate branch of their archives. If you were to just to judge the archives by the meters they take up on a shelf, this is the biggest part of the private archives by far. Photos as a source are very different to the classical paper archives, they are fundamentally subjective, as you never truly know what is behind the camera, either if it is the intentions of the photographer or the literal things behind the camera.<sup>85</sup> There are large amounts of pictures, and the amount of them grow exponentially by each year Aall had a camera, meaning there are 5 times as many pictures from 1934 than 1924. It has been a crucial resource in understanding connections and relationships over time, as well as a way to understand the daily life. It also seems like most of the pictures were delivered post-mortem.

The pictures have been an important part of this project, and while far from all of them has been used here, they are well worth seeking out for someone interested in the subject matter. There are pictures from dinner parties, warzones, skiing trips, old ruins, and many parties, it is a unique insight to the Norwegian community in Shanghai, as well as Shanghai as a whole. These pictures have also in many ways informed the approach to the subject of this thesis, as writing about the dinner has in many ways been like painting a picture of it, the details are not always the same, but

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<sup>84</sup> Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition.*p. 106-107.

<sup>85</sup> Tosh, *The pursuit of history : aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history. Fifth Edition.* 255 -277.

it does give an impression of the larger community. The pictures in this thesis are digitized by the National Library. There are hopefully more to come eventually.

These realities of the archives are similar to what historian Ludmilla Jordanova meant by her term “the cult of the archives”<sup>86</sup>. What she aims to describe with this term is the way historians tend to view the archives as an untapped source of knowledge, but that this often gets the upper hand of the project and author. She claims that there is a perception of the archives as more honest and personal, and that this is just an illusion of the historian. She enforces a critical view of all archival material, and to not blindly trust their legitimacy. In her words: “*The entrancing stories in the archives are quite distinct from the historical arguments in which they will be deployed*”<sup>87</sup>.

At the end of the day what we really know is that these documents have been preserved for close to a hundred years, despite travelling across the world and being preserved in non-optimal conditions and systems before ending up at their respective archives. Jordanova noted similar things, describing the archives as never complete, and that is essential to understand their organization, state, and creators in both a sympathetic and critical light.<sup>88</sup>

## 1.8: Terminology

Place names used in this thesis are the modern ones, meaning I will write Beijing and not Peking. This is according to the Pinyin system, which is the official way of Romanising Chinese names. However, some of the Chinese names in this thesis are more complicated. As this is based on western source material, some of these are only referred to by their English name or a romanization of their Chinese one. The romanization would be from the Wade-Giles system, which was in use up until the 1950s. This is unfortunate.

There are also street names and addresses. Most of these have been renamed since 1924, but to avoid overcomplication I have chosen to use the contemporary street names.

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<sup>86</sup> Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in practice* (London: Arnold, 2000). s.186-189.

<sup>87</sup> Jordanova, *History in practice*. s. 187.

<sup>88</sup> Jordanova, *History in practice*. s. 185-191.

## Chapter 2: Historical Context

### 2.0: Introduction

This chapter will not establish all the details surrounding the dinner in 1924, as this is too complicated to completely explain in this chapter. It will begin by establishing some the individual whose perspective is used on the dinner, Nicolai Aall's life up until 1924, it will establish where Aall came from literally, motivationally, educationally, and economically. This is not to make Aall the focus, but to understand what lens this thesis is looking at its subject. After Aall, Shanghai and its unique history and position in 1924 will be explained, mainly as a way to further understand the lives of the guests attending the dinner. It will do this by looking at the city's own culture, nationalities, communities, meeting places and history.

### 2.1: Nicolai Aall

Nicolai Aall was born in Kongsberg on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1883. His father was Nils Christian Joachim Stockfleth Aall, a conservative Christian, who according to Aall had little time for his children's upbringings.<sup>89</sup> Nicolai Aall did not attend his father's funeral in 1918. His mother outlived his father, by a long time, she was buried on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1940, better known as the day Nazi-Germany invaded Norway. When Aall wrote of her, she is always portrayed in a much brighter light than her husband. This is important as Nicolai would also often write long letters to her during his time in China. Aall stated in the 1970s: *"If I have any good abilities in my life, I inherited them from my mother."*<sup>90</sup>

Aall's relationship to his parents became something of the past when he applied to the Norwegian Military Academy<sup>91</sup> in 1902. In the Military Academy he went from Aspirant in Stavern to Cadet in Oslo by 1903. He then got a job working as a second lieutenant at Fredriksvern in 1904 to 1905. After this he spends the next 4 years studying law in Oslo. He summarized his student experience as *"... not much reading of law done in those days – but there was not much of that the other years either."*<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/ – Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio, 1942..

<sup>90</sup> "Hvis jeg har noen gode egenskaper i livet, så har jeg arvet dem fra min mor» from NB: Ubehandlet \_171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/ Essentials I, 1970-tallet s. 42.

<sup>91</sup> Krigsskolen.

<sup>92</sup> "Noe svært megen lesning av jus blev det ikke til i de dager - men det blev det forresten ikke de andre år heller» from NB: Ubehandlet \_171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/– Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio, 1942 s. 19.

During these years there is no secret that he was privileged enough to be funded well and lived happily. He even mentions having a servant in 1906. This privileged upbringing was what was typical and to a degree is still typical of a diplomat. It matches what Iver B. Neumann argued, when he stated that some amount of privilege, nepotism, and a position in the higher strata of society was a prerequisite or at least large benefit to diplomats.<sup>93</sup> If diplomats in this time period were not from these higher classes, they would need academic training and eventually be lifted to a bourgeois status by being given orders. To bring it back to Aall, he for example received the St. Olav's Order several times and the Chiao Ho Order, or Order of the Golden Grain, a respectable prize the local Shanghai government awarded foreigners and nationals of note, in 1923.<sup>94</sup> It was also awarded Høhnke, who will be circled back to in Chapter 4.<sup>95</sup> These were important as they lifted your status and opened the doors to the Norwegian bourgeois.

Despite this, Aall claims he stumbled into diplomacy, claiming he suddenly started showing a talent for it after accepting a position as secretary for the foreign ministry in 1911.<sup>96</sup> This seems like editorializing, and a softening of real events, but there are no other details given on how he got this secretary job. He quickly accepts the first available job abroad, which happened to be as secretary to the Norwegian Consul in London, from 1912-1915, before quickly becoming secretary to the Norwegian Legation in London from 1915-16. Then has a shorter stint and promotion in New York from 1916 to 1918 as Vice-Consul. After WWI he spent 2 years back in London as secretary.

Aall's career in Shanghai started on October 6<sup>th</sup> 1920, with him taking over from the acting Consul-General from Sigurd Steckmest, who had held the job temporarily since 1919.<sup>97</sup> The Consulate in Shanghai had had temporary Consuls General since 1917, and the Consulate was not in the best condition in 1920, Aall is quite harsh on his first days in Shanghai, naming Steckmest as unwelcoming and the Consulate he led as barely functional.<sup>98</sup> Steckmest and Aall, ended up being colleagues for the largest part of their time in China, with Steckmest being at the Consulate in Hong

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<sup>93</sup> Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats : Inside a European Foreign Ministry*. P. 147-148.

<sup>94</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927." P. 98-99.

<sup>95</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0158/, "Hsu Yuan to Aall" 06.09.1924.

<sup>96</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio - Norge, 1942 s. 39-42.

<sup>97</sup> Utenriksdepartementet, Oversikt over norske, ambassader, konsulater, interessekontor mm i årene 1906-2001, (regjeringen.no, 2001).

<sup>98</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio - China, 1942, p. 15-17.



Kong. They would eventually end up in a quite complicated situation with Minister Ludvig Aubert in the early 1930s, most of this is detailed Aall's private archive, and it is an interesting subject, that I do not have time to delve into here.<sup>99</sup> Steckmest attended the dinner and will be mentioned again in Chapter 5.

The Shanghai Aall arrived to was entering its golden age when Aall arrived, but he was not very prepared for it in 1920. Employing diplomatic representatives with no experience in China and elsewhere, was normal, in 1920 and in 1938, most had been employed by the ministry, and often from positions far from China. This was the case for both Aall and Michelet, it will be touched on in more detail in Chapter 6.

Aall claims he spent these first years mostly studying and building up his social and professional network. An example of this is when he was the temporary Charge d'Affaires in Beijing from January to 1923. Which is Minister Michelet's job, but he was currently in Tokyo to clean up a small scandal regarding Aall's counterpart in Japan.<sup>100</sup> This period is important for this thesis, mainly as it has a comprehensive diary, detailing close to every day for at least half a year, but also as a way to look at Aall's relationship with Michelet.

Aall does not put down a specific date or turning point for when his early years in Shanghai ends, but by 1926, he is established. This thesis assumes that Aall was in a period, where he still had to prove himself to his superiors, which is an important context for everything he has written about it. Perhaps the dinner in 1924 was when Aall went from the new kid in town, to being a more authoritative figure.

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<sup>99</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #1/1/- Minster Aubert & Steckmest, 1930-1935

<sup>100</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923.



*Picture 2: Nicolai Aall with Chiang Kai-shek, presumably between 1926-1930.*

## **2.2: Shanghai, 1924.**

Shanghai in the eyes of the world, during the 1920s and 30s, was not as a very family friendly place. Some of this has been mentioned in the introduction, but this is an important subject that needs some fleshing out to understand why foreigners came to live there. In Norwegian media the city was often referred to as a greedy and profit centred town. Which led some to believe the city held promise and profit, by 1930 Nicolai Aall himself took out a bulletin in the Norwegian newspaper *Nationen*, which simply read “DON’T COME TO CHINA!”<sup>101</sup>. This was in reference to the early days of the great depression, and Aall in a pre-emptive move declared that China was not a safe haven where you were guaranteed work and success.

This belief did not come out of thin air. In the early 1930s many foreign magazines and the like wrote about the Shanghai Boom, some going as far as saying your

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<sup>101</sup> *Nationen* 29.05.1930 «REIS IKKE TIL KINA»

money could be tripled in the city.<sup>102</sup> In Norway however the largest amount of information about China came through missionaries.<sup>103</sup> There were also a few China travellers, some had even been previous citizens of Shanghai, that returned to Norway to share pictures and stories, this began shortly after the reception in 1924. Nordahl Grieg can be grouped in with this class. The Norwegian view of Shanghai was no doubt very Orientalist, but there were many who viewed it as a city of opportunity. Some of the people that benefited well from their time in China will be detailed in later chapters.

The rest of the world was quite familiar with Shanghai as the Paris of the Orient, which hosted the world's longest bar, as mentioned in the introduction. Shanghai was internationally and within China sold on the promise of a truly modern city, this image was promoted by the westernizing economic elite that had established themselves in Shanghai, who either deliberately or accidentally transformed and shaped the city they had settled in.<sup>104</sup> This group was referred to as the Shanghailanders, a pun on the word Highlander.<sup>105</sup> This group of wealthy, largely British, male citizens, practically lived beyond Chinese law and seemingly without any attention paid from their own nations or governments. When referring to the high society in the research question it is the Shanghailanders that are referred to.

The Shanghailanders were allowed to live their lifestyle due to a series of treaties and concessions that have been collectively dubbed the Unequal Treaties.<sup>106</sup> This began in the middle of the nineteenth century, and it led to several different European powers having treaties with the scales being very much in the western nations favour. The first of these was the Treaty of Nanjing, which among other things granted the United Kingdom extraterritorial rights in China. It opened five so called treaty ports to China, the one in Guangdong<sup>107</sup> was already established, but quickly the ones in Xiamen, Fuzhou, Ningbo, and Shanghai, were added.<sup>108</sup> It also allowed them to establish Consulates and for foreigners to officially learn the Chinese language. After

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<sup>102</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. P. 96-97.

<sup>103</sup> Malin Gregersen, "Kinabilder og Kinasyn," in *Møter med Kina: Norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890-1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset, Malin Gregersen, and Karina Hestad Skeie (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018). P. 204-208.

<sup>104</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P. 54-61.

<sup>105</sup> Robert Bickers, "Shanghailanders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai 1843-1937," *Past & Present*, no. 159 (1998), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/651233>.

<sup>106</sup> Camilla Brautaset et al., *Møter med Kina: norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890-1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset et al. (Bergen: Fagbokforl., 2018). P.18-19.

<sup>107</sup> R.A. Bickers and I. Jackson, *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power* (Routledge, 2016).

<sup>108</sup> Wasserstrom, *The Oxford illustrated history of modern China*. P.51-53.

this 1842 treaty was signed, treaties with powers such as France and the United States were signed in 1844 and Sweden-Norway signed the treaty of Guangdong in 1847, giving these nations similar terms to what the British got.

Extraterritoriality had many benefits, mainly that this meant nationals from nations with extraterritorial rights were governed by their nation's own laws, and therefore could not be charged or judged by Chinese law. Shanghai was by 1920 considered to be one the freest places in the world, according to a prior British Consul General, said in the 1910s that it was a place where you could live the life you chose and faced minimal consequences for your actions.<sup>109</sup>

Shanghai was headhunted by the British as the prime candidate for a military and commercial expansion in China<sup>110</sup>. The reasoning behind this was multifaceted, but the geography and commercial potential within it is the most central part.<sup>111</sup> The city itself is positioned at the mouth of the Chang Jiang flood, therefore being a natural trade hub opening large parts of inner China. The emphasis on this as the sole reason for the city's success has dilapidated over time.<sup>112</sup>

When Shanghai was "opened up" as a treaty port, it was not a common name for Europeans. In 1842 it was not a major city in China.<sup>113</sup> In the first years only few traders even established there. The British Consul went as far as describing it in the North China Herald as "...an isolated seaport on the coast of a vast Empire."<sup>114</sup> in 1853.

One year after that the international city started taking the shape of what it would become by the time Aall arrived in Shanghai. Britain, France, and the United States had all been granted large land concessions in the city, they were referred to as the International Settlement. But as governing these alone quickly proved difficult, the English-speaking nations quickly created the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC), which served as a shared government that would administrate the roadworks in the

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<sup>109</sup> Camilla Brautaset, "Møter med Kina - En introduksjon," in *Møter med Kina: Norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890-1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset, Malin Gregersen, and Karina Hestad Skeie (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018). p. 19.

<sup>110</sup> Horesh, *Shanghai, Past and Present: A Concise Socio-Economic History, 1842-2012*. p. 40-44

<sup>111</sup> Edward Denison and Guang Yu Ren, *Building Shanghai: the story of China's gateway* (Hoboken, N.J. Chichester: Hoboken, N.J. Chichester: Wiley, 2013). P. 31-34.

<sup>112</sup> Rhoads Murphey, *Shanghai: Key to Modern China* (Harvard University Press, 2013).

<sup>113</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. s.9-27

<sup>114</sup> N.C.H. 17.09.1853, p. 26.

International Settlement.<sup>115</sup> The SMC has been described as an institution that was in practice an “autocratic business cartel”<sup>116</sup> in academic literature.

The French originally joined but left in 1864. This led to the British and American concessions evolving together, and the French concession enjoying a parallel development. In short both the SMC and the French Concession began building roads outside of the settlement, in accordance with the Chinese governments.<sup>117</sup> They practically built up the infrastructure of Shanghai, and therefore enjoyed power and influence beyond their borders. When the car got introduced the production of these roads and the influence of the International Settlement grew rapidly. By 1920, the French settlement had become a hub for money, culture, business, all while still maintaining a certain aura of France.<sup>118</sup>

The SMC grew as well. The chairmen of the council were up until the Japanese occupation in 1942, either American or British. It was no secret that the two foreign powers with the most pull in the city were the English speakers. Nicolai Aall described this phenomenon in his 1950 manuscripts as: “... almost completely monopolized by British interests, with some American backing”<sup>119</sup>. While membership in the SMC included several other countries, such as Japan, Belgium, Denmark, and Sweden-Norway, it served as another tool of keeping Shanghai as a de facto British colony. This was also the view at the time. A famous example of this is Stirling Fessenden’s nickname in the late 1920s, namely “the lord mayor of Shanghai”<sup>120</sup>. Likewise, the French concession, the French Consul General was in practice also the mayor of their concession.<sup>121</sup> Fessenden attended the reception. These two roles were at the top of their community’s social hierarchy in 1924.

This brings me to the role of the Consul in Shanghai. A Consul was and is meant to be a non-diplomatic position in a foreign country, their primary function is to assist their respective nation’s economic interests and promote their home country.<sup>122</sup> The day-job in Shanghai was spent doing this. Supporting the locals, writing visas, quarterly reports and being their nations eyes and ears abroad. The Consuls were in

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<sup>115</sup> Horesh, *Shanghai, Past and Present: A Concise Socio-Economic History, 1842-2012*. s. 61-63

<sup>116</sup> Denison and Ren, *Building Shanghai: the story of China's gateway*. P.

<sup>117</sup> Denison and Ren, *Building Shanghai: the story of China's gateway*. P. 85.

<sup>118</sup> Lee, *Shanghai modern : the flowering of a new urban culture in China, 1930-1945*. P. 18.

<sup>119</sup> “... S.M.C. omtrent helt var monopolisert av britiske interesser -med litt amerikansk bistann.” NB: Ubehandlet – 171/Ubehandlet, Eske2/III/8/.

<sup>120</sup> N.C.H. 01.10.1927.

<sup>121</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. p. 74.

<sup>122</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenriktjenestens liv 1905–2005*. P. 544.

service of the people, while diplomats served the nation, in the perception of the working class the Consuls were therefore much more approachable and popular.<sup>123</sup>

In Shanghai however, the Consuls, due to the extraterritorial rights, were also a central part of the legal system. There were three separate courts in Shanghai. The Consular Court, The Mixed Court, and the Court of Consuls. Nicolai Aall wrote his only academic article on these three and his role within them. The Consular Court is the most straightforward system and existed in most places where extraterritoriality was enjoyed. This is where the Consul acts as a judge if someone were to sue the Consul's countrymen, this one operated by the Consul's nation's laws.<sup>124</sup>

If someone were to sue another who did not have extraterritorial rights, or as was more usual, someone who was Chinese, they would have to go to the Mixed Court.<sup>125</sup> Here there would be a Chinese judge, and a foreign assessor, most often a Consul and most often British or American, whose task was judging the judge. This was an extremely unpopular solution, and the Chinese eventually abolished it in 1927, and it was replaced by a Chinese legal system.<sup>126</sup> Nicolai Aall was on the other side of the negotiating table and was the one that eventually handed over the seal to the Chinese Nationalists that formally abolished the court in 1927.<sup>127</sup> There was a similar system in Egypt.<sup>128</sup>

The final court was the Court of Consuls, which must not be confused with the Consular court. This was established to respond to criticisms against the SMC. It was as its name suggests built up of Consuls, in the 1920s there were three, and eventually by the 1930s there were five.<sup>129</sup> This court is the one that has not been written about much elsewhere. According to Aall it did not have to abide to any real law and was not with any specific set of law to follow. The Court of Consuls operated on gut feelings and mutual agreements between its committee. Which leads me to speculate that the Court of Consuls existed to solely support the SMC and the

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<sup>123</sup> Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste I : Grunnleggende år*. P. 174.

<sup>124</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai." P. 216-217.

<sup>125</sup> Sei Chin, "The politics of the Shanghai courts: the state, local elites, and social networks in Nationalist China, 1927–1937," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 11 (06/02 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1080/17535654.2017.1308100>. p. 29-31.

<sup>126</sup> Chin, "The politics of the Shanghai courts: the state, local elites, and social networks in Nationalist China, 1927–1937." P.31-47.

<sup>127</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai." P.217-219.

<sup>128</sup> Makko, *European Small States and the Role of Consuls in the Age of Empire*. P. 60-62.

<sup>129</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai." P. 219-220.

International Settlement, with as little regulation or blockades as possible. Aall writes that they seldom had any real discussion on how a matter should go.

These three courts were part of Aall's day-to-day life in Shanghai. This was a completely unique position to be in as a Consul, as no other place in the world ever had a similar judicial system. Being part of this system meant that in some way, the Consuls were intertwined with every single aspect of the judicial system. What went through these courts was almost everything, and the Consuls had the final say in most of the matters. As a contemporary of Aall, James Porter Davis, a previous American Consul in Shanghai stated this about the Consular body in 1926: *"In a very real sense it is the guardian of the larger interests of Shanghai, the mouthpiece of the community and its individual members in dealing both with the Chinese Government and with the remote and some-times unsympathetic home Governments. Every important question affecting the development of Shanghai, every threatened danger since its foundation, has been thrashed out and the action taken largely influenced by the Consular body. The senior Consul is, therefore, quite properly the highest-ranking official in Shanghai."*<sup>130</sup>

The quote by Davis shows us the belief people in the Consular body of Shanghai had in themselves at the time. It also answers why Nordahl Grieg referred to Aall as the most powerful man in Shanghai only a year later, as by then Aall had become the Senior Consul. It also places the title of the Senior Consul on the same level as the French Consul General and the Chairman of the SMC. These three are a trifecta of positions that were all individually described as the most powerful people in Shanghai. They were the apex of each of their respective social hierarchies.

This is the title given to the longest serving member of the *Corps Consulaire*, which is the group formed by all the different Consuls serving in a specific area.<sup>131</sup> For this project I have used the term Consular body or Consular corps, which are the English translations of the term. The Senior Consul is similar to the title of Doyen, who is the longest serving member of the Corps Diplomatique. In Shanghai these terms were used interchangeably, although Aall referred to himself as the senior Consul instead of the Doyen.<sup>132</sup> The final title that is worth a quick mention is the charge d'Affaires,

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<sup>130</sup> Davis, "Shanghai: A City Ruled by Five Nations." P. 750.

<sup>131</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p. 543.

<sup>132</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai."

which is the title given when the highest-ranking diplomatic official is not available, Aall was for example the charge d'Affaires when Michelet temporarily left China, making Aall the second highest ranking Norwegian official in China.<sup>133</sup>

Aall's working place, and an important hub for many in this thesis was the Consulate itself. In Norway the Consulates had become a fighting cause for many by the 1890s, and in 1905, it caused a scandal which many refer to as the breaking point for the union with Sweden, this is referred to as *Konsulatsaken*, or the Consular affair in English.<sup>134</sup> This led to the first *draft* of the Norwegian foreign ministry having a separate diplomatic and Consular side, but this changed in 1922, when they were merged into a unified foreign ministry. This changed many things, but opened for more members outside of the aristocracy, to become part of the foreign service, it was in many ways a professionalization of the foreign ministry.<sup>135</sup> Michelet and Aall were both in the service due to their privileges, but this started gradually changing during the 1930s.

How all of this directly affected the Shanghai Consulate could fill an entire study in and of itself. The Shanghai Consulate was a high priority after the split with Sweden. It opened in 1906. But did not have its first Norwegian Consul General before 1914, when Jørgen Jakob Eitzen, took over as a temporary General Consul, he stayed that way for 5 years.<sup>136</sup> Most of its money came from taxing the local Norwegian population, especially shipping, as all ships had to pay a Consular fee. The purpose of a General Consulate which differentiated it from a normal Consulate, was to be an administrative meeting point for its Consular district. It was also given the authority to function as a Court, which normal Consulates did not have.

The Norwegian community in Shanghai had the Consulate as one of their contact zones. But over the years the local community arranged and established several different clubs, businesses, and events. Details of these will be covered to an extent in Chapter 4. The point is the small community in Shanghai eventually had its own cultural sphere.

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<sup>133</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p. 543.

<sup>134</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p. 22–49.

<sup>135</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p. 71–75.

<sup>136</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*.



The major contact zone for anyone in Shanghai was the clubs. Which is also where this thesis will *take place*. The clubs were in the early 1920s the most important venue a man could be in. They were as much a part of your social life and your professional life. They were also almost exclusively male institutions. Meaning that simple membership in a club could by extension give you professional, racial, national, and therefore social status.<sup>137</sup> In Shanghai there were many clubs, the most famous being the British Shanghai Club, which hosted the famous “world’s longest bar” mentioned in the introduction. There were two American clubs, the American club, and the Columbia Country club.<sup>138</sup> The Norwegian community also had its own club.<sup>139</sup> Some of these included women, the largest ones allowed membership from different nations, and some were restricted to a profession. Clubs like the Shanghai club had strict social hierarchies, where your seat at the world’s longest bar was determined by how you ranked as a member of the club.<sup>140</sup> The clubs has been described by historian Catherine Ladds as the “quintessential colonial institution.”<sup>141</sup>

The dinner party in this thesis, was hosted at the *Cercle Sportif Français*, or as it was commonly called, The French Club. Of the Clubs this was one of the more family friendly ones, especially after its Country Club was constructed.<sup>142</sup> The club opened in 1926, and made the French club more popular, but by 1924, it was already one of the more popular and cosmopolitan clubs, perhaps due to it being relatively open to including both Chinese and women, although it had a limited number of women allowed at one time, which made it stand out from other clubs.<sup>143</sup>

Chinese being excluded is a pattern in most of the institutions that existed in the International Settlement. For the local population, this became increasingly apparent throughout the 1920s. The SMC, for example, did not allow Chinese members before 1928.<sup>144</sup> This came as a result after much local protest from the Chinese population. Many directly reacting to the 30<sup>th</sup> of May 1925 attacks on Chinese protesters by the largely British Shanghai Municipal Police Force. It is often referred to as one of the

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<sup>137</sup> Catherine Ladds, *Empire careers : working for the Chinese Customs Service, 1854-1949* (Manchester; New York; New York: Manchester University Press ; Distributed in the United States exclusively by Palgrave MacMillan, 2013). P.133-134.

<sup>138</sup> Denison and Ren, *Building Shanghai: the story of China's gateway*. P.121.

<sup>139</sup> Askeland, *The Neutral Enemy - A study of Norwegian representation and diplomacy in China 1937-1947*. P.35.

