

# The Neutral Enemy?

A study of Norwegian representation and diplomacy in China 1937-  
1947



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## On Wade Giles, Pinyin and Colonial Terms for Cities and Provinces

The political parties that vied for power in China during the Second World War, and geographical locations in China, go by many names and abbreviations in both Chinese and English textbooks. This issue is further complicated by China's traditional writing system. Therefore, I find it important to present the language problems we face when writing and reading Chinese history, and steps that I have been taken to simplify the text.

Chinese traditional writing 汉字 (*Hànzi*) consists of logograms, symbolic writing that depicts the object through enframing its qualities, usually using radicals. To illustrate we can look at the word for ice 冰, it has the radical 冫, this radical as a basis quality indicates cold. The main component of 冰 is however 水 which means water. Through analysis and guesswork, the reader can understand the meaning of the character. Cold and water gives cues to the reader, that the object can be what we identify as ice. 汉字 *Hànzi*, is however usually incomprehensible to the reader unless the reader has extensive training in the writing system.

Chinese has therefore been transcribed into phonetic writing, like most written languages, including European languages. Contact between westerners and Chinese traders created the original pidgin language, a grammatically simplified oral Chinese-English hybrid that later became ubiquitous in the Chinese treaty ports.<sup>1</sup> Words were later standardized during the 1930's.<sup>2</sup> Chinese writing used to be transcribed into a system called *Wade Giles*, which was meant to transcribe the coastal languages in China; these are now, among others, called Cantonese. Cantonese is very different from the modern common language (*dialect*) *Pǔtōnghuà* and the accompanying pinyin-system, transcribed after the 1949 communist takeover. *Pinyin* has become the universal phonetical transcription of *Hànzi*.<sup>3</sup> This thesis will use this pinyin transcription model, instead of the traditional *Wade-Giles* transcriptions.

This means that some of terms and place-names in the source material and literature may differ from the terms and place-names in this thesis, while indicating the same object or concept. This also include *faux-pas* assumptions such as labelling Sun-Yat-Sen and Chiang-Kai-Shek's nationalists "Gúomíndǎng" GMD as communists. Even considering ideological aspirations, terms like these will confuse the reader. Communists where it appears, refers to the *Gòngchǎndǎng* GCD, the political grouping following Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai. The *Gúomíndǎng* and the *Gòngchǎndǎng*, will hereby be referred to simply as the GMD and GCD, respectively.

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<sup>1</sup> At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a new *Comprador* appeared in China, this merchant needed to learn new language skills and knowledge of world markets, English was the most important language in the early trade system, and so new, non-Confucian school systems, emphasizing pragmatism and this market connection were established in China. Published dictionaries used by these merchants included rudimentary business English words, like basic measure words, objects, prepositions and possessive nouns. Western nationals tended to speak only this simplified English-Chinese hybrid with Chinese nationals. Yeh (2007) 14-15. Westerners on the other hand put great emphasis on speaking correct English with each other, a clear class marker.

<sup>2</sup> Yeh (2007) 41.

<sup>3</sup> Westad (2012) 207.

Whenever *pinyin* appears in this thesis outside of this subchapter, tone marks will not be used, and I will not translate the names of important historical figures whose names, are well established in historical narratives in *Wade Giles* transcription. This includes political leaders such as Chiang-Kai-Shek.

Political figures such as Wang Chingwei and Mao Tse Tung, tend to be referred to in contemporary literature as Wang Jingwei and Mao Zedong, transcribed from Hànzì using pinyin. The thesis follows these traditions, flawed and inconsistent though they may be.

These differences include but are not restricted to these examples.

Wade-Giles

Pinyin

Kuomintang	Guomindang
Szewan/Szechwan	Sichuan
Weihsien	Weifang
Amoy	Xiamen
Chiang-Kai-Shek	Jiang Jieshi

# 1.0 Thesis Introduction.

## 1.1 Introducing the Topic.

On the morning of December 7, 1941. Imperial Japan launched a surprising ambush at the American naval base Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. This attack led to extensive changes in diplomacy and power-relations worldwide, to the widening of the Japanese theatre of war in Asia and to profound changes in living conditions for westerners in Asia, liaison communications between the Sino-Sphere and the nations in the Occident<sup>4</sup>. Many western foreigners from the Occident had long lived in enclaves on the Chinese mainland, called Concessions. The concessions were international semi-autonomous cities.<sup>5</sup> As the Concessions, usually were on the coastline or along the rivers of China, the cities found themselves to be within Japanese domains very rapidly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, as Japan had already occupied or installed puppet-kingdoms on the vast eastern plains of China by 1941.

Most Western nationals in East Asia therefore found themselves behind enemy lines after Pearl Harbor. Many were therefore abruptly put in internment camps and branded as enemy nationals by the Imperial Japanese conquerors, eight thousand were interned in Shanghai alone by august 1942. In the greater Sino-sphere, 120.000-130.000 civilians, among a total prisoner count of 350.000 were interned during the war in East Asia.<sup>6</sup>

The focus of this master thesis is placed on Norwegian nationals and Norwegian national interests in China and Hong Kong from 1937-1947, with particular focus on events after 1941, following the widening of the Second World War.<sup>7</sup> More precisely the thesis aims at answering the following research questions:

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<sup>4</sup> The West and the old Chinese hegemonies in East Asia.

<sup>5</sup> Westad (2012) 171-173.

<sup>6</sup> Hata (1996) 263. Leck (2006) 206. Tanaka (1996) 2, 3. Archer (2008) 5. Greg Leck puts the total number of civilian internees in the Sino-sphere at 120.000, Bernice Archer puts the number at 130.000 Ikuhiko Hata and Yuki Tanaka argue that there were between 132.000-135.000 Allied POWs (Prisoners of War) held captive by Japan in the Second World War. I presume this does not include neutral nations and Jewish refugees in Shanghai, for Tanaka puts the total number of prisoners at 350.000, without defining clearly, what the term prisoner constitutes. Defining POWs and internees is sometimes done haphazardly, and terms like POW and internee are often mixed-up in the literature. For instance, George Kulstad (2013) 26. Notes in his memoir, that he was surprised to find out that his family was listed as internees, in the list attached to the book "*Ingen Nåde*" by Kristian Ottesen. He was never interned in the strict sense of the word, "*The state of being confined as a prisoner, especially for political or military reasons.*" <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/internment> 05.06.17 as he was only loosely confined to Shanghai's city boundaries.

<sup>7</sup> "*The Manchurian incident*" and "*The Second Sino-Japanese War*" are somewhat ambiguous and overlapping terms that describe distinct parts of an ongoing conflict, the events are especially ambiguous in relations to the

1. Who represented Norwegian interests in China and Hong Kong 1937-1947?
2. How and why did these arrangements come into place?
3. How did this arrangement affect Norwegian interests?

By 1941, Norway was already occupied following the German military campaign known as “*Operation Weserübung Nord*.”<sup>8</sup> The war therefore changed and challenged the Norwegian foreign department’s mode of operations, inside and outside of Europe.

Following the invasion in 9 April 1940, King Haakon and the legitimately elected Norwegian Nygaardsvoll government retreated to England.<sup>9</sup> Their departure led to a political takeover by Vidkun Quisling and his fascistic National Unity Party (*Nasjonal Samling*) who under German auspices implemented their party-program in Norway. The National Unity Party was refuted by most of Norway’s foreign diplomatic missions<sup>10</sup>, who generally turned to the government *in-exile* situated in London.

In a telegram dated 11 April 1940, The Quisling government sought the Norwegian diplomatic missions for recognition as the legitimate government of Norway. Minister Michelet from the diplomatic mission in Helsinki’s response to the missive, best illustrates the general attitude towards the National unity party, in his short reply: “*Heavenly curses upon the traitor...*”<sup>11</sup> Referring to Quisling, whose name has become a synonym for traitor. Most diplomats including the Norwegian General Consul in Shanghai refrained from acknowledging the National Unity Party in Norway, putting Norwegians in Asia in an uncertain path where their nationality could be defined as Allies, neutrals or members of the Axis powers, as Germany and the National Unity party by proxy, were aligned with Japan by 1940 after the Tripartite pact. At the same time there was no official declaration

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more general term “World War Two”. Scholars usually refer to these events as different epochs. The Sino-Japanese Conflict 1931-1937 as a separate incident or prequel to The Sino-Japanese war 1937-1945. The common western periodization of “World War Two”. Starts with the German invasion of Poland in 1939, Harmsen (2013) 9. In Asia, it is generally understood to have started much earlier. In January 2017 president of the PRC-GCD China Xi Jinping, ordered a revision of the Chinese war-narrative in schoolbooks, renaming the conflict the 14-Year War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression putting the start marker for the war in 1931. [https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/world/asia/china-japan-textbooks-war.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/world/asia/china-japan-textbooks-war.html?_r=0) 22.01.2017. Odd Arne Westad also puts the conflicts into a coherent periodization with Japanese aggression only stalled through disgraceful treaties, in a bid to give Guomindang (GMD) nationalist armies time to professionalize. Westad (2012) 195. Peter Harmsen argues that the battle of Shanghai in 1937 was the first major battle of World War Two. Harmsen, (2013) 9.

<sup>8</sup> Riste (2001) 147

<sup>9</sup> Ibid 154.

<sup>10</sup> Diplomatic mission is the generic term for a group of people from one state, present in another state, representing the first.” *\*sending state in a \*receiving state...*” Subgroups include Consulates, Legations and Embassies. Berridge (2003) 76, 92,54.

<sup>11</sup> My translation, the original quote reads: “*Himmelens forbannelse over landsforræderen*” Neumann,Leira (2005) 216



of war between Norway's Government *in-exile* in London and Japan before 1945.<sup>12</sup> Norwegians domestically and abroad were therefore under great duress, as their home country was divided by the truly global-spanning World war. This thesis named: *The Neutral Enemy? Analyses these little researched dynamisms and contradictions to see how the Norwegian political status was understood in China. The thesis also researches the roles of separate non-governmental actors in Shanghai, Hong Kong and China's interior. Some of these actors had to bargain for their rights, with a ruthless conqueror in a post League of Nations security-system world, where nationhood, allegiance and ethnicity could mean the difference between life and death.*<sup>13</sup> This story will be a small, but potentially important addition to the history of Norwegian foreign policy, extended Norwegian history and what I personally perceive as omitted war-history. Its methodology will be related to new diplomatic history, a discipline "*...aimed specifically at the study of individuals and groups of individuals who perform diplomatic roles, rather than at international relations as a whole; and it integrates political and economic narratives with other perspectives and methodologies such as prosopography, the sociology of knowledge, gender theory and network analysis...*"<sup>14</sup>. New diplomatic history defines itself as a post-modern extension of traditional diplomatic history as proposed by Leopold Von Ranke where the focus is more singular on power politics, *realpolitik*, and official diplomat's correspondence. Official diplomats most clearly incarnate the idea of diplomacy and the prerogative to "be" a country's will but they were not the only diplomatic actors in China during World War Two.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Minister Einar Maseng in Moscow recognized the telegram 11. April telegram therefore he also recognized the Quisling government as legitimate. Neumann,Leira (2005) 216. General Consul of Shanghai Terje Knudtzon rejected the telegram and revealed his stance towards the Quisling Government in a Chinese newspaper. Titled "*Norwegian consul ignores order*". (1940, Jun 19). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1418910650?accountid=164172> Archer (2008) 4.

<sup>13</sup> Foreign aggression and imperialism through war was by year 1900 abhorred, it was argued nation-states should in theory control their own destiny. Knutsen,Leira,Neumann (2016) 55. To combat foreign aggression and imperialism, legalist arbitration was meant to be dealt in the international tribunal League of Nations established 1919. The system broke down in 1931, After Italy and Japan respectively invaded Ethiopia and China. Jenssen (2016) 64. Riste (2001) 135, 93. Policy between nations therefore returned to traditional power politics. Alliances or neutrality was again adapted as policies and guarantors for national sovereignty and the security of national subjects. Jenssen (2016) 81.

<sup>14</sup> <http://newdiplomatichistory.org/about/> 01.03.2017

<sup>15</sup> Melve (2010) 110. Historian Robert Citino argue in the 2007 American History Review that war-history is too linear and focused on political events and great-man theory, which equates to "*Top down*" history. With the cultural component, holistic history and other historical inquiry like new diplomatic history near forgotten in literature. He is calling for a renewal of the field, and the birth of "*New-War History*." With this critique in mind, I will have to contextualize the little historical research literature about events in China during the war and events that relate to Norwegians, to cultural history, for instance mentality-history, like Japanese military thinking about internment policy and nation building and highlight challenges faced by the different actors who had political roles in the war-torn country. Citino: <http://military.hist.unt.edu/Citino%20AHR.pdf> 11.02.17.

## 1.2 Literature and Research Status.

It is when literature is examined in conjuncture with primary sources, that the thesis questions can be answered. To my knowledge, there is no specialized research literature that explicitly deals with the Norwegian diplomacy in the Asia during the Second World War or the more specific research questions I have asked in this thesis. However, several conflicting assumptions have been put forward about Norwegian political representatives in China during the timeframe this thesis encompasses.

These assumptions include somewhat blunt and even paradoxical assumptions about representation and politics. One assumption, originating in the Norwegian National archives' search engine archive description for archive: Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611 argues that the official Norwegian diplomats who left Shanghai on April 2, 1942, after Norway's break in diplomatic relations with the Japanese, resumed operations as representative for Norwegians interest in the new capital of the GMD nationalists, in Chongqing in Sichuan Province in China.

*"The Japanese decided in April 1942, to forcefully shut down the Norwegian Legation and Consulate-General in Shanghai, because they represented the Norwegian government in London. This action ultimately resulted in another Norwegian Legation being reopened the same year in China's wartime capital, Chongqing".*<sup>16</sup>

Stein Seeberg and Gunnar Filseth's Popular Science book *"Yangzidragens Rike"* on the contrary, argue that *"The Swedish Consulate took care of Norwegian interests."* After the Norwegian diplomatic mission closed, wholly omitting, throughout the book, the re-opening of the new diplomatic mission in Chongqing. It also mentions the creation of a committee *"The Norwegian Committee..."* Who worked *"...As a link between the Norwegians and the Japanese"* A residents committee to enable citizen diplomacy.<sup>17</sup>

What role did these different entities play in China during the war? Were Norwegian Consular activities effectively resumed in Chongqing? What does taking care of Norwegian interests' entail for these different actors and how was it practiced? This thesis will analyze these different claims, by comparing them to archival source material and conducting historical analysis.<sup>18</sup>

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<http://www.arkivportalen.no/side/aktor/detaljer?aktorId=no-a1450-01000000508817> 31.01.2017

*"Arkivportalen.no"* is the official search engine of the Norwegian National archives "Riksarkivet." Both historian Jens Tepstad and historian Frida Jenssen's master theses, respectively titled: *"Norwegian Extraterritoriality in China"* (2015) and *"Norwegian foreign policy and the Sino-Japanese conflict 1931-1938."* refer to the National archives' argument for a Chongqing diplomatic mission, as representative for Norwegian interests. Jens Tepstad (2015) 104. Jenssen (2016) 78.

<sup>17</sup> Seeberg, Filseth (2000). 112.

<sup>18</sup> Tosh (2010) 89,153.

### 1.3 Literature about Norwegians in China and Hong Kong.

Literature about Norwegians living in China and Asia during the Second World War is mostly historicized by topical interests under categories like war-sailors' literature and Interned Norwegian and missionaries' memoirs. In 1996, Historian Kristian Ottosen wrote the first iteration of his book about Norwegian nationals in Japanese captivity during the Second World War in Asia: "*Ingen nåde: Historien om nordmenn i japansk fangenskap*" (*No Mercy*) The newest edition of the book published in 2008, added a preface and edited some information.

"*Ingen Nåde*" has become the leading literary source in the field, and the book provides listings of Norwegian internees and a wide array of witness accounts.<sup>19</sup> His tally lists about nine-hundred interned Norwegians by the Japanese during the war.<sup>20</sup> This list was later used as reference material in other literary works about Westerners and Norwegians in China. The website project:

<http://www.warsailors.com> seems to build on Ottosen's research, and Ottosen's list was also used as the definite list of "prisoners" in St.prp.nr.67, the Norwegian State proposition for war-reparations for Norwegians who lived in China during World War Two. The proposal was rejected.<sup>21</sup> Historian Guri Hjeltnes hails Ottosen as the «*Primus motor.*» The principal writer in the greater project to historicizing the history of Norwegians in captivity, globally, during the Second World War.<sup>22</sup> Ottosen's book is certainly vast in scope but not exhaustive. And it has some pronounced imprecisions, for reasons I don't know, but suspect is related to source material available to him, and the sheer number of Norwegians stuck in Asia throughout the war.

I have identified many Norwegians missionaries in China, who had telegraphic communication with the Norwegian diplomatic mission in Chongqing; none of them are included in the list compiled by Ottosen, despite the some of them appearing in his book as anecdotes, perhaps they are not included since they missionized in the puppet-kingdom Manchuria (Manchukuo) which consisted of the modern day Chinese provinces Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang and to some degree Inner Mongolia, where they largely kept to themselves, similarly Norwegians in free GMD China do not appear on the list, more on this later.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ottosen writes that he conducted interviews with WW2 China-expatriates before writing his book. He also collected notes. Ottosen (2008) 9.

<sup>20</sup> Internment and captivity are terms often used as synonyms in literature. The 900 are however usually describes as "internerte" this translates into interned.

<sup>21</sup> Kulstad (2014) 26. Hjeltnes (1997) 252. St.prp.nr.67 15,16.

<sup>22</sup> Project: «Nordmenn i Fangenskap 1940-1945» Hjeltnes (1997) 252.

<sup>23</sup> Ottosen (2008) 72,304.

Georg Kulstad's father Peter Alv who was held captive on his boat in Kokura Japan, is listed as a captive in Shanghai. It is likely that this clerical error happened because he was signed on the Chinese public agency the WCB, and not in a Norwegian owned vessel, which led to complications in keeping track of Norwegian nationals for the Consulates. (he might be listed as a Shanghai internee because of his pre-surrender return to China).<sup>24</sup> George pointed out that there are other imprecisions about his family in Ottosen's book. While these are not critical to the subject of list compilation, they are indicative of a field of study in need of closer scrutiny, it also shows the complex nature of writing complex and dynamic historical narratives of events with many actors.

George Kulstad:

- 1) *My father was born in 1895, not 1900. He was not arrested on 8 Dec 41, and was not in Shanghai.*
- 2) *I was born in 1935, not 1933, and was not arrested on 8 Dec 41. We were under Japanese military occupation but were at liberty in Shanghai. Much like Norwegians in Norway during the German occupation.*
- 3) *Helen Kulstad, my mother, was born in 1899 not 1900.*
- 4) *Olaf Einar (correctly spelled Olav) was born in 1930, not 1931.*"

More seriously Ottosen's book lists Minister Alf Hassel, who travelled to Chongqing as a Norwegian representative, as having repatriated through Maputo (Lorenzo Marques) which is only partially true. It is also omitting the establishment and role played by the diplomatic mission in Chongqing and Hassel's posting as Minister there.<sup>25</sup> In the latest 2008 edition of the book the day-of-birth have been removed for the Kulstad family and many others, and replaced more restrictively by year of birth, still imprecise in the case of the Kulstad family. "*Ingen nåde*" was however, never meant to be a book solely about Norwegian captives in Japanese internment camps and (overly?) meticulous information scrutiny seems to have been a secondary concern over telling an orderly story. In that case, the exact situation of Kristian Eli and Ebbe Reichelt is not so important. In his book Ottosen argues that:

*"The history of Norwegians in Japanese captivity is not solely the history of about the ones who end up in POW camps, in usual prisoner camps and in prisons, it is also about Norwegians captivated in their homes, Norwegian who could not leave their area they were in, when the Japanese occupied it."*

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<sup>24</sup> Kulstad (2014) 8-9.

<sup>25</sup> Ottosen (2008) 328. See chapter 1,2.

<sup>26</sup> My translation, the original quote reads: «*Historien om Nordmenn i Japansk fangenskap er ikke bare historien om dem som havner i krigsfangeleirer, i vanlige fangeleirer, og i fengsler. Den handler også om nordmenn som ble fanger i deres eget hjem, som ikke kunne forlate det området de var i da japanerne besatte det*» Ottosen (2008) 74.

This means to my understanding, that he makes no distinction between captives in internment in the strict sense, and non-captives, in occupied China, in his tally. And with good reason. While civilian Norwegians in 1941 were not captivated and interned in camps, generally, their individual situation was always peculiar, and each lived destiny was different and deserving of remembrance. Common for all Norwegians in Japanese occupied China was a ban on travel out of the country, and compulsory registration process with Japanese authorities. Norway's peculiar status in China led the Japanese authorities to implement what Ottosen simply calls «Practical solutions» regarding handling of Norwegian nationals, while I agree that the Japanese dealt with Norwegians through «Practical solutions» Japan's authorities' decision making did not happen in a vacuum.

“*Ingen nåde*” is therefore the biggest collection of Norwegian witness accounts, in various locations in Asia, massive in scope, but uncritical. Ottosen wrote the time witnesses' stories many decades after the lived events in the Second World War had taken place, and the witnesses' stories are included without scrutiny, contextual literature nor a workable footnote apparatus.

Journalists Stein Seeberg and Gunnar Filseth's popular-science book on Norwegian *Shanghaiander* expatriates “*I Yangzidragens Rike, Nordmenn i Shanghai gjennom 150 år*” was written to commemorate the long-standing presence of Norwegians in Shanghai, and the re-opening of the Norwegian General-Consulate in Shanghai in 1996.<sup>27</sup> The book has many interesting anecdotes, and it touches on several topics close to the focus of this thesis. “*I Yangzidragens Rike*” historicizes the long epoch of Norwegian presence in Shanghai. But it is not providing a viable reference apparatus.<sup>28</sup>

Historian Fredrik Larsen Lund recently in 2017 also wrote a similar book named “*Norske Utposter, Nordmenn Utenfor Allfarvei*” One chapter of the book is dedicated to the history of Norwegian expats in Shanghai. The content of the chapter is similar to the content and topics explored in in “*Yangzidragens Rike*” but unlike Seeberg and Filseth, the author provides a basic referencing apparatus.

Journalists Helge Øgrim and Kjell Arild Nilsen wrote the book Popular-Science book (Norge VS Kina) In 2015. The book mainly concerns itself with the resumption of Norwegian representation in China in the timeframe 1955 until year 2015, with emphasis on modern political issues, like the fragile relationship between Norway and today's China and its post-war origins. Their book therefore mainly considers Norwegian-Communist GCD-China relations. “*Norway Vs China*” supplies a considerable referencing system to primary source material, open for peer-review at the Norwegian National

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<sup>27</sup> Seeberg, Filseth. (2000) Preface.

<sup>28</sup> Historian Helle argue in her master thesis that two of the most important authors pulled out from this project, due to a disagreement on how to approach the primary sources. Helle (2012) 14.

Archive. The authors also argue that they conducted several conversations with both identifiable and anonymous employees at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA).<sup>29</sup>

## 1.4 Biographies and Recent Research about Norwegian Interests in China.

There is a lot of usable biographical and prosopographical literature from the period this thesis analyses, most relevant among these is George Kulstad's «*A Foreign Kid in Shanghai in World War Two*» Johan Nielsen's «*Av en sjømannsprests loggbok*» Anwei Jensen's (Danielsen) «*Med Mor i Kina.*» Georg Rinvold's «*Misjonær i Krigens Kina.*» Kari Torjesen's «*We signed away our Lives.* » Asbjørn Aavik's «*Grotid I Storm: Krigsår I Kina.* » and Bengt Johansson's «*Shanghai.Svenskars liv & öden*» Together provide valuable witness accounts of World War Two events in China. Like Ottosen's book, they cannot be considered neutral sources or absolute truths. Historian John Tosh argues that biographies are often “... overlaid by intentions that are inconsistent with a strict regard for historical truth.” Historian Ludmilla Jordanova similarly criticize biographies as inherently hagiographic but argue that the popular literary genre has gained acceptance as unique brand of insightful literature. The genre has become increasingly important in post-modernist cultural history writing.<sup>30</sup> While these books only provide witness accounts, they are invaluable, because there is little other research-literature available about the events that happened in the remote provinces of China, where missionaries from the Occident typically were the only literate persons around. In relation to this problem of source-material accessibility, Jordanova argues that “...we should not fetishize ‘primary sources, but seek whatever is helpful...” Jordanova also argues “...relatively few (sources) were created with future historians in mind; many were produced in settings where academic disciplines did not exist, and they largely stem from the messiness of lives as they are lived...” This certainly holds true for missionaries in the field.<sup>31</sup>

Kulstad's account is that of a young multi-national partly Norwegian boy (holder of a Norwegian passport) in the greatest concession in China: Shanghai. Priest Johan Nielsen's biography concerns the troubles he and his congregation met in Hong Kong. Jensen, Rinvold, and Torjessen and Aavik were situated in the vastness of China's interior provinces, as missionaries, or children of missionaries. Jensen and Torjessen, suffered hardships as internees in Japanese captivity; inside internment camps. While the Rinvold family and Asbjørn Aavik managed to remain free from any type of internment-

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<sup>29</sup> The Norwegian Embassy was fully re-opened in 1955. Norge Vs Kina Helge Øgrim, Kjell Arild Nilsen.(2015) 40, 44, 290.

<sup>30</sup> Tosh (2010) 67 Jordanova (2000)30, 41, 42.

<sup>31</sup> Jordanova (2000) 101.

camp throughout the war.

Recent research literature submitted to the University of Bergen has also contributed greatly to the story of Norwegians in China, these diasporas include diplomacy and representation in China and studies of pull factors that attracted Norwegians to get involved in China. There have also been many new additions to several other research diasporas. Historians Camilla Brautaset and Stig Tenold have researched Norwegian port calls in Asia, reflecting Norwegian business interests.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, Jakob Tønnesen and Ingrid Helle have written Master theses about Norwegian Shipping practices.<sup>33,34</sup> Olga Medvedeva's Ph.D thesis has researched the topic of Norwegians working in the esteemed Customs-service in China.<sup>35</sup>

The establishment of Norwegian representation in China was the subject of Ingrid Myrstad's Master thesis.<sup>36</sup> She researched the humble beginnings of Swedish-Norwegian representation in China, and the effects the dissolution of the United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway had on the Norwegian Consulate in Shanghai. Jens Tepstad's Master thesis.<sup>37</sup> Explores the events that led to the abolishment of extraterritorial-rights for Norwegians in China during World War Two. Frida Brende Jensen's Master thesis and forthcoming book.<sup>38</sup> Examines Norwegian Policy makers approach to Japanese transgressions in Manchuria. Camilla Brautaset has supervised all these theses, and some of these studies took part of the "*Merchants and Missionaries project*"<sup>39</sup>. Brautaset is also working on the book "*Møter med Kina*" alongside UIB associates Malin Gregersen and Karina Hestad Skeie. "*Møter med Kina*" examines pre-World War Two interactions between Norwegians and Chinese. It is expected to be released in June 2018.

Individually the studies, research literature and popular literature have shed light on many important topics in relation to the accumulated holistic-history of Norwegian trade and diplomatic policy and history in China, from its infancy until the present. When this story is viewed as a synthesized story, it becomes apparent that the research literature has left what I perceive a historiographical "gap" during the Second World War era, leading up to the communist takeover in 1949, which in turn lead to a lull in Norwegian representation, until the opening of the new Royal Norwegian Embassy in Beijing 1955.

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<sup>32</sup> «*Lost in Calculation? Norwegian Merchant Shipping in Asia, 1870-1914*» (2010). *East of Aden. Norwegian Merchant Shipping in Asia, 1880-1920*. (2009) NHH-UIB.

<sup>33</sup> «*Norske nisjer og nye markeder*». Universitet i Bergen. (2016). Available at: <http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/12664/144683645.pdf?sequence=1> 30.07.17.

<sup>34</sup> «*Med verdifull last. Norske rederiers deltagelse i frakt av kinesiske arbeidsmigranter*». Universitet i Bergen. (2012) Available at: <http://bora.uib.no/handle/1956/9059> 19.03.17

<sup>35</sup> «*Norwegians in the Chinese maritime customs service 1862-1948*» Universitetet i Bergen (2015).

<sup>36</sup> «*Generalkonsulatet i Kina En studie av en svensk-norsk utenriksstasjon 1842-1905*» Universitet i Bergen Available at: [http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/3842/Masterthesis\\_Myrstad.pdf?sequence=1](http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/3842/Masterthesis_Myrstad.pdf?sequence=1) 19.03.17

<sup>37</sup> «*Norwegian Extraterritoriality in China*» Universitet i Bergen (2015). Available at: <http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/10776/140866382.pdf;sequence=1> 22.03.2017

<sup>38</sup> «*Norwegian foreign policy and the Sino-Japanese conflict 1931-1938*» NTNU (2016). Available at:

<http://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2430624/Jenssen%20-%20masteroppgave.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>39</sup> <http://merchantsandmissionaries.no/> 22.03.2017

Therefore, the Norwegian research literature will be more important for understanding historical causality and context. The biographies will provide anecdotes about Norwegian communities.

## 1.5 Recent Studies of the History of Norwegian Foreign Policy.

This thesis addresses problems related to Norway's foreign policy, its Ministry of foreign affairs and neutrality as policy. Therefore, it is important to understand the role played by Norwegian diplomats and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and what kind of resources Norwegians in expatriation can expect if they find themselves in a state of emergency.

### 1.5.1 Peace Politics as Foreign Policy

Norway was a small, militarily insignificant European trading nation when it declared independence from its union with Sweden in 1905. Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) built its foreign policy on the Swedish model of operation, and two leading principles.

According to historian Olav Riste author of "*Norway's Foreign Relations- A History*" and leader of the steering group that edited the multi-authored 6-volume series "*Norsk Utenrikspolikk Historie*" which also featured his book as the summarizing book, Norway has historically tended to be dependent on great nations like the USA and Britain for protection. This has become the leading narrative in the field of Norway's security policy. The most important supporting element to this dependency was Norway's long-standing concept of unconditional neutrality.<sup>40</sup>

Political scientists Torbjørn Knutsen, Halvard Leira and Iver Neumann, closely examine the contents and supporting ideology of neutralism as a type of foreign policy, in the co-authored book: "*Norsk utenrikspolitisk idehistorie.*" They argue that Norway was the country that most clearly elevated the late 19<sup>th</sup> century liberal peace discourse to a national concern. Peace quickly became the cornerstone in the creation of a new Norwegian national identity. According to co-author Halvard Leira, in his stand-alone book "*Folket og freden*" it is possible to view this Norwegian foreign policy and peace discourse by extension, as a constant development, from the establishment of the liberal peace-discourse in at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to Norway's current foreign policy. It was also believed Norwegians had a special affinity for peace; this concept is simply coined "*Norwegian exceptionalism.*"<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> "*Norway's Foreign Relations- A History*" was the summative final book in the series. [https://nbl.snl.no/Olav\\_Riste\\_29.10.17](https://nbl.snl.no/Olav_Riste_29.10.17) Neumann (2012) 50.