<sup>140</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*.

<sup>141</sup> Ladds, *Empire careers : working for the Chinese Customs Service, 1854-1949*. p.133.

<sup>142</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. P. 86.

<sup>143</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. p. 88-89.

<sup>144</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. 78-79

major reasons for the Chinese to eventually gain a foothold in the council.<sup>145</sup> This is also around the time of the abolishment of the Mixed Court. These were significant steps in redistributing power away from the SMC, and many similar events and deals were struck in the 1930s. Shanghai was becoming slowly more independent. Of its foreign influences.

Outside of the International Settlement, the working classes lived. When depicted in media and academic literature they often serve the role of being a stark contrast to what was happening inside the Settlement. Most of the work in Shanghai was in factories. By the 1930s the Chinese working classes had experienced massive growth. The growth also came at the same time as factory and working conditions were worsening. Some reports from the time claimed close to 80 percent of the factory workers in the city were women and children. City life for most in Chinese in Shanghai was a daily challenge. The elites noticed this, foreign and local, leading to the chairman of the SMC publicly calling it «*little short of appalling*»<sup>146</sup> in 1932. These people were close, but out of mind to most of the socialites who attended Aall's reception.

This is not to say the Chinese population did not attend the kinds of events focused on in this thesis. The Chinese Shanghailanders were considered the highest class in the Shanghainese society.<sup>147</sup> They were a central part of the city's life and culture and are today remembered for creating many of the things central to this period of the city's history. One example of a story like this is the Wing-On Department Store, an originally Cantonese business that opened a store on Nanking Road, the biggest and most famous commercial street in the city.<sup>148</sup> It was a Chinese run store that marketed itself to the city's high society, with a multilingual staff, they were able to give the foreigners and Chinese costumers an equal opportunity to shop. Another famous example is the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Company, better known as just HSBC, who built the second biggest bank in the world in 1922 in Shanghai.<sup>149</sup> The bank building is a perfect example of how the city presented itself to the world. It was large modern and functional. While technically being a branch of the main bank in

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<sup>145</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. p. 71

<sup>146</sup> William W. Lockwood, "The International Settlement at Shanghai, 1924-34," *The American Political Science Review* 28, no. 6 (1934), <https://doi.org/10.2307/1947378>, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1947378>.

<sup>147</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. P. 61-77.

<sup>148</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. S.51-64

<sup>149</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. P. 104-107

Hong Kong, the sheer size and amount of the workload in Shanghai, required the bank to build its largest office in the city. This was also common for diplomatic entities, in Norway the Consulate in Shanghai was and is bigger than the one in Beijing.

1924's Shanghai was not a colony but held many colonial influences. The world this thesis takes place in is fundamentally transnational, but also contains a strict social hierarchy that showed little room for social elevation for groups that were already marginalized. This should be kept in mind as this text focuses on the people who made it through and/or were born into the high society that participated in the dinner for Michelet on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1924.

## Chapter 3: Party Planning

### 3.0: Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it lays the groundwork for the latter half of the project. This will be done by establishing a timeline of the preparations for the dinner, leading up to and including the days the Michelets spent in Shanghai. After following the details before the dinner, the chapter will interrogate some of the details surrounding the event itself. Such as the location, staff, menu, and events at the dinner. These details build the foundation for further analysis of the dinner, but on its own establishes why these choices mattered. *The goal is therefore to establish some of the facts and details about what happened before and at the dinner to further understand what these decisions meant, and how they inform the larger social structures.*

### 3.1 Preceding events

On Saturday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December in 1923, Johan Wilhelm Michelet wrote to the General Consulate Shanghai.<sup>150</sup> The letter asked for five things. Firstly, it informs that the minister, along with his wife and two daughters, who were 12 and 14 at the time, was travelling home to Norway, to receive the St. Olav's Order, which had been given to both Aall and Michelet, in late November of 1923.<sup>151</sup> As well as taking an extended holiday. On their way there they wanted to stay in Shanghai for three nights, from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January before they left for Norway on the "Macedonia". Secondly the Michelets, or rather Ingeborg Michelet, wanted a full list of the married members of the Norwegian *colony*, as she would like to visit all their wives on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Thirdly they wanted a reservation at the Astor House Hotel. The fourth thing they asked for was their arrival to be announced to all Norwegians in Shanghai by January the 10<sup>th</sup>. And finally, it asks to inform Nicolai Aall of this, as soon as feasibly possible.

It is received in Shanghai on the 27<sup>th</sup>, by Vice-Consul Thorgheir Siqveland, who was temporarily in charge of the Consulate while Nicolai Aall was visiting the Angkor Wat for a four-week Christmas holiday.<sup>152</sup> The letter is the first mention of the Michelets travelling home, although there are references to it being arranged as early as

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<sup>150</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0022/0002 "Michelet to Siqveland".

<sup>151</sup> Bergens Aftenblad, 30.11.1923.

<sup>152</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Ubehandlet/Eske 1/2/Reiser, 1923-1924.

August 1923.<sup>153</sup> After this the archives tells us that much of the things asked for in the letter, happened. The rooms are ordered on Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> the day the letter arrives at the Consulate, it cost 156 Mexican dollars for their stay.<sup>154</sup> Aall is informed by telegram, by New Year's Eve, now on his way home sailing up the coast of Vietnam.<sup>155</sup> A list is gathered and sent of all the married women in Shanghai, although only a letter informing us of this remains in the National Archives, the list itself is missing.<sup>156</sup> Most of the things asked for in the letter from the 22<sup>nd</sup> are done before the first week of January 1924 is over.

There are a few notable hiccups. The one of note regards the Astor House Hotel. This was one of the more prestigious hotels in Shanghai.<sup>157</sup> Located by the Garden Bridge and on the Bund, it was also a stone throw away from the British, Russian<sup>158</sup>, German, and Japanese Consulates.<sup>159</sup> In short it was a very central and connected place in the middle of Shanghai, especially in the early 1920s. This is where President Ulysses S. Grant, Scott Joplin and Charlie Chaplin stayed. Like many Shanghai venues, it was more than one thing. During the 1930s it hosted a local German newspaper, beauty parlours, concert halls and from looking through Aall's diaries, it was one of his favourite places to host dinners big and small.<sup>160</sup> For a citizen of note, which Minister Michelet certainly was, a stay at the Astor House projected, wealth, comfort, privilege, and the general aura of high status.

The archives show us some back and forth in the reservation of Michelet's rooms. Siqveland is uncertain how many rooms Michelet desires, Michelet clarifies on the third, and the rooms are confirmed on the seventh by Astor House.<sup>161</sup> This would have been the end of things, until Michelet cancels his reservation on the eighth, clarifying he will be staying at the Thoresens' house instead.

In 1924, the Thoresens, who will be talked about more extensively in Chapter 4, resided at 90 Jessfield Road.<sup>162</sup> This was by all means, a nice part of town. Jessfield

<sup>153</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Ubehandlet/Eske 2/5/1/Korrespondanse – «Michelet til Aall», 1923.

<sup>154</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/ "Astor House Receipt, Undated.

<sup>155</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Ubehandlet/Eske 1/2/Reiser, 1923-1924. p. 76-77.

<sup>156</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Da/L00096. "Aall to Michelet, Telegram" Undated.

<sup>157</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. p. 92, 101.

<sup>158</sup> Not operating in 1924, due to the revolution.

<sup>159</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. p.44-46.

<sup>160</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. & *All about Shanghai and Environs*. p. 46-88.

<sup>161</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/, "Michelet to Aall – Telegram" 08.01.1924.

<sup>162</sup> North China Daily News & Herald, *The North China Desk Hong List: A general and business Directory for Shanghai and the Northern and River Porto, etc* (North China Daily News & Herald, 1924).

Road was close to Jessfield Park, which was the largest park in Shanghai.<sup>163</sup> A few years later the Thoresens would be neighbouring the new Bank of China building, which now is a museum.<sup>164</sup> Despite this, it does seem peculiar that Michelet would cancel his stay at Astor House. Especially with what we know staying at the Astor House meant to onlookers. From the available archival material there are some vague references to economic troubles for Michelet, and it was no secret that there were limitations in the budget of the Norwegian foreign service.<sup>165</sup> If there was definitive proof of this, it would be a punch in the face for Norwegians in Shanghai attempting to establish their legitimacy. The pomp and circumstance of diplomatic representatives are and were a central part in projecting soft power.<sup>166</sup><sup>167</sup> Choosing the hotel Chaplin would later choose, gives authority and class. Then again, this was a simple stop on the road back home, and maybe the Michelet just wanted to stay with some of his good friends.

What we do know happened is that shortly after the cancellation, Aall, on his first day back from holiday, orders the Astor House grillroom as a location for Michelets open invitation reception for all Norwegians in Shanghai.<sup>168</sup> Originally Astor House gets the date wrong on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup>, but this was shortly fixed and arranged.<sup>169</sup> Skipping ahead a bit in the chronology, we know this reception was held on Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup>, from five to seven. According to some newspaper notes and quick mentions in archival sources it seems to have gone over as a success. This is however how far this seems to go, as there are no other mentions, pictures, records, guestlists or receipts available from this event.

This reservation at the Astor seems to imply that even though Michelet was not staying there, it could still be a part of his image. Officially announcing that the Norwegians would be gathering in the Astor House Hotel, is no coincidence. The ad in the North China Daily News, was even written in Norwegian, and on the front

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<sup>163</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. P. 184.

<sup>164</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P. 91.

<sup>165</sup> Norway was in a banking crisis from the spring of 1923 to 1928, it impacted close to all levels of society. The ministry had an increased budget since 1922-23 but spending on its diplomatic postings would peak in 24-25, and not reach the same level before 1936-1937. From Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p. 64-65.

<sup>166</sup> Roald Berg, "Norway's Foreign Politics during the Union with Sweden, 1814-1905: A Reconsideration, Diplomacy & Statecraft," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 2020.

<sup>167</sup> There have been arguments that the Shanghai Consuls were cheaper than the rest of the Consular corps. This might hold some validity but could also come from misunderstanding the role of a Shanghai Consul, as just a normal Consul. For this thesis it is not relevant, as in Shanghai terms, the Consuls lived an expensive life. For more see: Tepstad, "Norwegian extraterritoriality in China. A study of how and why Norway abolished its extraterritoriality in China." p. 22.

<sup>168</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/, "Aal to Astor House" 09.01.1924.

<sup>169</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/, "Astor House to Consulate" 11.01.1924.

page.<sup>170</sup> This was boasting, and although who listened or remembered it is impossible to understand, an ad like that would at least give a strong impression of the standing of the Norwegian community, if nothing else.

There is no official record that shows us exactly when the dinner of honour for Michelet, was brought up. We know it has been mentioned by the 10<sup>th</sup>, as Michelet accepts his invitation to his own dinner by then.<sup>171</sup> Which means Aall organized this very quickly after returning to the office. In all available materials it is framed as Aall's dinner for Michelet, however this is a subject where it is important to keep the preservation bias in mind. It could simply be that Aall saved the material that was kind to him.

The next archival source in the chronology, is a receipt from The Oriental Press. Which was a printing press for hire, it specialized in advertisements, invitations, and menus.<sup>172</sup> The receipt is not dated, it only says month and year, but it has deadlines, for when the invitations had to go to press. The first is for one hundred dinner invitations with one hundred matching Envelopes, which are to be delivered to the Sheng building on 29 Szechuen Road, the address of the Norwegian General Consulate on January 12<sup>th</sup>. This shows that Aall would have had a completed guest list by then, or at least a rough number of the amount guests. The second deadline given is for the menus, which were to be printed on the 21<sup>st</sup>, the day of the dinner.

The invitations themselves are not part of Aall's private archives and chances of finding them elsewhere are slim. The contents of the invitation presumably do not hold much importance. What would be of importance are the RSVPs. Of these there seems to be only one remaining in all the archival material. The one remaining is from Høhnke and is nothing more than a yes and thank you.<sup>173</sup>

One of the most important sources for this project is created before the 12<sup>th</sup>. The guestlist, or more accurately the invite sheet.<sup>174</sup> Due to the private archive at the National Library not being officially sorted, publishing a scan of these documents have proven difficult, but a reproduction is available in Appendix 2.<sup>175</sup> The complete

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<sup>170</sup> N.C.D.N. 18.01.1924, "Consulate General of Norway".

<sup>171</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Da/L0096, "Michelet to Aall" 10.01.1924.

<sup>172</sup> "The Oriental Press: Main Building," 2021, accessed 04.05. 2022, <https://www.virtualshanghai.net/photos/images?ID=15068>. & Nellist F. George, *Men of Shanghai and North China* (Shanghai: The Oriental Press, 1933).

<sup>173</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Høhnke to Aall», 16.01.1924.

<sup>174</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Liste over inbudne til middag 21ste januar i franske Klub for minister Michelet» Undated.

<sup>175</sup> Relayed to me in an e-mail on the 08.04.2022.

list in the appendixes is a combination of six different pages in various sizes and with various purposes. The main invite sheet is simply titled “List over invited guests for the dinner 21<sup>st</sup> January in French club for Minister Michelet”<sup>176</sup>. The rest of the papers tie into this main document, and Aall has clearly counted the number of guests that had accepted, he counted 108. He was off by three, as he has listed 105 guests attending on his sheets. At the dinner 107 people attended, according to the table plan, which is also available in appendixes 3-7, sorted by different subjects. This is the correct number of guests.

The next thing that was clarified was the Michelets itinerary. This was clarified by the 16<sup>th</sup>. For simplicity’s sake, I have chosen to not go into detail on this itinerary, as this will be a large part of Chapter 4.

On Friday, the 18<sup>th</sup> Aall informs local English language newspapers, of the arrival of the Minister to China and Japan in Shanghai. The letter in the archive is to the North China Daily News (NCDN), but it also references copies sent to The China Press and the Evening News.<sup>177</sup> NCDN ran it on their front page on the 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup><sup>178</sup>, The Evening News ran it on the 18<sup>th</sup><sup>179</sup> and after the Michelets had left Shanghai, The China Press ran a group photo on the 27<sup>th</sup>, a full-scale version of this is picture 3. The North China Daily News wrote on the 23<sup>rd</sup> that the dinner was “a very pleasant evening”<sup>180</sup>.

These news bulletins, which are not much longer than a single paragraph, are a sign of the dinner’s success. The N.C.D.N. calling it very pleasant, is a sign of success. It signifies that the Norwegian representatives and by extension the Norwegian community was established in Shanghai. A positive review like this places Norway favourably within the international social structure of Shanghai. The dinner is a clear message of soft power through traditional diplomatic functions. But to further understand this, it is necessary to look for what we can find in the sources that tell us what happened on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

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<sup>176</sup> “Liste over innbudne til middag 21de januar 1924 I franske Klub for Minister Michelet” from NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/.

<sup>177</sup> T.E.N., 18.01.1924.

<sup>178</sup> N.C.D.N., 17-19.01.1924.

<sup>179</sup> T.C.P. 27.01.1924.

<sup>180</sup> N.C.D.N. 25.01.1924.



### 3.2: The Seating Plan

Before writing about the dinner, it feels important to reiterate that there will never be a complete understanding of what went down. Most of the things said or unsaid, personal conflicts, laughter, embarrassing silences and the quality of the meals and drinks and how good the band was that day, is lost to history. The dinner itself, will be a stand-in or example of what the guests did in Shanghai, and therefore presumably did at the dinner.

This is because the sources available depicting the dinner party itself are four receipts, a menu, a picture, the table plan, and a handful of newspaper articles. They refer to the people present, but not specifically what they did or what happened on that day. This is a weakness, but it is an incompleteness that must be accepted when selecting such a narrow field of research.

Let us begin with summarizing some details of what we do know. The dinner started at 6 pm<sup>181</sup>. There were 107 guests. And among other things a group photo was taken. This photo has been preserved in its original quality in Aall's private archives, see picture two on the next page.<sup>182</sup>.

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<sup>181</sup> An assumption, Aall usually dined then, and arranged events were usually around this time.

<sup>182</sup> NB/Ubehandlet\_171/Bildesamlingen/Eske 11.



*Picture 3: The dinner party. More details and references in appendixes. National Library will upload higher quality version soon.*

*Left row: Mrs. Halvorsen, Captain Kristian Larsen, Mrs. Welch, P. G. de Calcina, Mrs. Y. Utne, Hans Berents, Mrs. Seitz, Dr. Lindsay, Petra Berents, Ferno James Schuhl, Mona Knipschildt, S. F. Wright, Mrs. Gad, Mr. Green, Kirsten Meyer, Mr. von Norman, Mrs. Chen, Loh Ta-chiuan, B. A. Renborg, Loh Yung-chien, Shen Pao Chang, Werner von Heidenstram, Yao Yu.*

*Middle left row: Halfdan Klingenberg, Sverre Frøland, Miss Gerda Mladeck, Kaptein Karl Johan Halvorsen, Captain Weidemann, Mrs. Klingenberg, F. Sem, Mrs. Priestwood, N. Dyer, Dorothy Blix, J. G. Priestwood, Mamie Macdonald, Olav Thoresen jr., Alice Herlofson, Sigurd Steckmest, Margrit Thoresen, Charles Gordon Mackie.*

*Middle right row: Thorgheir Siqveland, Miss Frøberg, Mr. Stang Lund, Mrs. Bye, Captain Karl Ferdinand Josefsen, Mrs. Dahl, Sophus Brodtkord, Ingrid Sem, Arne Sørensen, Mabel Chen, (N. T.) Yang Hsiao-tang, N. Dyer, Gustav Schøien Jensen, Mrs. Schuhl, Ranald MacDonald, Green, Carl Blix, Mary MacLeod, Vilhelm Meyer.*

*Right row: Lars Tillitse, Reidar Johannesen, Alf Bye, Marguerite Chen, Bjørn Thams, Caspar Dahl, Fredrikke Feragen, Frithjof Høhnke, A. J. Welch, G. P. Steckmest, Yngve Utne, Carl Johan Knipschildt, Mrs. Wright, Carl L Seitz, Gordon Mackie, Herlof Herlofson, Mrs. Renborg, Chevalier Chen Shik-kuang, Mr. Gad, Mrs Loh, Yin I. P., Erik Tollefsen, Mrs. von Heidenstram.*

*Central back row: Dolly Tollefsen, Stirling Fessenden, Hugo Hergel, Charles Sumner Lobinger, Yada, Edwin Cunningham, Ingeborg Michelet, Nicolai Aall, (C. F.) Hsu Yuan, Mrs. von Haute, Sir Sidney Barton, Ellen Lobinger, Mr. Arce, General Wang Chieng-chen, Hugo Reiss.*

*Central front row: Shichitaro Yada, Marie Reiss, Jean Luc Isler, Elizabeth Cunningham, Minister Johan Michelet, General He Fenglin, Admiral Lin Jianzhang, J. van Haute, J. Lilliehöök.*

The first thing the picture does is that it confirms the seating plan. Although it is at times hard to make out faces, clothes, genders and at times how many, it is a match with the horseshoe pattern on the draft. If used along with the seating plans in the appendixes, it is possible to see the seating by name, nationality, gender, marital status, and profession. But as many guests do not have another photo reference widely available, this leaves a room for error.

There are by my last count 101 people in the photo, which is within the margin of error. By the margin of error I mean, people hidden behind others, people who were in the bathroom, the people that were not there when the photo was taken. There is at least one visible chair, Vice Consul Siqveland's, that is empty. This could be because he was the one taking the picture.

The number of guests does require some level of inquiry, in the table plan there are 107 guests, and there were 106 dinners ordered.<sup>183</sup> The North China Daily News stated "*About 120 guests were present...*"<sup>184</sup> but Aall confirmed 108 had accepted, but his actual count was 105. To put it bluntly, results vary. Out of these it feels safest to use the table plan's number, so 107, even though not everybody listed might not have showed up, it still displays intentionality of placement on the seating chart.

Some people worth mentioning in the picture is for example Aall, who was straight in the middle, talking to Mrs. Michelet in front of the bottom of the cross of the central Norwegian flag. Aall standing under the flag, with the cross pointing down to him seems intentional, it does also point to Minister Michelet, but as he is seated, he makes less of an impression. Also note that Michelet is seated with his back to the table, while Aall has the widest view of the room. How intentional this photo is, is complicated, especially as it very quickly gets into looking at the picture from a modern point of view. But if we were to assume Aall was intentional in his media image, this is positioned to be a celebration for Aall, rather than one for Michelet.

Other clearly identifiable people are Cunninghams, the Michelets, Fessenden, Vilhelm Meyer, Captain Weidemann, the Thoresens and the Tollefsens. Among many others, but the point is that these single identifiable people, all match the seating plan, which leads me to assume the rest of the picture matches the seating plan.

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<sup>183</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Receipts from French Club» 24.01.1924.

<sup>184</sup> N.C.D.N. 23.10.1924.

Looking at the seating plan by gender is also an effective way of confirming the picture with the seating plan as the clothing is quite easily identifiable. The men are all wearing tuxedos, with white bowties or none at all. This also shows uniforms were not a requirement for the dinner, which they often were in other events of state.<sup>185</sup> This makes it less formal, but still formal. In many ways the men are almost wearing the tuxedo as a uniform, the few exceptions are two or three of the Chinese officials.

### 3.3: Food and Drinks

In the four receipts there is enough info to know all that was ordered at the dinner. Comparing it to the sum Aall delivered to the Foreign Ministry in the quarterly reports, shows us that there might be another one that has gone missing.<sup>186</sup> This is however a low amount of money and could easily be explained away as tips to the waiters. In Shanghai this was called cumshaw, a term just as often used to describe a bribe.<sup>187</sup>

The receipts show us that there were sixty Martinis, thirty Manhattans, twenty Mary Pickford Cocktails<sup>188</sup> along with sixteen bottles of Champagne Pommery, fourteen bottles of Chablis and eleven bottles of the Château Gruaud-Larose from 1914, ordered by the 107 guests.<sup>189</sup> To put it mildly there was a lot of alcohol at the table. The purchase price ends up being 668.31 Mexican dollars, which was the currency most often used at the time.<sup>190</sup> The following receipts have several orders of whisky and brandy bottles, then orders for coffees, juices, and waters. It seems a natural progression for the evening. Only five glasses of aquavit were ordered.

The alcohol consumption was high at the dinner, which was not unusual for Shanghai at the time, but in the wider world it was problematic. Of the people present many of them lived in countries that currently outlawed liquor. This was the case in Norway, the US, and Sweden, who all had some form of prohibition at the time.<sup>191</sup> That means approximately 50% of the people at the table would be breaking the law in their homelands. Prohibition of alcohol was not a huge political topic at the time in Shanghai, Opium held the stage light instead, but for the Shanghailanders it was ever present. Aall reminisces in his diary from early January 1924, that the American

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<sup>185</sup> Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste I : Grunnleggende år*. p. 231-235 & which depicts Michelet in Uniform Omang, *Norsk utenrikstjeneste. II : Stormfulle tider : 1913-1928*. p. 70-71.

<sup>186</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Receipts from French Club» 24.01.1924.

<sup>187</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. p. 122.

<sup>188</sup> Noted as M.D. Cocktails but feels safe to assume this is referring to Mary Pickford, as it was an exceedingly popular drink at the time.

<sup>189</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Receipts from French Club» 24.01.1924.

<sup>190</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. p. 37-38.

<sup>191</sup> P.O. Johansen, *Den illegale spriten: fra forbudstid til polstreik* (Unipub, 2004).

Consul General, Edwin Cunningham was almost late for the boat from Hong Kong to Shanghai because he was busy smuggling alcohol aboard the American vessel that took him there.<sup>192</sup> There were most likely a few prohibitionists present, but in Shanghai they were far less prominent. And if we only look at the tally of the cocktails ordered, it outnumbers the people present.

Taking this one step further, it is important to think about who was publicly drinking alcohol. This was a Norwegian event, and Aall and Michelet, were Norwegian officials, if they were to order the same amount of alcohol in Norway, it would be the end of their careers. By looking through Aall's diaries and photo collection, it also becomes quite clear that Aall paid this little attention, as he never mentions it in his diaries and is pictured with a drink in hand multiple times. This in and of itself shows us that the Norwegian community was different from being in Norway, this was Shanghai, and in Shanghai you could be as free as you wanted. I have been unable to find any prohibition literature that is specifically interested in how this affected the diplomatic functions of the 1920s.

Consumption of alcohol is one thing, but what alcohol was consumed is another. The popular cocktails at the table were all typical recipes going around at the time. Most of them originated from either Paris, London, or New York, although Shanghai originals were also springing up at the time. What is significant is the wines. Château Gruaud-Larose<sup>193</sup>, Champagne Pommery<sup>194</sup>, and Saint-Galmier Badoit<sup>195</sup> carbonated water was all ordered several times and are French brands that exists to this day. Logistically speaking they would have to be imported from France to be sold in Shanghai. Compared to other drinks on the menu, such as the local beer or juices, the French imports bear a seal of French exclusivity, in both branding and practical availability. This was one of the key strengths of the French concession, the air of French-ness in its architecture, culture, and cuisine, made it deliberately stand out more than the mixed British and American sections. The French concession literally

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<sup>192</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923, p. 89-93.

<sup>193</sup> "Gruaud Larose 2019 - Château Gruaud-Larose," 2022, accessed 23.04., 2022, <https://www.graud-larose.com/en/wines/graud-larose-1988/>.

<sup>194</sup> Bill Daley, "Madame Pommery changed how we drink Champagne today," *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago) 2015, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/dining/recipes/sc-food-0417-giants-pommery-20150413-story.html>.