<sup>41</sup> Knutsen, Leira, Neumann (2016) 115. Jenssen (2016) 4. Leira (2005) 135, 151.



This *neutralism* was thought to provide Norway a morally elevated position, as the ideologues posited that their own interests and capabilities blind larger countries who always would have foreign ambitions. In effect giving smaller countries a more vital role as peace nations and role models, in a world of competing nations. Neutralism was possible for Norway because of its relative lack of external threats in the interwar years and therefore pursued.<sup>42</sup>

Geir Lundestad argues that Norway's idealist arguments were always secondary to its abroad interests, pragmatism, especially trade was more important than idealism. Iver Neumann and Benjamin De Carvalho also support the argument for pragmatism and status seeking, in their book, "*Small State Status Seeking - Norway's quest for international standing*". Neutralism did however lead to a militarily and diplomatically ill-prepared Norwegian state, as state-multilateralism, a small state bureaucracy and pacifism were thought central tenets, in the making of a neutral state.<sup>43</sup>

Political scientists Iver Neumann and Halvard Leira also authored "*Aktiv og Avventende – Utenriktjenestens liv 1905- 2005*". The book historicizes the history and condition of the institution of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) from its humble beginnings in 1905, to its modern form. It also examines how the MFA operated in exile in the Second World War and the new political strongmen of the institution, after Norway's Nygaardvoll government had to retreat to Britain. It portrays the overlying daily diplomatic exercise at diplomatic missions across the world and the conditions of the MFAs headquarters in London.

## 1.5.2 The Diplomat and the Citizen

Iver Neumann's "*At home with the diplomats: Inside a European Foreign Ministry*" is an insider's subjective, but well researched anthropological study of the Norwegian MFA. Neumann was working for the Norwegian MFA for several years, so his insight into the day-to-day practices of diplomats must be considered unique, especially considering his extensive authorship on the field of diplomacy and foreign policy.

Neumann argues that diplomats have long emphasized or at least idealized and idolized the diplomat-statesman, whose principal role is handling grand-politics and foreign policy by means of negotiation with other nations. This was however not all that has been expected of diplomats in real life, and the definitions surrounding the concept diplomacy seems to be an object of discussion.

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<sup>42</sup> Jenssen (2016) 4.

<sup>43</sup> Knutsen, Leira, Neumann (2016) 115, 133. The MFA received many complaints concerning low salaries from diplomats. Norway's military was also neglected in the interwar eras state budgets, and Norway's easy defeat is a marked national trauma in Norway. Jenssen (2016) 5.

Ernest Satow has traditionally been the largest authority in the field of diplomacy, and his defining book “*A guide to diplomatic practice*” often used as reference material in Neumann’s works. Satow defines the concept of diplomacy thusly:

“*Diplomacy is the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between independent states, extending also sometimes to their relations with vassal states.*”<sup>44</sup>

Today’s Norwegian diplomats have according to Neumann little opportunity to shape foreign policy or represent “Norway.” In other words, they typically do not practice diplomacy per the definition above; politicians now conduct state-to-state diplomacy instead while the diplomat has a supporting role, a source of great melancholy in modern foreign departments. The modern diplomat has instead become what Neumann call “*unwilling bureaucrats*” in in the home department or in expatriation “*Ute*” as field diplomats in the diplomatic missions. Bureaucratic supporting work is becoming the most important responsibility for diplomats in both these locations, and modern diplomats spend much time (especially in the Home Department) doing consensus building practices and speechwriting. Neumann argues that modern diplomats are “*potatoes*” meant to satisfy all the MFA’s needs. The modern field diplomat has another unique role, the traditional diplomatic role of information gatherers. Diplomats still have exclusive access to foreign political leaders’ diplomats and dignitaries; this is now the most important role of diplomats, as diplomats are the only actors to produce information in this unique manner.

Diplomats were however not always bureaucrats, and Neumann propose that diplomats had chance to form policy and represent countries interests in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, especially diplomats stationed in faraway diplomatic missions, since means of communication back to diplomats’ home countries were poor. The field diplomat was expected to fulfill three basic roles:

“Represent a polity,  
Gathering information for that polity  
Conducing negotiations on behalf of that polity.”<sup>45</sup>

This guideline is prescriptive, and Neumann does not problematize how this would manifest as policy. That question is however the theme of Halvard Leira’s “*Beskyttelse av Nordmenn i utlandet.*” Leira argues that the relationship between states and these states’ subjects/citizens is an old construct, and that this group dynamic has been subject to change. Up until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the citizen was the only accountable party in this relationship. The nation would typically have jurisdiction of its own subjects

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<sup>44</sup> Neumann (2012) 6,108,113,115.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid 7,8,14,32,33,35,64,94.

in expatriation and the primary concern of diplomats was to act as an extension of the state in foreign countries, controlling the nation's subjects and safeguarding other national interests. This relationship changed with the growth of nationalism and democracy in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the nation's subject, became a "countryman" and people started to expect the state to bear some responsibility, in safeguard his interests and rights in foreign countries.<sup>46</sup> The level of responsibility borne by the state, in resolving citizens problems has been a contentious issue of legal discretion, for instance helping children and humanitarians in distress, has typically seen as more important than helping mercenaries in captivity. Short-term travelers (tourists) also typically receive more support than so-called "expats" long-term travelers "living" in other countries do. Leira argues that the MFA has aided expats mostly because and due of their inherent "Norwegianness" a borderless race-based identity for people from Norway, aid based on propinquity.<sup>47</sup>

For Norway, most of these cases of emergency often-concerned seamen since Norway was a sea faring nation. This is also reflected in where Norway decided to open diplomatic missions, as port-cities and capitals tended to be represented by diplomatic missions, as opposed to destinations where most Norwegians have travelled, especially in modern times. Therefore, the diplomatic missions have often been grossly inadequate in providing care in large emergencies. During the post-crisis impact assessment of the Tsunami crisis of 2004 the question of the MFAs level of responsibility was finally addressed. Here the committee concluded that Norwegian nationals had unrealistic expectations of the diplomatic missions and final responsibility should lay with the individual. There are also international protocols pertaining to consular responsibilities, laid down in the *Vienna Convention on Consular Relations* from 1963's article 5, also ratified by Norway. It reads:

(a) "Protecting in the receiving State the interests of the sending State and of its nationals, both individuals and bodies corporate, within the limits permitted by international law."<sup>48</sup>

For a long time there seems to have been an understanding that the Norwegian MFA and the MFAs of other nations have had some responsibility for their own nationals in other countries, it does however seem likely that this is viewed as a secondary role by the diplomatic missions themselves. The exact prescripts for what the term "protecting nationals" in the receiving state continually eludes definition. Therefore, the degree of help that can be expected by Norwegian diplomatic mission remains disclosed and nebulous.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Leira (2015) 442,443,445.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid 445,450

<sup>48</sup> [http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9\\_2\\_1963.pdf](http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/9_2_1963.pdf) 04.11.2017

<sup>49</sup> Ibid 449.

## 1.6 Time Delimitation and Methodology

To find out who held de-facto representative and diplomatic roles and privileges during the hard to define Second World War in China. I have decided to examine the ten years after the outbreak of Second Sino-Japanese war. 1937-1947. This timeframe allows me to identify how the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and its autonomous diplomatic and consular representatives and later secondary diplomats and foreign actors, dealt with challenges to Western hegemony and Norwegian status in China. The timeframe also gives me time to identify how each of these actors negotiated Norwegian identity against third parties, like the polity itself (Norwegians) and the Japanese authorities.

The criteria for how they performed, is shaped by how the actors incorporated roles like the three basic roles of the diplomat. (See Chapter 1.5.2) To “*Represent a polity, Gathering information for that polity, Conducting negotiations on behalf of that polity.*” And other criteria like that prescribed in the post-war Vienna Convention “*Protecting in the receiving State, the interests of the sending State and of its nationals, both individuals and bodies corporate, within the limits permitted by international law*” And roles in relief work. By identifying who performed these roles in each chapter’s concluding remarks, I can make conclusions at the end of the thesis to answer the thesis research questions:

1. *Who represented Norwegian interests in China and Hong Kong 1937-1947?*
2. *How and why did these arrangements come into place?*
3. *How did this arrangement affect Norwegian interests?*

1937 was a year of radical change in China because of the brutality of the Second Sino-Japanese war. Policy maker’s responses to the developments of that war and the increasingly tense political climate of the next couple of years shaped Norway’s Foreign policy regarding Japan and its diplomatic actions. In 1947 the Second World War had ended, and the MFA was again the absolute representative of Norwegian interests. At the same time most of the immediate post-war challenges of repatriating and liberating Norwegians had largely ended. It would be interesting to extend the timeframe of the thesis to 1949, when China became a communistic-state under the GCD (Gongchandang) but I will focus primarily on Norwegian representation during World War Two and its prelude, to that end a timeframe from 1937 to 1947 makes sense.

## 1.7 Primary Sources

Much work has been put into finding relevant primary source material for this thesis. Most of this primary source material is in the Norwegian National Archives (*Riksarkivet*) in Kringsjå Oslo. This material and the other archival sources consist of diplomatic correspondence, reports, newspaper clips

and circular letters and other token items. This makes up the largest base for the qualitative content analysis. In addition, I have conducted an informal interview with several informants and an email conversation with another. This method-triangulation, meaning combination of methods has been conducted to include the different memories these people had of events important to this thesis. The historian should not base his assumptions solely by reference to the evidence.

It was very important to hear the interview objects subjective understanding of the situation and experiences of living conditions of Norwegians in China, so I could further understand the different events and their causal effects on Norwegian communities in China. Much information between literature and these interviews and the primary source material has been mutually exclusive, reflecting the discordant and anecdotal Norwegian literature discussed above and the conflicting claims presented therein. Therefore, it was important to ask questions about political realities to the informants. These disparate memories and literature is in line the argument that politics during political “*interregnum*” are traditionally difficult objects of study.<sup>50</sup>

The wide range of primary source material and the sheer amount of it has been a challenge to collect and analyze, and it is very likely that some important aspects of the lived experiences of Norwegians in China has omitted because of this. Historians must rely of fragmentary records that survive from the time-period; combined with selections of research materials this means that the thesis likely will require review as material surfaces. No one has written about my topic at an academic level. Despite this scholarly neglect, my paper explains the significance of my research topic in the main text and offers a provisional interpretation of the material at hand.

## 1.7.1 Archives

The Norwegian National Archives mostly provide archives arranged by thematic catalogues, the archives I refer to in the Norwegian National Archives have boxes that are searchable by keyword-headlines archival date and box codes. These cues have helped me find relevant sources. For the most part I have highlighted and researched relevant headlines from archive catalogues, these are referred to in the text by the box-code (D sakarkiv) searchable on the National Archive’s search engine: <http://arkivportalen.no/side/forside>. All the used archives in the Norwegian National Archives were deposited by state organizations and most of this source material consist of diplomatic correspondence.

The first and most important archive is: «*S-2611 Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina, serie Db.*» This archive comes was retrieved from the Norwegian General Consulate in

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<sup>50</sup> Tosh (2010) 134,153,187,188

Shanghai, arguably was the most important diplomatic body in Asia.<sup>51</sup> In 1931. General Consul Nicolai Aal was constituted Joint Charges D'affaires ad interim<sup>52</sup>. For China. Alongside Minister Ludwig Aubert in Tokyo, who *de jure* held the senior position.<sup>53</sup> Aubert and his successor Finn Koren, were most likely not heavily involved in China, and I argue that GK Shanghai worked for the most part as an autonomous Consulate in this period thus becoming an industrious bureaucratic institution. The Shanghai Archive was the biggest archive in Asia, with its 42 shelf meters. dwarfing some of the other archives that have been used and researched in this thesis, among them legation in Japan, and the Australian and Indian Consular archives.<sup>54</sup>

The greater Shanghai archive by size, is also likely due to the downgrading of the Beijing legation in 1931. The Legation in Beijing had created its own archive "*Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610.*" In 1931 the Consul in Shanghai was bestowed a dual accreditation, in effect incorporating the Beijing legation's functions into the Shanghai Consulate, to be merged with the already established consular functions there. Frida Brende Jenssen

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<sup>51</sup> China had long been considered the most important country in Asia by the foreign ministry and Norwegian business enterprises. It also had the greatest Norwegian expatriate population in Asia. By the 1930's net trade with Japan, was however greater than the trade with China. Mageli (2006) 30. The German transfer of their Jiaozhou concession in Shandong province to the Japanese and their following Manchurian landgrab led to Norwegian interest in Japan to be strengthened, *ibid* (2006) 47. Leading to Norway putting stronger emphasis on representation in Japan and Shanghai, the legation in Beijing became less important than before, it had used to be the minister's seat before the transfer. The business of Shanghai, it was said, was business. Diplomats in Shanghai seldom had any contact with Chiang-Kai-Shek or his government in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Japan had a more relatable government structure and expected foreign nations to follow diplomatic courtesy. Norwegian-Japanese relations was however, for the most part a "non-relationship" outside of formalities. *Ibid* 47. Japan was also looked at as a more civilized state and as a strong business partner or rival. These were probably the main reasons behind Japan getting the Legation. The Shanghai General Consulate had all the official functions that the legation in Tokyo had, with the exemption of holding a census roll (*Nasjonalitetsmatrikkel*). Evident in Norges Statsskalender for året 1935 (Norway's State Calendar for year 1935) page 132. General Consul in Shanghai Nicolai Aal the long-acting Norwegian minister was an accredited Cand-Jur qualifying him for a minister position. <http://runeberg.org/hvemervem/1930/0013.html> 02.02.17. He also held a formal exequatur bestowed by the GMD government. He was also board member of the Municipal Council in Shanghai. And even sat as doyen for the consular body in Shanghai Filseth&Seeberg (2000) 84. As a diplomat, his star was very high, his formal rank was however General Consul. Frida Brende Jenssen argues that Nicolai Aal had personal stakes in business, which raised concerns about his viability as a diplomat. Jenssen (2016) 18-19.

<sup>52</sup> *Charge'd Affaires ad interim* defined by Berridge, James (2003) 36. "*The member of a \*diplomatic mission who takes charge of an \*embassy or a \*legation during the temporary absence of its \*head, or pending the appointment of a new head\*...*" it indicates that Aal and his successors, held a supposedly provisional office. This meant that GK Shanghai could cut costs for pomp that is required from purely diplomatic mission. I argue that this was a factor that led to the Shanghai Consuls working as lower rank diplomats "*Ad interim*". "*Charge d'Affaires*" who could therefore skimp on haughty decorum ubiquitous to Shanghai, and focus on business and shipping, and remain a diplomat and gentleman of importance. This makes sense in the context of a foreign ministry trying to save money, which has been a recurring theme in literature. Mageli (2003) 33. Myrstad (2009) 22, 33, 49.

<sup>53</sup> Shanghai had by 1940 long been the most central trading hub in Asia, China's political center had however traditionally been to the north, along the yellow river and later in Beijing and Nanjing, more on this in chapter 2.

<sup>54</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Legasjonen i Tokyo, Japan - RA/S-3202. 1 meter.

Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611. 42 meters.

Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Melbourne, Australia - RA/S-3191. 6 meters

Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602. 17 meters.

wrote that she found the Shanghai archive and the Beijing archives contents to mirror each-other.<sup>55</sup> I largely agree. What is clear is that most of the reports and correspondence from the Beijing legation was also forwarded to Shanghai, prior to the merger of these two archives.<sup>56</sup>

According to Filseth&Seeberg the merger was done by Consul Aals insistence, as it became apparent that Beijing was becoming politically less important at that time.<sup>57</sup> Shanghai had also become the more important political sphere throughout the twenties. The establishment of the Legation in Beijing in 1919, had happened during a turbulent time in Chinese history, as anything resembling effective central authority in China slowly disappeared following the death of President Yuan Shikai in 1916. Shortly after China, again, like so often before, suffered under Warlords, terrible wars and droughts that fractured attempts at central authority.<sup>58</sup>

Consul Nicolai Aall brought up this issue in one of his letters, where he stated that because of the turmoil in China at the time, and the rather limited power of the government in Beijing. The General-Consulate in Shanghai had to do nearly all the negotiations with various Chinese authorities, Aall claimed that the Norwegian legation in Beijing, at times, had nearly nothing to do. It is certainly possible that Aall could have overstated his own position in China, like Jenssen argues in her thesis.<sup>59</sup> But considering how Nanjing, a city geographically near Shanghai, became the new capital of the nationalists-GMD in 1928, it is not farfetched to say that the political center of China had moved closer to Shanghai.<sup>60</sup> Following this, Shanghai's diplomatic mission's importance grew.

The Shanghai Consuls were also credited as representatives of the Chinese areas (*Det Kinesiske Riket*) from 1935 in the annual Norwegian State Calendar (Statskalender) implicating a change of the Consulate's status.<sup>61</sup> The shift towards a more important Consul in Shanghai, was also mirrored by Denmark in 1935.<sup>62</sup> While the star of the Legation in Beijing had fallen by the timeframe of this thesis, I found much relevant material deposited in the Beijing archive, both archives were kept separate through the war, and up until today. I do not know what method the archivists used to create the archives; it is however likely that the archives were tangled during the Consulates closure, as the

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<sup>55</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610. 12 meters

<sup>56</sup> Jenssen (2016) 15.

<sup>57</sup> Seeberg&Filseth (2000). 84.

<sup>58</sup> Ebrey (2010) 267-272.

<sup>59</sup> Filseth&Seeberg (2000) 82-84.

<sup>60</sup> Ebrey (2010) 275.

<sup>61</sup> Årskalender (1935) 129.

<sup>62</sup> Danish Historian and linguist Mads Kirkebæk ([http://vbn.aau.dk/da/persons/mads-jakob-kirkebaek\(dfec9d0f-0a09-48ea-87b0-ece9b63544a0\).html](http://vbn.aau.dk/da/persons/mads-jakob-kirkebaek(dfec9d0f-0a09-48ea-87b0-ece9b63544a0).html)) writes "In 1935 a thorough reorganization of Denmark's representation in China took place. The legation in Peking was moved to Shanghai, and this brought changes in the personnel. The post as envoy was kept, but the post as attached consul at the legation was abolished. Instead a post was created that combined the duties of legation secretary, consul in Shanghai, and judiciary consul for all of China. The holder of this post had the personal title of consul-general..." Kirkebæk (2001) 106.

building that held the Consulate was occupied by the Japanese banking company Yokohama Specie Bank during the war. The Consulate's archives were put into the building's loft, for the rest of the war, exposed to the elements and unattended. Some correspondence was lost because of this.

These two archives also contain data deposited by other actors who filled vital diplomatic roles during the occupation, including The Norwegian Delegation (*Den Norske beskickningen*) and the Norwegian Committee (*Den Norske Komitee*) and budgets and cut-outs from newspapers dated before the closure of the Consulate and Municipal-Council protocol. It also includes consular inventories, personal letters, salaries, and POW comfort money receipts, likely received by the Swedish Legation in Shanghai after the war. The archives also hold annually written reports known as *Årsrapport*. Further examined in chapter 3.1.

I also found relevant information in Nortraship's archives: Nortraship New York, General Files - RA/S-2127<sup>63</sup>. As they have some boxes with correspondence between the Norwegian diplomatic mission in Chongqing and the General Consulate in Kolkata. That same information is also accessed through the Kolkata archive: Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602<sup>64</sup>. Which is the biggest archive of these two and the most interesting archive. Most of this correspondence was also brought back to Shanghai with the diplomatic staff from Chongqing.

The Norwegian diplomatic mission in Chongqing received most of its supplies from Calcutta in India, meaning that all correspondence and supplies was freighted over Himalayan mountains by plane as air mail to Kunming City, or to the new GMD capital Chongqing further to the north. This air trip is often referred to as "*The Hump*" was a very difficult logistical challenge and limited the contact between the diplomatic missions. This correspondence is for the most part descriptive of conditions in Chongqing, and the needs of the diplomatic mission and its staff, but it also includes some correspondence with other nation's diplomatic missions, and nationals without representation in Chongqing. The most interesting correspondence received at these archives is the correspondence that the diplomatic mission in Chongqing had with missionaries and Norwegians in the many remote provinces China.

The source material in the two archives mentioned above is quite limited in size, but I argue that it is very telling of circumstances in the city. Intellectual historian Quentin Skinner divides the concept of historical meaning into three distinct categories. Lexical meaning refers to what the text itself implies. Secondly, the reader understands its relevance while reading the text. Third is the historical meaning

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<sup>63</sup> <http://arkivportalen.no/side/arkiv/detaljer?arkivId=no-a1450-01000001367742> 09.03.2017 Some correspondence with Southeast-Asia was lost. <http://www.arkivportalen.no/side/arkiv/detaljer?arkivId=no-a1450-01000001354675> 17.10.2017.



of the text.<sup>65</sup> The author of the text might have a different objective with the text than the objective of the researcher. The correspondence must therefore be viewed in the context of the wider events.

To find more information about the role of the Swedish Legation which had an important role in Shanghai during the war, I looked into the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) archive, found by keyword Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/Dyb.<sup>66</sup> The archive is massive in size at 1939 shelf meters and very difficult to use, as there are no digitalized lists of the contents online, at *Arkivportalen.no* or similar search engines. The archive is however among the most used archives in Norway. As the diplomatic missions were part of the MFAs functions, most of the now individual archives originated in the MFA archive. The archive has yielded much of the correspondence the Swedish Legation had with other actors, like Tokyo and Stockholm. It also includes many notes corresponding to the issues the Legation faced when it was representative of Norwegian interests in China, as well as notes containing information about Norwegians in Internment camps and repatriation efforts.<sup>67</sup>

I also tried to get access to a Japanese archive “*RA/S-2416 Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden i Tokyo, Japan*” This archive is however restricted, as it has yet to be organized and examined for sensitive information. They did however give me access to the archive overview list, attached to box one. In the overview, many interesting boxes are listed under headliner titles such as “Ambassador Hassel Minister in Chongqing ...” “Population Census” (Nasjonalitetsmatrikkel) and “Payments to Hong Kong”.

The box named “Ambassador Hassel Minister in Chongqing” can include anything, and the contents of this box is anyone’s guess. The box called “Population Census” likely holds a definitive list over Norwegians living in Asia. While the data is probably spotty like Norwegian GK Shanghai’s and later, the Swedish Legation lists it is probably a more complete list of the Norwegian population in all East Asia, since the Tokyo Legation held the senior position in the diplomatic pecking order.

According to Norges Statskalender for 1937 (Norway’s State Calendar) the task of creating a population census, is listed as a function of the Tokyo Legation, the other Asian Ministries did not have the same prerogative. Norges Statskalender does however not clarify if this is a yearly, biennial or decennial census, I highly suspect the data within the timeframe of the thesis is compromised, and probably less accurate than military reports and statements made by the returning General Consul in 1945. Similarly, the question of payments and receipts of money transfers to Hong Kong is already, somehow, available in the Beijing archive. As reports were sent from Hong Kong in to the diplomatic mission in Chongqing in 1945.

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<sup>65</sup> Andresen, Rosland, Ryymmin, & Skålevåg (2014). 113

<sup>66</sup> Commonly known as UD-Utenriksdirektoratets arkiv.

<sup>67</sup> <https://www.arkivverket.no/utforsk-arkivene/departementene/utenriksdepartementet> 07.12.17

After many email-conversations with Georg Kulstad I was also advised to consider examining the Old China Hands Archives in Special Collections & Archives at CSUN- California State University, Northridge. The curator at this institution then browsed the archive with my criteria in mind and produced scans of excerpts from the Olaf Torgersen Collection and the Kulstad Collection.<sup>68</sup> These boxes largely contain searchable physical correspondence between Olaf Torgersen, Peter Alv Kulstad and diplomatic staff in Shanghai.

## 1.7.2 Newspapers

In the «S-2611 Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina, serie Db.» archive I found about 40 newspaper clippings, cut out from the Shanghai Times newspaper by the consular staff at the Norwegian and Swedish General Consulates and the Norwegian Committee. The Shanghai Times newspaper was according to Historian Greg Leck the mouthpiece of the Japanese policies and instructions in Shanghai.<sup>69</sup>

While the text in The Shanghai Times Newspaper was laden with propaganda and misinformation about political developments in the war, it was the likely the clearest source for information about the standing of the different nationals: their rights and rationing policy in Shanghai, and therefore of tremendous interest to this thesis. Historian John Tosh argues that newspapers are the most important primary sources in modern history writing because of the implicit information in news articles in addition to the explicit and lexical information.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, I attempted to examine many printed newspapers that were circulating at the time. The Shanghai Times has proven particularly difficult to acquire online. While I have found websites with scans of this newspaper, the sites do not supply a working chronological search engine.

The search engine “Proquest” provided me with many Chinese newspapers circulating in the time leading up to the Pearl Harbor incident and after it ended. The complete list of newspapers covered in

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<sup>68</sup> <https://findingaids.csun.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=268> 19.10.17

<https://findingaids.csun.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard&id=458> 19.10.17.

<sup>69</sup> Leck (2006) 41,42 Leck authored the book «*Captives of Empire*» The largest book about internment of westerners in Asia and the most important literature for this thesis. «*Captives of Empire*» is dubbed the “bible” in the internment field of study by Historian George Emerson who authored «*Hong Kong Internment 1942-1945. Life in the Japanese civilian camp at Stanley*» A book that will be central to this thesis’ **chapter 5**. “*Captives of Empire*” is 738 pages long and holds more than 20 maps and over 650 illustrations. Most importantly, the book supplies a 200-page list of 13,544 internees in internment camps in China, including 64 Norwegians, by my own count. “*Captives of Empire*” prisoner list is an overview of every major so-called civilian assembly camp in China and Hong Kong; it does however not include all the institutions of internment, and none of the POW-camps. The book gives good insight into the many camp’s conditions across China. It also supplies a historical overview of political events. “*Captives of Empire*” is, as see it, a terrific academic achievement.

<sup>70</sup> Tosh (2010) 96-98.

the engine is catalogued on the website attached to the footnote below.<sup>71</sup> The important Shanghai Times newspaper is missing from this search engine after year 1921. While I have found no search engine with scans of Shanghai Times, most of the articles important to Norwegian interests were likely cut out and archived. I have also used the website “*Gwulo*” to validate information found in the primary source material. Gwulo.com is a website project serving as a depository for old Hong Kong memorabilia like pictures and newspaper articles. The site also provides a calendar of day-by-day events that happened in Hong Kong during the war.<sup>72</sup>

### **1.7.3 Informal Conversations with Interviewees.**

Hans Berents was the signatory of much of the correspondence between historical actors in Shanghai in the timespan 1942-1945 and he long remained an enigma to me. Wishing to learn more, I sought out members of the Berents family online. Hobby historian and distant relative to Hans, Johan Arthur Hansen, replied to my post at the website forum arkivverket.no. There he advised me to reach out to Hans Berents’s grandchild Kristoffer John Bøe Berents.

Kristoffer invited me to Oslo to have an informal conversation in Oslo on June 23, 2017. There I met Kristoffer, his wife Mette Berents, his sibling Elisabet Engelstad, and her husband Roy Engelstad. We talked for about 3 hours, around 2 hours of this conversation has been recorded and transcribed to writing. Because of considerations of privacy and official guidelines, I chose not to attach the full transcription to this thesis.

The conversation was an effective way for me to understand and contextualize the primary source material in the archives. The meeting was also a very interesting, as I believe we all learned new things and anecdotal stories, additionally Kristoffer Berents was himself interned in China during World War Two and therefore gave me a first-hand account of his childhood in Beidaihe in Hebei Province, where his own family, and the Klette family were interned.<sup>73</sup> All the interviewees were keenly interested, and well-read in Chinese history and their own family history. They have also meticulously collected and compiled letters and artefacts from China, and I received copies of many letters and decorations received by Hans Berents in China and cut outs from interviews that newspapers and magazines have had with Hans Berents after the war as well as pedigree-charts and short family member synopses created by Johan Arthur Hansen. The Berents family has also kept Hans Berents private archive which is apparently of notable size. The archive was brought back to

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<sup>71</sup><https://search-proquest-com.resources.asiaportal.info/hnpchinesecollection?accountid=164172> 19.10.17.

<sup>72</sup> <https://gwulo.com/> 19.10.17.

<sup>73</sup> Ottosen (2008) 321.

Norway as they repatriated after the war. When I refer to pictures of material given to me coming from this archive, I will simply refer to it as in Elisabet Engelstad's private archive.<sup>74</sup>

After finishing the book "*A Foreign Kid in Shanghai in World War Two*" by George Kulstad I reached out to him in emails where I asked George some questions about the Norwegian-societal dimension of his years in Shanghai. George was a Norwegian passport holder like his father and therefore Norway was their protective power. After the war he became an American citizen.

Kulstad's book only marginally problematize the role of the General Consulate or the causes and consequences of Norwegian representation or lack thereof. More than anything else the book is a narrative of the personal story of his family, alongside Shanghai's historical and chronological backdrop. In our conversations, Kulstad pointed out many interesting pieces of information from the primary source material I provided him; he told me of methods for resource distribution in the Norwegian Shanghai community, and gave me knowledge of personalities. Our conversations were incredibly interesting in my opinion, and I learned a lot about the Shanghai society from him.

I first learned about the Johansen missionary family, who started missionizing in China in 1940 through my Chinese acquaintances. The missionaries' son Johan Tidemann Johansen has today become something of a celebrity in China since he donated his family's videotapes to Ankang museum in 2013. These were taped in 1947 and were the first colored film-clips in Central-China. The story of the return of these films spawned many articles about his story in Chinese news media, and the film-reel is now shown daily at Ankang museum. This story was also picked up in Norway and the Norwegian national broadcasting service, NRK, sent a film-team with Johansen as he travelled to China to receive his accolades. NRK's documentaries are now available to watch for Norwegian viewers on NRK.no by titles "*Den Norske Missionæren i Kina*" and "*China 1947: Den Glemte Filmen*".<sup>75</sup> My own contact with Johansen is limited to a lengthy phone-call where I asked him a series of questions about such topics as the outreach of the diplomatic mission in Chongqing, accommodation, safety and missionary organizations.