<sup>195</sup> P.E. LaMoreaux and J.T. Tanner, *Springs and Bottled Waters of the World: Ancient History, Source, Occurrence, Quality and Use* (Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2012). p. 106-107.

was a gated community.<sup>196</sup> This also makes it seem like the decision to host an official dinner there, was to give it a certain aura of legitimacy, compared to the relatively rougher streets in the other concessions.

The food and drinks served at the dinner exemplify a quite recent term, Culinary Diplomacy or Gastrodiploamacy. The term originated in an article written by Paul Rockower, and it describes the attempts of Thailand and South Korea, among others, to use their unique cuisine in a state funded attempt to improve the reputation and relations with especially western powers.<sup>197</sup> The term is contemporary, and the field is still expanding, but it describes how food is a soft-power way to soften relations and communicate culture. Gastrodiploamatically speaking, this does not apply to the dinner, there were no servings of f  rik  l or brown cheese, which was something Norway did not do for its diplomatic functions, yet.<sup>198</sup>

At the reception the menu was French. In the mid-eighteenth century, haute cuisine, was introduced in Parisian restaurants, and by the 1920s, what was originally eaten in courts and palaces had now travelled into diplomatic functions such as the reception.<sup>199</sup> The dinner was and is a central part of the diplomatic process, behind only offices and boardrooms, the preferred meeting place for diplomats are over a shared meal.<sup>200</sup> In Shanghai the clubs took over the role of the offices and boardrooms. What food people ate in Shanghai varied. The Chinese started out hostile to western cuisine, especially to beef, but by the 1920s and 1930s, Shanghai had adapted to the many foreigners in the city, both national and international, and locals now served Chinese foods from the entirety of China, as well as having opened several western establishments.<sup>201</sup> The Shanghailanders, dined mostly in western establishment, although eventually when the Chinese got more of a foothold in the Settlement, they started to go to more Chinese venues. If they went to lunch, they went out for tiffin.<sup>202</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> It had large Iron gates which were used in times of crisis to close of Frenchtown. Christian Henriot, "SHANGHAI AND THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR. THE FATE OF REFUGEES," *European Journal of East Asian Studies* 5, no. 2 (2006), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23615676>. p. 218-220.

<sup>197</sup> Paul Rockower, "Recipes for gastrodiploamacy," *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy* 8 (08/01 2012), <https://doi.org/10.1057/pb.2012.17>.

<sup>198</sup> Brautaset, "Norges f  rste statsbes  k?."

<sup>199</sup> Iver B. Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry* (Oxford University Press, 2013). p. 70-72.

<sup>200</sup> Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry*. p.46-76.

<sup>201</sup> Rachel Laudan, *Cuisine and Empire: Cooking in World History* (University of California Press, 2013). p. 266, 326.

<sup>202</sup> Aall and others preferred lunch. NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923

The culinary landscape within diplomacy however was French.<sup>203</sup> If food is language, this would be one of the few places in Shanghai where French was the official language. From the menu alone this is very visible. It announces “*Diner Donné en honneur de Son Excellence le Min Donné en honneur de Son Excellence le Ministre de Norvège en Chine et au Japon et Madame Johan Michelet*”<sup>204</sup>. The grandiose French introduction is written by Aall himself, and does not refer to him by name, yet it is as much a celebration for Aall as it was for Michelet. More on this later.

The menus were folded, and on the front two Norwegian flags were drawn. There are no logos from the Oriental Press on them, but it feels safe to assume these were the ones Aall ordered. The menu itself, follows the French dining structure of a seven-course meal. In English it read as follows:

“APPETIZERS

HOUSEHOLD POT-AU-FEU (Beef Stew)

GRILLED WHITE SALMON, *The Maître d’hôtel own Braising*

STANISLAS BEEF FILLET, with Champagne

SPIT ROASTED TURKEY, New potatoes, and Celery salad

FROZEN ASPARAGUS, with Mayonnaise

PEACH MELBA

CHEESE FRUIT DESSERT

COFFEE”<sup>205</sup>

If we were to categorize the menu into the structure of a French seven-course meal, the first four courses match the formula. These are the l’apertif or tiny appetizer, then the hors d’ouvres or Entrée which typically is a stew or soup, then the fish is served. The fifth course is a salad, and while the fifth course on the menu includes celery salad, it promotes the turkey first, it still roughly fits the pattern. Course number six is supposed to be cheese, but the menu presents cold asparagus. This is the one that does not fit the formal seven-course structure at all. This could be due to availability

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<sup>203</sup> Laudan, *Cuisine and Empire: Cooking in World History*. P. 282-283.

<sup>204</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Menu from French Club” 21.01.1924.

<sup>205</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Menu from French Club” 21.01.1924.

or something similar, but asparagus in January would also be hard to come by. Nevertheless, frozen asparagus was served. The seventh dish is the Peach Melba, or *pêche melba*, in French.

The menu makes a clear point that what should be served at this dinner was French excellence. The menu itself contains many cornerstones of French Cuisine, such as the Pot-au-Feu, which is considered a national dish<sup>206</sup>, the Peach Melba<sup>207</sup>, which is a fundamental French dessert and with house specials such as the White Salmon, where they advertise freely that it is a specialty of the *Maître d'*. When you were inside the ballroom, you were meant to be dining in France, not Shanghai.

The food however, purely logistically speaking, had to be sourced locally. It is also deliberately boasting and pretending it is something it is not. Take the white salmon dish, this is not the King White Salmon found in Alaska, it is hake.<sup>208</sup> They were regularly available in France, and a variant exists in the North Pacific. This is not to say it was not special, just relatively less special than what was advertised. Advertisements for the French Club are also relatively hard to come by as most of them were in French newspapers, which are hard to find digitized. There is a reference within the Private Archive where Aall refers to especially the mayonnaise being "from France"<sup>209</sup>. This was sent in 1925, to an unknown address. While this might simply be an error, or lost in translation, it was virtually impossible to transfer mayonnaise premade from France, due to its low shelf life. And for the focus of this project, the important detail is not where it was produced, but why someone would state it was produced there.

### 3.4: Inside the Ballroom

Aside from the food, guestlist, venue and drinks, there is little to no information about the dinner party itself. In the room the clientele, was Shanghainese, commonly named "*boy*"<sup>210</sup> by the Shanghailanders elites. These were Shanghai's answer to servants, pages, drivers, or assistants, they made a living supporting the Shanghailester lifestyle. Practically every guest present had a *boy* on their payroll.

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<sup>206</sup> Prosper Montagné, "Larousse gastronomique," ed. Prosper Montagné and Alfred Gottschalk (First, Paris: Larousse, 1938). <http://books.google.com/books?id=HdvGAAAAMAAJ>. P. 637.

<sup>207</sup> Montagné, "Larousse gastronomique." P. 36.

<sup>208</sup> Montagné, "Larousse gastronomique." p. 686.

<sup>209</sup> About the same club, but in 1927. From RA D/Da/0006/06/Diverse brev. 1927.

<sup>210</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927." P. 184-186.



Especially the diplomats, the high-end businessmen and governmental employees had several employed, some Norwegians were for example known to have up to fifteen servants for one family.<sup>211</sup> They were only seen as a means to an end, someone who was always there. As an example, in Aall's private archives he only mentions his *boys* when they have done something wrong, he never used their name. This also means there are no real record of them at the dinner, other than a number on the receipts, referring to *boy #8*, which could mean that there were eight *boys* or more on the serving staff, or that there were eight or more *boys* in the room.<sup>212</sup> Compared to how often the French club presented itself as a little piece of France in Shanghai, it seems that this seems to not have extended to the staff.

From reading The China Press, we know that Norwegian music was played for the guests, they mention Grieg by name.<sup>213</sup> Classical music at these official events was a given, and the French Club was large enough to support its own orchestra. This was an early way of displaying unique culture, through the fine arts to the attending guests, this is still done at these kinds of events.<sup>214</sup> It is also bolstering the classically European aura of *culture* in the venue.

Most music at the time in Shanghai was by 1924, beyond this. The city had become famous for its Sing-Song girls and in the 1930s became a centre for jazz musicians, and the emerging composite genre Shidaiqu was in its early days.<sup>215</sup> The Jazz dance clubs had not taken over the more traditional diplomatic stylings of the reception, they never did, but at the time, Shanghai was in the beginning of its Jazz age, as many American musicians had left the US to play in Shanghai.<sup>216</sup> The jazz dancefloors were also eventually one of the largest transnational contact zones. The Dinner party also had dancing, but there are no records of what dances were danced.<sup>217</sup>

The dinner was a stylish affair, but it was a small one. As an example, a month earlier Aall attended the St. Andrews Society Ball, an event celebrating the Scottish national day, which still is happening in Scottish expatriate communities in Shanghai

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<sup>211</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927." p. 180-181.

<sup>212</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/, «Receipt from French Club» 24.01.1924.

<sup>213</sup> T.C.P. 27.01.1924.

<sup>214</sup> Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry*. P. 63-66.

<sup>215</sup> Fogel, "The Recent Boom in Shanghai Studies." p. 314-315.

<sup>216</sup> James Field Andrew David Farrer, *Shanghai nightscapes : a nocturnal biography of a global city* (2015). P. 20-24.

<sup>217</sup> T.C.P. 27.01.1924.

as late as 2020.<sup>218</sup> The North China Herald wrote of the ball: *"As usual, the gowns of the ladies present were one of the picturesque items of the gay pageant"*<sup>219</sup>, and then goes on for a full page describing the most remarkable dresses in detail. This was a much bigger event, with specific themes (the Scottish Highlands) and the 1200 guests, where Aall was listed as one of the ones of note.

The sheer size of this ball outmatches the dinner, but it also shows that without that size and notability many details disappear. In N.C.H. issue describing the St. Andrews Ball, "The Woman's Page"<sup>220</sup>, was dedicated to write about all the fashionable gowns and fashion of the ball, giving unique insight to contemporary views on fashion and what was trending in Shanghai in 1923. The ball was a massive event, and shows that the reception was ordinary in comparison, making it more peculiar why so much information about it has been preserved.

The fashion in the room is a subject that is limited by the available sources. The group photo is the main source. I already mentioned how uniformly the men dressed. Their suits were often in use in these kinds of events, and for the diplomats, for many it was their daily clothing. The tuxedos were a step up than normal but was also quite common dress at these events. The exception is some of the Chinese officials who are wearing traditional clothing, but the details are hard to distinguish. These traditional clothes are also an exception, as many other Chinese nationals wore tuxedos.

As always it is the female fashion that distinguishes itself. The fashion of the ladies of Shanghai was world-famous and especially in the 1920s revolutionary.<sup>221</sup> They led a wave of commercial modernity, by being a part of the image of Shanghai that was sold to the rest of the world. Shanghai women smoked, wore fur trimmed jackets, bicycled, and had their faces made up to be as beautiful and youthful as possible.

Some of the typical 1920s Flapper and Gibson Girl styles, are visible in the group photo. By this I mean they have identifiable and distinctive bobs, headbands, and

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<sup>218</sup> "St. Andrew's Ball 2020: This year's Ball was a huge success with a turn-out of over 350 glamorous guests," 2020, accessed 01.05., 2022, <https://www.britishchambershanghai.cn/news/st-andrews-ball-2020-this-years-ball-was-a-huge-success-with-a-turn-out-of-over-350-glamorous-guests>.

<sup>219</sup> N.C.H. 08.12.1923, p. 689.

<sup>220</sup> N.C.H. 08.12.1923, p. 714-715. Also, Aall was a close friend of one of the main journalists that wrote the Woman's Page, Frances Russell. He has a signed photo of her in his photo collection, Aall is eventually mentioned by Russell many times on the Women's Page from 1930 and onwards. NB/Ubehandlet\_171/Bildesamlingen/Eske 41.

<sup>221</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor: Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. p. 53.

sleeveless dresses. As their dress lengths are out of the frame this has not been considered.

If take the central table as an example we can ascertain that Elizabeth Cunningham, Ingeborg Michelet and Mrs. von Haute, are all dressed in typical 1920s styles. Cunningham seems to have bobbed her hair and her arms seem sleeveless, which matches the cultural image of Americans at the time, they were considered more independent and fashion forward than the rest of the world. Likewise, Michelet wore a sleeveless dress with a headband. Mrs Marie Reiss and Mrs. Yada seem to both have more traditional clothing, Reiss has an ankle length dress, and long hair. Looking at the rest of the picture, it seems the Gibson Girl style, was in fashion, with some women also wearing quite traditional clothing. Some distinguishable headbands are visible, but not enough to get any detail. That also applies to the quality and details of the jewellery and cloth, along with how they looked walking and moving.

The female fashion at the dinner table was very modern. The most traditional dresses seen are the longer ones, yet most are still freely displaying ankles. The largest indicator that the fashion was modern are the hairstyles, mostly because they are most visible. Most women had their hair bobbed, kept it short, and there are ten or so with visible hair pieces.

### Concluding Remarks

By looking at what we can ascertain from the preceding and actual events of January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1924, we know have a foundation to build upon. But simply looking at the hard facts reveal a lot about the Norwegian community as well.

The matter of where the Michelets would sleep, enforces that these choices of venue either private or official was important and required several letters and people involved to reach a conclusion. But Michelet chooses to stay with a friend instead of the Hotel that still boasts that Charlie Chaplin<sup>222</sup>, should be an issue to his reputation and public status.

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<sup>222</sup> Aall claims to have introduced Chaplin to Shanghai, and further explains that on a visit to Hollywood in the fifties, Chaplin came over to Aall and thanked him for welcoming him to Shanghai. From NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet\_Eske3/VI/, "Generalkonsul i Shanghai» p. 5-6. 1950s.

Looking into the decisions surrounding this shows us that the image and projection of power and wealth is central to the Norwegian diplomats. Choosing to stay with the Thoresens, might have been a way for Michelet to connect further with the Norwegian community rather than the diplomatic community. There will be more on the Thoresens power and reputation in the next chapter.

Combining this with the French Club and all the details there, shows that tying diplomacy back to old European traditions were a central part of maintaining an image of sophistication. The menus, food and venue for the reception shows us that while the language spoken over the table was English, everything surrounding the guests were French. The dinner's reception relied heavily on being affiliated with French culture as opposed to Norwegian culture. The only truly Norwegian things about the reception were the guests, music, and Norwegian flags. The French will be circled back to in Chapter 6.

Establishing hard facts surrounding the menu, entertainment fashion and seating, is to support the further analysis, but that does not mean it is not telling on its own. The mix of conservative and modern female fashion shows how within the community, many different standards and voices existed. The Alcohol issue also distinguishes the Norwegian community in Shanghai from Norwegians at home. In the room, purely statistically it is likely that someone held prohibitionist views, but looking at the amount of consumed alcohol, this seems to have been a minority.

This chapter has laid out many of the facts and details that we can be almost certain happened. This has revealed some new aspects, but mostly established the framework for what is to come. It is time to look further into who these people were, and why they were there.

## Chapter 4: Norwegian Guests

### 4.0: Introduction

This chapter focuses on the Norwegian guests. The goal is to find out who were prioritized within the Norwegian community by the Norwegian officials. It does this by following who were on Michelet's itinerary, and this is strengthened by what information is available about the relationships they had. This will also be seen by how they were seated at the dinner. The Chapter thesis is therefore: *By using some of the Norwegian guests at the dinner as subjects for analysis, how will this inform the social hierarchy and relationships within the Norwegian community?*

### 4.1: The Michelets

The guests of honour were the Michelets, and therefore they were the most important couple at the dinner. The husband, Minister Johan Wilhelm Michelet became the Norwegian Minister to China and Japan in 1919.<sup>223</sup> While this was not an entirely supported decision, most complaints came from a few strong voices within the Norwegian community.<sup>224</sup> Before his time in China he had already held diplomatic positions in Berlin, Paris, and London, and eventually went to Rio de Janeiro in 1928. In 1936 he served in Helsinki. Here, during the Invasion of Norway in 1940, he would eventually become the loudest Norwegian voice in Sweden during the war, which is what he is mostly known for today.<sup>225</sup>

His wife was Ingeborg Marie von Benda, who he met and married during his time in Berlin.<sup>226</sup> She was West-Prussian and came from a wealthy family. There is not much info on her in literature or in the national archives, but in the private archives Aall writes much about her. The first thing Aall wrote about her is that he rarely used her first name, letters are signed as Madame Michelet, and she is referred to as such. Secondly, she has a reputation for being a lover of a good party. Aall once described her staying late at a house party in Beijing as “... *would as usual not go home and eventually the younger ladies in our party became the ones to break it up. But that is*

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<sup>223</sup> Dagbladet 12.09.1919 #227, p. 4. «New Norwegian Ministers»

<sup>224</sup> More on this in Chapter 6.

<sup>225</sup> Neumann and Leira, *Aktiv og avventende. Utenrikstjenestens liv 1905–2005*. p.232.

<sup>226</sup> "von Benda, Ingeborg Frieda Mirjam," 2001-2002, accessed 16.09, 2021, <https://data.eidsvollsmenn.no/getperson.php?personID=I17349&tree=Eidsvollsmenn#cite1>.

*the same old story with our representative's lady.*"<sup>227</sup> That is not to say she was either rude or not well liked, most enjoyed her company, but there were rumours about her. Thirdly, Aall refers to an episode from when he was in Beijing in early 1923, where while Johan Michelet was in Tokyo, The Madame had a month-long romantic affair with an Italian named Scaduto.<sup>228</sup> While this is not proof that anything ever happened, Aall does lay out evidence for it quite convincingly. At the end of the day, it seems Aall, and his contemporaries shrugged it off. To them it was good gossip on long Beijing days.

It should be noted that Aall tends to gossip in his archives. Especially about women and people he regarded as competition or superiors. The Michelets fall into both categories. This is an interesting prejudice or character flaw which informs the greater whole of life in Shanghai, but what was meant to criticize and analyse this gossip, can very quickly end up becoming gossip. I feel I must therefore again make it clear, before we fully delve into people Aall had relationships with, that when his sources are used, this is his opinion, and not fact. He is far from being an objective narrator.

Beijing was quite different from Shanghai. Where Shanghai was humid, Beijing was arid.<sup>229</sup> The streets of the city were Chinese, and the foreigners were in foreign lands. Beijing did not have its own club scene, and foreigners only real refuge from the city was the close beachside town Beidaihe.<sup>230</sup> Many of the diplomats and western elites in the city may have gone to China to experience the Shanghailanders lifestyle, only to be disappointed by the relatively dull city. Aall describes the foreigners of Beijing as "...more interested in the Chinese language"<sup>231</sup>, it reads as an insult, a joke about how little they had to do there.

In the early 1920s it was the capital of China on paper, but this was in the warlord era, and Beijing and the Republic of China was decentralized and disorganized. Beijing only controlled some of its surrounding districts. The government there, was therefore not of much use to the foreign officials, as the Chinese they wanted to

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<sup>227</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923.p. 72 «... vilde som vanlig ikke gå hjem og det blev de yngre damer i vort selskap som kom til at bryte op. Men det er jo den gamle historie med vor representants frue».

<sup>228</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923.

<sup>229</sup> Henriot, "SHANGHAI AND THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR. THE FATE OF REFUGEES." P. 219.

<sup>230</sup> Askeland, *The Neutral Enemy - A study of Norwegian representation and diplomacy in China 1937-1947*. P.27.

<sup>231</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordning\_Eske 1/3/ & Ubehandlet\_171/Eske\_2/3/. "Introduksjon"

influence were often relatively powerless or more likely, on the frontlines. Shanghai in comparison, as established in Chapter 2, was where the real power was considered to be.

This is not to say the city was not beautiful, there were enough ruins, temples, and palaces to spend a lifetime exploring, which Aall and Madame Michelet did several times, Aall claims this is where he learnt to use his camera, which is supported by the large number of touristy pictures taken in the ruins.<sup>232</sup> These pictures are quite extensive and could potentially be of good use for further research. For Aall and his contemporaries Beijing was a city which hosted smaller dinner parties, rather than the clubs, balls, and bars of Shanghai.

The Michelets did not enjoy Beijing. Michelet wrote the Foreign Ministry several times complaining of problems with insomnia and anxiety.<sup>233</sup> Coming to Shanghai and travelling home was important to the Michelets. Aall lived most of his life in Shanghai alone, but the Michelet family included two children. The family needs and interests were therefore different, and they tried to leave Beijing often.

The dinner is one of the occasions the family left Beijing, but there was work to be done in Shanghai. For the Michelets this was visits and meetings. Michelet's final itinerary was sent by telegram on Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup>. It confirms that the Michelet's would be staying at Olav Thoresen's house from Saturday to Tuesday. That Sunday, Johan Wilhelm Michelet's lunch was with Thoresen. Then there was the reception of the Norwegian community at the Astor House Hotel from 17 through 19. Sunday would finish with a dinner with Erik Tollefsen. On Monday, the 21<sup>st</sup>, it was Hsu Yuan at 11, lunch with Høhnke, and the dinner would be in his honour at the French Club. Tuesday was entirely reserved for boarding the "Macedonia" and starting the voyage home.

Firstly Olav Thoresen, Michelet's host, and friend. Thoresen was an established name in Shanghai by this point, being named the Nestor of the Norwegian community by his contemporaries.<sup>234</sup> His business O. Thoresen & Co started in 1898.<sup>235</sup> It was a shipping company, which also held an engineering department and

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<sup>232</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 31.03.1923. p. 86.

<sup>233</sup> Michelet til UD, 02.07.1927, RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0020

<sup>234</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0003/02/, «Vore Skib og de Kinesiske Sjørøvere» Wallem to *Editors*. 1930s.

<sup>235</sup> Helle, "Med verdifull last. Norske rederiers deltagelse i frakt av kinesiske arbeidsmigranter i perioden 1895-1930." p. 57 & RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0195.

a shipbroking department.<sup>236</sup> In 1922 it had gone public in Hong Kong, which was a huge mark of its success, and was from then on a joint stock company.<sup>237</sup> The company was one of the strongest Norwegian companies at the time, with a branch in Hong Kong as well. The Thoresen's also imported substantial amounts of Norwegian products, including Ringnes beer and Aquavit, although paper import was their main income.<sup>238</sup>

Thoresen was one of the most central figures within the Norwegian community and was close to both Aall and Michelet. In 1924, within the Norwegian community he held more influence than both. When he eventually retired in Norway, Aall visited him several times. In a letter from Arne Rustad<sup>239</sup>, a close friend to Aall, wrote that Thoresen wanted Aall to marry into the Thoresen family in 1933.<sup>240</sup>

Being close to Thoresen's prominence was a positive for the Michelets and displayed their integration and inclusion in the Norwegian circles of Shanghai. Chapter 3 brought up how the Astor House mattered and why it was an important symbol of power influence to simply stay there, but instead of presuming the Michelets cancelled their stay there, due to financial or other reasons, it could be just as likely that maintaining the relationship with Thoresen was deemed more important than staying at a prestigious hotel.

After the dinner with the Thoresen's, the reception at the Astor House Hotel was held from 17-19 on Sunday. There was no public record from this event, other than a single mention of it being a success.<sup>241</sup> These types of events worked the same way a town hall meeting would work today. Norwegians came with queries, worries or simple curiosity to discuss with their countries highest representative in their milieu. This was the closest Michelet got to a pure work function, maybe aside from the dinner.

After the reception, there was dinner with Tollefsen. The Tollefsens was a similarly established family in Shanghai. In 1924, there were two Tollefsen households. One was Alma and Theodor Tollefsen. Alma is notable, as she ran a hotel largely on her

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<sup>236</sup> Rune Svarverud Elisabeth Eide, "NORSK SJØFART, HANDEL OG FORRETNINGSDRIFT I DET GAMLE SHANGHAI," in *Årbok - Norsk sjøfartsmuseum*, ed. Rasmus o. Vigrestad Bård Kolltveit (Norsk sjøfartsmuseum, 1998). p.35-38.

<sup>237</sup> Helle, "Med verdifull last. Norske rederiers deltagelse i frakt av kinesiske arbeidsmigranter i perioden 1895-1930." p. 94-96

<sup>238</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangtze dragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 58-59.

<sup>239</sup> Seemingly one of Aall's closest friends, he was in Shanghai by 1924.

<sup>240</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/. «Kjære ven Nich, 24.04.1933"

<sup>241</sup> N. C. H. 26.01.1924.



own, beginning in 1905.<sup>242</sup> It was called the Scandinavian Hotel, but by January 1924, it had hit demanding times economically, as detailed in a letter to the Consulate on the 11<sup>th</sup>.<sup>243</sup> Theodor is the one listed as the former manager of the hotel. On paper he was in charge, but others have cited Alma as the true manager, for more see *I Yangzidragens Rike*.<sup>244</sup> In January their hotel had been sold to a P. F. Thompson, who was now paying the Tollefsens' outstanding bills.<sup>245</sup> They were presumably in Shanghai for a while longer, but they did not attend the dinner, and perhaps not even Michelet's Sunday dinner with the Tollefsens.

The other side of the Tollefsen family was Erik and Dolly Tollefsen. They were at the dinner. Erik Tollefsen held the highest position any Norwegian ever held within the Chinese government. He was the Co-Director of China's Postal Service in the 1920.<sup>246</sup> Which was a separate division from the Chinese Customs Service but shared the same building.<sup>247</sup> Tollefsen was among several other Norwegian employees within the Chinese Customs Service, but as commissioner he was part of the indoor division, or in more modern terms, a white-collar worker. This was the Tollefsen Michelet was set to meet.

The motives for this were to maintain a good relationship with the then highest-ranking Norwegian official within Chinese government at the time. Michelet was isolated in Beijing, and therefore seeking out and keeping close to those who were more connected than him, was essential to staying relevant and keeping his job. Tollefsen and Michelet were seemingly good friends, as Tollefsen was willing to host Michelet's family.

This matches something Aall describes in his first attempt at his memoirs, which Aall wrote from his wartime desk in Rio de Janeiro. Aall is critical of Michelet in this case. Aall wrote: "... if it had not been for our Minister Michelet. A man who had a peculiar ability to misunderstand anything or understand nothing at all. When the time came for the then French Inspector General to take his leave, Michelet began talking [to the Chinese officials] about making Tollefsen Inspector General<sup>248</sup> and thusly spoiled his

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<sup>242</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. P. 97.

<sup>243</sup> RA/S-2611/Ba/L0030/0001. «Siqueland to who it might concern" January 1924.

<sup>244</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 97.

<sup>245</sup> RA/S-2611/Ba/L0030/0001. «Siqueland to who it might concern" January 1924.

<sup>246</sup>

"Erik Tollefsen: from a sailor to a Co-Director of China's Post Service," Olga Medvedeva 2020, accessed 22.12, 2021, <https://norwegiansinchinacustoms.wordpress.com/2020/12/01/erik-tollefsen/>.

<sup>247</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927."

<sup>248</sup> Also referred to as *Inspector General*.

*[Tollefsen's] shot. The Frenchmen got nervous, and their man stayed 2 years longer than intended.*"<sup>249</sup> Aall never dates this, but Tollefsen would get the co-Inspector General job in early 1929 which means if we consider the order of events, what Aall is referring to would be happening around 1924-1925.<sup>250</sup> Making it entirely possible that Michelet started pushing for Tollefsen at their Sunday dinner. This makes the decision to eat dinner, a more than friendly act from Michelet, as it establishes a potential motive. At the end of the day though, this is a guess, but it does inform Michelet's purpose and motivations.

Michelet's next item on the itinerary was a meeting with Hsu Yuan<sup>251</sup>, who was the Chinese Commissioner for Foreign Affairs at the time.<sup>252</sup> He was the Chinese official who by the definition of his job was the closest to the foreign dignitaries in Shanghai. The Chinese Commissioner for Foreign Affairs was the official that was in contact with all the local foreign dignitaries, especially the Consulates, where him and his office was in daily contact to resolve matters largely regarding the extraterritorial rights, yet what his job entailed is ill defined.<sup>253</sup> There was nothing obvious that would connect Michelet's motivations to something grander than it just being a quick visit. There is also not much else written about Hsu Yuan in research literature. He attended the dinner and was seated to Aall's left side.

The next meeting on the itinerary would be lunch with Frithjof Gustav Carl Høhnke<sup>254</sup> who was married to Margrethe Wilhelmine Konow.<sup>255</sup> Høhnke was by 1924 also a prominent Norwegian businessman in Shanghai. He bought the Union Brewery in 1919, and he stayed the main shareholder up until 1935, and he stayed on as one of several directors for the brewery until it was seized by the communists in 1949.<sup>256</sup> The brewery is still operating today.<sup>257</sup> While opening a brewery does not necessarily mean that much today, The Scandinavian Brewery, as it was sometimes called, was

<sup>249</sup> «hvis det ikke hadde vært for Minister Michelet. Denne mann hadde en merkelig evne til å misforstå all eller ikke forstå noe. Da det led mot den tid da den franske Postinspektør skulde ta avsked, begynte Michelet å snakke om at man burde gjøre Tollefsen til Inspector og gikk omkring og spolerte saken. Franskmenne blev nervøse og fikk sin mann til å forbli 2 år lengre enn han ellers skulde ha blitt». NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio – China, 1942, p. 21-22.

<sup>250</sup> North China Herald 1929.03.09.

<sup>251</sup> Also referred to as C. F. Hsu (English name).

<sup>252</sup> John Benjamin Powell, "Who's who in China; containing the pictures and biographies of China's best known political, financial, business and professional men ", ed. M. C. Powell (Third Edition., Shanghai: The China Weekly Review, 1925). <https://archive.org/details/whoswhoinchinaco00poweuoft/page/10/mode/2up?ref=ol>. p. 101.

<sup>253</sup> Largely only referred to in contemporary state documents or Who's Who books.

<sup>254</sup> Sometimes spelt as Hoenke or Höenhke.

<sup>255</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio – China, 1942, p. 17.

<sup>256</sup> Elisabeth Eide, "NORSK SJØFART, HANDEL OG FORRETNINGSDRIFT I DET GAMLE SHANGHAI."

<sup>257</sup> "Preservation of old brewery marks historic change in attitudes," Shanghai Daily, 2014, accessed 03.03, 2022, <https://archive.shine.cn/feature/art-and-culture/Preservation-of-old-brewery-marks-historic-change-in-attitudes/shdaily.shtml>.

the first industrial grade brewery in Shanghai, and therefore played a key role in normalizing beer to the Chinese and making it available for foreign expatriates. At the dinner party, seven Union Brewery beers were ordered, some of which were presumably ordered by the Frithjof Høhnke, who attended, without his wife.

Høhnke and Aall were good friends. They lived together in Shanghai after the war.<sup>258</sup> Aall described him as «... *he embodied hospitality and his dinners were the best, his wine the most exquisite in Shanghai (and naturally he had the best beer) and his cigars were always Havana*»<sup>259</sup>. A telegram conversation in December 1923 between Høhnke and Aall, who was travelling with Einar Evensen to Hong Kong, shows the tone of their friendship.<sup>260</sup>

Høhnke responded to Aall and Evensen:

*“Aall, Evensen «Angkor»  
What the fuck do you want, Happy travels.  
Høhnke”*<sup>261</sup>

To which Aall and Evensen responded:

*“Høhnke. “Paul Lecat”  
You shit. From the boys.”*<sup>262</sup>

In other words, they had a playful tone.

The relationship Michelet and Høhnke is unknown. From how Aall and others liked him, it is safe to assume it was a good relationship. Without any other proof it is safe to assume it was a business meeting, although some good alcohol was probably had.

After that Michelet's plans were to go to the dinner party and then leave on the “Macedonia the morning after. And while the many meetings Michelet had was important, we do not know what his wife was doing at the time. Some of her husband's meetings she might have gone to as well, especially the dinners, but all we know from archival sources is as previously mentioned, that she drove around to

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<sup>258</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. P. 118

<sup>259</sup> «Gjestfriheten selv og hans middage var de beste, hans vine de mest utsøkte man fikk i Shanghai (og det beste öl hadde han naturligvis)» NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio – China, 1942, p. 19.

<sup>260</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio – China, 1942, p. 19.

<sup>261</sup> «Aall, Evensen «Angkor Hva fanden vil dere, Lykkelig reise. Høhnke» NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. p. 6.

<sup>262</sup> «Høhnke. “Paul Lecat” Din dritt, Hilsen Gutta» NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. s.6.

visit the Norwegian wives in Shanghai. It seems unlikely that any record of this exists. Sadly, her perspective for this project is seen through either Aall's or official eyes. The official side is very, well official about her life, never mentioning any details. Aall frames her as entertaining and nice, while also overstaying her welcome and being unfaithful.

Her perspective on her house visit to the wives of Shanghai would have been a unique look into what the life of women in the colony were like. There could have been constructed a similar itinerary analysis looking into her day, which would help inform the larger social hierarchy and roles of the Norwegian Community.

During the stay in Shanghai, Aall was in several of the meetings, lunches and receptions Michelet went to. I have also displayed some animosity between the two. Aall seems to not be a huge fan of Michelet, behind his back, and only in private writings and correspondence, never naming anything specifically. This comes through in the section about the Tollefsens. Aall would later interrogate why Minister Michelet was appointed to China at all, more on this in Chapter 6.

One of the reasons Aall gives for the tension between them is in his 1960s memoir attempt, where he claims Aall was going to get Michelet's job after him, but it eventually was given to Ludvig Aubert in 1930 instead.<sup>263</sup> And while Aall was frustrated with Michelet at times, he despised Aubert. Enough to write six pages in 1939 detailing Aubert's many grievances against Aall, these pages seem to have been meant for Aall only.<sup>264</sup> This feud is interesting but is 10 years away from the dinner. The Michelet-Aall relationship was despite this mostly good, and Aall often expressed sympathies for Michelet's difficulties acclimating to Beijing and being introduced to China without prior knowledge. Most difficulties between them seems to come from the hierarchical tensions of the foreign department.

## 4.2: Arne Sørensen

Aall had a few feuds and some people he really disliked. First among them, chronologically, was Arne Sørensen<sup>265</sup>, who attended the dinner.

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<sup>263</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Erindringer i Rio, 40 aar i utenrikstjenesten, p.3.

<sup>264</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/D/Da/0003/03/, «Aubert-Aall 24.04.1923.»

<sup>265</sup> Also used Sorensen and Sørensen interchangeably, not to be confused with Arne Schou Sørensen, a contemporary Vice-Consul in Hong Kong.

Sørensen was the Vice Consul at the Norwegian Consulate in Shanghai from 25.8.1921 to 22.08.1923.<sup>266</sup> This two-year contract, required him to be able to perform the same duties as the Consul General, as the vice would be the acting Consul if the Consul General were indisposed or unavailable. Sørensen's life in Shanghai, began when he got the job as Vice Consul, he was born in Stavanger, and had already worked and been trained as an attorney there.<sup>267</sup>

Aall's private archives contain Aall's first impressions of Sørensen in a letter from his friend Herlof Herlofson's<sup>268</sup> American wife who wrote "*I met the new Vice Consul the other day. He is a nice man, when he is sober, which is very seldom*"<sup>269</sup>, Aall continues with his own reflection on Sørensen "*... did not meet at the office on his first day, was drinking in the Shanghai Club ... in most ways unfit for this post, and I had massive difficulties with him. I got rid of him as soon as his two-year contract expired. ... he died in a hospital, leaving only debt and misery behind*"<sup>270</sup>.

Sørensen has been mentioned before, he was the one who took charge of the Consulate in 1923 when Aall was in Beijing. This is when there is a suspicious gap in the archives, as referred to in Chapter 1. While the low amounts of archival material do not necessarily mean he was bad at his job, it does match what Aall writes about him. This is also the problem with the source material on Sørensen, most of it is from Aall who clearly disliked him. There is a folder within Aall's private archives titled "Sørensen"<sup>271</sup> which includes letters to and from Sørensen, several to his father, none are regarding Aall.<sup>272</sup> I have been unable to identify why Aall had these in his possession at all, it could possibly be related to Sørensen's will.

The letters there lay out the details on Sørensen's life. He claims he left Norway to seek a better fortune in China, but his father claimed he travelled to Shanghai for the drink.<sup>273</sup> In Shanghai he had many economic troubles on top of this. In 1923, Sørensen's home in Shanghai was foreclosed and he was 10 000 kroner in debt.<sup>274</sup>

<sup>266</sup> Utenriksdepartementet, Short Oversikt over norske, ambassader, konsulater, interessekontor mm i årene 1906-2001. P. 97.

<sup>267</sup> RA/S-2231/E/Ef/Folketellingen 1910/1210/

<sup>268</sup> An established businessman himself, also present at the dinner party. Details in: Elisabeth Eide, "NORSK SJØFART, HANDEL OG FORRETNINGSDRIFT I DET GAMLE SHANGHAI."

<sup>269</sup> Written in English. NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio - China, 1942, p. 16.

<sup>270</sup> «møtte ikke paa kontoret første dag, blev funnet i baren på Shai ... på mange måter en uskikket mann for denne post, og jeg hadde massevis av vanskeligheter med ham. Jeg blev kvitt ham så fort hans toårs kontrakt var utløpen ... Til slutt døde han på hospital, efterlatende sig bare gjell og elendighet.» NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio - China, 1942, p. 16.

<sup>271</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/.

<sup>272</sup> N. B. Sørensen, owner of a Steamship business. Devout Christian and Prohibitionist.

<sup>273</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/. «Far-A. Sørensen.» 1922.

<sup>274</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/. «Kjære ven Nich, 24th april 1933".

This became worse when his contract expired. In a letter from his father in Stavanger from January 1924 his post Consulate troubles are detailed. It is made clear that Sørensen was unemployed, during the fall of 1923.<sup>275</sup> His father is disappointed and asks his son to seek God and leave the drinking behind, he also orders his son to use his privileged and educated position to get a decent job. From other letters and telegrams, we can see that Sørensen applied to the Bangkok Consulate in November, and that Aall advised him and interfered his application by contacting the Foreign Ministry by telegram, asking the Ministry to fund Sørensen so he could leave Asia completely.<sup>276</sup> This does not happen.

On January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1924, Sørensen arrived at the dinner. He had recently been employed on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 1924; he was now the Sub-Manager of the Sino Scandinavian Bank.<sup>277</sup> This bank will come back in Chapter 7, but in short it was a fiasco, and was bankrupt by 1926. This led Sørensen to making his own attorney business in Shanghai, specializing in Norwegian business law. His clients, according to the Sørensen folder in Aall's private archives, were originally friendly, but in the end mostly tired. At the same time-period, he was thrown out of the French Club<sup>278</sup>, and was in several fights<sup>279</sup>. Sørensen died in Shanghai in 1933.<sup>280</sup>

Sørensen plays a key role in this thesis. If this is to truly discuss and interrogate the dinner to understand the Norwegian community, it cannot all be focused on the most upstanding members of society present. Sørensen is a stand in, or strawman for those who was not necessarily exceptional at what they did, making him stand out from Aall, Michelet and the ones on Michelet's itinerary who are all presented to be exceptional.

In my opinion Sørensen is not a failure, but based on Aall's archives, he was perceived as one. For this thesis his reputation matters, and not what his actual story was.

Sørensen was one of three Vice-Consuls Aall had during his time in Shanghai, the others being Sørensen's successor Thorgeir Sigveland the current Vice Consul in 1924, and Otto Kildal who held the job from 1933 and became Consul General after the war.<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>275</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Da/L0095/0001/.

<sup>276</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Da/L0095/0001/. «Telegram til UD»

<sup>277</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0022/0001/. «Sigveland-Michelet.» 7.01.1924.

<sup>278</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/. «Arne Sørensen fra fader» 20.04.1925..

<sup>279</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #2/5/1/. «Kjære ven Nich, 24.04.1933".

<sup>280</sup> Haugesunds avis, 18.01.1933.

<sup>281</sup> Utenriksdepartementet, Short Oversikt over norske, ambassader, konsulater, interessekontor mm i årene 1906-2001. P.95.

### 4.3: Seating

Now that the details of some prominent Norwegian Shanghailanders have been laid out, it is time to begin looking at how they were seated and what that implied. This is complicated to do without a visual, so I would encourage the reader to look at the complete table seating, in Appendix 3. All people mentioned in this chapter have been marked green, if someone was mentioned earlier, they are blue and if they are mentioned later, they are marked yellow. This is to make it more tangible and understandable. Some tables will show up from this point on, displaying certain sections of the seating plan, or collected statistics. This is also to simplify and make it more understandable, but I would advise bookmarking the Appendixes.

The best place to start when analysing the table plan is the central table. By this I mean the bottom of the horseshoe.<sup>282</sup> The first thing to point out there is that there are almost no Norwegians. Those represented are Aall, the Michelets and the Tollefsens. This is important as it implies a certain priority and protocol. The priority of this dinner, since there are almost no Norwegians at the central table, is not to further the bonds of the Norwegian community with their minister and Consul General, the priority is to further the bonds between the Minister and Consul General with the rest of the Consular Corps of Shanghai and Chinese officials. More on this in Chapter 5.

It also shows us protocol, note that Aall and Michelet are seated across from each other, and Madame Michelet is seated next to Aall. This was the standard at the time. If we look who they are sitting next to, are seated according to their rank and position in Shanghai society, but more on those later. The last thing is the Tollefsens them sitting at the same table as the diplomatic and military officials really does imply their status, or the status they wanted to project to the people around them. It would match Aall's anecdote on Michelet positioning Tollefsen from earlier in this chapter. Also notice that both the Tollefsens are seated next to Chinese officials. This also seems intentional as at least Tollefsen would have to speak some number of Chinese to function in his position as Commissioner of the Post. If this extends to Dolly Tollefsen, I do not know, but based on her seating it would imply so. The couple is

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<sup>282</sup> These horseshoe patterns are still the standard diplomatic table seating, originating in European courts. Neumann, *Diplomatic Sites: A Critical Enquiry*. p. 57-59.

also separated, which implies Aall placed them more tactically to converse with the Chinese. This also extends to Michelet, who also spoke Chinese.

Language is complicated to talk about. Almost all the guests present, were presumably multilingual. Which means, I have no way of knowing what language was being spoken where and by whom at the table. Therefore, people have been sorted by nationality, because this is manageable, and that this tells us what their first language was. In the rest of the world, the *lingua franca*, was French, but in Shanghai and China, this was only the case for the French Concession, as most spoke English, especially the local Shanghainese, whose dialect was mockingly called pidgin English.<sup>283</sup> A more extensive study could try to map what languages individuals spoke, but this would quickly become complex. An example is Aall, who at the end of his life claimed to speak English, Norwegian, French, Chinese and Portuguese as well as “*Scandinavian*”<sup>284</sup>.

Table 1: Sorted by seating section and nationality

TABLE 1	CENTRE TABLE	LEFT WING	RIGHT WING	SUM	With this said, of the 40+ Norwegians present, only three were important enough to be seated front and centre. The rest of the Norwegians were
NORWEGIANS	5	17	20	40	
INTERNATIONALS	27	19	16	62	
UNSURE	0	3	2	5	
TOTAL	32	39	42	107	

sectioned off to the right and left wings of the table. If you look to Table 1, Norwegians are by far the majority group in the wings. This implies a few different things.

One is that Norwegians mostly were gathered around other Scandinavians. If we look to other, more private events hosted by Aall such as his 1923 birthday, the guest list was Scandinavian. Overlapping guest were the Knipschildts, the von Heidenstrams, Vilhelm Meyer, the Utnes, the Byes, the Blixs, the Thoresens, Høhnke, Miss Dahl and the Sems.<sup>285</sup> The birthday was also hosted at the French Club. How much validity and value there is in matching the guest list of the Michelet dinner with the birthday depends on if the birthday was a truly private affair. As there are no other sources than a diary entry, giving us parts of the guest list, we will have to assume that it was private. If so, it establishes Aall's network of friends outside of

<sup>283</sup> This is why the current romanization is called pinyin. Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P. 14-15.

<sup>284</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/Ubehandlet kasse #3/3/- Noen nedtegnelser fra aftner i Rio – China, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>285</sup> NB: Ubehandlet \_ 171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 05-06.1923.



work. Note that Sørensen for example was not present for Aall's birthday, putting validity in their conflict. Many of these have positive accounts written about them in Aall's later memoirs as well, implying lasting friendships. It also shows us that these lasting friendships were largely Scandinavian for Aall and let us assume for the rest of the Norwegian settlement. Scandinavian connectiveness will be covered more in chapter 5.

Another thing we can ascertain from looking at the Norwegian seating at the table is that although many sat with people with different nationalities, from the table seating alone, it seems like most of the Norwegians were sectioned off into groups. The left wing for example features three Captains of different Norwegian vessels. Relative to others at the dinner party, many of which were diplomats and businessowners, being *just* a captain was a low position. If we keep this in mind and look back at the seating of the three Captains, it implies a certain, hesitancy to fully introduce and show them off to the finer members of society at the central table. This is not the only example of these sections; they were often by nationality as well. In the appendixes this becomes clear, as the ends of each wing are where most Norwegians were seated. This is clearly something Aall did deliberately, but why he did it is unclear. It could be because of a language barrier; class divide or for personal reasons. It does however seem that it was a class barrier.

The third point is an extension of this and regards which Norwegians were invited. Although as stated in the previous paragraph some of the seating arrangements might imply exclusion, it should also be considered that an invite and seat at this table was an inclusion. Now most of the Norwegians invited were prominent, they were the kinds of people on Michelet's itinerary, respected and valued members of the Norwegian community in Shanghai.

The Norwegian community in Shanghai was more than these people. There are for example no missionaries present, no seamen and furthermore no one aside from maybe the captains who did not have any form of higher education. Being included at the dinner party had a high barrier of entry, it was a privilege for already privileged people. Showing us that this was primarily a high-society Shanghaileader event. If we look at it a few steps removed, this might be a conscious attempt to frame and present the Norwegian community in the best possible light, having the dinner serve as an advertisement for curious foreigners who might strike a new deal over the dinner table with a respected member of the Norwegian community in Shanghai.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter set out to understand the social hierarchy within the Norwegian community. To do this it established a few distinct reasons for who the ministry deemed important, through analysing Michelet's itinerary. The itinerary shows us who required a home visit. The reason for this varied, Hsu Yuan was out of obligation, The Tollefsens were visited as they had an opportunity for social climbing, Høhnke had a flourishing business and the Thoresens were friends. The reasons were not necessarily so binary, but for the purpose of this thesis, they stand in as categories representing the different interests and goals Michelet and by extension Norway had. These itinerary categories were obligation, social climbing, economic reasons, and relationships.

The Norwegian community was much bigger than the people mentioned in this chapter, but the reasons for why they were invited can be seen in the people that were focused on. Sørensen, for example, is invited due to his new position, and old affiliation with the Consulate. To match it with the categories, Sørensen was invited out of obligation and because of his workplace's potential economic position, and by extension, the potential for social climbing.

Even though these categories simplify complex decisions, they are a unique tool in trying to understand the seating plan, especially as we do not have all the details, and a lot of the sources available, are quite biased. In the last part of the chapter, I began looking into the sectioning of groups. Such as the captains. If we use the itinerary categories to understand their section of the table, they were sectioned by economic reasons and by their low potential for social climbing. They were invited due to obligation.

This has been the main goal of this chapter, to understand the internal social hierarchy within the Norwegian community. Based on the available sources, Michelet's itinerary served as the guidebook to what the Norwegian officials deemed important. It was contrasted with Sørensen, who at least Aall found to be not important, yet he was invited anyway, showing us that it was more important to present the community as a clean and perfect house, than excluding some of its members due to personal conflicts.

## Chapter 5: Internationals

### 5.0: Introduction

The previous chapter set out to explain the internal structure of the Norwegian community. This chapter will build on what was discussed and established there, while expanding the searchlight to the entire dinner table. To do this it will approach specific groups, this is to avoid repetition and bring out patterns. The goal for this chapter will therefore be: *By building examples of motivations established in chapter 4, how will expanding the searchlight to the entire table further contextualize the social hierarchy at the dinner?*

### 5.1: Numbers and relationships

Table 2: Nationalities by number

NATION		At the dinner there were at least twelve nationalities present.
AMERICAN	12	How many there were of each group is represented in the table 2 on this page. Why they are sorted by nationality and not language was explained in chapter 4. Looking at the data in table 2, we see which nations were the most represented. This informs us of which groups the organizers could reach out to, and who they could not. Those who were not present will be covered in chapter 6. The largest represented group was the Norwegians, the second largest group was the Chinese, then the Americans, Swedes, British, and Danes. After these there are nationalities that are most often represented by a single couple, these were mostly Consuls of their respected nations. Let us begin with the second largest group. Of the 14 Chinese present only two were women, they were married to
BELGIAN	2	
BRITISH	9	
CHILEAN <sup>286</sup>	1	
CHINESE	14	
DANISH	6	
GERMAN <sup>287</sup>	2	
ITALIAN	1	
JAPANESE	2	
NORWEGIAN	41	
SWEDISH	10	
SWISS	1	
UNSURE	6	
SUM	107	

the Chevalier<sup>288</sup> Chen Shik-kuang, who at the time was the Chief Secretary to the Chinese Bureau of Foreign Affairs and Lo Tah-chuan, who was the Secretary to General Ho Fenglin. There were also two women, Mabel, and Marguerite Chen,

<sup>286</sup> Only represented by Consul, nationality unsure.

<sup>287</sup> Representing Brazil as Consuls

<sup>288</sup> French honorific.

potentially sisters who went by their English names. Of the different nationalities the Chinese were the group with the least women.

*Table 3: Marital status by number*

The Chen's also represent a small minority of single women at the dinner. Of the forty women there, only six were not married or in a relationship with a male guest. While attempts at finding wedding dates for the guests who arrived as a couples has proven difficult, but it seems that most if not all couples were married at the time. The marital status of many of the guest is still quite

unsure, and those who are especially uncertain have been marked as such in appendix 6 which sorts the table seating by marital status.

TABLE 3	PEOPLE
<b>MEN</b>	67
<b>WOMEN</b>	40
<b>MARRIED MEN</b>	35
<b>MARRIED WOMEN</b>	36
<b>SINGLE MEN</b>	29
<b>SINGLE WOMEN</b>	6

There were almost five times as many single men present then single women present, even considering that there were more men present, this is a major difference. Even considering that some details about their marital status are wrong, the discrepancy is large enough that the point still stands. This is not shocking. There were more possibilities for single men in Shanghai than for single women.<sup>289</sup>

Before delving into a wider gender role section, I want to focus on the placement of the single people. While they are spread all over the table, there is especially a section at the end of each side of the table, where they are sectioned. Especially on the right wing, where Vice Consul Siqveland is seated, he was also single at the time. This section underlines how important marriage was at these events. Even the married couples, where only one spouse was present, are placed more sporadically and by the status the couple held, instead of in these single sections.

To put it succinctly, single guests held a lower status than married couples from similar backgrounds, they were therefore sectioned of to sit together, potentially as an act of matchmaking. In my research I have not been able to find any single dinner guest, who met their future spouse there.

<sup>289</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P.102-103.

The single women present are hard to define, as most of the source material used here and produced at the time were made by men and kept a male perspective. Take Gerda Mladeck as an example, she was born Gerda Hansen, her father was a Norwegian State Engineer.<sup>290</sup> in his obituary from 1922, Gerda used his middle name Mladeck, there are no reasons given for this.<sup>291</sup> 2 years later she was living in Shanghai and attended the dinner. The only other detail is that she was staying with the Tollefsens<sup>292</sup>. Presumably, that was what got her on the guestlist, as there are no other connections to Aall and/or Michelet. To use the itinerary definitions, she was invited due to obligation and the Michelets' relationship with the Tollefsens. Trying to map a full understanding of where and why she was present, is close to impossible. Questions about marriage and relationships become more complicated, but from the source material on her and the five others like her we can assume they all were invited by some connection to important guests there.