As my thesis is not a "*case study*" of isolated individuals, these conversations have not been of primary importance, but conducting them has given me opportunities to create and understand the historical narratives as parts of the synthesized totality. History is created in the process of selecting of meaningful elements of the past and putting these into a purposeful order to tell a story to create narratives, because of this there will typically be room for interpretation in history. In relation to this

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<sup>74</sup> Hans Berents had an interview with Normannsforbundet "Norwegians Worldwide" in 1946 about his experiences in China, the resulting article has much interesting information about War-time Shanghai. The article will be referred to by code: Normannsforbundets.9. Hefte 1946. Årgang 39.

<sup>75</sup> <https://tv.nrk.no/serie/med-jesus-i-kina/KOID76001015/sesong-1/episode-1>.27.12.17.  
<https://tv.nrk.no/program/KOID75000315/kina-1947-den-glemte-filmen> 27.12.17

problem, time-witnesses can be very important, as they can give legitimacy to what is presented in text, by the fact that they themselves were there, something that gives the narratives credibility. At the same time, witnesses' like other historical actors' narratives are subject to subjectivity and interpretation. Time-witnesses' historical narratives, like any other actor's narrative is shaped by how they remember and experienced historical events and political concepts.<sup>76</sup>

## 1.8 Thesis Structure

The main objective of this thesis is to analyze changes in representation and events that affected Norwegians in China during the Second World War and its immediate aftermath. The study looks at developments in many areas within China and communications between political actors. In order to answer the research questions, this thesis is divided into 6 chapters. Chapter 1 has introduced the research topic and presented the leading historiographical framework and narratives about World War Two in China. The chapter has also presented the thesis' research questions and the collected source material.

Chapter 2. Treaty Ports and the Sino-Japanese war presents the history of how westerners and Norwegians came to trade, live, and prosper, in China. The chapter will present the historical background of Norwegian and western society in Shanghai and Norwegian representation, from its first days, until the crisis of diplomatic evacuation in 1942. The chapter also examines the events that led to the outbreak of war in China and political realignments following Japanese transgressions. The chapter is primarily meant to give the reader contextual information and historical backdrop to create an understanding, a platform for discussing the primary source material in the following chapters.

The following three chapters examine diplomatic actors in different regions in China. I have identified three different diplomatic bodies who performed diplomatic functions in line with the criteria presented in chapter 1.5.2. These bodies include both official Norwegian representatives and unofficial secondary representatives. In other locations, it seems no diplomatic arrangements took place, and no greater collective of Norwegians existed outside of the immediate in-groups, these in-groups were also subjected to Japanese whims and had little political autonomy. These three diplomatic bodies worked out of the three cities of Shanghai, Chongqing, Hong Kong.

Chapter 3 examines the newly established official Norwegian diplomatic mission in the city of Chongqing. The chapter problematizes the outreach and status of the Official Norwegian diplomatic mission. The multiple nature of consolidating the Norwegian polity then requires elucidation on how

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<sup>76</sup> Tosh (2010) 153, 163. (See page 13).

and when, and if, the diplomatic mission in Chongqing reached out to the other diplomatic actors to perform its formal diplomatic prerogatives, this will be examined in the next two chapters.

This thesis' diplomatic correspondence was archived chronologically; this leads the narrative immediately, to Hong Kong in the thesis' Chapter 4 as Hong Kong was the first out-group or other isolated large Norwegian community, the diplomatic mission in Chongqing re-established contact with.

Keeping a chronological narrative throughout makes for better storytelling and proves no challenge to analysis throughout the thesis. Chapter 5 therefore examines substitute diplomatic actors in Shanghai after the crisis of diplomatic evacuation. Chapter 6 analyses the remaining fringe communities, and communication integration between communities, as the Japanese were losing the war. Weighing each collective separately against the official representation in Chongqing reveals how autonomic the secondary representatives were. This type of analytical writing, based on weighing relevant factors, can reveal connectedness or lack thereof between the diplomatic actors over time.<sup>77</sup> Indeed, I believe there is no way to answer the research questions thematically.

Chapter 6 *Conclusion* is the closing chapter of my thesis and provides a conclusion based on research findings. Chapter 6 also discusses the ramification of the research and possible further research.

## **2.0 Treaty Ports and the Sino-Japanese War**

In this chapter I will briefly present the history of western society in China and draw factors that led Norwegians to get invested there. The chapter also presents the broad historical backdrop of events that lead to the outbreak of the Second World War and westerns nations and particularly Norway's responses to Japanese belligerency.

### **2.1 Treaty Ports**

Chinese-European ties originated in the Silk Road. A multilateral trade network spanning the length of the Eurasian continent. However, direct contact between Europeans and South-East Asians was rare, and trade in China's primary markets was discouraged, as most products made by the Chinese were superior to the products made by its trading partners.<sup>78</sup> Chinese-European contact was strengthened in the 1500's. With the advent of European Ship building technology- specifically the Carrack three-mast

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<sup>77</sup> Tosh (2010) 157

<sup>78</sup> Ebrey (2010) 68,70

ships. European interest and trade became mainly water-bound and trade connections spanning the vast world oceans appeared, this integrated the European-Chinese trade, earlier made difficult by proxy hubs.<sup>79</sup> China was a coveted market for European consumers, and its products, like porcelain and silk fetched a high price in European markets. European findings of silver in South America colonies, weirdly coincided with high demand for silver in China, and the silver could therefore be used as currency in purchases of Chinese goods.<sup>80</sup> The Europeans had almost no tradeable goods that the Chinese market wanted except for some peculiarities like clocks. The silver, therefore, was a great boon for the early trade. These factors led to the exploration of the Asian markets, primarily through maritime means.

Early trade between China and Europe was done exclusively in the southern port city of Guangzhou and with its state officials, the “*mandarin*” who were selected licensed traders.<sup>81</sup> Having to deal with these Hong merchants and their pegged prices of goods brought to Guangzhou at a great price away from the native markets of the goods.

Silver, which has an intrinsic value as a precious metal, was not a preferable trade item. This led the now English state owned East India Company (*EIC*)<sup>82</sup>. To seek a product that could fetch a high price from Chinese consumers, to balance their negative trade deficit.<sup>83</sup> This item proved to be opium, a powerful narcotic now enhanced by a newly invented pipe.<sup>84</sup> The narcotic was extracted from poppy flower, which had optimal growing conditions in the English colonies in Bengal, India, and it could therefore be made by cheap Indian labor. Within a brief period of time opium became the most valuable item by weight in the world. England through proxies became de facto drug smugglers.

Chinese authorities started combatting that drug trade. After negotiations broke down, 1,200 tons of the drug was dumped into the rivers of Guangzhou. The English countermeasure to the destruction of the drug, was a total embargo of Guangzhou, and forwarding of their base of operation to the uninhabited island of Hong Kong, which after the Nanjing treaty of 29<sup>th</sup> of August 1842 would become a crown colony.<sup>85</sup> When this embargo was broken in March 1839, after Chinese ships attempted escorting the trading ship “*The Royal Saxon*” through the blockade, resulting in four Chinese navy ships being sunk by English bombardment.<sup>86</sup>

This event was the first event in a chain that led to what has been known as the “Opening of China” by westerners, in China and East-Asia the events are remembered as the first events of “*The Century of*

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid 70. Before the 1500’s trade between Asia and Europe was peddled through costly intermediaries.

<sup>80</sup> Marks (2002) 78,80.

<sup>81</sup> Ebrey (2010) 234.

<sup>82</sup> Sardesai (2008) 228

<sup>83</sup> Westad (2012) 40.

<sup>84</sup> Ebrey (2010) 236.

<sup>85</sup> Westad (2012) 1. Seeberg&Filseth (2000) 15.

<sup>86</sup> Westad (2012) 42.

*Unequal Treaties*” in Chinese: “*Bu pingdeng tiaoyue*”. In China, the events are remembered bitterly, as the time when Asia fell victim to western and Japanese imperialism and serfdom. The concept is consecrated in public memory as the leading national trauma and it arguably defines Chinese identity rhetoric and policy to this day.<sup>87</sup> The event led to the first Opium war, the first among other wars that Qing China lost against the English and other westernized nations, leading to major changes in Asian power relations.

Resulting of the Chinese defeats several Treaty ports were opened for trade, secondly a number of nations acquired extraterritorial rights and the “*most favored nation*” clause. These entailing the right to execute jurisdiction within the Chinese heartland and outside the confines of Chinese understanding of law, and a guarantee that the different nation states would always get the benefits that other nation states had bargained for with the Qing China representatives through diplomacy, “*most-favored-nation*” clause.<sup>88</sup> The nations who got these rights were dubbed treaty powers. Consequently, owing to trading advantages, foreign presence grew much more prominent in China, and in Pan-Asian Trade.<sup>89</sup>

From 1890 Foreign investment, could be spent onshore increasing foreign presence and investment. By 1917, a total of ninety-two cities had been opened to trade with at least half of them having a permanent foreign presence with permanently residing Foreigners. These enclaves called concessions were as a rule governed by foreigners. who levied their own tolls. In 1854, the western managed imperial Chinese customs service opened in Shanghai, the city that accounted for half of all foreign trade to China by 1900. Following this Chinese tariff collection became reliant on westernized taxing competence and translucent bookman-ship, their service proved competent and profitable for the central Qing Government, and Westerners took over custom houses in other treaty ports.<sup>90</sup>

The Shanghai concession also established the political entity known as the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) to enforce through by-laws land and trade regulations, policing, and much needed city planning. The most important change in relations was however, the exercise of jurisdiction; Treaty powers had the right to judge their own nationals per their own laws in the treaty ports. Nationals without claim to extraterritoriality would from 1863 be judged in mixed courts, a Chinese Foreign Hybrid- Court. Shanghai also established a paramilitary self-defense force the SVC and a permanent

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<sup>87</sup> Wang (2012) 47. China always defined itself as the cradle of civilization, a “*Tianxia*”. A realm under the heavens, ruled by heavenly mandate, China in modern Chinese transcribes into “*Zhongguo*” The middle Kingdom ,the center. The “*Imperialist Powers*” during “*The century of unequal treaties*” stole Chinas hegemony as a regional leader, which it arguably always had been. Ibid. 43.

<sup>88</sup> Westad (2012) 171,

<sup>89</sup> Firms like Jardine Matheson and the two Sassoon firms who had profited from smuggling opium would swell into gigantic multinationals that branched out and dominated coastal Chinese and Shanghai society. Dong (2001) 61

<sup>90</sup> Westad (2012) 67.



presence of foreign warships on the Huangpu River.<sup>91,92</sup> Effectively the treaty ports therefore operated like Semi-Autonomous European City States but with nationals from many different countries.<sup>93</sup>

Among these nations, the United Kingdom of Sweden-Norway had carved itself a place by the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Norway having long ties to shipping, looked to China as a market for its freight services, able to freight vast amounts of cargo. Sweden for its part looked to act as a *comprador*, an intermediary in the freight of luxury goods to European markets. Envoy Carl Fredrik Liljevalch was therefore sent to China to survey market opportunities. During his expedition Liljevalch managed to get Sweden-Norway into the treaty system achieving extraterritoriality and “*The Most Favoured Nation*” rights for his country. The treaty became known as *Handels- og Søfarts-tractat*.<sup>94</sup>

The treaty was meant as a friendly and acknowledging gesture between nations. In reality it was a one-sided deal where China guaranteed that Sweden-Norway never would be put in a dis-favorable position in relation to other foreign powers. It also guaranteed people from Sweden-Norway the right to reside in China. Sweden-Norway became the fourth nation to partake in “*The Unequal Treaties*.” It is worth noting that the Chinese authorities never requested similar rights. The treaties meant that, the Chinese would not have to deal with the foreigners nor pay for the proceedings of court cases, viewing it a practical way to evade the hassle to dealing with what they perceived as foreign barbarians. This view of the treaties would change.<sup>95</sup>

## 2.2 Norwegian Representation and Western Society in China.

In 1850 Sweden-Norway formally opened a diplomatic mission in Guangzhou. Its main function would be to assist commerce and to provide information about market movements back to the Europe. The formal title of the station was General Consulate, hinting at its importance, but also its practical functions.<sup>96</sup> The Consulate in Guangzhou was run as an Honorary Consulate, meaning that the Consul and his staff were uncompensated non-professionals, who would work for the supposed dignity of the office. The title of General-Consul held some minor accolades like the right of admission to exclusive

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<sup>91</sup> Denison, Ren (2006) 37, 28, 81. The presence of gunboats on the Huangpu was however not a new phenomenon, Historian Odd Arne Westad argues that the concessions traditionally had been “...*Almost entirely secured by blackmail. “... Most Western powers kept gunboats in Chinese waters, and rarely hesitated to bombard Chinese cities if their demand were not met...”* Westad (2012) 60.

<sup>92</sup> Hammond (2007) 34.

<sup>93</sup> Westad (2012) Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 15.

<sup>94</sup> Myrstad (2009) 21, 34, 35, 36, Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 16.

<sup>95</sup> Myrstad (2009) 37

<sup>96</sup> Seeberg Filseth (2000) 16. Myrstad (2009). 17. Consul general: A consul of the highest status. Consul: An official appointed by a state to live in a foreign city and protect the state's citizens and interests there.

[https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/consul\\_general](https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/consul_general) 17.01.2017 Berridge (2003).36.

parties and the daily costs of maintaining the Consulate was usually paid through “*Consulage*”<sup>97</sup> Many Consuls were not Swedish-Norwegian nationals and generally they had little knowledge or interest in Swedish-Norwegian affairs.

Because of the strategic and geographic importance of Shanghai it quickly became the biggest trade hub in China, after it became a treaty port following the first opium war.<sup>98</sup> Shanghai sat at the tributary river Huangpu close to the estuary of the Changjiang (Yangzi) River, the greatest and most stable major river in China. This location also allowed for easy transport of Northern-trade-goods coming south through the Grand Chinese Canal which connected the great northern plains and the Yellow river to the Changjiang river.

The city had every opportunity to be a major hub in the 19<sup>th</sup> century despite its issues with sand banking of ships and the continuous unrest in China’s interior. Swedish and Norwegians were attracted to the booming city and constituted a small community by the 1860s. At the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were about 100 Norwegians making a living in the city, that number almost tripled by 1930.<sup>99</sup> With Shanghai gradually becoming the central trading hub Sweden-Norway moved their General Consulate to Shanghai to better service Norwegian interests; Guangzhou was therefore demoted to Vice-Consulate, a regional diplomatic mission of lower importance than a General Consulate.<sup>100</sup> Norway decided to leave the union in 1905. After a long-running dispute over the choice of Consuls and the prospect of independent Norwegian Consulates. A clear breach with the Swedish intentions of a common foreign policy for the union.<sup>101</sup> The case is known as “*Konsulatsaken*” and it was one of the most central reasons for Norway leaving the union, alongside the growing ideals for national independence, in correlation to the uniqueness of supposed Norwegian culture and language and its authentic spirit (*Geist*).<sup>102</sup>

In 1931 Norway was still one of the prominent foreign nations in Shanghai, Norway has retained its rights after its declaration of independence and was a full treaty power and one of the “*Fourteen*”

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<sup>97</sup> «Historically a tax on goods passing through their hands... Berridge (2003) 52.

<sup>98</sup> Myrstad (2006) 39,44,45

<sup>99</sup>In year 1902 Shanghai was trumped in total Norwegian port calls by both Hong Kong and Bangkok. But at that same time, at start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a great shift in Asia for Norwegian shipping activities. From long distance line freight, to what Camilla Brautaset defines as Inter-Asian voyages creating a shift from trade in the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea. This happened because of impromptu tramp-freight contracts in the Sino-sphere and procured specialized vessels with steam-technology and low-draft hulls suited to Chinese coast and river topography. Norwegian businesses also capitalized on conflicts as their flexible business model could easily adapt to changing circumstances. Norway’s shipping was an important draw factor towards China and Norwegians had built a sturdy reputation as competent seafarers. Brautaset,Tennold (2011) 219-221 Seeberg,Filseth (2000) 53,17. Mageli (2006) 17

<sup>100</sup> Berridge (2003) 53, 54 “*The chief functions of \* Consular officers are to protect and advance their state’s commercial interests...*”

<sup>101</sup> Mageli (2013) 20. Myrstad (2009) 19,7. King Karl XIII’s ultimatum for the union was that Norway-Sweden would have a common foreign policy.

<sup>102</sup> Knutsen,Leira,Neumann (2016) 74.

*favoured nations*” as such Norway held a somewhat prestigious place in Shanghai society. The city itself had long had a very clear social structure, with the White Europeans at the pinnacle of the stratified ladder. Among these foreign nationals, the English, Americans and French were the most privileged and in the 1900<sup>th</sup> century they had each headed their own Concessions. The English and American concessions were later combined into one big administrative area “The International Settlement” in 1863, dividing Shanghai clearly into 2 foreign settlements: The French Concession and the International Settlement. Outside of these settlements. The remainder of the city was divided into three Chinese-administered suburbs. Zhabei, Nanshi and Hongkew.<sup>103</sup> If Shanghai residents moved from one settlement to another, electronic gadgets also had to be changed or transformed, as each settlement followed different voltage standards. In addition, traffic protocols such as right-hand and left-hand driving were subject to concession policy, in other words, regulation was an unfixed and variable standard, ruled according to settlement regulation.<sup>104</sup>

The different foreign nationals in Shanghai also distinguished themselves by cultural and class dividers. Upper-class men attended fancy clubs like the French club and the Shanghai Club. These clubs were themselves subjected to a strict hierarchy. Most clear this was implemented at the Shanghai Club’s “world’s longest service counter” the “Long bar” where each customer was serviced according to his deemed worthiness, only the highest officials and the most elite “*taipan*”<sup>105</sup> Would be served close to the entrance. Common for all the renowned clubs was the rejection of Women and Chinese members.<sup>106</sup>

Norway’s own club “*Den Norske Klubben*” let women attend events. Mixed families and sailors were however barred from attending.<sup>107</sup> This can partially be explained by the fact that many in the Norwegian Shanghai society were related to one another, as entrepreneurs often recruited among their own family back in Norway.<sup>108</sup> But there was also a certain feeling of superiority over the sailors and the Chinese. Journalist Stella Dong’s “*Shanghai: The Rise and Fall of a Decadent City*” Has a series of anecdotes in it, where visiting travelers to Shanghai, were astounded by the Foreigners living in Shanghai (*the Shanghaiers*) attitudes towards, the Chinese nationals. Foreigners “...considered that they had built Shanghai from nothing” and “*Frankly asserted themselves as a superior race.*”<sup>109</sup> Chinese were clearly stigmatized, and mixed marriages often led to the Westerner being sacked from

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<sup>103</sup> Denison, Ren (2006) 56.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid 42.

<sup>105</sup> Shanghai’s big bosses, magnates of successful businesses.

<sup>106</sup> Liliane Willens family faked their identities and claimed Romanian statehood, as their standing as Russian Jews was lower on the social-ladder, especially as thousands of Jews immigrated into Shanghai, as they fled Russian pogroms and the German holocaust. Accused of defiling the prestige of the white races in Shanghai. Liliane always wished she was among the treaty power nationals and was describes her young self, as a strong Francophile. 86,32 Denison, Ren. 102.Dong (2000) 201

<sup>107</sup> Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 76.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid 17.

<sup>109</sup> Dong (2000) 176.

their work.<sup>110</sup> Liliane Willens writes that when she ate in the streets, starving Chinese kids begged her for food she, simply ignored them and enjoyed her privilege.

“... from a very early age my friends and I looked down on the Chinese, whose main function we had observed was to serve us and all other foreigners...”<sup>111</sup>

George Kulstad who also grew up in Shanghai, observed that white men worked as dockworkers in Honolulu in Hawaii after the war, and noted

“At first, I thought that it might have been a holiday, and that the white men were some sort of temporary replacement, in Shanghai, white men did not perform manual labor”.<sup>112</sup>

Many diplomats also had a general disdain for the Chinese in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Norwegian diplomats Consul Aal and Minister Aubert considered the Japanese land-grab of Manchuria legitimate, arguing for the land-grab, based on stability, as Japan would act as a “*Protector of civility, in the Far-East*”.<sup>113</sup> As opposed to the war-like Chinese, Most westerners were mightily impressed, by what Imperial Japan and its *Mantetsu* railway company had achieved in Manchuria and Shandong in the early 1930's, where they had modernized and made industries prosper. <sup>114, 115</sup>.

It is also possible that the Occidental powers feared that GMD nationalist who were rapidly consolidating their power in China could become a soviet pawn, and therefore favored Imperial Japan who clearly opposed communism. Westad's book supplies an anecdote where a Sir William Tyrell reported to the British Empire, Committee of Imperial Defense in 1926, “*I have no hesitation... in stating that our policy should be based upon the assumption that Russia is the enemy and not Japan. The most we have to dread from the latter is commercial rivalry*”.<sup>116</sup> The quote is dated before the break of the first united front, and alliance between GMD and the GCD and therefore it bore a smidgen of truth. 300.000 Chinese lived in abysmal slums in Shanghai, with wages barely sustaining life, meanwhile they saw exuberant wealth and industry everywhere, coupled with access to global news, supplying ideological alternatives, it is not difficult to see why they would prefer change.<sup>117</sup>

The strongest drive for a new government was however the concept of national humiliation and bids for national sovereignty and an independent China, a national feeling that the country had been robbed of its rightful place in world politics.<sup>118</sup> This feeling of nationalism was especially strong following,

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<sup>110</sup> Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 31.

<sup>111</sup> Willens (2010) 32

<sup>112</sup> Kulstad (2014) 144.

<sup>113</sup> Jenssen (2016) 33.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid 56

<sup>115</sup> Westad (2012) 186.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid 166.

<sup>117</sup> ibid (2012) 158. Harmsen (2013) 18. Dong (2000) 155.

<sup>118</sup> China participated in the First World War on the side of the allies and sent 140.000 laborers to France. In the following Versailles Treaty, the German Concessions in Shandong was given to Japan, instead of returned to

Japan's unequal treaties and especially its "*Twenty-One Demands*" a landmark event in 1915, where Japan had demanded that China would become its protectorate, tipping the scales for what Chinese national feeling could take, spurring nationalistic feeling. The absurd demands were never met. Japan had become a Treaty-Power in April 1895 after Japan had militarily defeated Qing-China, and was as such, for the Chinese, an imperialist nation, albeit a new one.

The Chinese in the 1920 and 1930's had found a newfound or reclaimed identity as equals to the westerners, the *literati* among the Chinese population had learned effective new skillsets, and the GMD continually strengthened central government, which was ever expanding, incorporating warlords into the federation, students coming back to China from abroad. It also took over key institutions. Giving the nationalist GMD legitimacy and competence.<sup>119</sup> While the GMD had an autocratic penchant, resembling the hated stereotype of the Asian despot it did enable the Chinese population to travel and seek new ideas and personal liberties and established a cohesion, that China had not seen in decades. The GMD through their alliance with the international and powerful Soong family created a relatable strong Chinese faction that Western nations felt they could relate with <sup>120</sup>

The Occidental powers and their Consuls were now much stronger bound to the still consolidating GMD central government, and many of the special privileges afforded foreigners, were reduced or abolished. The reductions in western privileges following the "Shanghai Massacre" included many significant changes such as tariff autonomy, previously a prerogative of the westerners. The changes also included Chinese control of the Customs house, the closing of 20 treaty ports, the cessation of extraterritorial rights for some countries, and a total takeover of the mixed courts, meaning that foreigners without extraterritorial rights, would be judged by an all-Chinese court. The Shanghai Provisional Court. <sup>121</sup>

1927 saw the establishment of the "Greater Shanghai Municipality" which incorporated all the Chinese areas in Shanghai into one area. In 1930, China's municipality got a 5-man vote in the Municipal Council SMC, giving the Chinese even more power than the English in passing by-laws in Shanghai, simultaneously the SMC institution was appropriating power from the Foreign Consuls.<sup>122</sup> China, had regained much of its autonomy. The GMD nationalists were however starting to be forced, to consolidate a divided nation, and to start dealing with a new Japanese challenge to their hegemony over China.

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Beiyang governed China, as expected this Spurred disillusionment on fair treatment of China and their wishes for China to take a stronger position on the world stage. Ebrey (2010). Westad (2012) 117.

<sup>119</sup> Ebrey (2010) 276.

<sup>120</sup> Westad (2012) 169.

<sup>121</sup> Ebrey (2010) 276. Westad (2012) 181.

<sup>122</sup> Dong (2000) 210.

## 2.4 Towards War.

At the start of the 1930's, the Guomindang (GMD) were embroiled in the purging of communists (GCD) who were forced to flee southern China. This routing was soon made legend in communist mythology as "The Long March" a gauntlet that supposedly whetted the GCD into a strong and hard-core.<sup>123</sup> The GCD having fled Shanghai created a new power base in the mountain of Yan'an. Simultaneously Chiang strengthened central authority, he had forced warlords to declare allegiance to him and the GMD nationalists, his government was therefore nominally now, the government of China, the new strongmen at fringes of the GMD's sphere of influence were very autonomous.<sup>124</sup> These policies did not take the realities of a new Japan into perspective, Chiang-Kai-Shek and his predecessor Sun-Yat-Sen who both had studied in Japan and admired the country, had always hoped that Japan would ally with China, and for both countries, to together create a Pan-Asian developing partnership, that could stand up to western dominance of Asia.<sup>125</sup> This would never happen, while the Japanese had a strong drive to liberate Asia from Western dominance and create an "*East-Asian Co-prosperity Sphere*" for the good of all Asians, at least in rhetoric. The Japanese bore an ingrained ultra-nationalistic concept of their country and its people, the "*Yamato spirit*" which presumably bound the Japanese race together as one as a leading race *Shido minzoku*" denigrating other Asians as *Untermench*.<sup>126</sup>

Tanaka argues that Japanese society, had not experienced what he calls an "organic" transformation for human rights, reflecting the realities of Japanese societal norms, even the word corresponding to human rights in Japanese "Kenri" had to be coined during the Meiji restoration, Japan's modernizing drive.<sup>127</sup> The Meiji constitution was for the most part a spectacle for the international community.<sup>128</sup> By 1930 Imperial Japan was inherently unstable and increasingly jingoist, its economy had suffered greatly under the global *great depression* economic crisis. The crisis radicalized conservative wings in the army. These radicals assassinated opponents, including two prime ministers, Hamaguchi Osachi in 1931 and Inukai Tsuyoshi in 1932. In 1936, there was also an attempt at Prime Minister Okada Keisuke's life, leading to ever more militarist leadership. Amid the terrors in the early 1931, Army radicals in Japan's Kwantung army, in China, staged a train bombing of a Japanese train, remembered as the "*Mukden incident*" and "*the Manchurian incident*". The bombing event was blamed on Chinese terrorists, *casus belli* for Imperial Japan to retaliate in "self-defense". The GMD and Chiang-Kai-Shek did seek appeasement with Imperial Japan, requiring arbitration by the League of Nations on the

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<sup>123</sup> Ebrey (2010) 286.

<sup>124</sup> Westad(2010) 165.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid 114,167

<sup>126</sup> Ibid 80.48,49. Dower (2012) 81.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid. 200.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid 199.

matter, realizing that China could not stand up to Japanese aggression until it was unified and modernized. Imperial Japan expanded and established total hegemony over all modern north-eastern China (*Manchuria*), and named it *Manchukuo*, Land of the Manchus.<sup>129</sup>

With the verdict of misconduct over Japanese aggression in the League of Nations the member states should have evoked article 11 of the “*Covenant of The League of Nations*” and through arbitration create a peaceful solution, that the signatories would have to accept. At the risk of being sanctioned against, in the face of noncompliance.

There was however no interest in strong-arming a response to Japan's transgressions. The proceedings like many before ended in petty squabbling between countries, as there was no will to follow through with the necessary sanctions to uphold the charter of the covenant. Whoever sanctioned Japan would lose trade and/or spend military resources. Furthermore, most of the powerful countries who could have done something about Japanese transgression, were occupied with other issues, among them the rise of Nazi Germany in Europe. It boiled down to a general condemnation of Japanese actions, and Japan leaving the League.<sup>130</sup>

Chiang-Kai-Shek continued to seek peace and mediation for another five years and a truce in 1933 that indirectly acknowledged the Manchurian Landgrab.<sup>131</sup> Following his doctrine of strengthening and preparing for his chance, to stand up to Japan, through adapting to Chinese military strengths, Japan was supreme on the seas. So, Chiang strengthened his Army with the aid of German military advisors.<sup>132</sup> And prepared to withdrawal into the interior. Away from the industrial and economic centers in

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<sup>129</sup> The Imperial Japanese puppet Puyi, who was the last Qing-Manchu Emperor, de jure ruled this country. But it was *de facto* Japanese. Imperial Japan and GMD China then had a series of contained “incidents” in various places around China. In 1932 a huge skirmish broke out in Shanghai’s Chinese sector and the district Zhabei was devastated. The Japanese also massacred Pingchan-town and its 3000 citizens. It remained however, a limited war. In the mean-time, the case of the Manchurian Land grab had been gutted in the League of Nations, as the division between the political aims between countries was too great. This followed an investigative report, the Lytton report, which rejected Imperial Japan's actions based on self-defense, and a referendum on public support, that showed that none of the citizens in Manchuria accepted the land grab. Jenssen (2016) 36. Westad (2012) 249,250 Mitter (2013) 49,54,57,56.67. The movie “The Last Emperor” is considered a good representation of the reigns of Emperor Puyi <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0093389/>. 09.04.2017 Westad (2012) 249,250 Ebrey (2010) 282. Mitter (2013) 49,54.67. Dower (2012) 265.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid. 36,37,40 Westad (2012) 251. Dower (2012) 265. Norway was very careful in condemning Japan and took great care not to damage trade or relation between the countries. Jenssen (2016) 79.

<sup>131</sup> Mitter (2013) 59.

<sup>132</sup> Chiang-Kai-Shek admired the rise of Germany and its old martial traditions. When the GMD nationalists lost its relations to Russia following the GCD communist purges most markedly the “Shanghai Massacre”. China needed a new model to emulate, the Germans who had lost all claims to colonialism was a perfect tutor for China. The German trained army-forces, who at their peak strength numbered 80.000, were always the sturdy backbone of GMD Chinese armies throughout WW2. The battle for Shanghai in 1937, was dubbed the “German War” by the Japanese assailants. Of course, a very ironic fact, considering later allegiances. The GMD also employed Italian pilot-trainers. The German Commander Alexander von Falkhausen and Chiang-Kai-Shek also communicated using the Japanese language. Harmsen (2013) 75, 76,78,30. Mitter (2013) 59.60. Ebrey (2010) 227.