Keep in mind, the single sections were not ignored. The Vice Consul were placed in one of the single sections, making them seated close to a Norwegian official. Then again this might say more about Siqveland's position. It implies that even the second highest position at the Consulate, was less respected if they were not married, Siqveland's seating can be interpreted as more of a punishment, than appeasement of the single guests.

To summarize, the gender dynamics within the single divide, is stark, showing us more of the underlying implications of being invited and being *worthy* of the dinner. Firstly, marriage matters. It seems that not being married as a woman, severely limits your options, but the single men as well needed strong titles. The foremost of this is probably Jean Luc Isler, who during his 10 years in Shanghai, never seemed to marry, but the position of Consul General for Switzerland outweighed his civilian status.<sup>293</sup> Which is why he is seated prominently at the central table.

My second point is broader. In most of the Shanghai clubs, women were kept out, the French club was an early exception, but admitting entrance did not mean

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<sup>290</sup> "Havneingeniøren," Bergen Byarkiv, 2006, accessed 27.04, 2022, <https://www.bergenbyarkiv.no/oppslagsverket/2006/09/23/havneingenioren/>.

<sup>291</sup> Aftenposten 23.05.1922.

<sup>292</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>293</sup> Also, Johannes Lukas Isler. "Information about Person 8324, Isler, Johann Lukas," Diplomatische Dokumente der Schweiz, 2022, accessed 03.04, 2022, [https://dodis.ch/P8324?p=0&dad=0&dau=0&dm=1&o=0&ds=0&dc=0#anc\\_dm](https://dodis.ch/P8324?p=0&dad=0&dau=0&dm=1&o=0&ds=0&dc=0#anc_dm).

membership.<sup>294</sup> Aside from the dinner itself, this would mean women would be excluded from the soft-power circles the Shanghailanders elites thrived in. These dinners were therefore a potential chance to enter these clubs and be present at some of the over the table discussions, although still to a limited degree.

The third point expands to include nationality. There is more to come on nationalities omitted from the dinner in a later chapter, but especially the Chinese must be mentioned here. Of the Chinese men present almost none have their wives, those who do have been noted already. Why this is, have been difficult to find in the available source material. It does however depict the wider divide between Chinese and the Westerners. In the picture used in chapter 4, we see quite clearly General He Fenglin, Wang Chieng-chen and Admiral Lin Jianzhang are all wearing a form of Chinese formal garb. Details are hard to tell in the picture, but compared to Chevalier Chen or Lo from earlier, who both wore the typically tuxedo *uniform*, that close to all the men were wearing at the dinner a clear divide is visible. There are the ones happy to adapt to the foreign cultures, and those who stand by older traditions. In other words, gender dynamics and cultural attitudes varied within cultures and communities, but even within these groups, there were clear divides.

Take the French Club as another example of this. It was relatively quick to accept women in their venues, but they were very much a part of the “*Dogs and Chinese not admitted*”<sup>295</sup> attitude. For the Chinese guests, and many of the women, this was at the time their only chance to visit the Club, making it a more loaded visit for them than for the men who visited it daily for lunch and tiffin.

## 5.2: The English and The Americans

Edwin Sheddan Cunningham and Elizabeth Rhoda Israel Cunningham were the American Consular couple. And therefore, a powerful family within Shanghai. The American presence in the city was only behind the British and French, as detailed in chapter 2. The Cunninghams themselves has however not been written about extensively in any work as far as I have been able to find.<sup>296</sup> This has made some

<sup>294</sup> For more details see chapter 2.

<sup>295</sup> Robert A. Bickers and Jeffrey N. Wasserstrom, "Shanghai's 'Dogs and Chinese Not Admitted' Sign: Legend, History and Contemporary Symbol," *The China Quarterly*, no. 142 (1995), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/655423>.

<sup>296</sup> There has been Norwegian texts written about an Edward Cunningham, who functioned as the Swedish-Norwegian Consul in Shanghai at one point, but he preceded Edwin by thirty or so years and there is no other relation. See Myrstad, "Generalkonsulatet i Kina - En studie av en svensk-norsk utenrikstasjon." Or even: Makko, *European Small States and the Role of Consuls in the Age of Empire*.

details about them unclear. As an example, there seems to be some references to Elizabeth being Jewish in Aall's private archives.<sup>297</sup> Her middle name could imply Jewish heritage, but she is buried in a Christian graveyard. Edwin was baptized. This might have been a loose accusation or misunderstanding by Aall.

Being Jewish was not uncommon in Shanghai, it served as a last resort for many jews, especially in the 1930s, when many countries denied their entry.<sup>298</sup> At the dinner there was at least one jew, namely Hugo Reiss, the acting Consul for Brazil and a prominent businessman and manager of the Shanghai location of Hugo Reiss & Co.<sup>299</sup> Reiss is seated at the central table, but was a German native, Consuls representing other countries than their own was common, but also showed a lack of interest or resources used by the Consulate's country in its respective region.<sup>300</sup> Reiss is a good example of Jewish integration in Shanghai, and how it seems to matter relatively little to those present at the dinner.

Now if the Cunninghams were Jewish or not, is not that relevant. Their history together begins in South Africa, where Elizabeth was from, Edwin was the Consul there when they met. They married in 1911 and he became the Consul General in Shanghai in 1914 and stayed there until 1935. Cunningham retired at the age of sixty-seven, which is two years more than the age limit for a diplomat was and is.<sup>301</sup> This was a rare occurrence and came directly from the desk of the then United States Foreign Secretary. This also meant that Edwin was the Senior Consul from 1926 to 1935, keeping Aall away from the title by the two extra years his tenure was extended.

Cunningham was a prominent figure in Shanghai, and the couple was seated next to the Michelets and Aall, implying they were the second most important guests after the Michelets. There are however some other reasons for why they were seated there. Firstly, Edwin Cunningham was from 1903 to 1906 the American Consul in Bergen, Norway.<sup>302</sup> Which gave him a unique familiarity with Norway. This is mentioned in Aall's diaries, where he is described as a "... *true friend of Norway*" and

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<sup>297</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923, p. 89-93.

<sup>298</sup> Helen Zia, *Last Boat Out of Shanghai : the Epic Story of the Chinese Who Fled Mao's Revolution* (Random House Publishing Group, 2019). p. 130-131.

<sup>299</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*. P. 180.

<sup>300</sup> Makko, *European Small States and the Role of Consuls in the Age of Empire*.

<sup>301</sup> George, *Men of Shanghai and North China*.p. 97-100.

<sup>302</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.25.

“... still had affection for Norway after all those years”<sup>303</sup>. At a dinner held in April of 1923, Aall noted in his diaries that Cunningham mentioned his time in Norway 3 times, commenting on the crowning of King Haakon and joking about the weather in Bergen.<sup>304</sup> Aall and Cunningham already had a strong relationship by 1924, but by the 1930s Aall claims they operated as co-Senior Consuls, Aall does not feel like explaining what he meant by this, and it is not referred to anywhere else.<sup>305</sup>

The second point regards Aall's position in the Court of Consuls. Which is the reason many judges and attorneys are present at the dinner.<sup>306</sup> I have been unable to find a full list of who sat when on the council, but Barton, Cunningham and Aall were the committee from 1922 to 1923. The connections Aall made in those court rooms, combined with his time working and living in both New York and London, positioned Aall to be a close friend to the English and Americans. The positioning of the Central table is very reflective of this. To underline this, I refer to table 4.

Table 4: Central table by nationality

Chinese																Chinese
Chinese																Chinese
Swedish																Norwegian
Chinese																Swedish
	Norwegian	British	Swiss	American	Japanese	American	Norwegian	Norwegian	Chinese	Belgian	British	American	Chilean	Chinese	Brazilian	

From this table we clearly see that there was only one Norwegian among the Central table. This was Erik Tollefsen, who was featured in Chapter 4. The news reports and the announcements call this a meeting with the Norwegian Community and their Minister.<sup>307</sup> But if we were to purely look on the Seating arrangements, this seems like a purely international event. If we start by looking at the ones seated next to

<sup>303</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, «Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.25..

<sup>304</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 17.04.1923.

<sup>305</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske3/6/5/. «Shanghais internationale settlement.» p.4.

<sup>306</sup> Aall, "Nogle praktiske erfaringer fra mit arbeid i de særlige domstoler i Shanghai."

<sup>307</sup> The Evening News "Norwegians Here to Give Greetings to Their Minister" 18.01.1924.



Michelet, he had General He Fenglin to his right and Elizabeth Cunningham to his left. He did sit opposite of Aall, as is customary and polite. Madame Michelet is seated next to Aall and Edwin Cunningham.

Now seating the Cunninghams in such a way is an informed decision. Especially if we assume Aall was setting them up to have fulfilling conversations with the Michelets. As far as I know Michelet only had passing contact and knowledge with the Cunninghams. But with Edwin's history with Norway, which Aall quite literally took note of, Edwin would be a good conversationalist for the homeward bound Michelets.

On Michelet's other side, General He seems to have had no prior connection to Norway. If we apply the itinerary categories, positioning the General there, is out of obligation and hospitality, as well as a way to affiliate and therefore position Michelet and Aall next to important Chinese officials. While the colonial influence in Shanghai was large, at the end of the day, it was a Chinese city. And having a General and Admiral at your dinner during a time of civil war, granted the dinner authority the same way having a French menu and the highest officials from the governing nations of the International Settlement present.

Michelet also spoke Mandarin, which would potentially open up the conversation with the Chinese officials.<sup>308</sup> This is not to say that the Chinese did not speak English, for the upper middle class this had become quite common by the 1920s, especially serving as an intermediary between Chinese and foreigners was lucrative, within Shanghai the International Settlement's police and military force, The Shanghai Volunteer Corps, had formed an entire company of local Chinese interpreters, they were mainly middle-class citizens.<sup>309</sup> For the higher classes studying abroad had become very attractive, as this opened up for more opportunities within the treaty ports. This was potentially the fastest way to becoming a Chinese Shanghaileander. This was not as common for the generation of Chinese present at the dinner. It is harder to know what Michelet discussed with the General, diplomacy's main goal is information production as defined by Neumann, perhaps Michelet wanted details about the current conflict or to soften bonds between Norway and China.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>308</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordning\_Eske 1/3/ & Ubehandlet\_171/Eske\_2/3/. "Introduction"

<sup>309</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. p.100-102.

<sup>310</sup> Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats: Inside a European Foreign Ministry*. P.

However good the conversations were, it is the soft power implications of the placements that matter. The other high-ranking English-speaking officials at the central table was Sir Sidney Barton and Judge Charles Lobinger. Sidney Barton was briefly mentioned earlier, as he was one of the three Consuls General on the Court of Consuls at the time, he represented Britain. Barton has been written about more extensively in the book by P. D. Coates, *The China Consuls*.<sup>311</sup> Barton became Consul in 1922 and was dramatically expelled/banished in 1929, following repercussions from the May 30<sup>th</sup> Movement in 1925. Barton has been described as very pro-settler and was very much against giving up extraterritoriality in any part of China, he ended his career as Consul General in Addis Ababa.<sup>312</sup>

In Aall's 1960s memoirs, he mentions that Barton somehow supported the Italian invasion under Mussolini in 1936, this is a hefty accusation which is not given much of an explanation for how it happened or any factual grounding, but it does make Barton look like a formidable and influential Consul.<sup>313</sup> In the same memoir, Aall refers to Barton as one of the most educated and prepared foreigners, especially on Chinese matters, noting that when Chinese attempted to for example debate extraterritoriality and Unequal Treaties, Barton would intervene and correct them. This matches the accounts of Barton eventually becoming a nuisance to both China and the British Chamberlain Government, especially after Chang Kai-shek's nationalists came to power.<sup>314</sup>

Barton was framed as a very well-educated diplomat, but with a tendency to make matters more complicated than they had to be. To put it bluntly, he is presented in most contemporary accounts as a nuisance and know-it-all. If that was just reputation and rumours, we will never know, but it should be noted that he is seated relatively far away from the Chinese guests, being only placed close to Admiral Lin Jianzhang. It seems peculiar that someone as adept in Chinese matters and who spoke Mandarin is seated that far away from them.<sup>315</sup>

The position Barton held as Consul General for Great Britain, is also at least at the same level if not larger than Cunningham, making it conspicuous why he is moved

<sup>311</sup> P. D. Coates, *The China consuls : British consular officers, 1843-1943* (Hong Kong ; New York, 1988). p.456-459.

<sup>312</sup> Bickers, "Shanghaianders: The Formation and Identity of the British Settler Community in Shanghai 1843-1937."

<sup>313</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet\_Eske3/VII, "Generalkonsul i Shanghai» p. 35. 1950s.

<sup>314</sup> Coates, *The China consuls : British consular officers, 1843-1943*. p. 476-477.

<sup>315</sup> Barton started his career as an interpreter in Beijing. The London Gazette, 20.09.1895. "After Open Competition."

further down the table. As established in Chapter 2. He is only one seat further away than Edwin Cunningham, but as Elizabeth Cunningham is seated next to Minister Michelet, this becomes more apparent. If Barton would have taken his wife to the club, the results might have been similar, but there is no way of knowing. The meaning and intention of this placement might be placing too much trust in a seating plan but looking at Barton's position it is conspicuous that he is placed further from Aall and Michelet than the Consuls representing Belgium and Switzerland. His seating does not match his place in the Consular hierarchy in Shanghai.

The same can be said about Stirling Fessenden, another Brit, which was mentioned in Chapter 2. Fessenden is not a Consul, nor a diplomat, but he was the chairman of the SMC, which was described as the Lord Mayor of Shanghai. He is seated next to Dolly Tollefsen and Hugo Hergel, the Danish Vice Consul, he sat opposite of Gordon Mackie, a businessman. He was close to the bottom of the left wing, which is where many people within the Chinese government sat. It is more understandable that Fessenden was this far away from Michelet, as Michelet was the Minister to China and Japan, not Shanghai. Yet, within the social hierarchy of Shanghai, Fessenden was the most influential individual there.

Charles Sumner Lobinger is famous within historical research on Shanghai and the International Settlements Court systems as he published a two-volume collection of cases from the many Courts of Shanghai.<sup>316</sup> Lobinger is positioned between Mr. Hergel and Mrs. Yada, and opposite of the Consul General for Japan, Shichitaro Yada. This implies that an American Judge was considered to be on the same level as Consuls General.

Having Lobinger that prominent at the central table, is more of a presentation of Aall's influence than Michelet's. As this is a connection and relationship that was presumably made in Aall's time as a part of the local court system. This is not an experience Michelet, and many of the others present had. Therefore, it seems likely that the Lobingers attended as a favour to Aall, and not for Michelet. This also extends to the other attorneys present, like the Schuhls and Priestwoods (Americans) and MacDonalds (British).

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<sup>316</sup> Charles Sumner Lobinger, *Extraterritorial cases : including the decisions of the United States Court for China from its beginning, those reviewing the same by the Court of Appeals, and the leading cases decided by other courts on questions of extraterritoriality* (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1920).

Table 5: Attorneys are marked green.

Mrs Petra Berents
Mr. Ferno James Schuhl
Mrs. Mona Knipschildt
Mr. S. F. Wright
Mrs Gad

Mrs Priestwood
Mr N. Dyer
Mrs Dorothy Blix
Mr J. G. Priestwood
Mrs Mamie Macdonald

To expand on the attendees from the legal scene, it is worth noting that they are placed together. The way Aall structured this was by having for example J. G. Priestwood sitting next to Mamie MacDonald, and F. J. Schuhl would be sitting close to Mrs Priestwood. See table 5. This

is an example of how Aall the table seating would blend influential people, while also keeping them connected to people they knew before. This seating was to make conversation easy as they had common ground for discussion. This matches the section with the captains and the single people. If they were deliberately sectioned due to their profession, this would further imply they did not necessarily know many others at the dinner. Implying that these attorneys, barristers, and judges were unconnected in their daily lives with the rest of the guests present.

### 5.3: The Shanghai Consuls

The smaller nations represented can be grouped into categories, first among them is the Scandinavians. These are the six Danes, and ten Swedes present at the dinner table, so there was a total of sixteen other Scandinavians present.

One of the most notable was a Dane, Vilhelm Meyer who was one of the most important businessmen in Shanghai. He had founded the firm Andersen, Meyer & Company which by 1931 held 1200 employees all over China, it was bought by General Electric in 1935, shortly after Meyer himself had died. All of these details and more are laid out in *Open Doors* by Christopher Bo Bramsen.<sup>317</sup> Vilhelm and his wife Kirsten, who was half Norwegian were therefore important guests and held influential roles within the business world of Shanghai.<sup>318</sup> The two were separated at the dinner, with Vilhelm being a seat away from the central table on the right wing, and Kirsten being placed with loosely affiliated businessmen and their spouses on the left

<sup>317</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*.

<sup>318</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.26.

wing. Aall described them as “... *magnificent and nice people, who I had much joy with.*”<sup>319</sup>

None of the Swedes held quite as high positions in Shanghai as the Meyers did, none of the Norwegians did either, at least before Aall became the Senior Consul, but there were more Swedes present than Danes. Most of these were part of Norwegian run corporations. This was the case for the manager of O. Thoresen & Co's Shanghai department, Fr. Sem.<sup>320</sup> I have been unable to find other details on him and his wife, other than them both being Swedish and Aall describing Mr. Sem as “... *also nice, but very much under the boot of his own wife*”<sup>321</sup>.

Working for the Chinese we have Werner August Hugo von Heidenstram, who was employed as Chief Engineer for the Wangpoo (Huangpu) Conservancy Board.<sup>322</sup> This was a massive undertaking to develop the Shanghai harbour to ensure it could reach the status of being the largest in the world, whatever the cost might be.<sup>323</sup> The project itself is large enough to carry its own book, but this was an expensive undertaking by the city administration, meaning von Heidenstram held a position almost as high as Erik Tollefsen. The Conservancy Board also employed Norwegians, most prominently Yngvar Utne, who was the chief mapper of the project.<sup>324</sup> Yngvar Utne and his wife were also at the dinner. There was also Einar Jønsberg Müller, who was an engineer on the project, he was not present at the dinner, and I have been unable to figure out why.<sup>325</sup>

The Scandinavians held quite similar jobs and positions as each other. The Conservancy Board is a good example of this, but Meyer is in a similar position to Thoresen or Høhnke in the previous chapter, although his business eventually expanded on a much larger scale. The Scandinavians were not only connected by their borders, but also by their relative position in the city, judging from the dinner alone. It should also be noted that the Scandinavians were distributed over the entire

<sup>319</sup> «... prektige og hyggelige folk, som jeg hadde megen hygge hos.» NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, “Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.26.

<sup>320</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, “The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated “The China Directory” and “The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East”,” ed. Hongkong Daily Press Office (Hong Kong: Hongkong Daily Press Office, 1921). <https://books.google.no/books?id=EeNAAQAAMAJ>. P. 822, 1073.

<sup>321</sup> «... også hyggelig, men svært under tøffelen på sin kone» in NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002.

<sup>322</sup> “Heidenstram, Hugo von (1884-1966),” updated 10.05. 2022, accessed 03.03. 2022, <https://digitaltmuseum.no/021037461389/heidenstam-hugo-von-1884-1966>.

<sup>323</sup> Denison and Ren, *Building Shanghai: the story of China's gateway*. P. 119-120.

<sup>324</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. P. 42.

<sup>325</sup> A.St. Castberg, *Slekten Müller fra Trondhjem* (Aktietrykkeriet, 1940). p. 92

dinner table, but the most prominent members, like the Meyers, were seated as close as many Norwegian businessowners, implying that Michelet and Aall regarded them as being on the same level of importance.

It is only the Americans, Chinese, Danish, English and Swedish guests who were present at the dinner that were not directly affiliated with Aall's day job as a Consul-General. That means the Belgians, Brazilians, Chilean, Japanese and Swiss representations were all from the Consular Corps.

There is one Consul present that was not affiliated with the Shanghai Corps, namely Sigurd Steckmest, who was then the Consul for Norway in Hong Kong and was Aall's predecessor in Shanghai.<sup>326</sup> Why he was in Shanghai is unknown, but Aall was technically Steckmest's superior as the Hong Kong Consulate did not have General Consulate status and was therefore a subordinate of the Shanghai Consulate.

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<sup>326</sup> Utenriksdepartementet, Short Oversikt over norske, ambassader, konsulater, interessekontor mm i årene 1906-2001.



*Picture 4: Consular body in 1923, only the bottom row is identified, From the left is Raaschou, Thiel, Aall, Cunningham, von Haute, Barton, Naggiar, Hattieren. The back row is unidentified, but some are recognizable such as Yada to the furthest left and de Rossi who is in uniform behind Cunningham.*

Aside from Steckmest, the dinner party's most prominent guests were the Consuls General. In picture four, you can see the Consular body in 1923, presumably the picture was taken late in the year and if not, it was still only months removed from the dinner in January 1924. The occasion for this picture is unclear but it does show the Corps gathered. The entirety of the consular body is hard to identify, as some countries had temporary consuls employed, some of these were not officially announced and/or have no lasting record. The presumed consular body is presented in table 6, those who are unsure are marked with a \*:

Table 6: The Consular body in January 1924.

TREATY POWERS	SURNAME	INVITE	PRESENT	ANNOUNCED	TITLE
AMERICAN	Cunningham	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
BELGIUM	van Haute	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
BRAZIL	Reiss	Yes	Yes	Yes	Temp. CG
CHILE	Arce	Yes	Yes	Yes	C
DENMARK	Hergel	Yes	Yes	Yes	Temp. CG
FRENCH	Wilden	Yes	No	N/A	CG
GERMANY	Thiel	Yes	No	N/A	CG
ITALIAN	de Rossi	Yes	No	N/A	CG, SC
JAPAN	Yada	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
MEXICO*	Bothellho	Yes	No	N/A	C
NETHERLANDS*	Daniels	Yes	No	N/A	Temp. CG
NORWAY	Aall	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
PORTUGAL	Casanova	No	No	N/A	CG
RUSSIA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SPAIN	Palencia	Yes	No	N/A	C
SWEDEN	Lilliehöök	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
SWITZERLAND	Isler	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG
UK	Barton	Yes	Yes	Yes	CG

Now assuming this is the same Consular body as the one in the picture, we can now surmise who several of the people in the picture were, even though the back row is somewhat of a mystery. The Danish, German, Norwegian, American, Belgian, British, and French Consuls are seated on the first row, the rest are also pictured, but they have not been identified.

Talking about the Consuls General in detail will quickly become repetitive due to a lack of archival and historical research done on most of them. For this text they are



their title and the country they represent. With that in mind, not all Consuls were equal.

Two of the ones presents, were Acting Consuls General according to Aall. This was Mr Hergel from Denmark and Hugo Reiss. Both were mentioned earlier. Their temporary status is ill defined, they could have been temporary for a year, month, or day. This however seemingly did not affect their seating, implying that to Aall, they were the country they represented first, and their current job title later.

The same goes for the Consul present. Mr Arce representing Chile, or as he is announced by Aall in Appendix 2 as the "*The Chilian Consul*", is for example seated closer to Michelet and Aall then Fessenden. Arce is also one of the ones that only exists in Aall's archives. There are also two Vice-Consuls present. One is the Norwegian one, Siqveland from Chapter 4. Another is the Swedish Vice-Consul Mr. Gad. Who was positioned close to the central table, approximately as far away as Steckmest. He sat opposite of Vilhelm Meyer and had Chevalier Chen Shik-kuang and Mrs Loh next to him.

The consuls were Aall and Michelet's colleagues, and they were therefore acquaintances with each other. To go back to the itinerary categories the Consuls were seated and invited due to their social obligation, expecting that they would get the same treatment if they were to host a similar event. That they were colleagues and contemporaries also made them a prime audience to impress. This is where people such as the Chinese officials, Aall's connections from the courts, the businessmen and people like Fessenden come into the picture. These were people that were not necessarily meant to be there but attended due to their prior relationship with the host. If this is true, we can look at these guests as tools used to display the wide range of Aall's social circle. His consular colleagues were meant to be impressed, but the one Aall needed to impress the most, was his superior, who was traveling home, which meant he had to talk to his superiors. When the question of the Shanghai consulate would eventually be brought up, Michelet would boast about the large attendance to the wonderful dinner, which would keep Aall in the good graces of his superiors for a while longer.

## Concluding Remarks

This chapter set out to build on the previous one, especially by utilizing the categories and people established there in the wider context of the entire dinner table. This was to further contextualize the position of the Norwegian community in regard to the wider Shanghai society.

It began this by looking at the table sorted by marital status and gender. This showed how marriage was important for both men and women, as being openly single would mean being clustered at the end of the table. Gender was also an exclusionary method in wider Shanghai society, and this dinner was presented as an example of how women could attend a usually male only scene.

This also extends to the Chinese. While being the largest group, they did also get sectioned into groups of fellow countrymen. This sectioning happened with close to every nationality, but the Chinese were more targeted than for example the Americans who were seated liberally around the room. This displays that in a seemingly polite and hospitable setting, microaggressions and exclusionary methods as simple as this was still ever present.

The other two groups that were brought up as examples of trends at the dinner table, were the Scandinavians and Consuls. The Scandinavians seems integrated in Shanghai. Some within the Chinese government, others with businesses. The Scandinavians sought each other out to work together, there were several examples of Norwegians, Swedes, and Danes being colleagues. This implies that the Scandinavians had their own social hierarchy, which included each nation's respective communities. These functioned and worked together with other nations and institutions, but judging from the dinner alone, there seems to be an exceptionally strong transnational connection with the Scandinavians.

The most prominent and important people at the dinner, judging by their seating, were the Consuls. These official representatives were positioned the closest to the guest of honour, often outranking more prominent members of Shanghai's society. Yet some nations were only represented by their Consul, like Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Japan, and Switzerland, implying that these connections did not go much deeper than the collegial level. The American and English people present implies some more interconnectivity between nations, but these are mostly all connected to Aall.

Looking at the entire dinner table gives a fuller understanding of the dinner, but up until now, this thesis has focused on the guests present. To further understand the reach of the Norwegian community, we need to look at who did not attend.

## Chapter 6: Absentees

### 6.0: Introduction

At the end of the last chapter, it started opening up the question of who did not attend the dinner. Looking at the people who got an invite and rejected it is listed in Appendix 2. This chapter, however, is interested in figuring out why they did not attend. To do this in a coherent way I have established a few similar to what was done in chapter 4 and chosen a few examples for representing each category. As going through this is something that could seemingly fill infinite amounts of pages, these examples serve as strawmen. They were not necessarily considered to be invited at all, but they serve as a good example for the people that were considered as guests.

The goal for this chapter is therefore: *By establishing some potential causes for rejecting or not being invited to the dinner party and picking examples for people who could fit these, how can we further understand the Norwegian community's place in wider Shanghai?*



Picture 5: After the wedding of Chiang Kai-shek. Pictured are Mr. Fischer, Miss Greaney, Nicolai Aall, Mrs Bahnson, Lars Tillitse Present at the dinner).

## 6.1: Nations

Last chapter started looking into the different Consulates and who was represented at the dinner. The nations who were not represented at the dinner were France, Germany, Italy, Mexico, The Netherlands, Spain, and Portugal. Now all of these potentially had a good reason for not attending, but of these seven, I choose to highlight France, Germany, and Italy, beginning with the German Consul General Fritz August Thiel.

First of all, Thiel is listed on the invite sheet, between the Belgian General Consul J. van Haute and the Japanese Consul General Shichitaro Yada, those two both attended. Thiel is crossed out on the list, and he is marked as not having received an invite. This makes him stand out from the six other Consulates, who were sent an invite, but rejected it.

The relationship between Germany and China, as well as the other nations in the International Settlement and the world as a whole in 1924, are complex, and not the focus of this text. To understand the German situation however, a quick summary of the Sino-German relationship is needed.

There have been other more fulfilling works on the German and Chinese relationship, for German Jews in Shanghai Marcia Ristaino wrote an informative book on the many communities who sought refuge in Shanghai, including the German Jews, and for large scale political cooperation around 1924.<sup>327</sup> William Kirby wrote a comprehensive history of the relationship between Republican China and Germany.<sup>328</sup> There are also several German works on the matter.

To keep it short, Germany and China signed a peace treaty separate from the Treaty of Versailles to end their conflict in May of 1921, this combined with Versailles prohibiting a German army, made many German military officials assist the Nationalist cause in China.<sup>329</sup> That meant that during the 1920s, the diplomatic relationship between the two nations grew strong. This was not the case in the International Settlement. In 1921 the General Consulate was reinstated after the first World war, but in a meeting of the Corps Consulaire, on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 1923, the

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<sup>327</sup> Marcia Reynders Ristaino, *Port of Last Resort: The Diaspora Communities of Shanghai* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

<sup>328</sup> W.C. Kirby, *Germany and Republican China* (Stanford University Press, 1984).

<sup>329</sup> Kirby, *Germany and Republican China*.

German extraterritorial right was revoked. In Aall's private archives he remembers the Germans, who at the time were represented by Thiel, not objecting to the treatment by the Chinese and International community's ruling on their position in the city.<sup>330</sup> Aall heavily implies that removing the extraterritoriality was a direct insult to the Germans, which was recognised by all in the room. Furthermore, Aall notes that the German reaction to this was one of sad acceptance, there was no fight in this debate.

Now back to the dinner. As established Aall wrote up Germany and the other Consuls at the time as people to invite. But in the archives, there is a quick memo about a German dilemma at the French Club.<sup>331</sup> Aall or someone at the Consulate presumably goes to investigate this in the week before the Michelets arrive, presumably on Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>, but the only date is given in the response the Consulate from the President on the French Club on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup>. It reads: "... *I beg to inform you that, considering the essential French character of the club, we cannot possibly admit it.*"<sup>332</sup>

It is written in English and tells us that the reason the Germans was not at the dinner, was because they were not welcome in the venue. Which shows how wider relationships between nations, intervened on the social scene in Shanghai. This matches the attitude that seemingly was present at the meeting of the Corps Consulaire.

While the French club held a grudge, it seems however that Aall did not, he writes close to nothing about Thiel himself, but at the end of Aall's career as Consul General in Shanghai, he would be working close with German Officials in refugee efforts, although they were Nazi officials at this point.<sup>333</sup> This is another complicated and interesting subject, that I do not have time to delve into here. It should also be noted that the Brazilian Consul, Hugo Reiss<sup>334</sup>, was German born, and as far as I know still a German citizen, there seem to be no complications about him being present at the dinner. Anyways, the point is that international and global politics intervened on a

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<sup>330</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 09-10.02.1923.

<sup>331</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002/.

<sup>332</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0022/0002. "The President of the Cercle Sportif Français to Aall" 15.01.1924.

<sup>333</sup> Marcia Reynnders Ristaino, *The Jacquinet safe zone: Wartime refugees in Shanghai* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

<sup>334</sup> Chapter 5.

small scale, making Aall unable to invite German officials to a Norwegian event as it was held in a French locale.

The French have been a throughline of this thesis from Chapter 3 and onwards, but no French person attended the dinner. There is no official reason for this, but during his time in Shanghai Aall seems to have no close relationship to anyone French. This matches the divide between the International Settlement and the French Concession, which was detailed in Chapter 2. It should also be noted that Aall had no opportunity to meet with the French, in the same way he did with the Americans and British.

The one Frenchman that was invited, was their General Consul Henry Auguste Wilden. The French Consuls General held a lot of power in their concession, they were the highest authority there, functioning more as a colonial governor than a consul.<sup>335</sup> In the International Settlement, the French consul General held equal power to what the Senior Consul and Fessenden did. They also held veto power over matters decided by the SMC, meaning that they were part of the government of the Concessions, but they rarely used this.<sup>336</sup>

Aall only mentions Wilden in 1923, which was when Wilden recommended Aall that Angkor Wat was a beautiful place to visit, which is the reason why Aall visited there for Christmas 1923.<sup>337</sup> Aall has warmer feelings for Wilden's predecessor and successor complimenting his quick mind at multiple points.<sup>338339</sup> As Aall also notes, the General Consul of the French concession practically governed it and that he viewed the French Consul as an equal to his position as a Senior Consul, showing us that this was a contemporary view as well as an academic one.<sup>340</sup>

It does however seem that Aall kept his relationship rather professional with the French Consuls. That however does not help explain why they did not attend the dinner, as this was very much an official event. This takes us back to what was discussed in Chapter 3 where the power of affiliation with the French was established. By 1924, *Frenchtown* included "*Little Russia*", a refuge for White

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<sup>335</sup> Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P.14.

<sup>336</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. P.19.

<sup>337</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. «Reise til Angkor» 1923. p. 1.

<sup>338</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Ubehandlet/Eske 2/3/9/. «Tilbake som ambassadør i Kina».

<sup>339</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, «Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.77.

<sup>340</sup> Which is supported by Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. p. 74.

Russians, the birth of the CCP had happened there in 1921<sup>341</sup> and it had the preferred shopping street for wealthy Chinese and Shanghailanders.<sup>342</sup>

There not being a specific reason given for this, forces us to speculate why they did not attend. Firstly, it could be purely practical, it was a busy job after all. Secondly it could be a question of rank, maybe the French deemed it too low to attend a dinner for only the Norwegian Minister, this does however not match with the many quite powerful British and American officials present. And thirdly, the one I personally believe, is that Aall had no reliable professional or collegial affiliation with the French, unlike the one he had with both the Americans and English. Therefore, it proved more difficult to convince the French to join than Cunningham or Barton, who on paper held equally important positions as Wilden.

If we look on the French connection one step removed from Aall, it is also clear that of the 106 other guests, none were directly affiliated with French individuals. Unlike the Scandinavian interconnectivity established in chapter 5, the French did not employ any Norwegians. No French business is represented at the table, and no other French guests were seemingly invited to the dinner. The closest to the French settlement was potentially Chevalier Chen Shik-kuang, who worked closely with the French.

Whatever the case might be, the French not attending the dinner for Michelet, presumably was a disappointment, as it meant that only two of the three major foreign powers in Shanghai attended. This is further underlined by the details laid out in Chapter 3, showing the preparations that went in to ensuring that the dinner was perceived as French.

## 6.2: Rank

The French could potentially have denied the invite due to them outranking the hosts, but a better example of this is perhaps the Senior Consul. In 1924 the Senior Consul was the Italian General Consul G. de Rossi.<sup>343</sup> He took the position after the death of the British Sir Everard Duncan Fraser, who had died in 1922.<sup>344</sup> He held the position until Cunningham and eventually Aall took over.

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<sup>341</sup> Fogel, "The Recent Boom in Shanghai Studies." p. 315.

<sup>342</sup> *All about Shanghai and Environs*. P. 93

<sup>343</sup> Jackson, *Shaping Modern Shanghai: Colonialism in China's Global City*. P. 44.

<sup>344</sup> Coates, *The China consuls : British consular officers, 1843-1943*. P. 455-456.



As previously established, the Senior Consul was considered to be among the most powerful people in Shanghai. The position held the same power and influence as the French Consul General and the Chairman of the SMC. Of this trifecta, only Fessenden attended.

Even though de Rossi held the title of senior Consul, he was referred to as a “*dego*”<sup>345</sup> in Aall’s diaries. This is today considered a racial slur, also sometimes referred to as dago, it held less of a negative connotation in 1924. Nevertheless, it was used by Aall to derogatorily accuse the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians of earning some special money on the side of their consular functions. This is a very heavy accusation from Aall, and he does not source this in anything. This was a negative stereotype, especially as the Italian General Consuls were the best paid of all the Consuls, laying fertile ground for insults and jealousy.<sup>346</sup>

Being at the top of the Consular Corps, made you a target and idol at the same time. This was maybe why Aall had certain resentments about him, he also mentions how de Rossi preferred full uniform at all times, as visible in picture four, and that his German wife was very nice, while explicitly not referring to de Rossi himself as nice.<sup>347</sup>

There seems to be some resentment yes, which could be why de Rossi did not attend the dinner. This combined with Aall being beneath him in the Consular hierarchy, would imply that this was nothing to de Rossi, but would mean a lot for Aall. There could also be national conflicts, the Italians were not the most popular, but far from banned like the Germans. de Rossi’s wife was German, but so was Madame Michelet and the Reiss’, so that should not have been an issue. There is no answer to why de Rossi did not attend, but it does serve as a solid example of how someone could potentially outrank an event both literally and socially.

### 6.3: Social Standing

Outranking people socially is something we all are familiar with but is not something that is always present or perceivable from afar. Social hierarchies were central to

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<sup>345</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, “Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.27.

<sup>346</sup> Only found Aall referring to this, suppose it is true, but pinch of salt. NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, “Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.27.

<sup>347</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, “Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.27.

the diplomatic life in Shanghai. Your social standing was important, especially how you appeared to others.

Take one of the more famous Norwegians in China as an example. General Johan Wilhelm Normann Munthe, was arguably more a prominent figure in China than both Aall and Michelet combined, at least to Norwegians. Norwegian newspapers went as far as naming him as "*The Norwegian adventure prince in China*"<sup>348</sup>. For those unfamiliar, Munthe moved to China and joined the Chinese Customs in 1887, he then joined the Sino-Japanese war as a volunteer in 1894, and from there befriended Yuan Shikai, the future President and founder of the Republic of China and through this climbed the ranks and became a General and Instructor to the new Republic.<sup>349</sup> he is today most famous for a collection of Chinese art at the KODE museum in Bergen.<sup>350</sup> For further detail see Olga Medvedeva's chapter in *Møter med Kina*.<sup>351</sup>

Munthe projected a certain level of social standing. Pictures show him adjourned in so many medals and orders that there are hardly more places to put them on his uniform. This is what many in Norway held on to. But as is pointed out by Medvedeva, the reputation in Norway did not equal the reputation in China. This confused Aall as well in early 1923.<sup>352</sup> He was then in Beijing, as established earlier, and in his diaries, he writes about General Munthe, especially about how people in Beijing viewed the General.

The consensus he reaches is that nobody liked him much, at least in the foreign circles. Aall eventually calls him "*not fair and straight*"<sup>353</sup>. A Beijing socialite, only referred to as Miss Carl, called his role in the boxer rebellion exaggerated. Aall quotes her: "... *useful too many, especially when he got an order for his work*"<sup>354</sup>. Which would match his many medals, there is also a similar accusation made by a Norwegian doctor named Otto Gulowsen.<sup>355</sup> Medvedeva mentions Gulowsen as

<sup>348</sup> Den 17de mai, 29.07.1924, «Den Norske eventyrprinsen i Kina fyller 60 år.

<sup>349</sup> Johanne Huitfeldt, *General Munthe* (C. Huitfeldt forl., 1990), p. 34-35.

<sup>350</sup> "Intervju: Johan Munthe og «Porselen og revolusjon», " KODE, 2018, accessed 05.06, 2021, <http://www.lysoen.com/artikkel/intervju-johan-munthe-og-%C2%ABporselen-og-revolusjon%C2%BB>.

<sup>351</sup> Olga Medvedeva, "Johan Wilhelm Norman Munthe i Norge og i Kina," in *Møter med Kina : norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890-1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset et al. (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018).

<sup>352</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Da/L00097/0001

<sup>353</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 29.01.1923.

<sup>354</sup> «... var nyttig for mange og som spesielt gjorde sig nyttig naar han kunde faa en orden til gjengjeld» NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 29.01.1923.

<sup>355</sup> Medvedeva, "Johan Wilhelm Norman Munthe i Norge og i Kina."

someone who openly tried to expose Munthe but was convinced otherwise by unknown forces threatening his job.

The social scene in Beijing seems to view him as ego driven, Aall references a conversation with Arne Jacob Eyde<sup>356</sup> in an official memorandum to the foreign department, where Eyde claims many of the published interviews and braveries written about Munthe in the Norwegian press, was written by Munthe himself.<sup>357</sup> Many also criticized his art collection as colonial, tacky and worthless.<sup>358</sup> Aall finishes the same memorandum being thankful Munthe was not in charge, he wrote: *“He has always been kind to me, but he always gave me the impression that I never knew quite where I had him. He always seems too glad to find a way to stab you in the back”*<sup>359</sup>.

In this diary he also tries to figure out why there is an apparent divide between Munthe and Michelet. This was loosely referred to in the beginning of Chapter 3. What Aall eventually pieces together is that Munthe heavily campaigned for the post of Minister that eventually went to Michelet. In many ways Munthe was the better candidate on paper, he was seemingly well established in China, with close ties to the new Republic. Compared to Michelet, whose previous postings were in Paris and Berlin, he seemed to be the obvious choice. I have not been able to see what specifically led to the choosing of Michelet over Munthe.

Whatever it was that happened with the posting, it is a large crack in the firmament of Munthe's image. The repeating pattern that seems to be emerging is that General Munthe was not the man he presented himself as. When he had to show credentials in a professional setting, where medals and orders were not relevant, it seems he was largely unsuccessful. Aside from him losing the position of Minister to China to Michelet, he also was part of the doomed project the Sino-Scandinavian Bank from 1922 through 1925. The same projected Arne Sørensen from Chapter 4 was a part of. Here Munthe along with four other Norwegian nationals attempted to create a joint bank with Chinese and Norwegian ownership. Further details of the fate of this

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<sup>356</sup> "Arne Jacob Eyde," Olga Medvedeva, 2020, accessed 22.12, 2021,

<https://norwegiansinchinacustoms.wordpress.com/0202/11/11/arne-jakob-eyde/>.

<sup>357</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 06.02.1923.

<sup>358</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 06.02.1923.

<sup>359</sup> «Mot mig har han alltid været meget venlig, men jeg har altid indtryk at man ikke kan stole paa hvor mand har den mand og at han vilde være altfor glad ved at finde en anledning til at falde en i ryggen» NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 06.02.1923.

venture have been laid out in detail in *Møter med Kina*.<sup>360</sup> Suffice to say the project was a flop, it was mocked in a seventeenth of May song from 1925, written for the Norwegian community in Shanghai.<sup>361</sup>

His role in the Chinese military, also seems dubious. With several of the socialites in Beijing naming Munthe's role was by many contemporaries Aall talked to described as the "*number one boy*"<sup>362</sup>. By this they meant to point out a few things. Mainly that Munthe was much more of a puppet than he described himself as. Some pointed out how he ordered his own medals.<sup>363</sup> Aall described the relationship between Munthe and Yuan Shikai as one where Munthe was the servant and Yuan was the master.<sup>364</sup> The consensus is that Munthe's image in Norwegian press and to people outside of China in general, was a projection and not a reality.

Munthe exemplifies something specific about the dinner. Those invited are not necessarily the most accomplished or powerful in Shanghai or China at large at the time. The invited are well connected people in the social scenes of 1924's Shanghai. Munthe, while famous in Norway, was unknown to most of the socialite Shanghailanders. Munthe for this text serves the role of a strawman for the people whose public image did not match up with their actual reputation. Munthe was famous in Norway, and somewhat of note to the Shanghainese.

Why he was not invited was presumably because he was either occupied elsewhere, far away or not a fan of Michelet. It is likely that Munthe never heard a word of this dinner. Munthe serves here a similar role to the one occupied by Sørensen in Chapter 3, he is a stand-in for those who were less established and respected. Perhaps Aall had a similar reputation, but this has not been included in his private archives.

## 6.4: Private lives

Chapter 5 began by discussing the importance of being married and where it put you at the table. Yet one of the most surprising throughlines in all of Aall's archives is that

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<sup>360</sup> Camilla Brautaset, "Med skandinaviske vikingskip på kinesiske sedler," in *Møter med Kina : norsk diplomati, næringsliv og misjon 1890-1937*, ed. Camilla Brautaset et al. (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018).

<sup>361</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0001/03/. «En liden sungen vise sunget ved 17de mai festen i Shanghai 1925»

<sup>362</sup> Comparing him to a servant, from NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 01.03.1923.

<sup>363</sup> Medvedeva, "Johan Wilhelm Norman Munthe i Norge og i Kina."

<sup>364</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 01.03.1923.

he seems to almost never mention his wives. As far as I can tell there are no reference to them at all, aside from pictures of his son.

Aall was married twice. From 1919 through 1925 he was married to Angela Hewson Ray<sup>365</sup>, an American, they met during his time in New York. There are seemingly no other references to her. She does not seem to be present during the time he spends in Shanghai and is not mentioned in both his attempts at writing memoirs of his time in New York. His second wife, Cecilie "Ciss" Heidenrich<sup>366</sup>, is the one he had a son with, they married in 1925 and divorced in 1932, she died in 1933. Other historians have tried and failed to find further information on his wives.<sup>367</sup>

Aall is one of very few married men at the dinner not to have his marital partner alongside with him. This might be due too of mistakes on my hand, but if we focus on the central table most married couples arrived as a couple. Now it was more natural than elsewhere for expatriates in Shanghai to leave their spouse behind, and divorces was much more regular than elsewhere in the world.<sup>368</sup> But for someone at Aall's level, it was highly unusual to not have a spouse by their side. Looking at the rest of the consuls present Arce, Barton and Lilliehöök did not have their partners present. This however is more acceptable, as they were not the hosts of the event.

Then again, it does not seem to have damaged or impacted Aall's career or social standing. This might very well be because most sources used are from his perspective, but his career still soared without a spouse. Not having Angela there makes the argument in Chapter 5 less sound, but it could also be the exception that proves the rule. The fact remains that during this entire project I have been unable to find any more details on Aall's wives than when I started.

If we pause looking at the dinner and focus on the source material for a bit, this omission of two seemingly important people from Aall's private life is the largest sign that these private archives were editorialized. When I mentioned a preservation bias in chapter 1 it was among other things referring to this. If these two very important people were omitted, what does this tell us about what else is omitted? What details

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<sup>365</sup> Jensen, "En Shanghai Gentleman." P.80.

<sup>366</sup> Paul Preus Breder, *Tillegg til stamtavle over familien Breder*, ed. Martin Arnesen (Oslo: Self Published, 1990). P. 12-13.

<sup>367</sup> Jensen, "En Shanghai Gentleman."

<sup>368</sup> This is more complicated, the Chinese population could in practice not divorce until 1928, and even then, it was an exceedingly arduous process. It was also frowned upon by diplomats up until the 1950s. Yeh, *Shanghai Splendor : Economic Sentiments and the Making of Modern China, 1843-1949*. P. 119-121 & Neumann, *At Home with the Diplomats : Inside a European Foreign Ministry*. P. 153.

have been edited and how do we really know what was written when. This is the uncertainty that sprung up over time while working with the private archives. They might be overwhelming at first, but quickly strange holes started appearing, meaning their validity is questionable.

Aside from the question of Aall's wives there were people who would have been invited to the dinner that were not there for perfectly good reasons. An example is Bernt Rein, a prominent Norwegian businessman, and his wife Elna Johanne Rein.

She had recently divorced another man in Oslo, and then married Bernt in the summer of 1923, with larger parts of the Norwegian community in attendance.<sup>369</sup> They were both seemingly well liked, and Bernt was at the time a partner at Wallem & Co, a shipbroking firm. The firm itself was represented through Sverre Frøland, but it is also strange that Haakon Wallem himself did not accept, although it is implied to be out of sympathy to Bernt.<sup>370</sup>

The marriage between Bernt and Elna turned out to be a short one, as Elna died on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1924, of tuberculosis.<sup>371</sup> Seventeen days before the dinner. There is a newspaper article from the funeral on the fifth which lists the people of note that attended.<sup>372</sup> Many of the ones mentioned in this text were mentioned in it. The chief mourners were Wallem and Bernt Rein, and some of the close friends present included the Gads, Knipschildts, Jensen and Sverre Frøland. Among those who sent wreaths Nicolai Aall and Thorgheir Siqveland, are noted only behind the other workers at Wallem & Co. Siqveland was the only one to attend the funeral, as Aall was yet to come home from his holiday.

It also led to Minister Michelet reading about the death in the newspaper, and through telegram specifically asks to visit Rein to give his condolences in person during his Shanghai visit, presumably on Sunday the 20<sup>th</sup>, although this is never dated.<sup>373</sup> This house visit seems to be mostly a kind gesture, but also a required one, as Aall wrote notes from their meeting. Originally on speaking with Rein, Aall was surprised that so close after their marriage the Reins had already finished their testaments. By February first this matter is finished, and never mentioned again.

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<sup>369</sup> RA/S-2611Da/L00096/0001.

<sup>370</sup> "Certification of death" RA/S-2611Da/L00096/0001.

<sup>371</sup> "Certification of death" RA/S-2611Da/L00096/0001.

<sup>372</sup> N. C. D. N. 05.01.1924.

<sup>373</sup> RA/S-2611Da/L00096/0001.

These kinds of events are the realities of the day, and hopefully serve as examples showing that not everyone that declined, did so out of an ulterior motive. Sometimes life got in the way. It does not really exemplify anything other than the tragedies of daily life.

### **Concluding Remarks**

There is no tangible way to know why someone did not attend, except for a few examples, like the one with Thiel or Bernt Rein. With this said, the strawman strategy used here, does tell us more about the position of the Norwegian community at the time.

Germany did not attend the dinner because of international relationships. If we look back to Chapter 4's itinerary categories, this matches with the social obligation and maintaining relationship categories. Germany most likely wanted to attend, but the French intervened. In other words, Germany wanted to strengthen ties with Norway, but France vetoed this, presenting Norway with an ultimatum, where France was prioritized over Germany. This establishes that France was higher than Germany and Norway in the diplomatic hierarchy of Shanghai, and on a global scale.

The French not attending builds on this. It establishes, in conjunction with chapter 3, that the French affiliation was an important symbol, but an actual French guest was still out of reach. It does not say anything about the French and Norwegian relationship necessarily, but it does inform the relationship the Norwegian community, and the French had at the time. As they seemingly had no reason to attend, or rather any interest in attending, they fall out of the itinerary categories. They had no obligation, important prior relationships, economic interest, or possibility for social climbing at the dinner. If this is true, it would mean Norway had much to gain from establishing a tighter relationship with them, as the implied power in not showing up for a dinner hosted in your own neighbourhood implies that the French were beyond what the organizers of the dinner were trying to achieve.

de Rossi establishes something similar within the Consular Corps. This point is much more specifically regarding Aall, as he was the Norwegian representative within the corps. It stands in for those who were too powerful to attend the dinner. It also is the last of the trinity of power that many claimed ruled Shanghai's International

Settlement and shows us that Aall was only able to get one of these three powerful positions to attend the dinner.

Munthe, served a similar function as Sørensen. He serves as a counterpoint to Aall and Michelet's reputations and social connections. Munthe is an example of someone who were seemingly good at their job but had a bad reputation and did not exist in the social scenes of Shanghai and Beijing. He was although someone who could sell an image of authority. Which is something that becomes important in regard to Aall's archives and reputation as well. He might have been seemingly good at projecting authority and respectability, which led to Nordahl Grieg writing about him and which made it possible for Aall to remain in Shanghai long enough to become the Senior Consul. The difference is that for Aall, this worked, and he was perceived positively, as seen at the end of his career.<sup>374375376</sup> Remaining as Consul for as long as he did was a difficult job and meant entertaining many different people and their indulgences for 18 years. This has been made obvious throughout this thesis.