China, all on the coast. While the interior had an enormous potential for development in resources, skillsets and machinery was lacking, this would become a problem later in the war.<sup>133</sup>

Following the murder of its finance minister in 1936, Japan used over half its state budget on the military sector, questioning the viability of bidding for time, China's finance minister H.H Kung, Chiang's brother-in-Law phrased the position soberly. "...*China was preparing for what he felt was an inevitable war...*" Because each year "*Japan would become comparatively stronger*".<sup>134</sup>

Imperial Japan continued to vie for land in China. In 1937, as a border skirmish over the Marco Polo Bridge close to Beijing started Chiang finally "picked up the gauntlet" and knowing that China would be alone, declared war on Japan.<sup>135</sup>

### **3.0 Shanghai 1937-1942.**

In this chapter I will examine the Norway's break in diplomatic relations with Japan and its 1942 repatriation scheme from China. I will also examine how Norwegian Status was understood by the Japanese authorities in the first contact between Norwegians and Japanese. This chapter then inquire about the little researched diplomatic mission in Chongqing and its role as a diplomatic actor in China and a part of the Norwegian MFA and the wider diplomatic system.

### **3.1 The outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War**

Chiang's declaration of war quickly spiraled into a total-war, as a force of 130.000 Imperial Japanese soldiers put Beijing under siege on 26 July 1937 and captured it after 2 days.<sup>136</sup> China, South of the Huangtu- loess soil plateau was less optimal for mechanized warfare; therefore it was strategically an ideal area to open a second front. With these strategic considerations in mind, Chiang opened a second war front in Shanghai 6 weeks later. Fighting in Shanghai could raise international awareness and garner assistance for what they coined the "Plight of the Chinese." In propaganda. War in Shanghai would also

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<sup>133</sup> Mitter (2013) 58.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid 82.

<sup>135</sup> On July 7, 1927. A Japanese unit practiced night drills inside Chinese territory, Chinese soldiers started shooting at the unit, the Japanese unit retreated and held a count, one soldier was found missing. Leading to the Unit attacking the Chinese Forces. The missing soldier was later found in a brothel. Harmsen (2013) 23Mitter (2013) 69,73.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid (2013) 84.



give them an advantage of the urban landscape of buildings and constructions.<sup>137</sup> Outside of the city proper, the topography was rice-field dominated, urban fighting favored GMD in pitched battles against a modernized enemy.<sup>138</sup> The fight would not take place in the Concessions as that would be viewed as aggression against western nations.

By the 1930s there was a substantial Japanese population in China, and 20.000 Japanese in Shanghai alone. There they lived in a very segregated area, nicknamed the “*Japanese Concession*” Also often referred to as “*Little Tokyo*”. This would become the most important battleground in any conflict with the Japanese. The Chinese public and the diplomatic missions quickly recognized the warning signs, and like in most conflicts before, Shanghai’s concessions saw huge streams of people entering the International Settlement that so often had provided a haven for refugees, fleeing from the warfronts arounds Shanghai. This lead the international city to getting packed with people in need of shelter and support.<sup>139</sup>

Then Norwegian Consul General Aal received a message from Chinese authorities at an unspecified time during the buildup about the potential outbreak of war and was advised to evacuate all Norwegians from Hongkou and Yangpu situated close to “*Little Tokyo*” The consular staff and Norwegian volunteers, notably Ship-Chandler G.S.Jensen, then personally contacted the Norwegians in Northern Shanghai through personal visitations, and provided means of evacuation to the international settlement, no easy task as the Suzhou River’s bridges, most notably the Garden Bridge, was packed with refugees, wishing to enter the safety of the settlement, therefore boats were used. To provide further assistance for the 300 Norwegians in the city the Consulate also established another temporary office, that could aid distraught Norwegians on Sichuan road, headed by Vice Consul Orvin. The Norwegian General Consulate, which was situated on the seafront Bund area also remained open throughout the whole ordeal of the battle for Shanghai in 1937. Very successfully, they evacuated all Norwegians to the safety of the International Settlement and G.S. Jensen was commended with the King’s Medal of Merit for his

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<sup>137</sup> In the 1932 Japanese bid for Shanghai, Japanese tanks had found themselves «*Trapped like bleeding bulls in in the arena, blinded and waiting for death*» When fighting in Shanghai streets. This lesson was well remembered and was the reason for opening a second warfront in Shanghai. Harmsen (2013) 20

<sup>138</sup> Ibid 17.

<sup>139</sup> Westad (2012) 172. Kulstad (2014) 23. In Shanghai, the foreign population was a 70.000 in 1937, out of these 20.000 were Japanese, making them the largest foreign segment in Shanghai, the British and Russian populations were at the time about 10.000 each. Harmsen (2013) 17. The Norwegian population in Shanghai in “Occupied China” indicating year 1937 or later, without a clearer periodization, was 200 registered citizens. Making up the greater Norwegian population in China. Ottosen (2005) 76. Hans Berents claimed there were about 300 Norwegians in Shanghai “during the war” probably referring to the Second World War in Normannforbundet’s 9.th booklet from September 1946. Minister Otto Kildal put the number of Norwegians in Shanghai “during the war” at 276 Norwegians. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148. Mitter (2013) 106-107.

efforts in the evacuation. Norwegian Priest Nielsen from the Seaman's Church noted that he also thought the consular staff brave, and he commended them for staying at their post during the fighting.<sup>140</sup>

On the river by "The Bund" near the Consulate lay the clearest war-objective in Shanghai, the Imperial Japanese Cruiser *Izumo*, which was repeatedly attempted sunk by Chinese planes. The Chinese pilots, while vigorous and "gung-ho" had very poor Italian trainers, and little battle experience and since they were using sights that were attuned to a different target ranges, they scored no critical hits on *Izumo*. On August 14<sup>h</sup> "Black Saturday" the second day of fighting, stray bombs dropped by the planes hit one of the main avenues of the International Settlement, Nanjing Road, where crowds clustered to spectate the battle between Chinese and Japanese forces. Killing or injuring thousands. Later that month the south train station was bombed, killing about eight hundred people. Shrapnel from Japanese anti-air-guns shooting at the planes also killed many civilians. The Shanghai concessions supposed safety, was quickly failing and the displaced people needed accommodation in a safer space.<sup>141</sup>

Among the foreigners in Shanghai most women and children were therefore evacuated, between 17<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of August. Thousands of Americans evacuated on the SS "*President Jefferson*," *President Lincoln*" "*President Pierce*" and "*President Hoover*." The latter two ships were bound for the USA. Among the British 3000 nationals, 85 percent of the women and children were evacuated on the "*Rajputana*" and the "*Empress of Asia*" out of Shanghai and mainly to Hong Kong. For Scandinavian nationals. The "*Taishan*" owned by Wilhelmsen Shipping Company, was leased for evacuation. 240 Norwegians, Swedish, Danes and Finns boarded the ship for Hong Kong. Among the passengers were "(All) Norwegian women and children in Shanghai" As well as 40 hire-less Sailors. The Newspaper "*The China Press*" in interview with Consul Aal, write that the total of Norwegians embarking was 100 persons, making up approximately half the Norwegian population at the time. They arrived safely in Hong Kong before August 23, 1937.<sup>142</sup>

The Japanese-authorities quickly started an evacuation program for their own nationals announced in the newspaper North China Herald and Supreme Court, who posted an article on the issue of refugees,

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<sup>140</sup> Filseth, Seeberg (2000) 106,107,109. Kongens fortjenestemedalje.

<http://www.kongehuset.no/tildelinger.html?tid=28028&sek=27995&q=jensen&type=27125&aarstall> 08.04.2017.

<sup>141</sup> Denison (2006) 172. Norwegian Hans Berents was wounded during the "Black Saturday" bombing. According to a cut out from a newspaper kept in Elisabet Engelsens private archive. The article reads; *Hans Berents of Bergen, Norway, had a narrow escape. He was in an automobile opposite Sincere's at the time of the blast and found four holes in his hat later. The car's windshield, roof and rear-end were ripped to pieces and by flying fragments. The back seat flew up and landed on top of Berents, probably saving his life, he assisted many of the injured.* According to Fredrik Larsen Lund however, no Norwegians suffered any injury. Lund (2017) 314. Yeh (2008) 153 Harmsen (2013) 143.

<sup>142</sup> Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 106.107. Harmsen (2013) 79. Ottosen (2008) 76.

Bookings still available on pres. pierce. (1937, Aug 23). *The China Press (1925-1938)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1425456743?accountid=164172> 10.04.2017 103.

following the widening of war, on 25<sup>th</sup> of August named “*Refugees fired on downriver*”.<sup>143</sup> In the paper the refugee issue is problematized, with civilian Japanese ships fleeing Shanghai, being fired upon, by the in their view, belligerent Chinese soldiers. Feeding into the propaganda game between Japan and China, both parties trying to paint each other as savages.

Among the evacuees was the Multinational boy George Kulstad and his mother and brother. They had lived in Boone Road in northern Hongkew, North of Suzhou Creek, and must therefore have been evacuated into the international concession, and from there embarked on-board “*Taishan*”.

George at the time a small child, spent some time in Hong Kong, and he was baptized there, but later he returned to Shanghai.<sup>144</sup> His father a buoy-tender alongside most men stayed in Shanghai during the bombing, but was unable to do his job as the fighting raged on, when the fighting had subsided, he returned to his boat attempting to resume work, and found that the ship’s cat had been shell-shocked, and turned mad by the war. Priest Nielsen who later became an important character in Hong Kong, similarly evacuated on the “*Taishan*.” After he was asked to act as a community leader for the refugees by Minister Knudtzon, who would later become General Consul in Shanghai.<sup>145</sup>

### 3.2 Enveloped Island

The outbreak of war in Shanghai had displaced Norwegians and brought the stresses of war into the everyday life of most westerners in China. Those who evacuated Shanghai, could later return. The war then moved into China’s interior after 3 months of intensive fighting. The “*Shanghaiers*” could, for the most part resume their normal lifestyles by November.<sup>146</sup> Chiang and the GMD followed their own directives and routed into the interior of the country, bringing disassembled factories and their government institutions with them. Therefore, Japanese domains now surrounded the Shanghai concessions, but Shanghai concessions remained unoccupied also after the 1937 skirmish. When the fighting moved away from Shanghai, most Norwegians in the city, started to have a positive outlook on their prospects. Seeberg&Filseth argue that General Consul Aal thought that opportunities would return to Shanghai, after all “... *Won’t a country as ruined as China need a lot of export to rebuild?*”

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<sup>143</sup> REFUGEES FIRED ON DOWN RIVER. (1937, Aug 25). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from:<https://search.proquest.com/docview/1369978842?accountid=164172> 13.04.2017.

<sup>144</sup> Kulstad (2013) 12.

<sup>145</sup> Nielsen (1946) 5. Henriksen (1964) 42. For detailed maps of Shanghai in 1937 I recommend the reader to check out Edward Denison and Guang Yu Ren’s: *Building Shanghai: The Story of China’s Gateway* (2013)

<sup>146</sup> Leck (2006) 39.

<sup>147</sup> this makes sense. And mirrored the general mood of the city, after all, Shanghai had long operated in a country embroiled in different wars.

In this, the Minister was right, and trade anomalously flourished in Shanghai after 1937, as Shanghai firms earned good money on illicit trade with GMD China, and the “*in-port*” market, boosted by newly arrived and wealthy Jewish immigrants, flourished to meet new demands for foodstuffs and other goods. Half of all Chinese owned industry had also been devastated in the “Battle for Shanghai” giving Western firms, largely untouched by the warfare, bigger market shares. <sup>148</sup>

The optimism would quickly die out as the political mood took many repeated blows. In the battle for Shanghai, Japanese planes had ended up shooting at the English Ambassador to Shanghai’s car, which had donned the flag of Great Britain “Union Jack” on the hood of the car, almost paralyzing him; a grave diplomatic transgression. In addition, Japanese General Matsui Iwane, on his own accord, chose to follow the GMDs retreat from Shanghai to their capital Nanjing. <sup>149</sup> During their infamous bloody purge of that city, where the Japanese killed at least 200.000 and bestially raped thousands, Japanese troops also bombed the American gunboat USS Panay and a Japanese soldier also hit the American Consul John Moore Allison in his face; these grave offenses, among other Japanese transgressions, severely hurt US-Japanese and other nation’s relations with Japan diplomatically. <sup>150</sup> The Sino-Japanese conflict had also become a terrifying total war, where Chinese civilians had become indistinguishable from the military as targets and were often outright massacred. <sup>151</sup> Japan had therefore consequently lost much of its global admiration, and diplomatic good-will. While the diplomatic situation was poor by any standard, escalation was averted for the time being, since Japan paid huge indemnities to USA. The Japanese conquests in 1937 therefore led only to a few hardline containment sanctions from the US. <sup>152</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Filseth, Seeberg (2000) 110.

<sup>148</sup> Wakeman (2006) 7. Yeh (2008) 153.

<sup>149</sup> Japanese Military commanders had great autonomy, this often lead to the political crises, and generals and armies often acted without considerations to country policy. Tanaka (1996) 208,209.

<sup>150</sup> Mayer (2013) 100. Leck (2006) 39.

<sup>151</sup> Total war: Military conflict in which the contenders are willing to make any sacrifice in lives and other resources to obtain a complete victory, as distinguished from limited war. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/total-war> 08.06.17.

<sup>152</sup> An embargo of Warplanes was imposed on Japan because of its 1937 transgressions. US Ambassador in Tokyo Joseph Grew recommended giving Japanese moderate politicians’ time to change Japan’s foreign policies. US Ambassador to China Nelson T. Johnson mostly implied that Japanese aggression implied US exclusion from Chinese market, and demanded much harder sanctions against Japan, he criticized Minister Grew and called his supporters the “*peace at any price boys.*” Japan’s drive for empire also clashed with the United States at a political-ideological level. The USA still recovering from the “*Great Depression*” economic depression of early 1930, was still pursuing a political system based on the status quo, and belief in the failing League of Nations. Particular for USA’s China-policy was its sponsoring of the “*Open-Door-Policy.*” Enforced by the “*Nine-Power-Treaty*” giving all nations the right to trade within “*Chinese-Territories*” Mayers (2013) 21.

While the relationship between Japan and USA had partly normalized after the indemnities. Historian and political science Professor David Mayer, argues that the historical weight of Japanese misdeeds was by then too great to ignore for USA. Making a confrontation between the countries inevitable. To quote Mayers: “...*The notion that Japan and the United States might avoid a clash was, in other words, a fantasy...*”<sup>153</sup> Ambassador Johnson fled from Nanjing aboard the USS Luzon and proceeded to accompany the retreating GMD government. The retreat took them through Hangzhou, to the temporary GMD capital Chongqing where a new American Embassy was established.<sup>154</sup>

The usual unconcerned attitude of Shanghai also changed because of the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. While the warfront had moved into the interior, clandestine organizations such as the Green Gang, related to the GMD by now situated in Chongqing, waged terrible shadow wars in the streets and abductions and bombing became daily occurrences as the proxy-fighting intensified.<sup>155</sup> Outside of the politically motivated war, financially motivated crime flourished in Shanghai by 1938 because of increased spending on carnal pleasures like drugs and prostitutes, peaking businesses in those uncertain times, especially in Japanese administered Shanghai, where the Japanese profited from the trade since the Shanghai police had no authority there, owing to the sectional nature of law enforcement and jurisdiction in the city, now markedly split between the International Settlement and the now Japanese administered Shanghai. Stella Dong puts it like this: “*Shanghaiers were now living each day as if it was the last...*”<sup>156</sup> There was a sense of fatalism and daily activities became dangerous. George Kulstad remembers visiting the cinema sometime after the conventional fighting for the city had stopped. In his anecdote he ponders the accidental occurrence of him choosing to watch “*The Wizard of OZ*” at that particular cinema, for while he was watching the movie, the neighboring cinema venue was bombed in a terrorist attack killing many. Shanghai was commercially functional, but very much a minor theatre-of-war, also after the “Battle for Shanghai.”<sup>157</sup>

While Japan did not wish to start fighting the nations of the Occident by annexing the more important concessions outright. Japan consecrated its power in the concessions, and not always by subtle means.

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<sup>153</sup> Mayers (2013) 11,12,13,14,99

<sup>154</sup> Ibid 99.

<sup>155</sup> Leck (2006) 45. Dong (2001) 264. In 1940 a bank war between the GMD and the newly established Wang Jingwei's reformed government broke out in the streets of Shanghai, both parties attempting to supersede the others opposing legal tender (money). Ye (2008) 185. Wakeman (1996) 115,119.

<sup>156</sup> Dong (2001) 257. Yeh (2008) 155. Shanghai Municipal police (SMP) much like Shanghai's Municipal Council (SMC) was strongly pressured to comply with Japanese demands to strengthen the Japanese position (or to safeguard Japanese possessions) After a Japanese army parade was attacked in Shanghai on December 3, 1937, Japanese representatives demanded 10 constable officer positions in the SMP and was given these positions. Wakeman (1996) 14,15

<sup>157</sup> Kulstad (2013) 1.2. Gen.Matsui Iwane threatened the International Settlement in 1937 with an impending invasion if the SMC and the Shanghaiers would not bend to Japanese demands, like the suppression of GMD propaganda and GMD elements in the International Settlement. Wakeman (1996) 147

Shanghai had long been the economic engine of China, surely a coveted possession for a Japanese economy rapidly losing money on its China conquest. Interactions between Westerners and Japanese soldiers also resulted in scuffles and happened countrywide, in Japanese checkpoints, and in the task of getting travel permits, enmity was evident.<sup>158</sup> Similarly, people's freedom of expression was ever increasingly, threatened with violence. Most publicly when eighty-seven journalists from news agencies in the International Settlement of Shanghai were blacklisted by the Japanese secret police, and subsequently assassinated or firebombed into silence.<sup>159</sup>

In the Shanghai Municipal Council (SMC) Japanese discontent was also plain to see. On one occasion on 26 January 1941, during a tax vote, the Japanese, opposing the motion to increase taxation, was overridden by popular vote. Japanese discontent with the outcome, stemmed from the standing of the SMC vote system, where Japan held two out of a total of fourteen votes, in their eyes a situation not reflecting political and numerical realities, as Japan was a conquering nation, and the largest contingent of foreigners in Shanghai. During the squabble, a Japanese surnamed Hayashi drew a gun that he attempted to kill the SMC Chairman WJ Keswick with. He was however stopped by Japanese General Consul Okamoto, revealing a split in the Japanese ranks. Hayashi, having wounded Okamoto and Keswick, was then rescued by a Japanese mob and sent back to Japan where he later became a national hero.<sup>160</sup>

Later, in April 2, 1941 in the Shanghai times revealed a new SMC seating arrangement, that would equate Japan with USA and the English, with three seats each. Keswick's immediate successor was Briton Jack Liddel. He was in turn replaced by Japanese National Katsuo Okazaki.<sup>161</sup> Simultaneously two Japanese nationals had made their way into the only other International Settlement in Kulangyu Island, in Xiamen city, after the Japanese pressured the council there to change the composition of the council there, under threat of outright invasion and takeover of the city, Japan had then already done this to the so-called international city of Tianjin.<sup>162</sup> In the words of the Japanese General Consul in Kulangyu, all in clear "*Co-prosperity-sphere*" rhetoric "*it would be necessary to remove the foreign pressure that is keeping China in the status of a semi-colony.*"<sup>163</sup> The role of reliever was of course to be played by the Japanese alleged liberators.

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<sup>158</sup> Leck (2006) 45.

<sup>159</sup> When Shanghai surrendered, Chinese newspapers were ordered to undergo examination by the Japanese Imperial army. Instead the newspapers flagged out and became foreign publications. As the Japanese, could not put censorship on international businesses, they instead retorted with violence. Wakeman (1996) 115.

<sup>160</sup> Leck (2006) 41, 42, 47,48

<sup>161</sup> Ibid 56, 81.

<sup>162</sup> Wakeman (1996) 2.

<sup>163</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0095/0002. (1939, May 20). *The China Weekly Review (1923-1950)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1371479356?accountid=164172> 24.06.17.

### 3.3 Drawing Lines and Preparing for War.

In response to this obvious and ever-increasing Japanese enmity and encroachment on Occidental nations interests. The American Foreign Department intensified the economic embargoes that had been placed on Japan in 1937, cutting trade of scrap iron in 1940 and then a more crippling embargo on fossil and freezing of all Japanese assets in USA fuels in 1941. Sanctions were also imposed because Japan took another autocratic when political parties were outlawed followed by General Hideki Tojo elevation to Japanese prime minister in 1941.

On the day of the SMC shooting incident English and American nationals were strongly re-advised to leave China and return to their countries. This advice had been posted in newspapers in China and Japan since October 1940 after their respective Ministries of Foreign Affairs decided the political situation between their nations and Japan was unstable.<sup>164</sup> This advice and the prospect of war lead to higher fare prices on ships, as all military personnel, and a lesser portion of the American and British population in Shanghai left. Most of the expatriates however, believed the situation still viable, or considered themselves indispensable to their businesses, bidding their time for a more critical juncture. A November article in *The North-China Herald & Supreme Court & Consular Gazette* informed Britons that the British state would also pay for its' nationals to combat the rise in fare price.<sup>165</sup>

### 3.4 Norway's response to the Shanghai Municipal Council Shooting.

The severity of the political situation was probably underestimated by the diplomatic staff in late 1941. I have found no documents that point to repatriation or evacuation efforts, or advice to leave in the timespan between the evacuations to Hong Kong in 1937 and the attack at Pearl Harbor. Consular

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<sup>164</sup> Americans and Britons had been advised to leave China and Japan since 1940. The British Ambassador advised all Britons to leave, emphasizing no compulsion, but advising all nationals to leave. *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1369985628?accountid=164172>. 26.05.17. All non-essential personnel both British and American, were advised to leave, unless they had stakes in China. Britons reminded of advice to leave. (1941, Feb 19). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1369992564?accountid=164172>. Leck (2006) 47.48.

<sup>165</sup> Evacuation advice to Britons here. (1941, Nov 05). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1370009802?accountid=164172> 28.05.2017.

archives are meant for the public eye; it is therefore at least possible that the diplomatic mission might have chosen not to archive any documents related to consular advice on the political situation, as this could have negative implications in retrospect, and diplomats have, as we have seen in chapter 1 implied responsibilities over nationals in expatriation.<sup>166</sup> George Kulstad wrote in his book an anecdote that supports the argument for consular inertia in giving, in my subjective view, well-reasoned political advice to leave China to the Norwegian polity. His father Peter Alv Kulstad, who was idle at work, as his workplace the WCB remained inoperative because of Japanese disagreements with the SMC.<sup>167</sup> He therefore sought advice from the Consulate regarding the political situation and a job-offer that would take him to Japan in late 1941.

*“Being a Norwegian citizen, my father sought guidance from the Norwegian Consulate regarding the advisability of sailing to Japan. The Consul pointed out that Norway was not at war with Japan, suggesting that he should comply. Expecting to return to Shanghai soon, my father sailed the Chien She to Kokura...The ship was at anchor in Kokura harbor when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. ...On April 1, 1942, my father and Chinese crew were confined to the ship. They remained in the custody of the Japanese for 959 days...When the war ended, the Norwegians in Shanghai must have raised Viking hell with their Consul for not having advised them to leave China prior to the outbreak of the war...”*<sup>168</sup>

His father, and therefore the Kulstad family experienced long-term economical losses because of Peter’s internment as he lost his wages during the war, after the war he was also not included in the war sailors-reparation-pool because of technicalities related to criteria listed in the 1943 law-draft known as “*Provisory Order of 29-10-1943*”.<sup>169</sup> Peter’s pending paid-leave vacation, postponed just as war broke out in Europe, was also snubbed by his employer the Whangpoo Concervancy Board(WBC) after the war, as the money was not adjusted to inflation and therefore of insignificant value. Consequently, this ended up stranding him far away from his family after the war, in Trondheim, Norway, as he had no money to rejoin his family in the USA. Similarly, Peter also had issues getting work recommendations after the war, because of his ambiguous status, as he was not officially recognized a war sailor, this led him to send many letters to then General Consul in Shanghai Otto Kildal. In a sense, he fell between two stools and his story was later ignored.<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>166</sup> Tosh (2010) 98,99. Neumann (2012) 7,8,14,32,33,35,64,94.

<sup>167</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148 02.06.17

<sup>168</sup> Kulstad (2013) 25.

<sup>169</sup> My translation, in Norwegian it is known as “*Provisorisk Anordning av 29-10-1943. Om Lønn Til Norske Sjøfolk I Fangenskap.*» found in archive: Det norske innskudds- og trekkontor i London - RA/S-3273/D/Db/L0005/0005.

<sup>170</sup> Peter Alv Kulstad have also yet to be commended with the Haakon VII Freedom Cross, a prestigious medal awarded to Norwegian war-sailors and other distinguished Norwegians or other nationals who fought Norway’s



Norway had 100 missionaries in China, these lived mostly in remote provinces like Shaanxi, Heilongjiang and Hunan, like the other 8000 missionaries in China, and they were especially dependent on political advice, as they had little access to news. Their decisions to stay was therefore often based on the church-chapter or ministerial advice. Consular reach must however not be over exaggerated, and the situation at hand must have been obvious most people through the English newspapers that circulated at the time and the word of mouth. Missionaries Valborg and Peter (Pastor Ye) Torjesen, among others, returned from Norway to China through Hong Kong in 1939, at a time of obvious great turmoil, and enrolled their four children at Tao Feng Shang School in Hong Kong, later transferring to them to Yintai in North China.

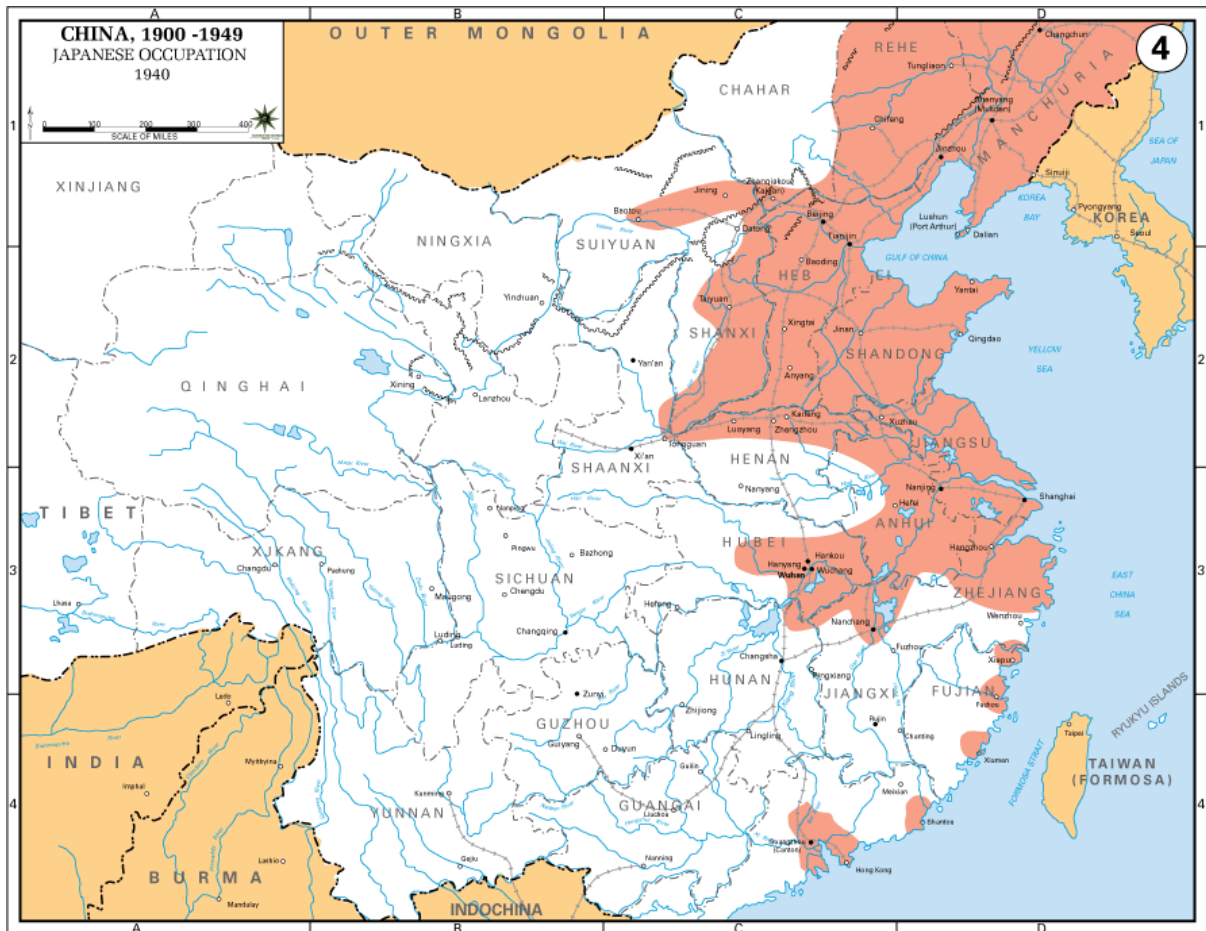
The parents had by then returned to their long-affiliated Hequ mission in the extremely dangerous Shaanxi province. Both were without a doubt fully aware of the dangers posed by war in China, Hequ was in the middle of the shifting frontlines, where big battles were fought. Their return resulted in Peter Torjesen being killed during a bombing-run just months after arriving there, and so he became the first Norwegian casualty of war in Asia, to pass away on December 14, 1939. Consular advice to leave would likely not have changed their minds about returning to China.<sup>171</sup>

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fight. <https://www.krigsseilerregisteret.no/no/utmerkelse/249448/> 11.12.17. Read more about Kulstad's fight for recognition as a war-sailor and reparations in the the *Captain Alv Kulstad and George Kulstad Collection*. Available at California State University Northridge:

<https://findingaids.csun.edu/archon/?p=collections/controlcard&id=458> 03.03.18.