The question of reputation is also central when discussing the wives. If spouses were as important as presumed earlier, why did Aall never have one present. Was this something people knew about in Shanghai, something that was whispered about behind Aall's back, or maybe nobody seemed to care. I have no clear answer but looking at the other examples in this text it seems obvious that something like this would have been a problem, which is further underlined by how Aall seemingly editorialized all signs of it out of the archives. This double-standard could therefore be the exception that proves the rule, underlining how important it was to present your life as perfectly as possible to those who were interested.

Lastly the Reins are strawmen for the regular events that kept people away from the dinner. Their story was picked as it had supporting source material but digging far enough on others who rejected the invitation or were not invited at all would possibly show many of these simple explanations for why they did not attend. It underlines that not everything is a conspiracy or Machiavellian level decision, sometimes life just got in the way.

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<sup>374</sup> N.C.H. 21.09.1938. "Lives of great men all remind us. We may make our lives sublime. And departing leave behind us. Footprints on the Sands of time"

<sup>375</sup> N. C. H. 14.09.1938.

<sup>376</sup> N. C. H. 14.09.1938.



## Chapter 7: A Larger Perspective

### 7.0: Introduction

This thesis set out to further understand the social structure and relationships in Shanghai. The goal was to use a singular event, the dinner for Minister Michelet, where several people of note in the high society of Shanghai were present, as a way to draw an impressionistic representation of what these connections were and what they meant.

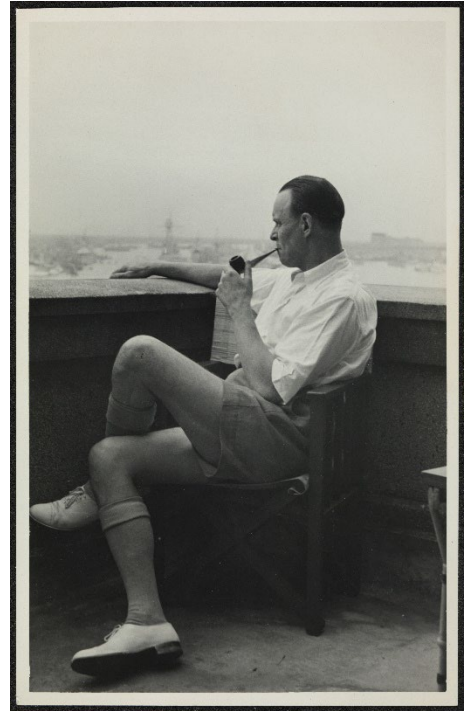
It did this by splitting the analysis into three parts. Firstly, it explained the facts available around the dinner. Establishing the planning around it, looking at what happened during it and how it was received. After this, the people came into focus.

Over two chapters large parts of the guestlist was covered, and categories were established to understand decisions and motivations. These categories were challenged in the final part of the thesis. Here the focus was on those who did not attend, and how the categories for those who attended were used to understand why these people chose to stay away from the dinner.

This chapter will summarize what has been established in this thesis, and combine the conclusions reached in the analysis in a concise way, while also looking back at what has been done in the thesis itself.

### 7.1: Affiliation

A word or theme that came up several times during the analysis was affiliation. Largely this was meant to describe the relationship or reason why something was done. As an example, take the affiliation with French excellence. It was presented in Chapter 3, as something that was seemingly aspirational. Aall and Michelet wanted to be affiliated with French excellence, and therefore hosted their dinner in the French club and served French food. Another layer is added to this when chapter 6



*Picture 6 Picture 7: Aall on the terrace of the Norwegian Consulate, in 1937. He was looking at the war in the Chinese city. Battleships are visible in the background*

looks into the potential reasons for why the French did not attend the dinner hosted in their own club. Rather than contradicting what was established in chapter 3, it builds on it.

The answer to why the organizers chose to host the dinner at the French club might have been because they did not expect the French to attend. But if the dinner was hosted at the French Club, the newspapers and guests leaving the party would look back at it remembering it for being classy and French, perhaps even forgetting that the French were not there. For the people involved, it is impossible to know what their memory of the dinner was, but the reaction in newspapers was positive, and it mentioned the French Club. For the Shanghailanders reading the daily news, they might just assume the French attended. This is not only applicable to the Norwegians. It shows us that the French were not affiliated with the Norwegians and saw no benefit in tightening these bonds.

Affiliation to cultures, nations and other communities is one thing, but this thesis also attempted to look at the personal relationships. Here affiliation takes another meaning. It could be the affiliation someone had to a workplace, club, community, or friends. A good example of this comes in Chapters 4 and 5. This is where the connections outside of the dinner presumably led to people being invited are in focus. Chapter 4 largely follows the situation from Michelet's perspective, showing us who was on his itinerary and why this was the case.

Chapter 5 is where this becomes especially clear. Here the Norwegian community is being compared to the rest of Shanghai. Through analysing this, several things became clear. First among them is how closely the Scandinavians worked together with each other, and how this was not the case for other nations. Several of the Norwegian businesses established in Chapter 4, employed Danes and Swedes, and vice versa. An example of this was Sem, a Swedish manager of a Norwegian firm. This shows us that the affiliation and connection between the Scandinavian countries was important, even though their home countries were very far away. The only other nationality that employed people so freely despite nationality were the Chinese. The most prominent example of this was Tollefsen and the employees of the Whangpoo Conservancy board.

While these connections and transnational hirings were quaint by today's standards, they show how the Scandinavian groups were well connected, which resulted in many Danes and Swedes attending the dinner.

The other large group of relationships formed prior to the dinner, came from Aall. It Chapter 5 showcases how important people who had no other obligation or purpose for attending, still attended. These were people like the connections Aall made from his time in the courts and Stirling Fessenden. Especially the attorneys, barristers, and judges in attendance, had no obligation to attend, but still attended. Presumably as a favour to Aall, who they all knew from their professional lives. Fessenden is also important as he was one of the three White Whales, that had been named as being the most powerful people in Shanghai. Fessenden being there is giving more weight when it is considered that de Rossi and Wilden did not attend. If we consider these three as the most powerful people in Shanghai, we can ascertain that Aall only had a good relationship with Barton, and the two others were still out of his reach.

This gets into who were excluded, while this is explicitly brought up in Chapter 6, it was included earlier as a theme. It is seen through how and where people were seated and what this implied. This was brought up in regard to the single people, those with lower education, the Chinese, and the potential language barriers. While this does not necessarily imply any malevolent or deliberate plan for exclusion, it nevertheless shows us that people were prioritized and valued by their knowledge, nationalities, marital statuses, and groups they were affiliated with. Displaying the internal hierarchies of the community as well as the wider social standards at the time.

## **7.2: Motives**

Affiliation and by extension your reputation to others was currency in Shanghai and was deeply integrated within the city's social hierarches. This helps us understand why things were done, which is the other large part of this thesis, namely the motives.

The first example of a way of understanding this was in chapter 4, when the itinerary categories were first used. These are not meant as a final answer to understand every aspect or layer of the motives held by the organizers, but it helps conceptualize them. The four categories used to understand why Michelet had who he had on his itinerary were obligation, social climbing, economic reasons, and relationships.

Obligation, or duties or customs as it could also be called is what led to the Consuls attending the dinner, especially those nationalities that were only represented by their consul. This is implying that there was no other affiliation than the one between consuls. Brazil or Belgium are examples of this. Two countries with seemingly little presence in Shanghai and a relatively distant connection with Norway, still attended the dinner based on their affiliation, duty, and obligation to Aall. Aall also had obligations to others, the example used to explain this is Sørensen, who despite having a seemingly bad relationship with Aall, was invited due to his employee status and prior history with the Consulate.

Social climbing and positioning were originally brought up when discussing Tollefsen, where Aall shared an anecdote where he detailed how Michelet postponed Tollefsen's chance of advancing by interfering. There are no other records of this incident, but if we assume it was true it shows us how important social advancement was to the organizers of the dinner party. It is also underlined when chapter six makes it clear where the reach of Norway ended. At the table however, many people were positioned for possible social advancement, but the one positioned the most for social advancement, was the one who organized the seating, namely Aall himself. This was briefly mentioned at the end of chapter 5, but Aall has the clearest position for social advancement at the dinner. He is in the centre of the photo, his name is on the papers, he is everybody's friend, and he has surrounded himself in the middle of the central table with the Michelets, important Chinese officials and his good American friends the Cunninghams. Here he has positioned himself to lead a conversation that shows Aall's extensive network, which for the guests, is meant to display that Aall was well connected in many different sectors, and that his work in Shanghai was going splendidly.

Seeing where the economic interests are at the table is not as applicable, it was introduced to explain why Michelet visited Høhnke. What this category really is meant to explain is how business were followed up on directly by the Norwegian officials, presumably through encouraging and working directly with them to establish a healthy environment for growth. This is hard to see at the dinner table, as this is very dependent on what conversations were had. With this said, many of the guests at the dinner were people with prominent established businesses. Some examples that were used was Thoresen, Meyer, and Høhnke. This category was included to display

what the primary function of a consul was, namely working for their respective nation's commercial interest abroad, and how this is visible at the dinner table.

The last itinerary category mentioned was relationships, which was covered in the first part of this chapter. As a motivation for why people were invited this is simply meant to describe how relationships were maintained. This could mean that some were invited to the dinner as a favour, or as a friend. The category changes however when Chapter 6 introduces the absentees. Here we are presented with some relationships that were not good enough for the people in question to attend. Munthe is the main example of this. According to Aall and prior research his position in the military and image to the public, was largely disliked by the typical high society at the dinner. Munthe plays the role of someone who had a bad relationship or outsider status with the typical high society socialites.

These categories are examples used to understand why the dinner was organized the way it was. They have been useful tools in trying to understand the motivations for why things were done the way they were.

### 7.3: Concluding remarks

Using a dinner on this scale to understand and explain large trends and social structures is perhaps an eternal project. It could be looking into other contact zones in Shanghai, such as the many clubs and organizations the guests were part of or who organized the flowers, and what dances were danced at the dinner, but eventually it is time to look back at what this thesis set out to do. Namely further understanding the Norwegian community and their social standing in the high society of Shanghai.

In most of the categories established to describe the social hierarchies, the Norwegians were up and coming, but still far from the top. This is for example clear when the Germans are rejected by the French club. On a local diplomatic level this is seen when the de Rossi and Wilden did not attend, but Fessenden did. On a person-to-person level, the attendances of those who were not obligated show that the community was well established within Shanghai, but it would be more established over the next ten years.

This project has been made possible by Aall's private archives, which are also one of the problems with this project. Aall is the creator of most of the archival material, and it is therefore his perspective on everything that is mainly analysed. As he was the largest contributor in organizing the dinner, his perspective and role in the community potentially plays a much larger role than what it was in reality. We can assume he represented his community's interests, but at the end of the day it is seen through his eyes.

Despite this flaw, this text has contextualized many people and lives and communities in Shanghai, that previously were not mentioned or written about much in research literature. There is more to uncover and research in most of those cases, and hopefully this thesis has served as foundation for further studies into this.

#### 7.4: Further research

What originally convinced me to write about Shanghai was when I learnt about Aall's Archives. At the time I was interested in Shanghai and the 1920s, but Aall's archives led this project to what it has ended up as today. This is not to say they have been exhausted. There are many things to still learn from the archives.

Especially the photo collection is something I felt I have underutilized in this thesis. The collection is far from being only Aall's private collection, it includes copious amounts of material from Shanghai, in times of peace and war, it depicts people who have been written about elsewhere, and people who there are no record of anywhere. Aside from being a way to view the Norwegian community and its members it could potentially be an extremely useful resource to anyone interested in the period.

There is also a lot of remaining archival materials in Aall's collection. This thesis largely used his memoirs, letters, diaries, and notes to understand his social network and by extension the Norwegian community, but there are several details that were never brought up in this thesis. Aall's involvement in refugee efforts are very interesting, his time in Rio de Janeiro during World War two is also a unique perspective. He was the ambassador to China after the war, this period is also extremely interesting, and a stark contrast to the life in Shanghai before the Japanese invasion. He had several conflicts with Ludvig Aubert, which include large amounts of Foreign Ministry intrigue, and collected two volumes of material on propaganda after he left China for good. If anyone is interested in writing his biography, this is also a seemingly worthy endeavour, the source material is there.

It is of course also possible to expand the scope of this thesis's subject, namely the January dinner. All sources directly relating to it from the National Library and the National Archives have been used, but supplementary materials that would help understand the entire guestlist would enrich this immensely. This is what this project has been lacking, multiple perspectives. Where to get these is a challenge, but to for example look at official archives from the different consuls could potentially help expand the understanding of the social hierarchies of Shanghai.

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<i>Publication</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Purpose</i>
<i>Dagbladet</i>	12.09.1919	New Norwegian Ministers
<i>Morgenbladet</i>	08.11.1920	Aall announced as CG.
<i>Aftenposten</i>	22.10.1922	Death of Arthur Hansen
<i>Bergens Aftenblad</i>	30.11.1923	Aall & Michelet is awarded the St. Olav's Order.
<i>Nationen</i>	14.03.1924	Aall is awarded the Chiao Ho order.
<i>Nidaros</i>	09.06.1925	Aall interviewed about Norwegian interests in China in turbulent times.
<i>Nationen</i>	10.06.1930	Norwegian legation in China moved to Shanghai.
<i>Nationen</i>	29.07.1930	Do not travel to China.
<i>Stavanger Aftenblad</i>	29.06.1935	Aall interviewed about his work in Shanghai.
<i>Nationen</i>	09.12.1937	Aall interviewed on situation in Shanghai.
<i>Nationen</i>	05.09.1938	Aall described as the "Strong Man in China"
<i>Nationen</i>	03.11.1938	Norwegians in Shanghai
<i>Fædrelandsvennen</i>	15.12.1966	86-year-old Aall reflects on his time in China.
<i>Nationen</i>	15.11.1975	Nicolai Aall announced dead.
<i>Haugesunds Avis</i>	18.01.1933	Sørensen dead

### English

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Page</i>	<i>gathered from</i>
<i>North China Herald</i>	25.03.1922	Mrs. Von Norman and Miss Frøberg arrives together.	867	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.03.25/page/867/mode/1up?q=%22von+norman%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.03.25/page/867/mode/1up?q=%22von+norman%22</a>
<i>The London gazette</i>	20.09.1895	Barton's hiring	5251	<a href="https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/26663/page/5251">https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/26663/page/5251</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	02.12.1922	Aall cited as acting Consul for Spain.	586	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.12.02/page/586/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.12.02/page/586/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	16.12.1922	Aall leaves for Beijing (Peking).	718	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.12.16/page/718/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1922.12.16/page/718/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	30.06.1923	Court of Consuls reject PETITION FROM POLICE	913	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1923.06.30/page/912/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1923.06.30/page/912/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>

		TO ROUTINELY INSPECT CLUBS		
<i>North China Herald</i>	08.12.19 23	Aall, St. Olav's, St Andrew society.	686	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1923.12.08/page/685/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1923.12.08/page/685/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>The Evening News</i>	18.01.19 24	"Norwegians Here to Give Greetings to Their Minister"	N/A	NB: Ubehandlet_171/Z/Za/L000 1/
<i>North China Daily News</i>	17- 19.01.19 24	"Consulate General of Norway." Norwegian announcement.	1	NB: Ubehandlet_171/Z/Za/L000 1/
<i>North China Daily News</i>	23.01.19 24	"Very pleasant evening"		NB: Ubehandlet_171/Z/Za/L000 1/
<i>The China Press</i>	27.01.19 24	Dinner to the Norwegian Minister to China		NB: Ubehandlet_171/Z/Za/L000 2/
<i>North China Herald</i>	24.05.19 24	Isler named as Swiss CG.	291	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.05.24/page/291/mode/1up?q=isler">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.05.24/page/291/mode/1up?q=isler</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	07.06.19 24	Japanese Regents Wedding.	375	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.06.07/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.06.07/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	12.07.19 24	July 4th celebration.	54	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.07.12/page/53/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.07.12/page/53/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	19.07.19 24	French July 14th celebrations.	96	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.07.19/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.07.19/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	11.10.19 24	Raaschou dead.	63	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.10.11/page/63/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.10.11/page/63/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	22.11.19 24	Lars Tillitse becomes Legation Secretary.	318	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.11.22/page/318/mode/2up?q=%22l.+tillitse%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.11.22/page/318/mode/2up?q=%22l.+tillitse%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	27.12.19 24	Aall as Consular judge.	547	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.12.27/page/546/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1924.12.27/page/546/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater</a>



<i>North China Herald</i>	05.12.19 25	Caledonian Ball.	483	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1925.12.05/page/432/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1925.12.05/page/432/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	26.12.19 25	Dinner at Officers Mess.	588	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1925.12.26/page/587/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1925.12.26/page/587/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	26.02.19 27	The Washington Ball.	323	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1927.02.26/page/322/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1927.02.26/page/322/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	01.10.19 27	"Lord Mayor of Shanghai"	14	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1927.10.01/page/14/mode/2up?q=%22lord+mayor+of+shanghai%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1927.10.01/page/14/mode/2up?q=%22lord+mayor+of+shanghai%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	01.12.19 28	Sino-Norwegian Treaty.	338	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1928.12.01/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1928.12.01/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	03.09.19 29	Chinese press Report of a French Appointment	888	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1929.03.09/page/n3/mode/1up?q=%22e+tollefsen%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1929.03.09/page/n3/mode/1up?q=%22e+tollefsen%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	02.04.19 30	Captain Halvorsen's Funeral.	181	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1930.02.04/page/181/mode/1up?q=%22e+tollefsen%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1930.02.04/page/181/mode/1up?q=%22e+tollefsen%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	04.12.19 35	Aall praised as worthy successor.	1	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.04/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.04/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	11.12.19 35	Consular body says goodbye to Cunningham	438	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.11/page/438/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.11/page/438/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	25.12.19 35	Cunningham's retirement dinner	519	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.25/page/518/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.12.25/page/518/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	23.01.19 36	Berents gets Scroll of honour for fighting Chinese pirates	130	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.01.23/page/129/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1935.01.23/page/129/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	26.05.19 37	17th of May celebration	324	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1937.05.26/page/324/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1937.05.26/page/324/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>

<i>North China Herald</i>	25.08.19 37	Aall founds Relief committee as member of executive branch	307	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1937.08.25/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1937.08.25/page/n14/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	06.07.19 38	Aall promoted officially	36	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.07.06/page/36/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.07.06/page/36/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	14.09.19 38	Chinese honour Mr Aall	451	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.09.14/page/451/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.09.14/page/451/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22</a>
<i>North China Herald</i>	21.09.19 38	Farewell to Aall, at YMCA, by the Relief committee, Last function in the city	495	<a href="https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.09.21/page/494/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater">https://archive.org/details/north-china-herald-1938.09.21/page/494/mode/1up?q=%22N.+Aall%22&amp;view=theater</a>

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##### **B – Kopibøker:**

###### **Ba/L0022/**

0001 – Kopibok – 04.01.1921-28.12.1922.

0002 – Kopibok – 03.01.1923 – 31.12.1924.

###### **Ba/L0025/**

0002 – Kopibok – HD. – 05.01.1921. – 12.12.1922.

0003 – Kopibok – HD. – 07.01.1924. – 31.12.1925.

**Ba/L0030/0001** – Kopibok. – 23.12.1923. – 30.04.1924.

##### **D – Sakarkiv**

###### **Da/ Korrespondanse etter år.**

**Da/L0095/0001** – Årgang 1923. 311-343.

**Da/L0096/0001** – Årgang 1924 01-13.

**Da/L0097/0001** – Årgang 1924 14-74.

**Da/L0098/0001** – Årgang 1924 75-137.

###### **Db/ Korrespondanse etter kode.**

**Db/L0158/0002/**

**Db/L0390/0002/**

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As these are unsorted, the archival codes will eventually change at one point. These were the codes as of 20.05.2022.

#### Ubehandlet 171

##### **Grovordning Eske 1:**

###### **1: Korrespondanse**

###### **2: Personlige dokument**

- Dagbøker
  - o London-Shanghai (1918-1921)
  - o Dagbok og reiser (1922-1928)
- Opptegnelser utklipp og notater
  - o Reiser 1923-1924
  - o Reiser 1927-1952

**3: Manuskripter**

- Erindringer i Rio (1941)

**Grovordning Eske 2:****3. Manuskripter, forts.**

4. Ambassadør Aall ang. Materiale vedk. Memoarene. (med følgebrev til UBO)
7. Litt forskjellig. Notater i forb. Med foredrag, avisartikler m.m.
8. Memoarene I (London 1912 –1920).
9. Memoarene II (Kina 1921 –1938).

**4. Artikler, taler m.m.**

1. Artikler og taler.
4. Uttalelser, taler etc.
5. Etaten. Mer forretningsmessige innberetninger.
6. 40 år i utenriktjenesten.
5. Materiale, inkl. korrespondanse fra tiden i Kina
  1. Forskjellig korrespondanse (Wallem, Sørensen, Sino-Scandinavian bank).
  2. China: Senior konsul 1927.
  3. China: Consular affairs, 1927.

**Grovordning Eske 3:****6. Materiale, inkl. korrespondanse fra tiden i Kina, forts.**

1. Diverse Shanghai – Peking 1925 – 1933.
2. Shanghai, historie, 1927.
4. China: Missionærer, Munthe, Sprengstoff.
5. Shanghai, Consular body 1938, tysk 'manus' om Kinesisk rett.

**Grovordning Eske 4:****9. Materiale, inkl. korrespondanse fra tiden i Brasil.**

5. (Rio) Det 60de – 61de og 62de år.

**Grovordning Eske 5:****11. Andre spesialarkiv.**

7. Fotos & avisutklipp (fotografier i aviser etc.).
8. Diverse.

**Nicolai Aall – tilvekst 2010:13. Levert fra Utenriksdepartementet.****D/Da/ - SAKARKIV:****D/Da/0001: Diverse nedtegnelser:**

- 02. Bemerkninger vedr. N. Aalls memoarer.
- 03. Opptegnelser og kladder til memoarer.
- 04. Nedtegnelser: Korte historier mv.

**D/Da/0002: Diverse nedtegnelser 1922-1953:**

- 01. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923.
- 02. Nedtegnelser: Reise til Kambodsja (Angkor) og Kina, 1923.
- 04. Nedtegnelser mv.: Peking 1928-1935.
- 06. Nedtegnelser: «Erindringer» 1941.
- 07 Nedtegnelser: Brasil 1942-1943.

**D/Da/0003: Vedrørende politiske forhold i Asia 1926-1935:**

- 02 Kina - sjørøveri 1926-1935.
- 03 Anti-japansk boikott 1927-1929.
- 04 Shanghai og Kina - den norske koloni 1927-1935.

**D/Da/0006 Diverse 1795<sup>377</sup>-1963:**

- 01 Diverse avisutklipp vedr N. Aall mv.. 1938-1963.
- 02 Diverse foredrag 1930-1954.
- 03 Foredrag: «25 år i Østen» 1955.
- 04 Bemerkninger vedr. pressen mv. 1938-1954.
- 06 Diverse notater/brev 1927-1954.
- 07 Diverse diplomer 1922-1954.
- 08 Diverse eldre papirer vedr. familien Aall.

**D/Da/0007: Diverse 1924-1938.**

- 02 Bordarrangeringer, innbydelser, bilag m.m. 1924-1938.
- 03 Diverse (trykte) kart.

**Z/Za/ - AVISUTKLIPPSBØKER:**

- 0001 Avisutklippsbok I 1917-1938.
- 0002 Avisutklippsbok II 1924-1964.

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<sup>377</sup> It is 1895.

**Bilder**

Picture 1, «Første kontor i Shanghai, 1921!», Eske 11.

Picture 2, «Med Chiang Kai-shek», Eske 11.

Picture 3, «Middagsbilde», Eske 46.

Picture 4: «Consular Body 1923» Album 46.

Picture 5: “Efter Chiang Kai-shek’s bryllup” Eske 11.

Picture 6: “Konsulatets terasse, 1937” Album 11.

## Appendixes

### Appendix 1: Complete guestlist

Surname	Name	Nationality	Profession	Affiliation	Spouse	Amount present	Order announced	Notes	Sources
Aall	Nicolai	Norwegian	Consul General	Norwegian Consulate, Host	Mrs.	1	1		
Arce		Chilean*	Consul	Chilean Consulate		1	15	Nationality unsure.	
Barton	Sidney	British	Consul General, Sir	British Consulate	Mrs. Mary Ethel Winifred MacEwen	1	9	Wife not present	378
Berents	Hans	Norwegian (Bergen)	Engineer	Self-employed	Mrs Petra	2		Potentially Hans Petter, Hans' son. Published memoir	379 380
Blix	Nils Juul	Norwegian	Postal commissioner	Bohler Bros. & co.	Mrs. Dorothy Arundel Gundy	2	35	Could be his brother, Nils Christian, who was employed by Bohler Bros. at the time. Published biography.	381 382 383
Brodtkorb	Sophus Aars	Norwegian	Stockbroker	Norwegian Atlas Insurance		1			384 385
Bye	Alf	Norwegian	Secretary	F. Høhnke	Mrs	2			386 387
Chen	Shik-kuang	Chinese	Chevalier, Chief secretary	Bureau of foreign affairs	«Mrs. Margaret chen»?	2	21		388 389

<sup>378</sup> Coates, *The China consuls : British consular officers, 1843-1943*. p. 456-459.

<sup>379</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.22.

<sup>380</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 112-114.

<sup>381</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.22.

<sup>382</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927." P. 282. 295.