<sup>171</sup> Ottosen (1996) 55-61. Kari Torjesen's memoir reads like a biblical text in my subjective view. Proselytizing and aid work in China, was it seems to the writer to be their assumed mission in life. Torjesen (2007) 82,90,111,112. Missionaries had long been exposed to misery and banditry in China. Some missionaries would leave the country at critical junctures. Other missionaries believed that the misery was part and parcel of missionizing, times of dire need, was to them when missionaries were thought needed the most, both as soul-savers and as aid workers. Like the Torjesen family, the Aavik family, and others, returned to their station in China. The Aavik family returned to their mission after a respite in Norway, in 1938 at the height of conflict through GMD territory. The anecdote on page 45 of Aavik's memoir, is also very telling of how some missionaries did not shy away from conflict, while their return was surely rash, their bravery should be commended and remembered, few people are that selfless. My translation: "*The same German boat that took us ashore, was now taking in missionaries from the same interior we were going to, they had been called home by their missionary organization's leadership. Some were headed to Europe, some to America.*" Kvalvik (2009) 109, 111. Aavik (1982) 36,34,47,52,102 Uglem (1979) 172.



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If there were no circular letters advising Norwegians to leave, it would however not have been archived. Therefore, there might be no reason to suggest a conspiracy to hide public outrage over lack of advice to leave. It is however plausible, that in the scenario of a Consul, who as we will see later left China on a repatriation ship, the not so heroic story of diplomats misinterpreting the political situation, and then abandoning the polity in enemy territory, would be better-off forgotten in history. Either way the omission to clearly warn Norwegians to leave, could be considered a blemish on the MFA's reputation in my subjective opinion. A clear advice to leave China, could have changed the mind of many Norwegians who were who were indecisive about leaving or entering China, perhaps the most comparable country to Norway, Sweden evacuated all Swedish women out of China and back home to Sweden before Pearl Harbor, setting a precedent to something Norway's MFA could have achieved. The omission of a warning in the archive and contemporary newspapers, as hinted at above, is however not proof of no evacuation effort, claiming blatantly that there were no evacuation efforts, could easily become a *post hoc ergo propter hoc fallacy*.<sup>173</sup>

<sup>172</sup> The red colored area shows the area occupied by Japan in 1940.  
<https://www.usma.edu/history/sitepages/chinese%20civil%20war.aspx> 06.05.2018.

<sup>173</sup> Johansson (2012) 156.

The method of discursive post modernistic historical practice used on the Consul's wording, in the Consulate's annual report for 1940. "*Årsrapport*." (These reports had been sent home to the MFA (UD) in Norway annually since 1876.) Where he argues that there are chances for hire in China-freight for ship-officers, can however suggest that he would not have advised Norwegians to come to work in China, if there were undergoing evacuation procedures. Market analysis was however as we have seen, central to the diplomatic mission's functions also in times of crisis and especially so for Consulates. Evacuation efforts can also have been halted as the diplomats did not communicate with so-called Minister President Quisling's puppet government who had usurped executive power in Norway. This was a widespread problem for occupied countries, as there was nowhere for nationals from occupied countries to return to, unlike Sweden. The strong belief in Norway's neutrality and its non-interference policies based on trade, can perhaps also explain the reluctance to leave China. The Consul might also have thought like many other people in China at the time, that Japans surrender in a potential war with western nations would come quickly, as Japan couldn't even beat properly beat GMD-China.<sup>174</sup>

### **3.5 World War Two in Asia and Official Norwegian Representation in Shanghai 1937-1942.**

At the start of 1940, the Norwegian Consular staff in the General Consulate (GK) in Shanghai consisted of General Consul Terje Knudtzon, 1<sup>st</sup> Consul Vice Consul Otto Kildal 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Consul and 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary Fredrik Orvin and later the 2<sup>nd</sup> secretary Alfred Rustad. The GK also hired a non-diplomatic and locally hired staff, led by the Norwegian trainee-secretary Gunnar Sevald and the Chinese secretary N. sun his Assistant numerate clerk T.A Pan. The GK also hired on-hand "*Coolie*" workers..<sup>175</sup> On June 3, 1941, the GK produced its last "*Årsrapport*" for the year 1940. The report was shorter than usual, and submitted later than anticipated, because of the apparent workload at the GK.<sup>176</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Leck (2006) 46. Knutsen, Leira, Neumann (2016) 15, 96.

<sup>175</sup> Norges Statskalender 1940. 132,133. "Coolie" Ambiguous term meaning a low-status Chinese worker who did the brunt of the manual labor in the Concessions.

<sup>176</sup> Also known as, «Generalberetning» and "Konsulatberetning" In English this type of report is best known as "Annual Reports." Berridge (2003) 12. GK Shanghai favours the term Generalberetning. RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148. The General Consulate must have been very pressed for time in 1941, as the consulate was forced out of its premises in Peking Road's Glen line building, as a new proprietor the Kaichu Sanshi Kaisha took over the building late that autumn. The Consulate later resumed its operations, in premises owned by the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank before the final shutdown of operations.

The 15 pages long report appears thoroughly researched and every subject deemed important, is catalogued under headliners like Communications (*Kommunikasjoner*) Tariffs (*Tollsatser*) Finances (*Finanser*), Exchange rates (*Kursforhold*), Foreign trade (*Utenrikshandelen*), Port calls (*Skipsfarten*). The purpose of the reports was always to inform home-country superiors about current events, so that they could make informed policies. The 1940 “*Årsrapport*” suggests that the general situation in 1940, was good for Norwegians. Chinese imports had doubled since 1936, similarly, so had Chinese exports, but with the trade balance continually in foreign nation’s favor. The Norwegian trade balance was even better, netting 2.6 million American dollars in exports to China, while Chinese net imports only amounted to 499.000 thousand dollars, in other words Norwegian businesses were doing well.<sup>177</sup>

Shortages and speculation in paper stock also netted Norway great profits, especially as the last shipments stopped coming into the marketplace, because of the 1939 occupation of Denmark and Norway.<sup>178</sup> The speculation and hoarding of tradeable products, was also a product of challenges in the China freight business, which was of tremendous interest to Norway. The trade routes were getting restricted, and Norwegian vessels had since 1939 stopped calling in several cities, according to the 1939 “*Årsrapport*.”. These were cities that had Norwegian Honorary Consulates, like Hangzhou (Hangchow) and Yingkou (Newchwang), were also eventually closed for trade, and the diplomatic missions were also in the process of closing. The cities that were still open for trade, were advised to hinder hire seeking sailors from disembarking, as it would be difficult to find new hire in other ports. Despite these challenges Norway had remained a large actor in the trade. Minister Knutzon wrote that the Changjiang-river, which has its estuary in the Shanghai area, was closed for western trade, while of little interest to Norwegian trade, it stopped trade in general, increasing stockpiling. Probably the trade-restrictions also contributed to the growth in Japanese freight trade. As a result, according to the “*Årsrapport*” for 1940, Japan had become the biggest actor in the freight business and England the traditionally largest actor, had become a much smaller actor, clear proof of the long-expected violation of the “*Open-Door-Policy*” This change of status in the market had taken place within a year.<sup>179</sup>

When the war broke out following the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941. It was soon felt in many places in East-Asia, where the now enemies from the Occident had possessions such as Hong Kong, Singapore, The Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and big military presence in the Philippines. Shanghai fell without any marked resistance, and the SVC paramilitary

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<sup>177</sup> The report does not define what the term Chinese trade entails

<sup>178</sup> Trade goods came in through an intricate network of proxy-hubs, therefore the trade did not stop immediately after the occupation of Norway.

<sup>179</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148

volunteer corps put up no fight against the Japanese. The only direct act of war in the city was the sinking of the English warship the HMS Peterel, which refused to surrender.

Japanese Soldier crossed into the international settlement from their headquarters in Hongkew (Little Tokyo) over Wusong River, and quickly occupied all key-assets in the city. The businesses and ministries there had their hands busy with disposing of sensitive information. I imagine the Norwegian General Consulate was busy disposing of proof of the Norwegians Consulate's role in sending volunteers to "Little Norway" a Norwegian resistance army in training program in Canada, evident in the "Årsrapport for 1940." This was likely disposed of alongside with trade secrets, communication codes and anything else that could compromise the status of the Norwegian Community or expose trade secrets. The *Shanghaiers* were generally cooperative with the Japanese, and the SMC remained operative and cooperative, the SMP low rank workers had work for another year.<sup>180</sup>

For Norwegians, the important question now, was how they would be treated? For the Japanese, the status of the little nation of Norway must have been a minor concern, especially in the context of the Japanese authorities already having, as we have seen, no official policy on how to deal with civilians.<sup>181</sup> As a result, Norwegians and most other nationals in China were in a state of limbo, not knowing how the Japanese would deal with them. The status of Norwegians was however, peculiar, and even the British authorities were uncertain about Norway's status owing to its *government in-exile* status and the puppet-state nature of Quisling's government. An article published in the *China Weekly Review* titled: "Danish firms in Hong Kong seized: Pacific trade is menaced" published April 27, 1940 announced that Danish firms and ships porting in Hong Kong had been seized by the British, as ships flying Danish colours, were considered enemy property. Denmark like Norway was then occupied by Germany, but Denmark would have no efficient *government in-exile* in London. On these grounds, the ships would be considered an enemy, the article then elucidated the status of Danish nationals as non-enemies.

"Although Denmark is at present regarded as Enemy territory. Danish Nationals will not be treated as enemy nationals"<sup>182</sup>

The article side notes that British attitudes towards Norway was undecided. "Her (Britain) attitude towards Norwegian ships has not yet been clarified." The article also recognized that British warships had intercepted Norwegian vessels in Japanese chartering. In an older article dated Apr 17, 1940.

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<sup>180</sup> Leck (2006) 56,57,58, 81. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148

<sup>181</sup> Archer (2008) 5.

<sup>182</sup> Danish firms in Hong Kong seized; pacific commerce is menaced. (1940, Apr 27). *The China Weekly Review (1923-1950)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1371504440?accountid=164172> 08.10.2017

In: *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette*. Norwegians were advised by the Norwegian Consul to “...*Place themselves under British protection...*” Mirroring the long-standing policy of relying on British protection, advice that perhaps, could be understood as picking a side in the then brewing conflict. News from the frontlines of war in Norway was heavily featured in the Shanghai areas newspapers, and the Free-Norwegian opposition to Germany and the National Unity Party must have been apparent to anyone reading newspapers.<sup>183</sup>

In Shanghai, the General Consulate quickly had to deal with Japanese officials after the occupation, despite the undecided status, as many Norwegian’s possessions were quickly seized, despite Japanese proclamations that lawful residents (of all nations) would be left alone. A note found in the national archives, written by Vice-Consul Otto Kildal, refers to a conversation relating the confiscation of several Norwegian ships into a prize-court. This despite GK Knudtzon’s attesting to Norwegian ownership of the ships before the seizure, in several letters to the Japanese General Consul T Horiuchi, from December 11, 1941 and later. Kildal writes in a report, that he had also had a conversation with an officer named Lieutenant Miwa, in January about these ships, where he argued for Norwegian neutrality. In reply, Miwa told Kildal that “*The Japanese authorities had seized the ships because if they hadn’t, they would risk that the English would seize the ships instead*”. Recognizing the absurdity of the reply but attempting to be diplomatic, Kildal writes that he then underlined the argument of neutrality. Kildal had no leverage to get the ships released. Letters indicate that these ships were held in the prize-court for at least 2 years, as several of the ships were desired released by their owners, in letters sent to different Japanese authorities until late 1943.<sup>184</sup> Talking with the Berents family I also learnt that John Berents, son of Hans Berents, in addition to having his boat “*Eileen*” held in Prize-court, had his house confiscated by the Japanese authorities in Shanghai just after the outbreak of war.<sup>185</sup>

Later on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 1942, Norwegian metal works firm China Metal Products CO owned by G.S Jensen who had helped Norwegians evacuate to Hong Kong, wrote to Minister Knudtzon that Japanese Soldiers had come to his factory three days before, while he at the time didn’t know their intentions were, as they did not speak English, but he was continually barred from entering his own factory. He was long denied entry, and his factory fell into disrepair. A similar closure was imposed on

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<sup>183</sup> Danish ships will be seized. (1940, Apr 17). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1418948118?accountid=164172> 12.10.2017 Norway will fight with allies. (1940, Apr 17). *The North - China Herald and Supreme Court & Consular Gazette (1870-1941)* Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.resources.asiaportal.info/docview/1418947863?accountid=164172> 13.10.2017.

<sup>184</sup> My translation, the original note reads: «*Hvis ikke de japanske myndighetene tok båtene i forvaring, ville man risikere at Engelskmenne (sic) gjorde det*». Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0080/0003. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411. Leck (2008) 218.

<sup>185</sup>Points raised by Roy Engelsen taken from interview conducted by Dennis Askeland in Oslo, 07/04/2017

Olaf Thoresen's businesses on March 3, 1942. But Fridtjoff Hoenke seems to have gotten the worst of it, for his brewery was immediately forced-closed and he also had his boat and house appropriated. additionally, Hoenke had up until November 1943 been unable to withdraw a substantial sum of 250.000 GMD "Fabi" money from his bank account at liquidated E.D Sassoon & Co Banking Corporation. The Japanese also appropriated a car owned by Captain Einar Krogseth. Money-reparations rates for the newly bought car worth 1.350 US-dollar would, according to the appropriation notice, be set by the Japanese Army. When the Consulate investigated, or as they called it "ventilated" the case. They were simply told that cars were appropriated without any considerations towards owner nationality. The report of the event then states that the Consulate would advise Krogseth to comply, as refraining from that, would lead to "*unpleasantries...*". As that anecdote implies people from every nation could theoretically lose privileges, personal possessions, and their businesses. The Swedish were unconditionally neutral and largely left alone, but Swedish owned Svenska Tandsticks A.B matchstick factory was appropriated at the outbreak of war and money reparation were not given back before 1945.<sup>186</sup>

"Enemy nations'" businesses were also only gradually taken over, as Japanese firms first needed to learn the skillsets needed to run the different businesses. Greg Leck describes the Japanese takeovers processes thusly: *«Japan ...slowly completed the takeover of foreign concerns and confiscation of property. Agricultural products were seized as well.»* It is apparent from the sources that this also applies for Norway. Foreigners who were not ousted from their jobs in favour for Japanese workers, often received wage-penalties. For instance, Norwegians and Polish neutrals working in the renowned customs house had their salaries cut in half, and were additionally accused of colluding with the enemy, because they continued working for the Japanese.<sup>187</sup>

In private correspondence with George Kulstad, I also learned of the internment of Norwegian sailors in the Japanese Naval Landing Party headquarters in Shanghai shortly after Pearl Harbor. The events leading up to these arrests are vividly described in a handwritten letter from Georg Kulstad's mother Helen Thomas Kulstad, to the son of a Shanghai boat-captain and later board member for the Committee for Norwegian Seamen, this committee is examined in chapter 5.<sup>188</sup>

*"Eight to ten merchant marine ships were in the harbour that day, with Norwegian Captains and Officers, including you father (Ferdinand Semmelmann) their ships were confiscated, and the men taken to the J. Naval Landing Building (Japanese Naval Landing HQ, In North-Hongkew Shanghai) near the boys' public school, where they remained for a few months."*

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<sup>186</sup>Johansson (2012) 75,76. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0080/0003. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

<sup>187</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0075/0002,

Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010.

<sup>188</sup> Kåre Semmelmann son of Captain Ferdinand Semmelman, the letter is in George Kulstad's private archive.

This event is ominously missing and is not explicitly mentioned in any other literature, nor in the Norwegian state archives, given the seriousness of internment of neutral sailors. This raises the question of why it has not been pointed out or mentioned in literature. George Kulstad wrote to me “*This is a sore point for me, and something that I believe falls into the category (sic) of the Norwegian Government wanting to hide.*” Strengthening the earlier argument for censorship of the events that happened in the autumn and winter of 1941.<sup>189</sup> Kulstad argues that his mother, who was Japanese through her maternal line and fluent in Japanese, was an interpreter for the Consulate, putting herself in great personal danger by entering the Japanese headquarters, where she gave the sailors items like toilet requisites, tobacco and clothing.<sup>190</sup> Helen Kulstad had no diplomatic immunity, unlike Minister Kildal who accompanied her, and therefore must have put herself at great personal risk, here we must consider that after all the Japanese had already neglected Norwegian neutrality and confiscated property and interned neutral sailors. Additionally, as we have seen, the consular staff and the SMC had few means to coerce the Japanese who did whatever they pleased. Helen Kulstad never received any award for her role in this affair during her lifetime according to Kulstad, but after the war she received casual letters, offhandedly thanking her, sent to George Kulstad’s father, Peter Alv Kulstad, from Minister Kildal in 1951. The letter emphasised her important efforts in 1941 and later, lending credibility to the notion that she had some important role she was never commended for, and therefore she is at least an unsung hero.<sup>191</sup> Her son George Kulstad has attempted to open a case to get his mother a posthumous award, for her good work, for around 15 years, but has not been able to progress the case.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> I have been given permission to cite George Kulstad directly. The other explanation outside of the MFA’s directed gloss-over, is rivalries and classism/racism in the Shanghai-Norwegian community. In an email to the Norwegian Royal Ministry of Justice and the Police, written by George Kulstad, asking for a review of Helen’s case in 2002, he argues: “*After the war, according to my father, local petty jealousies within the Norwegian community in Shanghai stifled a proposal to award my mother a medal for her efforts.*” In our correspondence, he elaborates on this “... *I remember his complaining after the war that the ladies of the Norwegian community in Shanghai, jealous of the fact that my non-Norwegian mother had contributed to the welfare of the Norwegian seamen while they did nothing, took steps to ensure that no recognition was made of my mother in the form of a Norwegian medal.*” It is, as I see it, entirely plausible that crediting Helen Kulstad who was of multi-ethnic origins and half-Japanese, the enemy state at that. Must have been difficult and humbling for the otherwise powerless Norwegian community, and therefore a likelihood. Nils Nesbø argues that he was interned “*At the outbreak of the war in the East*” in correspondence with the Norwegian Committee in Shanghai on November 12, 1943. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411, this letter will be further examined in chapter 5.

<sup>190</sup> Kulstad (2014) 11.

<sup>191</sup> From my personal correspondence with George Kulstad, translated from the original Norwegian letter:

*Dear Captain Kulstad. At the same time included in this letter is a “vandelserklæring” (Backgrounds-check) That I hope will be satisfactory. I am sorry to hear that your wife is sick and hospitalized. Moreover, I must ask you to give her my best regards and thank her for her excellent work for our interests during the difficult times that followed the Japanese Occupation of Shanghai in 1941. I will be glad to hear from you again.”*

<sup>192</sup> George Kulstad has attempted to communicate with well-connected scholars and people in the Norwegian government that he argues he has earlier had good communication with, at earlier junctures. Among them the



While browsing the archive material from California-State-University Northridge I also came across the curious case of Olaf Torgersen, Captain of the S/S Norse Carrier, owned by the Norwegian firm Wallem/Co but sailing under a Panamanian flag. Norse Carrier was at the estuary of the Yangzi River at the time of the outbreak of war, the source material suggests that Torgersen was brought to Shanghai in December and interned in Kiangwan POW camp. He spent a month interned in Shanghai and was later transferred to Sasebo, Japan for interrogation. He later returned to China.

*“On June 20, 1942, I was returned to Shanghai and set at liberty...”*

These anecdotes suggest that many Norwegians were treated as enemy nationals in the Shanghai already in the immediate time after Pearl Harbor, without there ever being a guiding principle on the topic of Norway’s status.<sup>193</sup>

With the situation worsening diplomatically between Occidental powers and Japan, especially after the widening of war following Pearl Harbor and events like the ones described above playing out in the Shanghai area and greater China. The Norwegian MFA ordered the diplomatic missions in East Asia to prepare to leave alongside the American and English diplomats. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of March 1942, *Charge’d affaires* in Japan Arnoldus Kolstad formally broke diplomatic relations between Japan and Norway.<sup>194</sup>

Before leaving China and the closure of the Consulate, the GK began compiling a list, to see who among the Norwegians wished to leave China; this was in time handed over to the Swedish Legation in Shanghai, so they could finish the task. When finished, the list was sent to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, for further dispersion throughout Europe. The report was relayed by proxy through Tokyo on August 27, 1942. According to this missive 240 Norwegians had applied for evacuation from Asia, among the applicants, 214 applied from China, Hong Kong, and Manchuria (Manchukuo) This meant that over 30 percent of the Norwegian population, totalling about 600 in China and Hong Kong, according to a 1943 census, applied for evacuation,<sup>195</sup> The letter also confirms that the Swedish Legation interestingly intended act as a *“protective power”*<sup>196</sup>. For Norwegians in China. This was decided in Europe through telegram-correspondence between the Norwegian *in-exile* Government and Stockholm. The transcribed report of this confidential telegram also confirms the

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Desk Editor at NIAS and the Higher Executive Officer at the Royal Ministry of Justice and the Police. These attempts of communication have according to him fallen silent.

<sup>193</sup>OTC\_Box1\_Folder80 / [http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8125v50/entire\\_text/](http://www.oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8125v50/entire_text/) 13.08.17.

<https://www.warsailors.com/freefleet/norfleetn.html> 13.08.17.

<sup>194</sup> Mageli (2006) 46,141.

<sup>195</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/9284/004, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0159/0014.

<sup>196</sup> Protective Power: “A state which undertakes to protect the interests of a second state, in the territory of a third. Berridge (2003) 216. See chapter 5.

Swedish acceptance, to act as protective-power was received in London on of April 4 of 1942. The report reads:

*“The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs have yet to hear from Shanghai but is fully willing to take over the protection of our interests and will give their representative instructions of this.”*<sup>197</sup>

Evacuation was difficult after Pearl Harbor and could only happen through prisoner exchange with Japan. This posed a great challenge for Norway, for Norway itself had no Japanese hostages to trade and therefore had to rely on the USA where a substantial American-Japanese population had been put into internment camps. Volunteers among these, most often from the first-generation Japanese; the “*Issei*.” Took the opportunity to emigrate back to Japan. Australia also had a huge pool of Japanese captives, but would not exchange them, because of fears for military intelligence data. This was poorly received by the Japanese, who believed Japanese were being tortured in Allied camps.<sup>198</sup> There was a huge difference in the total number of people in Asia and USA wishing to “repatriate”. Because of this only five cruise ships undertook repatriation voyages took place that could repatriate Europeans.<sup>199</sup> The tumble to get a seat on one of these ships often also side-tracked less well-off westerners from the “*outports*” that is outside of Shanghai, in favour of wealthy Shanghaiers.<sup>200</sup>

Because of these circumstances, the Norwegian evacuation quota was decidedly small and fluctuated. An undated report of a communication between the Norwegian *government-in-exile* - the London government to the Norwegian Legation in Stockholm, which was of similar importance to the early London Government, further illustrates the issues faced by the MFA and how little prepared or informed Norwegian decision-makers were to deal with the break in diplomatic relations. This makes sense as the provisory government and the diplomatic mission were pressed for time and resources. The report of the correspondence sent, from London to Stockholm reads.<sup>201</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> My translation the original reads: «*Det Svenske Utenriksdepartement har hittil ikke hørt fra Shanghai, men er fullt villig til å overta beskyttelsen av våre interesser, og vil gi sin representant instruksjoner om dette*».

<sup>198</sup> <http://gaic.info/treatment-of-latin-americans-of-japanese-descent-european-americans-and-jewish-refugees-during-world-war-ii/> 26.06.17

<sup>199</sup> Leck (2006) 283-306.

<sup>200</sup> There was supposed to be a priority system for evacuations with sick and necessitous persons being first priority. This was largely ignored when actual evacuation happened because of corruption, consequently many were angry when seemingly healthy rich men and women came back to their countries on these cruise ships. Ibid 96,304,305.

<sup>201</sup> The Government in exile in London adopted three main targets for its new operations in England: 1. to inform Norwegians in expatriation about Norwegian affairs. 2. To consolidate the recognition of Norway as a sovereign nation with its own ministry of foreign affairs (MFA). 3. To build up its own departments. The *government-in-exile* failed in the first two instances and ended up resembling a spy agency more than a government, similarly, the MFA had poor contact with Norwegians in exile and also with Norwegians back in Norway; this work was further hindered in 1940 by destructive discussion and critique of Foreign Minister Halvdan Koht’s defence-policy. As we have seen, Norway had followed a neutralist policy therefore it had failed to put up any meaningful

“Try to inform Hassel (Bangkok ?) that The Foreign Department is in agreement with Knudsen (sic) about him leaving to Lorencø (sic) with all Norwegian refugees. Ask Sweden to protect our interests in ~~Siam~~ Thailand. The earlier request about the personnel in Tokio (sic) has not been received. And it is not possible to make a plan before everyone has made it out. Regarding the second leg of the voyage, we will make the arrangements.”

The report shows that the evacuation was an *ad-hoc* initiative planned by the poorly established and out of touch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) who were not realizing the finality of the situation in Asia.<sup>202</sup> The report also indicates that information gathering about the events in Asia happened out of these locations in co-operation, with Stockholm having better communication with diplomatic missions in China, in the time-period shortly after the governments' rout to England.<sup>203</sup> The Norwegian Legation in Stockholm, was headed by Jens Bull until 1944, Bull was given the senior position of Secretary General (*Utenriksråd*) in 1939, and was therefore one of the most prominent men in the MFA. However, the legation in Stockholm much like the London Government, was torn up by drama and the difficult political situation.

Most importantly Bull was in Stockholm *persona-non-grata*, an unwanted individual, Sweden's (MFA) prioritized to harmonize, to distance itself from Axis and Allied bloc policy to be perceived neutral at any costs. Bull who travelled to Sweden at the start of the war was therefore not officially received as a high-ranked diplomat, this must have restricted his room for action.

Bull continuously clashed with Swedish authorities, as he attempted to persuade them to help Norway's interests, that is, what was perceived as the *Government-In-exile* in London's interests. This Norwegian Government, situated in London, was clearly banded with the Allies. The Swedish government additionally, at least in rhetoric, therefore regarded the *Government-in-exile* in London a “*Quantite negligee*,” a fictional state. Official recognition as the legitimate Norwegian government was instead given the National Unity Party in occupied Norway.

Historian Olav Riste proposes a multifaceted view of this particular situation, as Sweden differentiated between Norway as a nation and its governments. Sweden helped Norwegian interests but would not recognize the *government-in-exile*. While the Swedish MFA would not communicate with Bull in Stockholm, indirect communication with the *Norwegian Government-in-exile* was pursued, Sweden

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resistance to the German invasion, this was a highly contentious issue. Neumann, Leira (2005) 222, 223 Leira (2006) 150. Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/9284/004, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0159/0014.

<sup>202</sup> “Everyone” might refer only to diplomats.

<sup>203</sup> Minister Bull. signed a lot of the correspondence between Chongqing and the MFA.

was also, as we shall see, important to Norwegians in China during World War Two, it was a balancing act.<sup>204</sup>

In another letter sent from Norway's *Government-in-exile* in London to Stockholm July 30, 1942, emphasizing the communication connection, and the importance of the Stockholm Legation. Edvard Paul Torjesen, whose father had died in the 1939-bombing run in Hequ, pleaded the diplomatic mission to relay his request to evacuate his sister Kari Marie. Edvard had left China in August the year before, to start his missionary education, but his family now numbering four, after Peter's death, was still stuck in Yantai.<sup>205</sup>

Two months earlier, Lutheran missionary Olaf Lie from the frontier city Qiqihar, a new big missionary venture in the then puppet-state *Manchukuo*, also sent the Norwegian General Consulate (GK) in Shanghai a letter asking for evacuation for the entire staff at the station. Earlier correspondence asked only for evacuation of some members. Therefore, the situation was likely looking bleak for them Lie points out that connections were being severed, and roads blocks were in the process of being put up. In his letter he wrote, "*We now hear very little from the outside world...personally I would like to go directly to the fatherland (Norway) as my family is there. I was ready to leave as the last road was suddenly closed, so there is perhaps little hope to get there. Even if I could take part in an eventual evacuation*" While the station was still doing well, at the time of writing, he was clearly worried about the future.<sup>206</sup>

Neither Kari Marie Torjesen, nor the staff at the missionary station in Qiqihar were evacuated out of China with the cruise ships. Pentecostal minister Bernt Martin Kvamme elaborates on the later status of Norwegians in North-China-Manchukuo in a later letter to Swedish Consul General Malte Pripp, written June 5, 1943. "...*As conditions are so very unsettled, and many if not all, of our Norwegian friends in the interior are now subject to forced evacuation, it seems impossible for anyone to form a*

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<sup>204</sup> Bull's formal letters to the Swedish MFA were not answered in writing and Norwegian Resistance fighters were turned back at the border. On the flipside, the Swedish government rejected German (Reichkommisariat Norwegen) requests for access to the Norwegian archives in Stockholm, important for the mission's service. In addition to the formal restrictions to serve as a diplomat to the Swedish State, the mission in Stockholm had little money, and had issues with paying rent. Neuman, Leira (2005) 230,232,234,243,249, Riste (2001) 179,180.

<sup>205</sup> Torjesen (2007) 133

<sup>206</sup> Lie remarks that the while the missionaries at the station earlier in January, had deemed it necessary for some of them to stay to take care of the business, the consensus was now moving towards evacuation for everyone. One of the primary worries was the economic situation. The letter reads "*We came to the result that most us should attempt to leave, as we could easily run out of money.*" My translation, the original reads: "*vi kom til det resultat at de fleste av oss burde prøve å komme seg vekk, da vi jo her lett kan komme i vanskeligheterbl.a (sic) økonomiske.*" Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0287

*satisfactory Norwegian Committee that will truly represent the Norwegian nationals here in the north...*” The missionaries in the Northern interior were lost and without leadership.<sup>207</sup>

The letter that held Edvard’s plea further informed Consul Knudtzon about negotiated changes in the Norwegian repatriation quota, it expanded the quota by 11 more persons from Thailand and 25 from Japan.<sup>208</sup> The final evacuation quota for Norwegians in Asia was therefore 64 people.<sup>209</sup> The Norwegians were to embark on the two first Japanese evacuation ships to leave for Europe, the *Tatuta Maru* and the *Kamakura Maru*, among the 64 evacuees, 24 were Consular staff, including General Consul Knudtzon and his staff. As this was the first and final evacuation effort directed by the Norwegian state during the war in occupied-China. This left most Norwegians stranded in occupied territory while the Consular staff left Shanghai.