<sup>383</sup> "Nils Juul Blix," Olga Medvedeva, 2020, accessed 22.12, 2021,

<https://norwegiansinchinacustoms.wordpress.com/2020/11/11/nils-juul-blix/>.

<sup>384</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. «Mai 1923».

<sup>385</sup> George, *Men of Shanghai and North China*. p. 22.

<sup>386</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0001/03/. «En liden sungen vise sunget ved 17de mai festen i Shanghai 1925»

<sup>387</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 76, 93.

<sup>388</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>389</sup> Powell, "Who's who in China: containing the pictures and biographies of China's best known political, financial, business and professional men ". p. 32.

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>Chen</i>	Mabel	Chinese	Miss	N/A	Single	1			390
<i>Cunningham</i>	Edwin Sheddan	American	Consul-General	American Consulate	Mrs Elizabeth Rhoda Israel	2	6		391
<i>Dahl</i>		Norwegian	Miss	N/A	Single				
<i>Dahl</i>	Caspar	Norwegian	Silk department	Arnhold & Co.		2			392 393
<i>De Calcina</i>	P. G.	Italian				1		According to Aall is Italian, but I have found no further details on him other than this.	394
<i>Dyer</i>	Norman	American	Unofficial representative	American State Department	Mrs.	2		Connected to Seitz	395
<i>Feragen</i>	Andreas	Norwegian	Assistant	Chinese Customs service	Mrs. Fredrikke	1		Mrs. was the only one present	396
<i>Fessenden</i>	Stirling	British	Chairman	Shanghai Municipal Council		1	16		397 398
<i>Frøberg</i>	V.	Norwegian	Miss	N/A	Single	1		Viktor?	399
<i>Frøland</i>	Sverre	Norwegian	Regional manager from 1925	Wallem & Co.		1		St. Olav's Order	400

<sup>390</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>391</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.25.

<sup>392</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 123.

<sup>393</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East"." P. 728.

<sup>394</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. «Mai-juni, 1923».

<sup>395</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. "28.01-29.01.1923"

<sup>396</sup> Medvedeva, "Norwegian employees of the Chinese custom service, 1890-1927." P.165-166, 238, 283.

<sup>397</sup> George, *Men of Shanghai and North China*. P. 129-130.

<sup>398</sup> Bickers and Jackson, *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*. p. 48-53.

<sup>399</sup> N.C.H. 25.03.1922.

<sup>400</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. P. 110, 118, 130.



<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>Gad</i>		Swedish	Vice-Consul	Swedish Consulate	Mrs.	2	27		
<i>Gordon Mackie</i>	Charles	British	Businessman	Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Company	Mrs.	2	28		
<i>Green</i>						2		Have found no other details.	
<i>Halvorsen</i>	Karl Johan Leander	Norwegian	Shipbroker	Self employed	Mrs.	2			401 402
<i>He (Ho)</i>	Fenglin	Chinese	Military governor for Zhejiang	Republic of China, Anhui clique and the Fengtian clique		1	3		403 404
<i>Hergel</i>	Hugo	Danish	Vice Consul	Danish Consulate		1			405
<i>Herlofson</i>	Herlof	Norwegian	Shipbroker, Self-employed & businessowner,	Heidorn & Herlofson	Mrs. Alice Isabel (Rolker)	2	29	Johnsen & Herlofson and/or Herlofson & Reeves could be his current firm, timeline unsure.	406 407
<i>Høhnke</i>	Frithjof Gustav Carl	Norwegian	Brewery owner	Union Brewery	Margrethe Wilhelmine Konow	1	37		408
<i>Isler</i>		Swiss	Consul General	Swiss Consulate		1			409
<i>Jensen</i>	Gustav Schøien	Norwegian	Engineer, business owner	China Metal products Co. Ltd.,		1		Norwegian Association in China (Chairman)	410 411 412

<sup>401</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0003/03/, «Brev fra Anti-Japansk Boikott» 03.1927.

<sup>402</sup> N.C.H. 04.02.1930, p. 181.

<sup>403</sup> Carter, *Champions Day: The End of Old Shanghai*. p. 54-55.

<sup>404</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>405</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*. p. 179.

<sup>406</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, «Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.17.

<sup>407</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 58-60.

<sup>408</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, «Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.17.

<sup>409</sup> N.C.H. 24.05.1922

<sup>410</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, «Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.23.

<sup>411</sup> George, *Men of Shanghai and North China*. P. 187-189.

<sup>412</sup> RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0390/

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>Johannes en</i>	V.		Assistant	Great Northern Telegraph co.		1			413
<i>Josefsen</i>	Karl Ferdinand	Norwegian	Captain	Tug and Lighter company		1		POW during WWII.	414 415
<i>Klingenber g</i>	H. F. S. Halfdan	Norwegian	Assistant Manager		Mrs.	2			
<i>Knipschildt</i>	Carl Johan	Danish	Manager of	Danish East-Asian Office	Mrs. Mona	2	33		416 417
<i>Larsen</i>	Kristian Sparrman	Norwegian	Captain	«Store Nordiske»		1			418
<i>Lilliehöök</i>	J	Swedish	Consul-general	Swedish Consulate		1	12	Chapter 5.	
<i>Lin</i>	(K. C.) Jianzhang	Chinese	Admiral	Chinese navy		1	4	Senior officer, Shanghai Navy team	
<i>Lindsay</i>			Doctor			1		No other material.	
<i>Lo</i>	Tah-chuan	Chinese	Secretary	General He	Mrs.	2	23		419
<i>Lobinger</i>	Charles Sumner	American	Judge	American Consular court	Mrs. Ellen Ballon Hunker Lobinger	2	11	Connected to Mixed Court as well.	420
<i>Loh</i>	Yung-chien	Chinese	Police commissioner	Chinese police Shanghai		1			421

<sup>413</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Korea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East". P.1541.

<sup>414</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.23.

<sup>415</sup>

"Karl Ferdinand Josefsen," Olga Medvedeva

2020, accessed 22.12, 2021, <https://norwegiansinchinacustoms.wordpress.com/2020/11/11/karl-ferdinand-josefsen/>.

<sup>416</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.24.

<sup>417</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*. p. 162.

<sup>418</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.23.

<sup>419</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>420</sup> Lobinger, *Extraterritorial cases : including the decisions of the United States Court for China from its beginning, those reviewing the same by the Court of Appeals, and the leading cases decided by other courts on questions of extraterritoriality*.

<sup>421</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>MacDonald</i>	Ranald George	British	Barrister	Self-employed	Mrs Mamie Clow	2	31		
<i>Macleod</i>	Ronald Neil	British	Attorney	Platt, Macleod, Gregson & Ward?	Mrs Mary (The one Present)	1	36	Good friend of the Meyers	422 423
<i>Meyer</i>	Vilhelm	Danish	President & General Manager	Andresen, Meyer & Co., Ltd.	Mrs Kirsten (half-Norwegian)	2	34	Chapter 5	424 425
<i>Michelet</i>	Johan Wilhelm	Norwegian	Minister to China and Japan, Guest of Honour	Norwegian legation in Beijing	Mrs.	2	2	Guest of honour.	426 427
<i>Mradeck</i>	Gerda	Norwegian	Miss	N/A	Single	1		Born Hansen. Chapter 5.	428 429
<i>Priestwood</i>	J. G.	American	Attorney	Defensive		2			
<i>Reiss</i>	Hugo	German	Temporary Consul-general	Brazilian Consulate	Mrs. Marie Ignatius Murphy	2	14	Father of Jane Engelhard. Jewish.	430
<i>Renborg</i>	B. A.	Swedish	Commercial Attaché	Swedish Consulate	Mrs	2	25		431
<i>Schuhl</i>	Ferno James	American	Attorney	American court	Mrs. Ruth	2			432

<sup>422</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East"." P. 797.

<sup>423</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*. p. 78.

<sup>424</sup> Ubehandlet 171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.23.

<sup>425</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*.

<sup>426</sup> Camilla Brautaset, "Opium, traktater og tolkninger," in *Møter med Kina*, ed. Camilla Brautaset et al. (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2018). P. 50-51.

<sup>427</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 82-83.

<sup>428</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>429</sup> Aftenposten 23.05.1922, "Dødsannonse Arthur Hansen"

<sup>430</sup> Bramsen, *Open Doors: Vilhelm Meyer and the Establishment of General Electric in China*. P.180.

<sup>431</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East"." P. 487, 754, 1596.

<sup>432</sup> George, *Men of Shanghai and North China*. P. 342-343.

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>Seitz</i>	Carl L.	American	Special Delegate	American association of China	Mrs	2	32	Connected to Dyer.	433 434
<i>Sem</i>	F.	Swedish	Manager	O. Thoresen	Mrs. Ingrid	2	30	Wife left him in Shanghai in 1925, they did not divorce.	435 436
<i>Shen</i>	Pao Chang				Mrs	1			
<i>Siqveland</i>	Thorgeir Tobias	Norwegian	Vice-Consul	Norwegian Consulate		1	26	Photographer.	437 438 439
<i>Sørensen</i>	Arne	Norwegian		Sino-Scandinavian bank		1		Chapter 4.	440 441
<i>Stang Lund</i>		Norwegian				1		No other data found.	
<i>Steckmest</i>	Sigurd	Norwegian	Consul (Hong Kong)	Norwegian Consulate (Hong Kong)	Mrs.	2		Chapter 2.	
<i>Thams</i>	Bjørn	Norwegian	Shipbroker	Linnestad/Thams & Co.		1			442 443
<i>Thoresen</i>	Olav (jr.)	Norwegian	Import/export	Thoresen & Co.	Mrs. Margrit (Olaf's, Nestor (sr.))	2	38	Chapter 4.	444

<sup>433</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East". P. 744, 725, 1606.

<sup>434</sup> House of Representatives, Taxation of American Companies in China: Hearings... on the Tax Features of H.R. 7204, (Washington D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1920).

<sup>435</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002

<sup>436</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East". P. 822.

<sup>437</sup> Grieg, *Kinesiske dage*. P.40.

<sup>438</sup> Bjørn Steenstrup, "Hvem er Hvem?," in *Hvem er Hvem?*, ed. Bjørn Steenstrup (Oslo: H. ASCHHOUG & CO. (W. NYGAARD), 1973). P. 502.

<sup>439</sup> Tepstad, "Norwegian extraterritoriality in China. A study of how and why Norway abolished its extraterritoriality in China."

<sup>440</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.16.

<sup>441</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p.56-59.

<sup>442</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p.18.

<sup>443</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 61

<sup>444</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 56-59.

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
<i>Tillitse</i>	Lars	Danish	Legation Secretary	Danish Legation in Beijing	Mrs. Vilhelmine	1		Soon to be legation secretary (November 1924)	445 446
<i>Tollefsen</i>	Erik	Norwegian	Commissioner of the post/Co-director general of post	Chinese customs service	Mrs. Dolly	2	17	Chapter 4.	447 448 449
<i>Utne</i>	Yngvar	Norwegian	Officer at sea, Chief mapper, doctor	Whangpoo Conservancy Board	Mrs	2		Published biography.	450
<i>Van Haute</i>	J.	Belgian	Consul-general	Belgian Consulate	Mrs.	2	8	Chapter 7.	451
<i>Von Heidenstam</i>	Werner August Hugo	Swedish	Chief engineer	Whangpoo Conservancy Board	Mrs	2	24	Chapter 5.	452
<i>Von Norman</i>	W.	Swedish	Manager	Ekman Foreign Agencies	Mrs.	1			453 454
<i>Wang</i>	Ching-chen	Chinese	Chief of staff (to General He)			1	19		455
<i>Weidemann</i>	«The Typhoon»	Norwegian	Captain	Chinese boats, Self-employed		1		Hypochondriac with one remaining tooth.	456
<i>Welch</i>	A J.		Director	Wattie & Co.		2			
<i>Wright</i>	S. F.	British	Inspector General	Chinese Maritime Customs	Mrs	2		Mrs had business with a lawyer in Oslo, Aall was	457 458

<sup>445</sup> Kraks legat, "Kraks Blå Bog: Fem Tusinde Nulevende Danske Mænd og Kvinders Levnedsløb," in *Kraks Blå Bog*, ed. Bjørn Steenstrup (København: O. C. OLSEN & Co., 1937). p. 1104.

<sup>446</sup> N. C. H. 22.11.1922.

<sup>447</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/0001

<sup>448</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 39.

<sup>449</sup> Medvedeva, "Erik Tollefsen: from a sailor to a Co-Director of China's Post Service."

<sup>450</sup> Seeberg and Filseth, *I Yangzidragens rike : nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*. p. 52, 64.

<sup>451</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p. 27.

<sup>452</sup> "Heidenstram, Hugo von (1884-1966)," updated 10.05, 2022, accessed 03.03, 2022, <https://digitaltmuseum.no/021037461389/heidenstam-hugo-von-1884-1966>.

<sup>453</sup> Hongkong Daily Press, "The Directory & Chronicle for China, Japan, Corea, Indo-China, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Siam, Netherlands India, Borneo, the Philippines, &c.; with which are Incorporated "The China Directory" and "The Hongkong Directory and Hong List for the Far East"." P. 760, 1580.

<sup>454</sup> N.C.H. 24.05.1922

<sup>455</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>456</sup> Ubehandlet\_171/Grovordnet/Eske1/III/, "Opptegnelser noen aftener i Rio, 1942» p. 20.

<sup>457</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/0002/0001-0002. Nedtegnelser: Dagboknotater 1922-1923. 16.02.1923.

<sup>458</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0022/

<i>Surname</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Nationality</i>	<i>Profession</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>	<i>Spouse</i>	<i>Amount present</i>	<i>Order announced</i>	<i>Notes</i>	<i>Sources</i>
								very curious what this was.	
<i>Yada</i>	Shichitaro	Japanese	Consul-general	Japanese Consulate	Mrs	2	10		
<i>Yang</i>	Hsiao-tang (N. T.)	Chinese	First Secretary of the Land office	Bureau of Foreign affairs		1	22		459
<i>Yao</i>	Yu	Chinese	Superintendent	Chinese customs service	Mrs.	1	20		460
<i>Yin</i>	I*. P.	Chinese	Director	Shanghai-Nanjing Railway Station		1			461
<i>Yuan</i>	Hsu C. F.	Chinese	Special Commissioner for Foreign Affairs Kiangsu	Chinese Foreign Affairs		1	5	Chapter 3.	462 463

<sup>459</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>460</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>461</sup> Invite sheet in Appendix 2.

<sup>462</sup> Powell, "Who's who in China; containing the pictures and biographies of China's best known political, financial, business and professional men ". P. 359.360.

<sup>463</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/0001.

## Appendix 2: Invite sheet

Reproduction from Aall's private archive.<sup>464</sup>

NAME	PARTNER	INVITE SENT	YES	NO
GENERALKONSUL DE ROSSI	Yes	Yes		2
GENERALKONSUL CUNNINGHAM	Yes	Yes	2	
GENERALKONSUL WILDEN	Yes	Yes		2
GENERALKONSUL YADA	Yes	Yes	2	
GENERALKONSUL THIEL	Yes	No		
GENERALKONSUL VAN HAUTE	Yes	Yes	2	
KST. <sup>465</sup> GENERALKONSUL DANIELS	Yes	Yes		2
KST. GENERALKONSUL REISS	Yes	Yes	2	
KONSUL PALENCIA	Yes	Yes		2
KONSUL BOTHELLO	Yes	Yes		2
KONSUL ARCE		Yes	1	
GENERALKONSUL BARTON		Yes	1	
GENERALKONSUL LILLIEHØØK		Yes	1	
KST. VICE KONSUL HERGEL		Yes	1	
S. K. ISLER		Yes	1	
MR. FESSENDEN		Yes	1	
COMMISSIONER CUSTUMS		Yes		1
DO. FERGUSON		Yes		1
DO. FOREIGN AFFAIRS	Yes	Yes	2	
DO. OF POST	Yes	Yes	2	
SUPERINTENDANT OF CHINESE CUSTOMS	Yes	Yes	2	
YAO YU				
SHEN PAO CHANG	Yes	Yes	2	
GENERAL HO FENG LING		Yes	1	
CHEVALIER CHEN	Ms Margaret Chen	Yes	2	
LOH TACHIUAN	Yes	Yes	2	
SECRETARY YANG		Yes	1	
MISS MABEL CHEN		Yes	1	
GENERAL WANG WHING CHEN		Yes	1	
MEYERS	Yes	Yes		2
KNIPSCHILDS	Yes	Yes	2	
GADS	Yes	Yes	2	
V. NORMANS		Yes	1	1
V. HEIDENSTRAMS	Yes	Yes	2	
RENBORGs	Yes	Yes	2	
MICHELETS	Yes	No	2	
THORESENS	Yes	Yes	2	
SEMS	Yes	Yes	2	
UTNES	Yes	Yes	2	
FERAGENS	Yes	Yes	1	1
BYES	Yes	Yes	2	
BERENTS	Yes	Yes	2	
HASLUNDS	Yes	Yes		2
HERLOFSONS	Yes	Yes	2	
KLINGENBERGS	Yes	Yes	2	
DAHLS	Yes	Yes	2	
BLIXS	Yes	Yes	2	
AALL		No	1	
SIQVELAND		Yes	1	
REIN		Yes		1
WALLEM		Yes		1

<sup>464</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002.

<sup>465</sup> Temporary.

NAME	PARTNER	INVITE SENT	YES	NO
STANG LUND		Yes	1	
JOHANNESSEN		Yes	1	
FRØLAND		Yes	1	
F. UTNE		Yes		1
HØHNKE		Yes	1	
BRODTKORB		Yes	1	
G. S. JENSEN		Yes	1	
E. J. MULLER	Yes	Yes		2
TILLITSE		Yes	1	
KAPT. LARSEN		Yes	1	
JOSEFSEN		Yes	1	
THAMS		Yes	1	
WEIDEMAN		Yes	1	
EEK, A	Yes	Yes		2
LINNESTAD		Yes		1
STECKMEST		Yes		1
FRK. FRØBERG		Yes	1	
FRK. GUDA MLADECK (HOS TOLLEFSEN)		Yes	1	
HALVORSEN	Yes	Yes	2	
SUNDLO	Yes	Yes		2
SORENSEN		Yes	1	
DU PAC DE MARSOUILERS	Yes	Yes		2
G. H. STITTS	Yes	Yes		2
MACKIES	Yes	Yes	2	
WRIGHTS	Yes	Yes	2	
PRIESTWOODS	Yes	Yes	2	
MCLEODS	Yes	Yes	2	
SKINNERS	Yes	Yes	2	
A. J. WELCH	Yes	Yes	2	
MACDONALDS	Yes	Yes	2	
CAMPBELLS	Yes	Yes		2
GREENS	Yes	Yes	2	
NORMAN DYER	Yes	Yes	2	
SEITZS	Yes	Yes	2	
DR. FINDLEY		Yes	1	
H. DOLLARS		No	N/A	N/A
LOBINGERS	Yes	Yes	2	
SCHUHLS	Yes	Yes	2	
CALCINA		Yes	1	
DR. BIRT		No	N/A	N/A
SUM	52		105 466	35

<sup>466</sup> Aall counted 108, but that was simply wrong.



## Appendix 3: Seating plan

Reproduction from Aall's private archive, highlighted when people were mentioned in chapters<sup>467</sup>

LEGEND	Name confirmed	First name unsure	Unsure
			Thorgheir Siqveland
Mrs. Halvorsen			Miss Frøberg
Kristian Larsen	Halfdan Klingenberg		Mr. Stang Lund
Mrs. Welch	Sverre Frøland		Mrs. Bye
P. G. de Calcina	Miss Gerda Mladeck		Karl Ferdinand Josefsen
Mrs. Utne	Karl Johan Halvorsen		Mrs. Dahl
Hans Berents	Kapten Weidemann		Sophus Brodtkord
Mrs. Seitz	Mrs. Klingenberg		Ingrid Sem
Dr. Lindsay	Mrs. Sem		Arne Sørensen
Petra Berents	Priestwood		Mabel Chen
F. J. Schuhl	N. Dyer		(N. T.) Yang Hsiao-tang
Mona Knipschildt	Dorothy Blix		N. Dyer
S. F. Wright	J. G. Priestwood		Gustav Schøien Jensen
Mrs. Gad	Mamie Macdonald		Mrs. Schuhl
Mr. Green	Olav Thoresen jr.		Ranald MacDonald
Kirsten Meyer	Alice Herlofson		Mrs. Green
W. von Norman	Sigurd Steckmest		Carl Blix
Mrs. Chen	Margrit Thoresen		Mary MacLeod
Loh Ta-chiuan	Charles Gordon Mackie		Vilhelm Meyer
			Lars Tillitse
			Reidar Johannesen
			Alf Bye
			Marguerite Chen
			Bjørn Thams
			Caspar Dahl
			Mrs. Feragen
			Frithjof Høhnke
			A. J. Welch
			G. P. Steckmest
			Yngve Utne
			Carl Johan Knipschildt
			Mrs. Wright
			Carl L. Seitz
			Gordon Mackie
			Herlof Herlofson
			Mrs. Renborg
			Chevalier Chen Shik-kuang

<sup>467</sup> NB: Ubehandlet\_171/D/Da/L0007/0002, «Seating Chart»

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## Appendix 4: Seating plan by Nationality

Combination of the seating chart and information from Appendix 1.

LEGEND	Confirmed	Unsure															
																	Norwegian
Norwegian																	Norwegian
Norwegian																	Norwegian
Mrs. Welch																	Norwegian
Italian																	Chinese
Norwegian																	Norwegian
Norwegian																	Norwegian
American																	Norwegian
Dr. Lindsay																	Norwegian
Norwegian																	Mr A. J. Welch
American																	Norwegian
Swedish																	Norwegian
British																	Swedish
Swedish																	British
Mr Green																	American
Danish																	British
Swedish																	Norwegian
Chinese																	Swedish
Chinese																	Chinese
Swedish																	Swedish
Chinese																	Chinese
Chinese																	Chinese
Swedish																	Norwegian
Chinese																	Swedish
	Norwegian	British	Danish	American	Japanese	American	Norwegian	Norwegian	Chinese	Belgian	British	American	Chilean	Chinese	German (Brazilian)		

## Appendix 5: Seating plan by Profession

Combination of the seating chart and information from Appendix 1.

LEGEND	Confirmed	Unsure										
										Vice-Consul		
Spouse									Single		Legation Secretary	
Captain		Assistant manager							Mr Stang Lund		Assistant	
Spouse		Regional Manager							Spouse		Secretary	
Mr de Calcina		Single							Captain		Single	
Spouse		Captain							Spouse		Shipbroker	
Engineer		Captain							Stockbroker		Assistant	
Spouse		Spouse							Spouse		Spouse	
Doctor		Manager							Banker		Brewery owner	
Spouse		Spouse							Single		Director	
Attorney		Unofficial US representative							First Secretary		Spouse	
Spouse		Spouse							Spouse		Officer	
Inspector General		Attorney							Engineer		Knipschildt	
Spouse		Spouse							Spouse		Spouse	
Mr Green		Shipbroker							Barrister		Special Delegate	
Spouse		Spouse							Spouse		Spouse	
Manager		Consul (Hong Kong)							Businessman		Shipbroker	
Spouse		Spouse							Spouse		Spouse	
Secretary		Businessman							President & General Manager		Chief Secretary of foreign affairs	
Commercial Attaché											Vice-Consul	
Police Commissioner											Spouse	
City Magistrate											Director	
Engineer											Commissioner of the post	
Superintendent											Spouse	
	Spouse	Chairman	Temporary Consul	Judge	Spouse	Spouse	Spouse	Special Commissioner	Consul General	Consul General	Spouse	Consul
									General	Temporary Consul General		



## Appendix 7: Seating by gender

Combination of the seating chart and information from Appendix 1.

[illegible]

## Appendix 8: Norwegian firms

Firms in January 1924

Reproduction from National Archives.<sup>468</sup>

COMPANY NAME	OWNERS	INDUSTRY	ADDRESS	AT THE DINNER
<b>A. H. HASLUND &amp; CO.</b>	Axel Hopstock Haslund	Import & Export	53, Szechuen Road	No
<b>B. THAMS</b>	Bjørn Thams	Shipbroker	4, French bund	Yes
<b>C. BLIX</b>	Carl Blix	Exchange broker	None	Yes
<b>E. J. MÜLLER</b>	Einar Jonsberg Müller	Engineer	17, Museum Road	No
<b>EAST ASIA PRODUCE &amp; ESTATE CO.</b>	Hans Berents	Import & export	13, A, Canton Road	Yes
<b>FRITHJOF HØHNKE</b>	Frithjof Høhnke	Import & Export	17, Museum Road	Yes
<b>FRITHJOF UTNE</b>	Frithjof Utne	Import & Export	96, Szechuen road	Yes
<b>G. S. JENSEN</b>	Gustav Schøie Jensen	Engineer & Importer	91, Szechuen Road	Yes
<b>H. BERENTS</b>	Hans Berents	Engineer	13, A, Canton Road	Yes
<b>H. HERLOFSON</b>	Herlof Herlofson	Shipping & Coal broker	44, Szechuen Road	Yes
<b>O. THORESEN &amp; CO.</b>	Olav Thoresen	Shipbroker, Import & Export	29, Szechuen Road	Yes
<b>R. E. LINNESTAD</b>	R. E. Linnestad	Electrical Engineer	36, Jinkee Road	No
<b>UNION BRYGGERI A/S, SCANDINAVIAN BREWERY</b>	Frithjof Høhnke	Brewery	17, Museum Road	Yes
<b>WALLEM &amp; CO.</b>	Haakon Johan Wallem Bernt Rein	Shipbroker, Import & Export	29, Canton Road	No

<sup>468</sup> RA/S-2611/B/Ba/L0030/

## Pictures