### 3.6 Leaving Shanghai

The *Kamakura Maru* departed from Shanghai on the 17 August 1942 and headed for Maputo (*Lorenzo Marques*) in today’s Mozambique. The ship arrived at its destination on 5 September that same year, after several more port calls.<sup>210</sup> Upon arrival, the diplomatic staff was soon briefed about changes in their new postings. General Consul Terje Knudtzon like expected, was dispatched to India, posted as Consul in the safe Indian city of Mumbai (*Bombay*<sup>211</sup>) Vice Consul Otto Kildal new posting would be the post of Consul to the Faroes.<sup>212</sup> Vice Consul Fredrik Orvin was send to London to assist the government *in-exile*.<sup>213</sup> The new secretary to the GK in Shanghai, Alfred Rustad who had expected to leave for Mumbai with Consul Knudtzon, was ordered to instead travel to Chongqing in Sichuan province in China, the new capital of the GMD, he was assigned as secretary to Minister Alf Hassel, earlier envoy to Thailand.<sup>214</sup>

Hassel had arrived Maputo nine days earlier on the *Tatuta Maru* that he had boarded in Ho Chi Minh city (Saigon). In Maputo Minister Hassel was given a list of Norwegians in Shanghai by Minister

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<sup>207</sup> My translation, the original reads: «*personlig vilde jeg helst prove aa komme direkte til fedrelandet, da jeg har min familie der-og jeg stod reiseklar da den siste vei plutselig stengte. Men der er kanskje ikke stort haap om aa kunne komme frem, selv om en kunde bli med i en eventuell evakuasjon.*» Uglem (1979) 176-177

<sup>208</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/004

<sup>209</sup> Only two civilian Norwegians were evacuated from Shanghai.

<sup>210</sup> Leck (2006) 299.

<sup>211</sup> <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0292.html> 06.07.17.

<sup>212</sup> Otto Kildal was later transferred to Iceland as acting General Consul and then to Antwerp serving in the same office, before returning to China in 1945. <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1973/0301.html>. 06.07.2017.

<sup>213</sup> <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1973/0435.html>. 06.06.2017.

<sup>214</sup> <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0207.html> 06.07.17.

Knudtzon.<sup>215</sup> It is not clear why Knudtzon was not sent to Chongqing instead, as he was by far the best suited for the task as he had 4 years of experience in China. Minister Hassel had very little knowledge of Chinese affairs, this is most clear from the fact that Hassel later asked Knudtzon in March 1943, if Norway held any special privileges in China. This was during the final months of Norwegian extraterritoriality in China.

*“There are some things I would like to ask you about. Did Norway have any right in China apart from the Consular Court in Shanghai? Did we have any special rights in coastal and river trade? Or did we enjoy the same privileges as England for that type of trade? I have no dossiers that can give me more information, I would be grateful for any information about extraterritoriality you can give me.”*

Hassel was interestingly the signatory of the abolition treaty that ended Norwegian extraterritoriality in China.<sup>216</sup>

The situation in Chongqing was poor in 1942, and it was clearly an undesirable posting. Therefore, it is likely that the diplomats attempted to avoid it. Norwegian diplomats must however, heed orders coming from the MFA, and move to where they are thought needed, as prescribed in the concept of moving duty *“flytteplikt”*.<sup>217</sup> In October, Orvin had reached London, where he gave a briefing on the situation in Østen’ (the East) to the MFA. The brief resulted in a letter sent to the Legation in Stockholm. Orvin’s update states that the diplomatic staff were all on their way to their new posts, Hassel formally as the Minister to China.<sup>218</sup> Secretary Rustad, at length describes the trip to Chongqing in a letter to the Swedish General Consul Lund sent but not received in April 14, 1943.

I will get back to the implications of this letter later. In the letter, Rustad wrote:

*“In Bombay I met a Swede named Tham, he traveled as delegate on the evacuation ships. Very nice fellow, I met lot of other Norwegians and Swedes there, and had a very good time. Calcutta is also a very interesting town, and I stayed there for nearly three weeks as it took some time to make arrangements, for our trip through the thin air, and up here. We went up to 18-thousand feet and I felt no discomfort. But I am told that many people need oxygen. The view of the mighty Himalayas was an*

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<sup>215</sup> Ottosen (1996) 110. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010.

<sup>216</sup> My translation, the original reads: «Det var et par ting jeg gjerne ville spørre om: hadde vi noen rettigheter i China annet enn den konsulaere domstol i Shanghai, hadde vi noen særrettigheter i kystfart og fart oppover elvene? Eller nød vi godt av samme rettigheter som England gjorde for saadan fart?... Jeg har jo ingen dossiers som kan gi meg nærmere opplysninger, så jeg vil vaere takknemmelig for alle opplysninger de vil gi mig angående ekstraterritorialitet» Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Tepstad (2015) 132,133. Most treaty powers had agreed to abolish extraterritorial rights before 1945. Leck (2008) 409.

<sup>217</sup> Iver Neumann argues that diplomats are infatuated by rank, therefore, the less desired postings are often given to diplomats of lower rank or place in the diplomatic-pecking-order. Neumann (2012) 13, 14.

<sup>218</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/004. One of the most central tenet of the MFA is *“flytteplikt”*; it dictates that Norwegians diplomats do not decide where they wish to be posted. Neumann (2012) 52.

*impressive sight I will never forget as long as I live (sic). It took eleven hours to get up here. The most expensive air-trip in the world, to the most expensive town to live in, in the world. There are a few Swedes here, all in good positions. Nearly as many nationalities here as in Shanghai.”*<sup>219</sup>

Secretary Rustad and Minister Hassel must have traveled to over “*The Hump*” At the time, the only re-supply route to the embattled GMD capital from outside of GMD territory, and the greatest airlift project ever attempted at the time. In 1942 ten thousand tons of supplies was shipped monthly over the Himalayas to prop up GMD-China against the Japanese Imperial Army. The supplies sent included weapons, foodstuffs and medicine, but the most common and needed item was fuel.<sup>220</sup>

The necessity of an airlift to supply Chongqing hints at the military and resource situation of the GMD. The retreat from Shanghai had left the government with little in terms of resources, and the infrastructure and supply lines in Inland-China consisted mostly of dilapidated roads, especially after the Japanese took over Vietnam (Indochina) in 1942. The land routes to Sichuan through Yunnan Province had become unavailable, barring all main roads to Chongqing from outside China; Russia similarly had a working trade embargo with GMD-China.<sup>221</sup> The USA decided to resupply its now important ally, after Pearl Harbor but had few options regarding logistics other than “*The Hump*.” Keeping the GMD in the fight was considered one of the primary objectives in the East-Asian theatre of war. As up to 1 million Japanese soldiers were bogged down fighting the GMD, otherwise deployable elsewhere.<sup>222</sup> GMD-China was by 1942 considered among the leading member of the Allied powers, viewed as among the “*Big Four*.” At least in its own view, and that of the USA.<sup>223</sup> China was surely one of the major theatres-of-war in the Second World War. Chongqing as a city surely does not conjure up the same recognition of heroism in the public mind as say, the bombing of London or the siege of Stalingrad by Nazi Germany or even famed battles like the naval battle at Leyte or Kursk. Not even within China. This is however, like the literature proposes, most likely because of the communist takeover in 1949 and China’s own historical memory.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0001 in a letter to a man called Tiencken secretary Rustad describes his trip to Chongqing hurriedly. “*The evacuation ships took us to Africa, and from there we went in a roundabout way to Calcutta.*”

<sup>220</sup> Plating (2011) 161,164,166 the annual net tonnage peaked in 1945 with 750000 thousand tons sent over the hump.

<sup>221</sup> See 2.5.3.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid 3. Mitter (2013) 387.

<sup>223</sup> Mitter (2013) 300, 301.

<sup>224</sup> There have been some advances to recognize of the city and GMD wartime importance in China, but mostly as private initiatives for museums, and feature movies like “*The great battle of Taier Zhuang*” and the upcoming movie “*The bombing*” featuring American movie star Bruce Willis. <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt4743226/> At the same time Taiwan has distanced itself from Chiang-Kai-Shek and the GMD by removing or displacing statues and landmarks, reflecting the ever-changing historical narratives of China and Taiwan.

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2017/02/27/2003665776>,

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/22/world/asia/taiwan-statues-chiang-kai-shek-park.html?mcubz=1> 07.27.17.

While the above hints at diplomatic incentives because of the GMDs importance, I have found no express explanation of why, it was decided by the MFA, that Chongqing should get a diplomatic mission. With the marked exception of a letter forwarded Stockholm on 22 August 1937, where the then General Consul Knudtzon argues for Chongqing's importance.

*“Knudtzon called for authorization from the Norwegian Government to continue from Lorenzo Marques to Chongqing, this he believes to be of great importance to Norwegian interests.”*<sup>225</sup>

The Norwegian MFA also considered the GMD the legitimate sovereign of the Chinese state and there is Allied common policy to account for. This is also reflected in the fact that both Minister Knudtzon and Minister Hassel received their exequatur in Chongqing. Just as England and The United States had. Additionally, several countries from the *Corps Diplomatique* of countries Norway aligned and compared itself with, already had a presence in Chongqing.<sup>226</sup>

In World War Two a diplomat in Chongqing would have been able to shape policy and collect information about changes in war policies locally. Therefore, it is likely that the most important draw factor for having a mission in Chongqing was its geopolitical situation, rather than the bureaucratic functions also associated with diplomatic missions and particularly the Consulates, that as we have seen traditionally worked to promote business.<sup>227</sup> After all Norway had little economic interests in Chongqing, except for Norway's post-war status in the Chinese marketplace as a whole, expected to again come under GMD rule. The role of the diplomatic mission will be more closely examined in the next chapter.

### 3.7 Chapter Conclusion

When the Second-Sino Japanese War broke out near Shanghai in 1937 the Norwegian General Consulate in Shanghai provided excellent protection for its nationals by arranging an evacuation effort of Norwegians to Neutral Hong Kong. As that conflict died down and Shanghai again became relatively safe despite Sino-Japanese proxy fighting and Japanese encroachments on the Concessions, Norwegians could return to Shanghai. The autonomous diplomatic mission then decided to prioritize its economic interests in the region and advised Norwegians to go about their business as normal.

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<sup>225</sup>Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/004. *“Knudson hamställer om bemyndigande från Norska Regeringen at fortsattä från Lorenzo Marques (Maputo) til Chungking (Chongqing)vilket han anser vara av synnerlig betydning av Norges interessen i Kina.»*

<sup>226</sup>The USA had Ambassador Johnson as an envoy in Chongqing since he fled Nanjing. England was represented with Ambassador Archibald Kerr since 1937. Mayers (2013) 101. Knudtzon received his Exequatur in Chongqing during his 1940 trip. Men and Events The China Weekly Review (1923-1950); Oct 26, 1940; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chinese Newspapers Collection pg. 276. Exequatur is most broadly defines as the right to diplomatic prerogatives inside a sovereign nation.

<sup>227</sup> Neumann argues that diplomatic operational procedures operate out of routine and traditions, rather than as an organization working out of strict guidelines, policy and decision-making if often consensus based, rather than prescriptive. Neumann (2013) 2,7,8,107,118.



When the political situation worsened some other nations present in China advised their nationals to evacuate China, as staying would mean that they could end up behind enemy lines, if war broke out. Norway probably did not issue a similar warning. Consequently, many Norwegian ended up in Japanese occupied territory where some were subjected to Japanese acquisitions and internment despite Norway's undecided yet neutral status. While Norway did not declare war on Japan after these events it broke formal relations with Japan and closed its diplomatic missions across Asia. The staff from the diplomatic missions was later evacuated to Mozambique alongside some very few civilians. It was then decided that some among the diplomats should return to Asia to open a new diplomatic mission in Mumbai India and the new capital of Free-GMD China, Chongqing. This evacuation initiative meant that the Norwegian communities lost their most important connection to the Norwegian Government and the most suited resource in negotiations with the new Japanese authorities. Sweden told the Norwegian government that it intended to act as protective power for the Norwegian civilians who were now stuck in China.<sup>228</sup>

## **4.0 The Norwegian Diplomatic Mission in the Chinese Wartime Capital.**

This chapter will examine the diplomatic mission that was opened in Chongqing in 1942. This mission was the only Norwegian diplomatic mission in China after 1942 and it has been little researched. It is therefore interesting to see if it had any representative functions despite its remote location, or if it was opened solely a political move to better Norway's post-war position in China. Several hundred Norwegians were scattered all over both free-GMD China and the areas occupied by Japan, did Chongqing help any of these people?

### **4.1 Establishing a Different Diplomatic Mission**

Consul Knudtzon was first sent to visit Chongqing in midsummer 1940, to receive his exequatur.<sup>229</sup> However, the proposition to move the Consulate to Chongqing was at that time advised against by the Norwegian MFA. Knudtzon's trip to Chongqing took him through the thick of the fight and he had to change his means of transport several times. He travelled on trains and trucks from Shanghai through Xian to Chongqing. Knudtzon arrived in Chongqing on June 4, 1940. Like secretary Rustad would in his later letters, he long pondered the price situation in Chongqing. *"I thought I was very expensive in*

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<sup>228</sup> Swedens role as protective power will be examined in chapter 6.

<sup>229</sup> Men and Events, The China Weekly Review (1923-1950); Oct 26, 1940; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Chinese Newspapers Collection pg. 276.

*Shanzhou (Shanchow); but compared to prizes here it was cheap. Zigong (Tzeliuqing) is 100 to 200% more expensive than Shanzhou....before a Cow cost 30 to 40 \$...now a cow costs 600 \$.*<sup>230</sup> Prices had not changed since 1940 and had in fact inflated further. By 1942 the economic situation in Chongqing was critical, despite the increased airlift over “The Hump,” prices had kept rising, and while some of the “Fabi” GMD currency was dollar backed, most of the otherwise fiat money lost most of its real value as legal tender as far too much money was printed to pay GMD costs leading to hyperinflation. The rampant inflation was also a result of the general situation of Chongqing. Since the outbreak of war in 1937, the provincial city, not even its province capital, had taken in up to 1 million refugees, the official population of the province similarly swelled, also important is the fact that illicit trade with the coastal provinces had ceased.<sup>231</sup>

Sichuan province is one of the agricultural “breadbaskets” of China and the land could therefore provide rice to most of the population, still many Chinese starved to death, or were easy targets to Japanese bombs, as even makeshift shelter was rare and sometimes death traps, as they could not sustain life during long bombing raids. Access to proteins from meat or bones was extremely scarce apparent also from the meat price in Knudtzon’s letter, and therefore a luxury, mainly preserved for American soldier’s consumption. In this situation, the Norwegians diplomats arrived Chongqing in late November 1942 with little preparation and carrying only some of their possessions, most of their stuff was left at the diplomatic mission in Kolkata, India.<sup>232</sup>

In an undated letter to Reidar Johannesen<sup>233</sup> written by Minister Hassel, the Minister gives a description of the missions’ conditions, shortly after arriving in Chongqing.

*“We have given up the prospect to find a “house” as the residence the Foreign Ministry here offered us, the Dutch Ambassador and the Canadian Minister had a rental fee of between 25000-30000 dollars a month and a 3 year down-payment lease. Now we live in an apartment with a small sitting-room, bedchamber and a bathroom, with no in-laid water in Chialing (sic) (Jialing). So, we are doing well. We are very happy that we brought the little radio that we bought in Calcutta...the housing market is the worst part about the current situation, for there are no rooms for travelers coming to*

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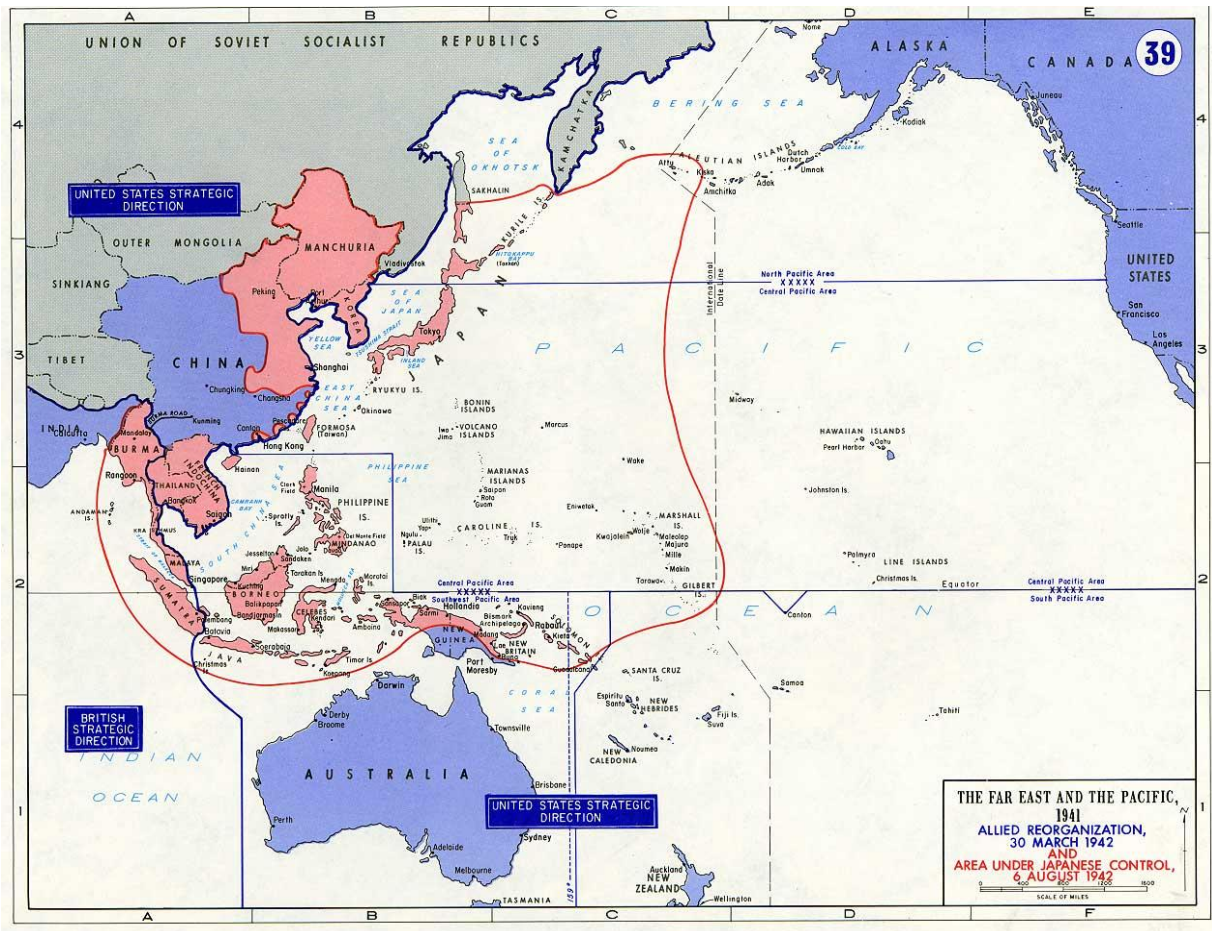
<sup>230</sup> Knudtzon stayed in Zigong outside of Chongqing city proper. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0044/0002.

<sup>231</sup> Sichuan province had long been the “breadbasket” of China, bountiful seasons during the war-increased yields. Mitter (2013) 180,173

<sup>232</sup> Gao Rongbing witnessed one of the greatest disasters to play out in Chongqing in an unnamed air-raid-shelter where thousands dies of asphyxiation Mitter (2013) 176,177. The event is well illustrated in the video: Chongqing Blitz, available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Dd8S1d8q9c>. 07.13.17 The anecdote is part of the <http://www.chinasforgottenwar.org> 07.13.17 project, endorsed by Rana Mitter; In the pilot episode. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ok00oXL4aEc> 07.13.17

<sup>233</sup> The letter is addressed to “Mr.Johannesen” It is very likely this is Reidar Johannesen who left Hong Kong in 1941 to India through Chongqing with his family. Johannesen became a representative for Norway’s free trade fleet: Nortraship in India and Sri Lanka out of his office in Mumbai. Ottosen (2008) 106. See the next chapter for more information on Johannesen and his role in Hong Kong relief-work.

Chongqing, and there is a queue to get a room here in Chialing House (Jialing) and in Victoria House.”<sup>234</sup>



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Secretary Rustad’s descriptions of the living conditions in this guesthouse, situated outside of the city center are more somber in their tone. In a letter sent to the Consulate in Kolkata in May 1943, he wrote:

“Along with the heat, the bedbugs came, and there is no insect repellent to get a hold of. But I presume that there is a powder in the great city of Calcutta (Kolkata) that can kill these little devils, or at least

<sup>234</sup> My translation, the original reads: «Å få noe hus har vi foreløpig måttet oppgi, da de huse som (det kinesiske) utenriksministeriet her har tilbudt oss, den nye Hollandske Ambassadør og den Canadiske Minister betinger en husleie på mellom 25000 og 30000 Dollar, og med forskuddsbetaling for 3 år. Vi har nu en liten salong, soveværelse og et bad. Dog uten rindende vann i Chialing House og har det derfor meget bra. Vi har megen glæde av vor lille radio, som vi kjøpte i Calcutta... boligspørsmålet er noe av det verste her, det finnes ikke rum å oppdrive for tilreisende, og der er kø for å rom her i Chialing House og i Victoria House» Ra/S-2610/D/DA/L0013/0010, Ra/S-2610/D/DA/L0075/002, Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010

<sup>235</sup> <https://www.westpoint.edu/history/SiteAssets/SitePages/World%20War%20II%20Pacific/ww2%20asia%20map%2039.jpg> 10.05.2018.

*repel them. I have been free of this devilry up until recently, but now they are eating me alive. I would be very grateful if you can send me some when there is space in the package*".<sup>236</sup>

Rustad would have many more bouts with insects that summer, still, the first winter had probably been even worse for the consular staff, and the winter climate in 1942-1943, in Chongqing, is describes by Rustad as "very bad" and in an undated missive, he describes the indoor conditions in Jialing House. "We have had a few days of only 64 degrees in our rooms here, which is practically the same as sleeping out-doors, as when on my back in bed, I can see the heaven through the mattings, which is the roof of my room, and the tiles above that. Lots of air, but not fresh."

Later in a missive dated September, he writes that Minister Hassel found it hard to work out of Rustad's room, as it was too hot in Hassel's own room during the summer. In Hassel's missive to Minister Lund on 14 April 1943, mentioned above, describes the weather in these terms

*"You feel like putting on a fur-coat (if you have one) in the morning, and around tiffin time (lunch), you wish you had your shorts on. Difficult climate to get used to, and I hope I don't have to stay for long enough to get used to it."*

In the correspondence Rustad often names Chongqing by the very illustrating epithet "rat-hole-town." And that is what they are describing, the diplomatic mission was ramshackle, and the weather and seasons pained them greatly. So, I believe it is easy to assert that neither of them was enthusiastic about their postings.<sup>237</sup> Rustad's correspondence with Kolkata in early 1943 also asks for the Consulate to send him medicine to combat dysentery and a number of other medicines, indicating that that the mission staff had recurring issues with bacillary infections, Minister Hassel's letter to Reidar Johannesen mentioned above, also makes note of the fact that he and secretary Rustad had a long been down with streptococci and scarlet-fever. Rustad wrote that these infections had lasted "Several months" but reported that his health was back to normal by April 1943. Hassel's wife similarly came down with a throat inflammation shortly after arriving Chongqing in late November 1942.<sup>238</sup>

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<sup>236</sup>My translation, the original reads: «Med varmen er det også kommet veggus aa her finnes der ikke noe insektpulver å få kjøpt. Men har dere vel i den store byen Calcutta, noe pulver som disse jekler kan drepes med, eller i det minste skremmes vekk. Jeg har vært fri faenskapen helt til det siste, men nå eter dem mig opp. Vil vaere meget taknemmelig om de kan sende mig noe, når der er plass i pakken.» Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0001.

<sup>237</sup> A posting in Chongqing seems to have been shunned by diplomats from other nations also. US Ambassador Johnson was finally, after petitioning for a year, relieved of duty by his successor Clarence Gauss, whose, according to Mayers most significant quality for the job, was his willingness, as no other diplomats wanted the post. Johnson expressed grief for Gauss's posting. "I feel sorry for Gauss... I have always had a very real respect for his mind" expressing pity. The American Embassy-staff, like the Norwegians had a hard time in Chongqing, their living-conditions is just described as "flimsy bungalows or makeshift offices." Mayers (2013) 101. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0001.

<sup>238</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0001, Utenriksstasjonene, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0002, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Calcutta, India - RA/S-2602/D/Da/L0087/0003

The infections suffered by the staff make sense, since Chialing House had no in-laid water as described in the above-mentioned letter. Clean water was in general major concern in Chongqing, and the process of getting hold of getting drinkable-water was cumbersome and the water was rarely clean. Rustad writes that he though the water to be acidic, suspecting the GMD to have laced it with lye, as the water tore at his clothes during washing.<sup>239</sup> Processes to sterilize water like alcoholising water with cereal grains, common to expatriates in China, was largely banned in Chongqing, as the cereal grains were viewed as more valuable as foodstuffs, the traditional *Baijiu* drink was outright banned since alcohol was also in demand as a petrol substitute.<sup>240</sup> The exception to the rule was the exclusive Club Chongqing where a watered out beer was served. The club was a poor substitute for the haughty club-life the diplomats were used to, especially those who had been posted in Shanghai before the war, and it can only have provided marginal solace for the diplomats, yet it also provided an arena for diplomats to mingle and ply their trade of information gathering.

The lack of hard liquor and tobacco was because of the circumstances war rare and therefore it must have become a valuable commodity among the diplomats, and likely a strong marker for social status within the *Corps diplomatique* in Chongqing. Alternatively, an item of intrinsic value, in an otherwise unstable economy. Good food and luxury items were traditionally traditional markers of hierarchy in the diplomatic world, this divide of haves and have nots must have become an especially strong marker in Chongqing, because of the difficulty of procuring these items.<sup>241</sup> Most of the correspondence to Kolkata concerns alcohol and tobacco, at least in the side-notes, while some of the shipment was for surely personal use, access to luxury goods must have helped the diplomats gain standing and aid. In some instances, the mission also asked the Consulate in Kolkata to provide services for other nation's diplomats, such as providing the Consul of the free Consulate of Czechoslovakia a hand-watch.

Access to supplies from outside China did not provide the diplomats a comfortable lifestyle and they had little in terms of standard consular equipment. In the correspondence with Kolkata, Rustad wrote many requests for different shipments, often handwritten as they had run out of stationery, at other times the typewriter had itself broken-down, as machine parts like the ribbon and the carriage frame-roll had worn out. Most equipment, not only specialized equipment had to be flown in. In an undated single correspondence to Kolkata, Rustad requested items ranging from everyday items like butter, shoe soles, detergents and salt for cooking and fountain pens, to medicinal products like boracic acid for eye cleaning and ointments for treating a fungal ailment known as athlete's foot (*Hong Kong foot*). These items were likely not obtainable in Chongqing, items obtainable there, were also overpriced, because of the rampant inflation.

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<sup>239</sup> Mitter (2013) 180.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid 181.

<sup>241</sup> Neumann (2012) 9

When Rustad departed from Shanghai, all the possessions he brought were listed in an inventory list. He brought two crates, two camphor-chests and eleven suitcases and clothes-bags. Most of these containers held ironic items of clothing like riding equipment and sport-clothes, and personal items like pictures and film-rolls. Only one suitcase is listed as medicines and toiletries, useful stuff. The list holds little in terms of obvious Consular equipment like pens, papers, typewriters, and paper folders. There is no similar inventory list for Minister Hassel, but he embarked on the evacuation ship in Vietnam far away from his Thailand posting, which had been closed on August 4, 1941. Because of logistical issues bringing equipment over-land he likely had little in terms of consular equipment.

Minister Knudtzon's inventory list from the evacuation ship shows that much of the furniture from GK Shanghai was shipped out, and it includes items ranging from things like sauce cups and cupboards to an electrical vacuum cleaner. It is possible that some of the items in Knudtzon's inventory list made it to Chongqing, most of it, must however have been brought to Mumbai to refurbish Knudtzon and his wife's new posting there. What is clear is that the most important items in a working diplomatic mission like stationery and consequently the mission itself was seriously lacking. Perhaps the most symbolical and notable feature of a Diplomatic mission, the national flag of Norway, was also a missing feature at the Mission in Chongqing, until June 1943, when the mission in Kolkata sent one of its own flags to Chongqing.<sup>242</sup>

Despite the mission in Chongqing being a rundown-operation, plagued by maladies and poor living conditions with little equipment to work with, the mission was upgraded to Embassy in 1943, and therefore became one of the very first Norwegian Embassies emphasizing the State-to-State function and political function and importance of the mission. Probably giving the mission privileges in the class-conscious diplomatic pecking order. In Chongqing, these privileges most clearly materialized into a bigger airlift quota over "The Hump".<sup>243</sup>

## 4.2 Reaching Out.

The Mission in Chongqing quickly attempted to contact Norwegians in the different areas of China shortly after moving into Jialing House. Attempts to collect information outside of GMD territory were generally fruitless in the first year, probably because of the political realities, and information

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<sup>242</sup> RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0075/0002. Interview with the Berents family on June 12, 2017 conducted by the author. The Consulate's flag in Shanghai was according to Kristoffer John Bøe Berents lowered by his first cousin's father as the Consulate was in a hurry to close. Today his son Peter Berents, who lives in Australia still has the diplomatic mission's flag. Kristoffer John Bøe Berents's son Fridtjof Berents recently helped Peter Berents get in contact with the Norwegian MFA, who will likely get the flag back soon, The Norwegian MFA seemed very interesting in that prospect according to John Bøe Berents.

<sup>243</sup> Minister Morgenstjerne in Washington became the first Norwegian Ambassador in May 1942, after USA and Britain proposed exchanging Ambassadors. Several exile governments were bestowed Ambassadorial privileges following the first decision to receive Belgian Ambassadors. Neumann, Leira (2005) 241.

about Norwegians in occupied China, as we will see throughout the thesis, often came from unexpected sources outside of official channels and often in a roundabout way.

In the local GMD provinces and tributary provinces, the diplomatic mission had correspondence with some very few Norwegians in Sichuan and Yunnan and Shaanxi Hubei and Hunan Provinces. These persons will be examined in this subchapter.

Among these was engineer Johannes.K Lindheim.<sup>244</sup> Lindheim worked on the Yunnan-Burma highway project to create an overland supply route to GMD-China. Despite the short geographical distance, Lindheim only established a working dialogue with the Mission in 1944 when he sent several requests for visa renewal, after sending two letters and later a complaint on October 17, 1944. Lindheim was reluctant to part with his old passport, perhaps mistrusting the postal services. The letters were addressed to the Norwegian-General Consulate in Chongqing, so Lindheim cannot have known of the Ambassadorial upgrade, further indicating poor communication. In later correspondence Lindheim recognizes the Mission as Embassy with all the decorum expected of correspondence with an Ambassador.

In January 26, 1945 Lindheim's visa issue had yet to be resolved, and he was forced to send both his new and old passport to Chongqing, another recurring theme in Lindheim's correspondence with the mission in Chongqing, relates to money and exchange rates, as he was paid in the *Fabi* currency. By that time in 1944-1945 near-worthless by market value. Lindheim hoped to be able to exchange his money for British pound sterling at the official rate, like the Chongqing mission was able to, as the diplomatic mission paid a pegged price far lower than the market price for pound sterling. The pound sterling itself was by then pegged to the US Dollar and therefore stable, each day increasingly in value against the inflated *Fabi*. Many Norwegians faced this issue.<sup>245</sup> It is not clear if he or any of the other entrepreneurs were able to exchange money at the official rate before leaving China in 1945.

Considering how well-connected Yunnan and Kunming was to Chongqing it is strange that their communication was so difficult.

Missionary Georg Rinvold writes that missionaries in his chapter, the China-Inland Mission (CIM) were instructed to follow a directive, to move to safe spaces as the war worsened. Specifically, the instruction was to heed the simple instruction from the chapter was "*Do not let yourself be captured, instead flee into the interior and take up new work.*" This led some missionaries to retreat into GMD territory, including Rinvold's own family, they fled to Chongqing in 1942, where most of the major missionary-organizations Norwegians were affiliated with, had established new headquarters. There are however few instances of cases relating to missionaries arriving to, or proselytizing in GMD China in the Calcutta Archive, most likely because of the nature of the correspondence they sent and

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<sup>244</sup> J.K Lindheim is not listed in Ottosen's list.

<sup>245</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010



received and the anaemic status of the mission itself. The Chongqing mission did however definitely have some direct correspondence with some Norwegian missionaries, evident in letters in the archive and the mission forwarded messages to Kolkata as late as 21 June 1943.<sup>246, 247</sup>

The memoir of missionary Asbjørn Aavik, who was among those who attempted to send letters home through the diplomatic mission in Chongqing, offers a more nuanced narrative about missionaries in GMD-China. His memoir describes the operations of a large group of missionaries from the Norwegian-Lutheran China-Mission Association (NLM) (Norsk Lutherske Kinamisjons-Forbund)<sup>248</sup> in Hunan and Hubei Province, who continued their work even after the attack at Pearl Harbor. The NLM missionaries were largely self-sufficient, growing their own food and living alongside their parish, their expenditures were according to Aavik largely covered by the one-time 1941 lump sum payment of money received from the government *in-exile*'s Royal Department of Church and Education in London, totalling 7000-pound sterling, known as "*The King's gift*" (Kongegaven). They were therefore able to work in relative safety and comfort as the Japanese military were bogged down in Shaanxi Province and elsewhere.<sup>249</sup>

These missionaries could continue their operations late into the winter of 1944, while long advised by the diplomatic mission in Chongqing to evacuate; new developments had changed this position and made the advice imperative. In 1944, the GMDs military situation was at large, according to Aavik, compromised by Japanese advances. This must have been the massive Japanese military three-pronged offensive, known as "*Ichi-go*," whose main goal was to shut down American super-fortress bomber-plane bases in GMD territory and to establish land routes into Japanese occupied Indo China.

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<sup>246</sup> My translation, the original reads: "*La dere ikke ta til fange, men flykt lenger innover i landet og ta opp nytt arbeid.*" Rinvold (1979) 114. Ottosen's prisoner list only has these two entries of families fleeing to GMD-China. (The Holth family and the Rinvold family) They might have been the only missionaries to flee de-facto Japanese territory in the North, they were however, as we will see, not the only ones to flee from or to GMD China. Ottosen (2008) 330,342. Both these families were proselytizing in Shaanxi province, a contested area after 1940. Georg Rinvold notes that where they before had been protected as neutrals, under the uncertain aegis of their Mission's Norwegian flag, the Japanese now cared less for politics, leading to awkward situations. He writes that he was attacked by a drunken Japanese soldier armed with a sword, who only reluctantly backed off after he cited neutrality. The critical juncture that made them flee was when Sverre Holth, who the Japanese accused of espionage was severely beaten by the Japanese. Ibid 96,112. The other missionary in that region of Shaanxi, Thora Holth did not make it out, and was according to Ottosen interned in Weihsian internment camp. (Ibid) 332. She is however strangely not listed as interned in Leck's prisoner list of Weihsian. The Torjesen family, still living in Yantai by the coast, where they had moved after Peter Torjesen's death, were scrutinized and subjected to Japanese whims immediately after Pearl Harbor, they were transferred first to Temple hill then to Weihsian internment camp in August 1943. Rinvold (2007) 134,135. Leck (2006) 680. Some made it to GMD-Free China, some did not make it out. Rinvold's memoir ends as he reached Chongqing, I can therefore not say who provided for him, or if he was immediately evacuated to India.

<sup>247</sup> The letter asks the Mission in Kolkata to forward four letters to Norway; the letters were received from Norwegian-Lutheran China-Mission Association missionaries Ingrid Tønnesen, Ole Ledang, Martin Andestad and A. Aavik who were posted in the contested provinces Hunan and Hubei. None of these people are listed in Ottosen's listing presumably because they always operated outside of Japanese occupied China.

<sup>248</sup> The precursor to today's NLM- Norsk Luthersk Misjonssamband.

<sup>249</sup> Aavik (1982) 106.



Recognizing the imminent danger, the diplomatic-mission toughened their line and wrote a frank letter to these missionaries. The letter reads.

*“You risk becoming completely isolated; you might get sent to a prison-camp or massacred mercilessly, In Japans eyes we are on the wrong side.”*<sup>250</sup>

According to Aavik this translated to Minister Hassel, having talks with American air force officers about evacuation options, no records have surfaced on how these negotiations played out. However, in the winter of 1944-1945, at the starts of the New Year. American transport planes were dispatched to Laohekou, the long-term centre of operations for the Norwegian-Lutheran China-Mission Association, and most of the missionaries and children totalling eighty-seven (87) persons boarded the planes and evacuated to Kunming. A resolute group of 11 missionaries decided to stay with their parish, hiding in the mountains of Hubei, until the war ended.<sup>251</sup> In other places in Free-GMD-China some unknown number missionaries were able to continue their work throughout the war without any major disruptions, like in Shanxi provinces’ Ankang city where the Johansen Missionary family continued their assignment dutifully and without any heavy military involvement after 1943.

The evacuees had difficulties in Kunming because the group included many children, but they received army rationing and provisory shelter in tents, paid for by the Lutheran Office. Paying for the costly food for these missionaries must however have been untenable as a long-term solution. Daniel Nelson, the Director of the Lutheran World Federation therefore reached out to American Ambassador in Chongqing, about the prospect of sending a total of three-hundred missionaries, including Norwegians to India. Possible since the return flights to India were typically empty over the “The Hump”. This was according to Aavik agreed upon, on the condition of the Lutheran Office covering their upkeep costs in India. After the missionaries evacuated in late spring 1945, they settled in Santalistan Christian mission in Jharkhand state in India, where they would wait for further evacuation back to Norway.<sup>252</sup>

Missionaries in China often referred to themselves as “orphaned” missionaries, insinuating isolation and the fact that connections back to their respective home countries was broken. This was, as we have seen not the full truth, for most people the establishment of a diplomatic mission in Chongqing gave some Norwegian subjects access to their own government within geographical proximity, and most missionaries were able to relay information to this diplomatic mission. However, it seems that the mission might have down-prioritized the role of protective power for Norwegians inside of GMD-China over the other diplomatic prerogatives described in chapter 1.5. This is not uncommon; Halvard

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<sup>250</sup> My translation, the original reads: “*Dere risikerer å bli helt isolert. Det kan bli fangeleir for dere eller grenseløs massakre også for Norske borgere. Sett fra Japan er vi jo på den gale siden ...*” Aavik (1982) 153,154.

<sup>251</sup> The Eleven missionaries were called « *The Eleven on the Hall* » in posterity. Uglem (1979) 162,175. Aavik (1982) 161,164.

<sup>252</sup> Aavik (1982) 152-165.

Leira argue that private-actors like the Norwegian internationally-spanning Norwegian Seamen's Church (Sjømannskirken) and other NGOs have played an unwarrantedly important role, alongside insurance companies, historically, in protecting Norwegians in expatriation. In the case of the group of missionaries in the Free-GMD provinces it seems like the Lutheran World Federation and each missionaries' respective religious chapter played the most important role. In addition to being provider of welfare for missionaries, the Lutheran Office in Chongqing printed "*The Chongqing Newsletter*". Aavik collected several editions of this minimalist circular letter and transcribed them into his memoir. These letters never reached Shaanxi's Ankang according to Johan Johansen. This newsletter was the only published source of news for many missionaries still working in GMD-controlled China.<sup>253</sup>

The diplomatic missions' contribution to wayward Norwegians and other westerners in GMD should however, not be sniffed at, given the circumstances they operated under. The diplomatic mission also had international duties, and therefore received requests for help by Icelandic, Danish and Swedish nationals who wished to evacuate from China, with the help of their offices. The mission had to relay information to these nationals' governments, since their own countries had no representation in GMD-China and would act as a protective power for these nationals. The diplomatic mission in Chongqing had also lost all contact with Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Thailand. It was therefore a vital concern for the diplomatic mission to reconnect with these communities that had been "orphaned" just like the missionaries around China. January 7. 1942. Minister Knudtzon, then in Shanghai, had reached out to a Minister Horiuchi in Japan for information about Norwegians in Hong Kong. Since every telegraph line or other means of communication but letters through Shanghai had been broken since the outbreak of war, the reply was the last he or any of the other ministers had learnt of the city before the evacuation to Maputo.<sup>254</sup>

### 4.3 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the diplomatic mission in Chongqing was an ill-equipped operation bothered by diseases and a whole range of other problems. The station had some outreach and could communicate with and give advice or otherwise help some Norwegian. Since Chongqing was an important wartime capital in Second World War. The military and diplomatic presence there gave the diplomatic mission access to Allied military information and resources that helped Norwegians. If the diplomatic mission is viewed with the lens of the diplomat's three basic functions it can therefore be argued that it was able, but not always willing or prioritizing to represent the Norwegian Polity in

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<sup>253</sup> Aavik (1982) 155. Leira (2015) 445. <https://tv.nrk.no/serie/med-jesus-i-kina/KOID76001015/segong-1/episode-1> 07.10.17

<sup>254</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0014/0002, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148, Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0080/0003

Free-GMD China. The diplomatic mission gave well-reasoned advice to some groups to evacuate China at critical junctures. That advice was based on US Military intelligence about Japanese military advances therefore it can be argued that it collected information for its polity. To evacuate the Norwegians out of China the station negotiated on their behalf. But it was likely not the most important representative, informant or negotiator for Norwegians in Free-GMD China. That role was probably played by religious organizations.

## **5.0 Hong Kong. The British Colony.**

This chapter examines Norwegian status and diplomatic actors in Hong Kong after the Honorary Consulate closed and its staff evacuated in 1942. This adheres to the research questions highlighted in chapter one because it questions who held representative functions to enable track II diplomacy (secondary diplomacy) in lieu of official diplomats. At the same time the chapter asks if any outside factors held any representative roles or otherwise helped the Norwegian Community in the Colony. We can therefore formulate two sub questions: 1) Who represented Norwegian interests in the Colony, and to what end? 2) Did the Norwegian diplomats in Chongqing or Norway's intended protective power Sweden play any important role for the Norwegians in Hong Kong?

### **5.1 The Hong Kong Reports.**

In late February 1943, British military patrols in GMD aligned Guangxi-Province received two Norwegians who had escaped Japanese-occupied Hong Kong. The escapee's names were Halfdan Kvamsø and Ragnar Brodersen, they had together chosen to flee from Hong Kong island on February 10 through the Chinese underground movement's complex system of escape routes, on board sampans and pirate ships. The Britons, in turn, brought them to the city of Guilin, headquarters of the paramilitary spy-ring known as British Army Aid Group (BAAG) on March 4, where they would then wait for further transit. Kvamsø and Brodersen were among some very few westerners to flee from Hong Kong to GMD-China. To the diplomatic mission in Chongqing this was a landmark event that they paid keen interest in, as Hong Kong had been a closed-off city since the outbreak of war. February 23, mere days after the they were received, the mission in Chongqing contacted the GMDs Foreign Affair Bureau about travel permissions for the Norwegians further into GMD-China, so they could continue to Chongqing, this

was the first out of a great number of letters stored in the Norwegian National Archives between the Norwegian diplomatic mission, British-Allied intelligence, and the escapees.<sup>255</sup>

Hong Kong had long been an important English crown-colony, but it was by 1942 occupied after a 3 week long, hopeless but grizzly resistance war. The Japanese conquerors quickly interned most American Englishmen and Dutch nationals (ABCD nationals) starting on January 4, 1942. Two weeks later all were transferred to the south-eastern tip of Hong Kong Island, in Stanley village by Stanley prison; later known as Stanley Civilian Internment Camp. All so-called third nationals only had to register at Hong Kong HSBC bank building by February and wait for further processing. In the meanwhile, these so called third nationals were told not to leave the city, transgressors risking being shot.<sup>256</sup> It seems, however, that Norwegians, at least initially, had a second option of evacuating to Shanghai, but this was viewed as a meaningless action because it was believed it would be useless to go to Shanghai, as the occupation situation was the same there.<sup>257</sup>

Hong Kong was one of the cities in China that it seems the diplomatic staff in Shanghai and later Chongqing had been most worried about, and information about the difficult situation in Hong Kong, must also have been relayed by Norwegian Honorary Consul Dick Wesman to Minister Hassel since they both left for Maputo on the *Tatuta Maru*. Wesman's evacuation leaving Hong Kong without any representative body.<sup>258</sup>

In line with normal diplomatic conduct, the Norwegian MFA then attempted to find a protective power, or to create an interest section in Hong Kong, to represent Norwegian interests in Hong Kong<sup>259</sup>. A Letter sent from London to Stockholm dated 28.04.1942, ahead of Honorary Consul Wesman's evacuation, shows that these efforts came to a quick impasse, as Norwegian efforts to find a guaranteeing power was continually rebuffed by the Japanese authorities. Argentina one of the few

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<sup>255</sup> Brodersen also gave a detailed description of his escape to Sir Lindsey Ride commander of the BAAG. This report was later transcribed into BAAG secretary Paul Tsui's memoir <http://www.galaxylink.com.hk/~john/paul/memoirsxiii.htm> -<http://www.galaxylink.com.hk/~john/paul/paul.html> 11.01.18. The first telegrams received in Chongqing told of three Norwegian escapees, the third escapee William Vallesuk, was found to be a Russian national. The different sources are inconclusive about when exactly they arrived in Guilin, one telegram signed Stockley, a British secretary, writes that they arrived on March 1. I base the dates on Kvamsø's letter to Chongqing dated March 5, where he argues that he had arrived one day before writing the letter. The earliest dated report is signed by Kvamsø 15 February in Huizhou, probably the first stop on the refuge trail. (despite Huizhou being in the polar opposite geographical direction). Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010.

<sup>256</sup> Leck (2006) 63-66.

<sup>257</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Larssen must have overestimated their freedom to choose where to go. 6 Norwegian attempted to flee to Shanghai alongside 28 Englishmen on the *SS Pakhoi* but were caught in Xiamen and sent to Shanghai for internment in Kiangwan POW camp. Leck (2006) 91.

<sup>258</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/004

<sup>259</sup> Interest Section: "A small group of \*diplomats of one state working under the flag of a second on the territory of a third." Berridge (2003) 138. Taking care of other countries interests was common in early 20<sup>th</sup> century diplomacy.

neutral powers still represented in Hong Kong, was lastly proposed as a protective power, but this was rejected by the Japanese Government. Having run out of options, the MFA then lay the efforts dead. The letter reads:

*“As it is unlikely that we can find other ways of solving the issue, the MFA finds no reason to take further steps”*

Underlining that the MFA hoped the Swedish MFA, which was generally powerless in Hong Kong, could help Norwegians there.<sup>260</sup> Minister Hassel seems unawares of all of this, despite traveling with Wesman, and his first letter to the escapees in Guilin regards those problems of representation.

*“I ask for notification of which neutral consular has been transferred Norwegian interests (Hong Kong), and if this body has received funds to relieve Norwegians there”*<sup>261</sup>

Kvamsø and Brodersen, pointed out that they were themselves surprised that Norway had a diplomatic mission in Chongqing, they then responded to Hassel’s requests and wrote several lengthy descriptions of the Norwegian community’s situation in Hong Kong, some of these reports would later be relayed-on to the Norwegian *In-exile* Government in London and other locations. The first handwritten letter by Brodersen was sent just one day after arriving in Guilin, described how the escapees had ended up in Hong Kong. It also described military intelligence of convoys and ship-repairs, letters sent later that month, were much more interesting.<sup>262</sup>

Kvamsø and Brodersen had been well placed to collect updated information as they had both been elected as board-member of the “Norwegian War Time Relief Committee” commonly referred to as the Norwegian-Committee (Den Norske Komite), an *Ad-hoc* representative body of nine members, created on the Japanese governments behest, in-lieu of official national representation to enable secondary diplomacy.<sup>263</sup> Brodersen hired at Thoresen & Company in its import department was also a

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<sup>260</sup> My translation, the original reads: “...Men da der er liten mulighet for andre måter å ordne det på finner UD at der ikke ø(sic) ikke er grunn til å ta ytterligere steg“ Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/004. Greek efforts to have Argentina become the protective power was similarly rejected.

<sup>261</sup> My translation, the original reads: “Jeg ber om meddelelse om hvilket nøytralt konsulat i Hong Kong har fått seg overdratt de norske interesser der og om dette har fått midler til understøttelse av norske i Hong Kong“ Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010, RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0075/0002

<sup>262</sup> Pictures of the original reports by Kvamsø & Brodersens are attached to this thesis, in the attachment section at the end of the thesis. Kvamsø & Brodersens were sent to Kunming on April 9, 1943, and were from there sent to India, despite Brodersen wishing to work as a photographer for allied forces in GMD-China, it was again a matter of costs effectiveness. Brodersen was instead hired as a secretary to the Norwegian Shipping and Trade mission in Bombay. Kvamsø remained idle in Bombay for the rest of the war until he was able to travel to Durban where he met his new-born daughter.

<sup>263</sup> The Norwegian Committee (The Norwegian-Wartime-Committee) initially had nine board members, including Kvamsø, Brodersen and Larssen. The other members were Joseph Krogh-More, Sigurd Heiberg, Johan Nielsen, Paul Urke and Birger Andresen. Andresen and Kvamsø served as secretaries. Most of the board-members worked at the docks as sailors and ship-chandlers, Priest Johan Nielsen fled from Shanghai in 1937 during the bombing of that city, and decided to stay in Hong Kong, leaving Shanghai without a seaman’s church, a new Seaman Church was instead opened in Nathan-road and later moved to Chatnam-Road. Nielsen (1946) 5,6

photographer, when working as a photographer he had been given ample opportunity to survey the island on jobs. Kvamsø, Ship-Captain by profession, had been forced to scuttle his ship, the “*Haraldsvang*” by the English military forces when it became apparent that they would lose the battle so the Japanese could not use the ship. After the scuttling, he spent months in his employer and later Chairman of the Norwegian-Committee Karsten Larssen’s offices, followed by brief internment.<sup>264</sup>

## 5.2 The Cost of Escaping.

When Hong Kong was occupied there were around eighty (80) Norwegians in Hong Kong A substantial number of people for the small nation-state.<sup>265</sup> During the siege most Norwegians on Hong Kong Island had sought refuge in Victoria peak, but some like Kvamsø and Brodersen sought refuge in Hong Kong Island’s Victoria (Wan Chai) metropolitan area, both locations facing northward and subjected to cannon shelling during the fighting.<sup>266</sup> Others, like the Reichelt and Thelle families sought refuge in Hong Kong Islands church guest house, and priest Nielsen’s seaman Church in Kowloon during the heavy shelling, later they returned to their missionary work in Tao Feng Shan in the Shatin suburb. Nine Norwegians also fought for the English, upon capture, the eight survivors were sent to the notorious POW-camp Sham-Shui Po, a nightmarish derelict and ill-supplied internment camp. Like Shatin, Sham Shui Po is found on the Kowloon-mainland side of Hong Kong.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>264</sup> The daring escape and the sinking of Kvamsø’s ship are major talking points in two articles posted in two different Norwegian outlets. “Krigseileren 3/1986” (The War-Sailor magazine)

<https://www.krigsseilerregisteret.no/no/tidsskriftet-krigseileren/360472/>  
Haugesunds Avis (Haugesund Newspaper) <https://www.h-avis.no/krigsseiler/haugesund/rederier/romte-fra-japanernes-fangeleir/s/5-62-369313>. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010, RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0075/0002

<sup>265</sup> There is no definitive list of Norwegians in Hong Kong at the time of the outbreak of war. Kvamsø argues in his article in “*Krigsseileren*” that there were ninety Norwegians in Hong Kong during the autumn of 1941. In the first post-war report to Chongqing, which I consider the most reliable, Karsten Larssen attached a list of exactly 80-by my own count, Norwegians. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0014/0002. In a report to London June 8, 1942, written by Minister Hassel, based on Brodersen’s descriptions, he reported that there were 52 Norwegian in Hong Kong, including 23 seamen. I assume this is imprecise because of the stresses of the occupation, as this number is impossibly low when considering other data. Military reports made by the BAAG from February 1943 lists 68 Norwegians. <https://gwulo.com/node/14786> 01.11.18

<sup>266</sup> Brodersen wrote that 20-30 Norwegians celebrated Christmas 1942 together in Gloucester Hotel in Wan Chai (Victoria) the day before the Japanese landing on Hong Kong Island. In Brodersen’s first report he wrote: “As we...*Sang the Norwegian Christmas carols we could barely hear our own voices because of the thundering cannon-fire outside!*” My translation of the original reads: “*Julaften var vi samlet en 20-30 norske i Gloucester hotel til en dinner. Da vi (unclear) og sang de norske julesanger kunde vi nesten ikke høre våre egne stemmer, da der hundrede kanon torden utenfra!*» Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Priest Nielsen celebrated Christmas in his seaman’s church in Kowloon alongside his Chinese staff and an unnamed sailor. The community was in other words divided. Henriksen (1964)52.

<sup>267</sup> Ottosen (2008) 98,118,130,131. There is also an anecdotal chapter about the Reichelt family and Tao Feng Shan starting on page 116.

Apart from those who took up arms in the defense of the city, Norwegians remained free to roam if they could shoulder the costs, also after the February censor. This position of freedom must however, have been a difficult position. Most importantly, because of crimes.

The fighting had led to massive looting of the huge provision storages collected by the English and looting of private properties. The most relatable act of lawlessness to the Norwegians, must have been the murder-looting of five Swedish nationals on Victoria peak, like them, the Swedish were third nationals, and strictly neutral in the war. These murders were symptomatic of the general lawlessness of Hong Kong during the first months of Japan's occupation. The Japanese conquerors were mostly occupied with implementing policies that could create revenue, like the creation of a new legal tender, military yen and the process of shipping-out of food, oil and machinery to Japan totaling 2.500 million tons of freight already in that first year of the occupation. The exportation created severe shortages of many life-essential items, this problem was in turn compounded by millions of Chinese refugees, who much like in Chongqing, sought shelter in the city, this drained its resources quickly, despite ineffective rationing efforts and price-controls and the systematic removal of Chinese-nationals from the city.<sup>268</sup>

In this marketplace less-wealthy families without breadwinners and sailors in the Norwegian community quickly became destitute, as everyone would have to spend more-and-more money for bare necessities, the sailors also faced payment difficulties, as they were unable to collect their salaries at the Consulate like they had used to. Approaching the summer of 1942, free Hong Kong residents were also increasingly forced to exclusively use the military yen money, military yen was itself only obtainable by trading it for Hong Kong dollar, pound sterling or USD (United States dollar). While these currencies were similarly fiat money like the military yen they circulated widely, pound sterling was the closest thing to a global currency at the time, it was also highly demanded because of its credibility and stable bank rate. Military yen on the other hand was a pure fiat money, backed by nothing but its own paper value, and only tradeable locally and with Japanese soldiers. The reason for the coinage being a distinct type of yen, was that it would function independently from the Japanese yen, like other so-called invasion money, like the CRB (Central Reserve Bank of China) circulating in Shanghai. Printing several currencies shielded Japans core economy from hyperinflation in case mass printing of the tender would be needed, in all out total-war. Inflation on yen could have effectively broken its extrinsic value and collapsed Japan's isolated economy. Colonies were expendable. More importantly creating worthless money was one of Japans very few options of paying for foreign trade deficits and occupation costs, as it also generated revenue through seigniorage: the sale of money and taxation. The military yen money gained value from its use-exclusivity; enforced by laws, as it became the singular legal tender.

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<sup>268</sup> Leck (2006) 62-67.

Money hoarding culture in times of crisis, also helped stabilize the value, as money is often (mistakenly) looked at as the highest standard of value, resulting in a more stable extrinsic value. Military yen and Japanese invasion money in other countries, also provided a cheap way to pay Japanese soldiers salaries, after all businesses would be bound by law to accept the money. Businesses also accepted the invasion money, as it held value in the closed marketplace, additionally military yen payment was preferable than full closure of business and ensuing poverty, especially as other currencies became illegal to hold. The traded Hong Kong dollar or other money received in money trade, was in turn spent by the Japanese military government in trade with nearby neutral Portuguese-Macau.

The most important implication of the military yen and inflation in prices for the Norwegian community in Hong Kong, was that they needed to bring in money from outside to survive, as personal savings were being rapidly exhausted. Withdrawing money from Hong Kong's banks also became increasingly difficult day by day, as the Japanese were in the process of monopolizing banking, by liquidating Hong Kong native bank-structures and instating their own banks (unlike Nazi-Germany). Norwegian owned money in the native Hong Kong bank structures, that had not yet been withdrawn before closure, was only made available after a series of negotiations with the Foreign Department. The sum-total of personal saving remained locked, but 20% of the liquidated personal assets were transferred to the Japanese controlled Yokohama Specie Bank personal bankbooks.<sup>269</sup>

As a solution to the deteriorating situation, according to several letters and the Hong Kong reports by Kvamsø and Brodersen, a transfer of pound sterling was sent to Banco Ultramarino in Macau by the Free Norwegian Shipping and Trade Mission (Nortraship) shortly before April 28, 1942. The sum was then collected by Reidar Johannesen, later Nortraship's representative in India, and ship-chandler at Hong Kong's Wallem & CO company by trade. Johannesen and his family fled Hong Kong through GMD-China in 1941 to India, but Reidar seems to have somehow made it to Macau to withdraw this money.<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> People in occupied countries often preferred the payments in Japanese money (especially in Indonesia). Economist Greg Huff and Historian Shinobu Majima argue that the (moneyholders) "...*They thought it was better it (Japanese invasion money) was better than British (money) and enjoyed the feeling of wealth which they got by carrying away large wads of brand new Jap (sic) Notes*" Huff, Majima (2013) 4,19,22,58. Slabaugh (1977) 22,23. Since most money holders were self-sustainable and bartering rice-farmers, they seldom spent the Japanese invasion money, giving it longevity and allowing further money-printing and stalling hyperinflation. Ottosen (2008) 75. Leck (2006) 14,67,70. The pound sterling was highly valued because of its stability, due to a stable external value and transparent value, it also traded internationally. Pound sterling was put of gold convertibility (fiat money) in 1931. Kwarteng (2014) 138-150. *Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010*.

<sup>270</sup> Ottosen (2008) 106. Sending money into occupied Hong Kong was initially against allied policy, as Britain, according to Minister Hassel's letter, strictly opposed trading allied-money for Japanese-money in 1942. Direct transfers of money were however theoretically possible through Swiss bank accounts until 1943, when this option closed. I have found no proof of such transfers for the Norwegian community. The military government started in 1943 to require that these transfers would be made through the Japanese Yokohama specie bank, at a



Johannesen, in turn, transferred the money to Hong Kong, perhaps through clandestine smuggling networks, like the well-known operations run by Dr. Selwyn-Clark and the British Army Aid Group (BAAG) both vaguely referenced in several letters related to this money transfers.<sup>271</sup> In Hong Kong the money was then probably converted to military yen at the pegged rate through brokers. Illegal brokering, would have yielded more money, as pound sterling was considered a more valuable money on the black market, especially as the Japanese fortunes of war changed for the worse.<sup>272</sup>

Regardless of worth and expenditure, the money, which was pooled into a communal fund, to supply destitute Norwegians was maintained by the Norwegian Committee and it provided a brief respite. This one-time transfer seems to have been instrumental in helping the Norwegian community to cope. In Brodersens reports in early in March 1943, he described the Norwegians were still “*healthy looking...*” at the time of his departure. The money would however, according to the report, run out in

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Japanese- favoured set-rate. Japanese officials then also created personal bankbooks for each Allied or friendly-enemy internees. (also, Norwegians.) This bankbook could be paid into by national governments, through and a complex transfer- and money exchange system in Swiss francs, into Swiss banks, who then transferred the money into Japanese bank proxies, which held the personal bankbooks, alternatively persons at liberty could withdraw money in Japanese Banks Ottosen (2008) 121. Swiss francs were particularly coveted by Japans government, as it also was the currency used for paying for the upkeep of Japanese internees, in Allied countries. These payments also went through swiss accounts and was overseen by Japans protective power Spain. Switzerland also became the de-facto protective power of several of the major allied nations, including the USA, England and the Netherlands. Swiss nationals also headed the International Red Cross (ICRC) efforts in Asia, with three official high ranked ‘delegates’ named Rudolph Zindel, Edouard Egle, and Fritz Paravinici in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Tokyo respectively. Red Cross operations were only handled unofficially in South-East Asia to the detriment of internees there. Therefore, its role as caretaker of internees’ interests, in Asia, should not be underestimated. Leck (2006) 215,219. Emerson (2010) 18,19. A telegram indicates that the sum-total of the Macau transfer was 1000.- pound sterling. Converted into USD (American dollar) which was at a pegged price, this sum equals roughly 4000 USD.

<sup>271</sup> Dr Selwyn Clark ran a smuggling operation of goods and radio-parts into Stanley prison until June 1943 when 33 of his collaborators were shot dead, Clark was himself interned in Stanley on May 3,1943. Effectively stopping large scale smuggling and contact between Stanley and the Baag. This smuggling was largely financed through western bankers who diverted lots of money while collaborating with the Japanese during the liquidation process, where they raised 2 million USD for Dr. Clark. Later trade would be done through Stanley’s own black markets exclusively. Leck (2006) 354-359. David Bellis argues on Gwulo.com that the English Consul John Reeves was part of this particular money smuggling scheme. (lending credibility to British cooperation despite the official line not to transfer pound sterling into enemy hands). <https://gwulo.com/node/36529> , <https://gwulo.com/baag> 16.01.18. This is again contradicted one of Brodersen’s reports where he argues that Karsten remitted money through small-scale smuggling. “...*Through certain Portuguese and Chinese friends... we managed to have the money transferred to Hongkong in small lots, this kept the Norwegian community going for a while...*” Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. The English Consul could of course have been a key person in this arrangement, this makes sense as the Hong Kong bankers and the BAAH had secrets communication with Macau. Ibid. 354.

<sup>272</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/0004 See footnote 298. Emerson (2010) 135. There was a lot of illegal money trading going on throughout the war, and the value of the military yen and other invasion money fell after each subsequent Japanese military defeat, leading even Japanese officials to buy Allied- currencies to create personal safety funds. When the Norwegian community received the money in April, Japan advances had started stopping slowly, shortly after Japanese military fortunes turned in the battle of the Coral sea in May. In June Japan lost the decisive battle of Midway. These war advancements must have increased the value of the pound sterling, the Norwegian community might have taken advantage of this and sold the money at a premium on the black market. Huff, Majima (2013) 20,44,45.

May 1943. Brodersen and Kvamsø therefore urged for more money-transfers through the same vaguely described (purposefully?) “channels” And omitted mentioning other viable options.<sup>273</sup>

### 5.3 The Price of Escaping Hong Kong.

Japan’s prisoner and foreign policies was diffuse and applied *mutatis mutandis*, according to conditions and regionally. The Japanese arbiters’ frame of mind, bias, and position towards Norwegians-arguing neutrality, must have been crucial to the received judgement in this situation. Norwegians were as we have seen above not among the defined ABCD enemy in China, however, “whites” as a stereotype, were often considered *persona non-grata* in Asia and the supposed key factor in the destruction of East-Asian culture, values and greatness. Most Norwegians fit perfectly into this “white” phenotype, and nine had clearly fought for the English revealing their loyalties. Others had refused to cooperate with the Japanese in Hong Kong, and showed little deference (however undue) to the Japanese, who were known to take great offense at perceived disrespect, among these Norwegians who went against the Japanese agenda, was escapee Captain Kvamsø, who noted proudly in the first report to Chongqing that he had refused to take command the “*Haraldvang*” when it was refloated, leading to his aforementioned internment. There were other well-documented public displays of affection among free-peoples and ethnic Chinese for the ABCD internees all over China.<sup>274</sup>

Therefore, and because of these concepts of propinquity and the apparent resistance it seems the Japanese stance on Norwegians in Hong Kong was characterized by pragmatism and uneasy wariness. As a result, internment was immediately offered as a voluntary, temporary option for the Norwegian community. Stanley was then, as today, widely regarded as an idyllic beach-town, and Japanese propagandized that the ABCD internees were treated fairly, and according to international treaties. Four Norwegians took up on the offer after the occupation and entered internment alongside ABCD nationals, hoping for better provision than they would have had in the city, since the situation in Victoria got increasingly difficult every day because of money worth, food shortages and other difficulties. Stanley internees were better-off, early on, than those at liberty in Victoria and Kowloon. People outside of the camp did however have opportunities buy extra food, if they had money or

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<sup>273</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010

<sup>274</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Third nationals were often partial in the war, a Danish family secretly broadcast illegal BBC radio signals in Shanghai, and a Swede was aiding the allied war effort in Shaanxi. Italians scuttled one of the ships that had served as a repatriation ships, the S.S Conte Verde shortly after the Italian armistice, to hinder it from being used by Japan’s military. Leck (2006) 86,87,98,99. Archer (2008) 5. Dower (2012) 10-27, 78.

possessions for bartering, Hong Kong's harbors had been operative until Pearl Harbor, unlike Shanghai, so many had saved up money. <sup>275</sup>

In the spring and summer of 1942, the status of the Norwegians in Hong Kong took a turn for the worse. On April 1, all Norwegians were summoned to Statue Square by the Hong Kong gendarmerie paramilitary, where they were told that Norway, in line with official Japanese policy, was now regarded as an enemy nation, because of its break in diplomatic relations with Japan. While this would have no immediate effect, a warning was given to the community that any serious infraction of the law, would result in a collective punishment and internment for all Norwegians. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of April the Norwegians consequently received passport stamps branding them officially as "enemy nationals." The second major event that hurt the status of Norwegians happened in July 1942, when the new Japanese military government arbitrarily doubled the value of the military yen against the traditional Hong Kong dollar, meaning that it was now trading at one-to-four, this also mirrored in their monthly bank allowances, as they were able to withdraw exactly 100 Military Yen or 400 HKD monthly from the 20 % allowance, in their own private accounts and deposit that into their Yokohama Specie bank personal bankbooks, a redundant choice as the money was of equal value. This new exchange rate cut the purchase power of Hong Kong dollar holders who had to provide for themselves outside of internment by half. <sup>276</sup>

This issue of purchase power would not get more favorable in the remainder of the year, as purchase power would also be weakened by depleting food stores. Brodersen underlined in his reports that especially flour stocks were about to run out, as grains were the preferred food-item for westerners this

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<sup>275</sup> Florence Haugland and her sixteen-year-old daughter Esther, and Catherine Hellevik (Ekaterina Tushkanoff) who had married a Norwegian and her 15-year-old son Norman entered temporary internment voluntarily shortly after the Japanese occupation. Greg Leck suggests they were all re-interned (definitively) in February 1943. Leck (2006) 630,631 <https://gwulo.com/node/14786> 16.01.18. They likely didn't enter internment of naïve grounds and rather enter the camp because they had little choice. Norman's Norwegian father Harald Olsen Hellevik was out at sea, like many other fathers at the outbreak of war, and could therefore not financially aid the family. He took up a vacancy on an English ship before the outbreak. He took the mission only after receiving advised to do so, after a consultation session with the Norwegian Honorary Consulate. Another case of diplomat's failure in reading the political situation. The Japanese military government rapidly confiscated their house, leaving them few options for accommodation, Norman also needed daily injections of insulin and Catherine had already bought much insulin in the city and exhausted her money in the purchase. She must have believed they would also receive insulin in Stanley as medical provisions was part of believed Japanese internment obligations. The Hellevik family survived internment throughout the war, but Norman died on the repatriation voyage aboard the "*Empress of Australia*" which carried in total 26 Norwegians repatriates wishing to return to Norway, the cause of death was a botched insulin injection by the medical staff. The full anecdote can be found in a standalone chapter in Ottosen's book by title "*Norman*" in Ottosen (2008) 134-141. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0014/0002. Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010 International Red Cross delegate Edouard Egle's report of Stanley among other propaganda, was so heavily edited that George Emerson dubs the report a description of a "*Summer Holiday camp...*" Emerson (2010) 19,83. Nielsen (1946) 5.

<sup>276</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Ottosen (2008) 120. Emerson (2010) 83,84. It took a while for Japan to recognize that Norway had broken diplomatic relations. Mageli (2006) 191.

also meant a higher market price for those items, the resource ran out in January 1943. Brodersen's requests for relief in that same letter was quickly responded to. Minister Hassel forwarded Brodersen's reports to the diplomatic missions in India and Nortraship represented by Reidar Johannesen. Johannesen in turn responded that he had relayed a second money transfer request to Nortraship in London, who approved his request. His response letter to Chongqing sent 27.4.1943 reads: "*They intend to remit money to Macau, same as they did last April on my request...you will understand that this is a most difficult problem, as now that I'm not there to receive the money, we will have to make some other arrangement*"<sup>277</sup> As a solution to this problem of money extraction, Johannesen put the members of the Norwegian Committee as possible signatories.

Privately held money and logistical challenges in money smuggling, would however quickly prove to be minor problems in the spring of 1943, and food choice simply became problems of more privileged people than the Norwegians. This was brought on by an article posted in the Hong Kong News on 16 February 1943, calling all Norwegians to assemble at the Japanese Foreign Affairs Department, this was the long-awaited first call to internment. The community seems to have viewed internment as unlikely, but it is apparent in various anecdotes in the archival source material that most people had ready-made suitcases for when internment was due. This was likely a response to what they themselves had observed when ABCD-nationals were called to internment in January one year earlier. When some had gone into internment after the summoning, wearing only a set-of-clothing, while others brought items ranging from beds to fur coats, jewelry and food products, in other words tradeable items. Preparation was the key to well-being in the internment-camps, and the Norwegians would likely would not be to retrieve possessions after the summoning call.<sup>278</sup>

The real reason why Norwegians status transited from friendly or semi-enemy to an enemy that could be interned involuntarily, can only be guessed at, as it is not explicitly stated outside of the instructions and reasons pointed to during the summons in Statue Square, earlier that year, and Japanese internment policy to intern enemies.

I argue that internment as policy materialized because of two main reasons. Firstly, it seems likely Norwegian internment in Hong Kong was postponed because reasons of practicality. The amount of administrative work and the total workload of providing for internees was ubiquitously underestimated by Japanese administrators, and Stanley-camp had itself experienced major provisioning issues because of inept administration in the first year, Stanley-camp was also already accommodating many

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<sup>277</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010

<sup>278</sup> Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9285/002. Emerson (2010) 83,84

<https://gwulo.com/node/14786>.10.02.18 Many ABCD nationals wrongly assumed they could retrieve their belongings after meeting up on Murray Square. People who did not heed the summons were simply not given time to organize their belongings after they were arrested. see footnote 321. <https://gwulo.com/node/13649> 10.02.18.

more people than the initial plans devised by Selwyn-Clarke had accounted for, so crowding had been a big problem and nine persons sharing a room was not uncommon. The second and likely trigger-factor must have been Kvamsø and Brodersen's escape, which directly violated the military government's laws. This kind of event was after all, just what they had been warned about in Statue Square. The escape was also pointed to as the trigger factor by International Red Cross representative Rudolph Zindel in a letter to representative Edouard Egle in Shanghai.<sup>279</sup> By the summer in 1942, the biggest practical obstacle to Norwegian internment, accommodation, had also been seriously lessened by repatriation efforts. As over 300 Americans and Canadians had been repatriated from Stanley in the last repatriation voyages. In October 1800 British POWs were also transferred to Japan. This must have opened room for more internees and provided the Japanese military government the option to intern Norwegians.<sup>280</sup>

## 5.4 A Fragmented Community of Enemies.

The general internment order for Norwegians was first openly announced in *Hong Kong News* on February 20, 1943. Factual internment happened two days later, on February 22, 1943. This news, in form of a cut out of the article reached the Chongqing diplomatic mission only in May 1943, through British intelligence. The diplomatic mission in Chongqing therefore surely had no part in the coming community division scheme or a diplomatic role for the community in relation to the Japanese in Hong Kong.<sup>281</sup> The general internment orders led to the Hong Kong community fracturing into 4 distinct groups of people. Those over 60 years of age, clergymen and internees in Stanley and Sham Shui Po. All Norwegians above 60 years of age and clergymen remained at freedom, this was unique for Norway, ABCD national clergymen were interned with the other segments of their community. Freedom was again only allowed, provided everyone were able to pay for themselves.

The other two separated groups of communities were the people who became internees in Stanley, and the five POWs, who long had been interned at Sham Shui Po because of their role in the battle for the city. The Tao Fong Shan missionaries and Priest Nielsen, who was part of a different denominations, remained free, on grounds of their clerical status and could therefore continue preaching and leading their own little communities. Several key persons in the secular Norwegian community were also older than 60, and therefore evaded internment, among them was Norwegian Committee-leader

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<sup>279</sup> See footnote 339. Leck (2006) 479. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0257/0004. See footnote 336.

<sup>280</sup> Leck (2006) 284-304.

<sup>281</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. Swedish Minister Malte Pripp recieved the list of internees on February 25 by Swiss IRC representative Rudolph Zindel. Therefore, the Swedish Consulate was surely more involved and updated on events in Hong Kong than Chongqing. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0257.

Karsten Larssen, his wife Aasta Larssen and Ship Captain Håkon Sareussen. Together with Priest Nielssen they were able to continue Committee efforts to relieve the community. Most clearly, the fruits of the new Committee's work are evident in an anecdote from an interview transcribed into Kristian Ottosen's book, where he argues, that the Committee's work was essential to life for the prisoners in Sham Shui Po.

*"...His work (Larssen) meant so much for the Norwegians, not the least for Smeby, who had no friends or acquaintances outside of the camp. The Consul (sic) made sure that all Norwegian prisoners got extra food, and it helped to save many lives."*<sup>282</sup>.

The burden and cost of providing for the POW's in Sham Shui PO, who suffered under extreme conditions would, however lessen for Larssen in early 1944, as four of the POWs were sent to Sendai in Japan for coal mine work. POW Johan Johnsen was considered indispensable to Sham Shui Po's camp's orchestra and remained interned there, until the end of the war.

Sareussen proceeded to set up an illegal radio, so he could listen to Allied-news radio and Priest Nielsen had privileges to provide valued religious services in the camp, which also gave him the chance to bring them the news Sareussen had picked up on. These visits must have brought immense joy to all Stanley internees, as the radio-ring created by Dr Selwyn and the BAAG had been crushed. The Larssens seems to have taken the most vital role in relief work and they continued providing the community in Stanley with aid, in form of comfort-money through their personal bank accounts in Yokohama Specie Bank. Larssen seems to have also sent aid-packages to Stanley.

This of course required ever more money, Karsten Larssen managed to get into contact with the Swedish diplomatic mission in Tokyo, perhaps through the Swedish branch of the Nordic Christian-Buddhist-Mission (Den Nordiske Buddhistmisjonen) Associated with Tao Fong Shan or the Swiss IRC who had established means of contacting Shanghai. Sweden had as we have seen, nominally taken over the role of protective power and started sending wire-transfers of money to Larssen, through the costly Yokohama Specie Bank transfer scheme, characterized by trading yen or HKD for military yen. These transfers seem to have been the largest transfers of money for the Hong Kong Community after 1943, this is apparent in Larssen's September 1945, post war assessment. The connection to Tokyo also opened a means of communication back to Norway's free government in London, who then replied that they intended to negotiate for the Norwegian's in Stanley's release, this never materialized.<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> My translation, the original reads: "*...Hans arbeid betydde uendelig mye for nordmennene, ikke minst for Smeby som ikke hadde slekt og venner utenfor leiren. Konsulen sørget for at alle norske fanger fikk noe ekstra mat, og var med på å redde manges liv ...*» Ottosen (2008) 130. Larssen had long served as a Danish Honorary Consul.

<sup>283</sup> Norwegians were supposed to pay back the comfort-money they received during the war, this was later revised as it was thought unfair. Leck (2006) 355,256,357. Ottosen (2008) 130,131,265,333. Nielsen also brought food to Stanley while he himself also was undernourished. Henriksen (1964) 62.

The Swedish comfort money transfers to Hong Kong and places like Shanghai and inland internment camps were largely reimbursed but also credited to the free Norwegian government who acted as guarantor to these loans through a simplistic system of payments, most clearly characterized by Norwegian payments of equivalent value in Pound Sterling or USD for Japanese Yen in Swedish possession. This yen was then tradeable locally for military yen in Hong Kong or CRB in Shanghai or other money. The Swedish General Consulate in Shanghai and their Legation in Tokyo had both, according to a report signed Minister Kildal “*significant amounts...*” of yen money on hand, and the transfer was therefore very simple in character, as the exchange rates were set. The Norwegian Legation seems to also have had a substantial deposit in the Swedish MFA’s Section B (Avdeling B) tradeable for yen. This closed system of money exchange allowed Sweden’s MFA to quickly adapt to Larssen’s money needs, if every recipient would agree to repay the relief aid loans after the war.

The earliest Swedish money transfer to Hong, to my knowledge, was approved by the Swedish MFA on April 12. 1943. The Swedish MFA had then agreed to transfer a sum of 5500-yen monthly, a report of this system of payment was sent to London in May, also informing of 1000 pesos payments to Norwegians in the Philippines. This sum-of money quickly also proved insufficient, and Larssen appealed the Swedish MFA to increase the amount on several occasions. In March 24, 1944, on grounds of “*high cost of living...*” Larssen appealed to have the monthly allowance increased to 10.000 yen monthly.

Later that year, in December, Larssen also appealed for an extra allowance of 30.000 yen. His plea to the Swedish MFA was received in Stockholm, but it was never cashed out, and it seems he believed the communication to have been lost. In addition, Larssen noted in the assessment that transfers stopped coming in from mid-1944, amounting to 140.000 yen that should have been paid out, by the end of the war. Perhaps this happened because of Sweden’s displeasure with Japanese authorities and ensuing wiring cancelation because of the extreme disparity of money-worth. Both Sweden, who also represented Belgians and several other nations, and the other major protective-power Switzerland had stopped wiring money to Japanese accounts on several occasions, in protest from November 1943-on. The reason for these cancelations, was that it was too costly to buy rapidly inflating Japanese money. With the Yokohama Specie Bank money transfer scheme failing, Larssen must have had little chance of procuring money in another manner, there is however a chance that Larssen might have also collected the May 1943 Macau money transfer, as the value of “*money on hand and in banks...*” in the September 1945 assessment, which included the current Banco Ultramarino account amounted to 16.62. military yen, practically worthless money.

*«The money question was very difficult, every day, prices went up daily, I did my best to be as economical as possible, but it was all hopeless. I sent monthly accounts to the Royal Swedish Legation*

*in Tokyo, but I understand accounts from august 1944 until the end; have not been received in Tokyo. Lost on the way I suppose...<sup>284</sup>*

## 5.5 Internment in Stanley.

*“They all came to the appointment on time...They were called by name and had to return the passports the Japanese had previously given them. They then got on the bus that was to take them to Stanley. I had given a big Norwegian flag to them, and the fellow I gave it to said with military precision: "It will be hoisted at Stanley at 3 pm". If it was, I don't know. I just know that when they all had entered the bus; the same fellow starts to sing "Gud signe vårt dyre land" they all sang along... The street was filled with song, both from the bus and from us bystanders, even a Portuguese lady from the community sang along. Then the bus engine started, and the Norwegians were sent to Stanley internment camp. The street was so empty and quiet, and our little colony here was now in silence. Our Church had been destroyed by bombs a long time ago. Our house had been taken by the Japanese. And now, even our little congregation had been taken away.”<sup>285</sup> – Priest Nielsen.*

The group of people that did not get exempted from internment consisted of forty-six (46) Norwegians, they were sent to Stanley Village on February 22, 1943. When they arrived, the camp had been running for just over a year, the camps perimeters had been set and fenced, and the camps repository had been supplied with basic supplements that had been seriously lacking, like thiamine B1 vitamin pills by Dr.Selwyn’s smuggler ring. The food, was however rudimentary and rice cakes and hand-grinded rice flour was the singular source of most of the daily calories eaten by internees. Some westerners in Stanley, who had never tasted Chinese food, had very big problems with adapting to what they called “*The Chinaman’s diet*”

Interned doctors in Stanley also kept counting the caloric and nutritional content of the food in the camp throughout 1943 to 1945 and found that it never complied with League of Nations agreements on food provisions for prisoners of war, POWs (there were no international agreements particularly concerning civilian internees) amounting to 2400 Kcal per day. Nutrient levels were also far below

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<sup>284</sup> Leck (2006) 221,222. I found Larssen’s appeals and assessments in the UD archive, found by codes: Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/0004, Utenriksdepartementet. Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9285/0002.Utenriksstasjonene and Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0014 /0002. Larssen’s post war audit is also found in the attachments chapter at the end of this thesis. Sweden also acted as protective power, at least nominally, to Argentina, Belgium, Chile, Finland, Greece, Iraq, Iran and Mexico. Johansson (2012) 156.

<sup>285</sup> My translation, the original quote reads: “ *Til fastsatt tid møtte de alle frem. De ble fratatt de pass Japanerne hadde gitt dem. Så gikk de inn i bussen som skulle bringe dem til Stanley. Jeg hadde gitt fra meg et stort Norsk flagg, Og han som fikk det, sier med militær presisjon «det skal heises klokken 3 i Stanley» Om så skjedde vet jeg ikke. Jeg vet bare at da alle var kommet innpå bussen begynte den samme mannen å synge "Gud signe vårt dyre land" og de andre stemte med...Det runget i gaten, både fra bussen, og oss som fulgte, også en portugiser i flokken sang med. Så startet maskinen klar, og de norske kjørte avgårde til internment campen i Stanley. Det ble så tomt og stille i gaten. Og stille også innen vår lille koloni her. Vår Kirke var for lengst bombet sønder og sammen. Vårt hus tatt av Japanerne, Nå var også vår lille menighet ført bort. Nielsen (1946) 70,71. Henriksen (1964) 34.*



required levels, internees were additionally deficient in fats, proteins and vitamins B and C. All deficiencies connected to food. Internees in Stanley received, at the best of times 1400 kcal of food per day per person by the Japanese authorities. On top of this, internees received foodstuffs from people outside of the camp, and people of means could buy food on the black market. In addition, the International Red Cross had sent tens of thousands of crates to China holding small food parcels, but only three food parcels per person were received during the years of internment in Stanley camp, the crates were partially pilfered through, but high in nutritious value and meats.

These outside factors brought the caloric count to about 2.200 Kcal per day for most people, a food level of sustained hunger and slow emaciation, especially for men. Stanley camp was among the worst camps in China to be an internee in, and the longest running camp and a great many people died there, compared to the other civilian internment camps in China. By the end of the war 121 people had died and most of them succumbed to hunger.<sup>286</sup>

The Norwegian Community initially kept their own segregated kitchen, in their collective living quarter in the so-called “Dutch-block”, shared alongside Dutch and Belgian nationals.

Here they elected a community leader unknown to me and grew rooftop gardens to grow extra food. Later that year, the camp collectively chose to elect Franklin Gimson as camp-leader for all the internees and hoped he in light of this station could bargain with the Japanese for better conditions, kitchens were also at this time collectivized to save coal, water, and other precious resources, it also meant that every community contributed its resources to the common-pool.<sup>287</sup>

It is not clear to me if all the food was outsourced, including the parcels, grown vegetables and money received by the free Norwegians like the Larssens in Victoria. What is clear, is that most of the Norwegians fared rather well. In the two years of internment and only one Norwegian named Olav Pedersen died in the camp due to complications in a major operation, related to severe malnutrition. This happened the day before the end of the war on 15 August 1945.<sup>288</sup> One of the explanations for the Norwegians relative welfare is that emaciation to the brink of death takes a long time, with the average

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<sup>286</sup> Leck (2006) 161, 162, 233, 479-483. Ottosen (2008) 66. Emerson (2010) 81. Stanley internment camp was run as a mixed family camp. The Imperial Japanese authorities established two types of camps that were meant to house western nationals in China, Civil Assembly Camps, and Internment camps. The two types were nominally different, differentiated by their intended purposes, the assembly camps were supposed to be reserved for non-combatants. The internment camps served as camps for military captives, also known as POW camps. In practice, these guidelines were not subscribed to, and camp classification was not that important since there were problems of legal discretion, since there was no global protocol for civilian internees. Camps were also very diverse in terms of living conditions and residents. Camps in the geographical North in Asia were better stocked with goods and plagued by fewer maladies. Camps in Northern China also provided a corn-based diet, reflecting the food crop base of the area. Camps in South China mainly provided a rice-based diet, much to the dislike of western nationals. Archer (2008) 68-175.

<sup>287</sup> Ibid 480.

<sup>288</sup> Ottosen (2008) 341. Leck (2006) 480,642. <https://gwulo.com/node/9857/view-pages?page=32> 04.03.2018.

food intake averaging 2200 Kcal, death becomes a numbers' game as the body deteriorates very slowly. The extra year of hunger in the camp suffered by the ABCD nationals put extra strain on their bodies, therefore they fared much worse in the last year of the war approached, and food stopped coming in through Japanese channels, The IRC then became the main provider of food. The extra time at freedom in the city, and the fact that the Norwegian community pooled resources coupled with a lucky community segregation leaving some at freedom in 1943, where Norwegian at freedom could help the interned nationals, created favourable conditions for Norwegians to go into internment at Stanley and survive.<sup>289</sup>

## 5.6 Chapter Conclusions

After Consul Wesman left Hong Kong a Committee known as "The Norwegian Committee" was constituted to enable secondary diplomacy this was the only marked diplomatic actor in the colony and it performed all the roles of the diplomat.<sup>290</sup> The Hong Kong Norwegian Committee bargained with the Japanese Authorities over the question of internment, but It had little power over these authorities. Norwegian status was like in other Chinese occupied areas viewed by the Japanese Authorities through a racial lens. Norwegian were imperialists whites, at the same time there no standing conflicts between Norway and Japan, and Norway had taken care not to provoke the Japanese. Rationale to intern Norwegians was first expressed when the Japanese Authorities in Hong Kong learnt of Norway's break in Diplomatic relations, but this was probably not the trigger factor that led to forced internment of Norwegian civilians. The triggering factor was most likely Halfdan Kvamsø and Ragnar Brodersen's escape to Free-GMD China. Their escape seems to have brought the first news of the Norwegian community in Hong Kong after Pearl Harbor to the Norwegian diplomatic mission in Chongqing, and that mission seems to have had no influence as a Norwegian representative in Hong Kong, in fact the escapees were surprised to hear about the diplomatic mission. When the internment of 46 Norwegians started some resourceful members of the Norwegian Community evaded internment on religious grounds and grounds of age, so they could help the interned from outside the camp. Funds to buy food or deposit comfort money into internee bank accounts was wired to Hong Kong by Norway's protective power Sweden.

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<sup>289</sup> Stanley was among the worst internment camps in China to be interned into, at the same time 10 times more people survived Japanese internment in China compared to the 25 % death rate in Japanese internment camps altogether. Leck (2008) 236,237,419.

<sup>290</sup> "Represent a polity. Gathering information for that polity. Conducting negotiations on behalf of that polity." See page 17.

## 6.0 Shanghai 1942-1945.

This chapter examines Norwegian status throughout the last three years of the war in Shanghai and the representative roles of both Sweden acting as protective power and non-official track II secondary diplomatic actors. As explained in chapter 1 this thesis relates to new diplomatic history, therefore the chapter will identify what role these actors practised rather than their proposed or nominal roles. This relates to the thesis questions highlighted in chapter 1, but it requires me to ask two sub questions: 1) Who represented Norwegian interests in the Shanghai from 1943-1945. 2) Who could bargain for Norwegian neutrality with the Japanese. I will explain the Norwegian representatives' view of the conflict and how they acted through the challenging years and how this was received and affected Norwegians.

### 6.1 Chongqing- Shanghai Communications.

After the diplomatic staff at Norway's General Consulate(GK) left Shanghai, both Minister Knudtzon in Bombay and Minister Hassel in Chongqing, lost nearly all communication with the city for a couple of months. There were functional postal services between Chongqing and Shanghai throughout the war, but it seems this system was tedious and slow, as can be expected in a nation at war, this hindered meaningful conversation. On March 20, 1943 four months after arriving in Chongqing, Minister Hassel wrote in a letter to Minister Knudtzon, that he had already sent several formal missives to different recipients in Shanghai by mail, but he pointed out that he had received no replies. In the same letter, he argues that "*...Young Brodersen who has come to Kweilin (Guilin) from Hong Kong, has written that conditions in Shanghai are somewhat fine for Norwegians...*"<sup>291</sup>. This implies that Kvamsø and Brodersens reports were the first relevant source of information about developments in Shanghai. (See Chapter 4.). Later that same month, and increasingly in April the diplomatic mission in Chongqing received a few letters sent through the postal services and by air-mail from different organisations and persons in Shanghai, Tianjin(Tientsin) and even Hong Kong, forwarded to Chongqing through the Swedish General Consulate (GK). In response to these letters, the Chongqing mission sent letters of appreciation to the Sweden's GK and attached personal letters to acquaintances in Shanghai and the coastal area.

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<sup>291</sup> My Translation, the original reads: "*...En ung herr Brodersen som er ankommet Gweilin fra Hong Kong har skrevet a forholdene i Shanghai er noenlunde bra for oss norske..*" Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010

“...the other day the legation got a letter from Ms.Randby,(Tianjin/Tientsin) which we are attending to. It was sent as \*air mail” and got here in less than a month. My hat off to the Chinese postal service...”<sup>292</sup>

Therefore, it can be claimed that communications had been tentatively restored at that point in time. Consequently, the diplomatic mission in Chongqing sent more inquiries about friends, bank holdings and later in May month inquiries about the wellbeing of the Norwegian community and Minister Knudtzon’s two dogs, that he had to abandon in Shanghai when he evacuated. The postal service as means of communication, seems to have rendered able to any meaningful conversation between these two actors impossible, as it took so long for conversations through letter exchange to take place, the diplomatic cajoling and ceremonial manner of speaking did not help speed up communication. As a result, Chongqing first learned meaningful information about Norwegians in Shanghai only in November 1943 from a Chinese national and acquaintance of Rustad named T.I Lee who had fled from Shanghai in June 1943 and arrived in Chongqing in early November that same year. Lee had a conversation with Rustad and Minister Hassel November 10, 1943 and it is apparent from the notes from that meeting that this was where they learned of any meaningful information about political developments, city sectioning, rights of ABCD nationals and comfort money grievances within the Norwegian community in Shanghai. It seems a plausible claim to me, to say that Chongqing must have had a very marginal role as a representative also for the Norwegian community in Shanghai during that time.<sup>293</sup>

## 6.2 Committees and Consulates

With the Norwegian Consulates’ forced closure after April 2, 1942. The Japanese occupational forces requested that the Norwegians in Shanghai would constitute what they called a representative body, that could negotiate for and inform the dispersed Norwegian community about Japanese statutes and proclamations. This created Shanghai’s “Norwegian Committee.” For all intents and purposes, it resembled the “Norwegian Committee” in Hong Kong examined in Chapter 4. And similarly, it was

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<sup>292</sup> In one of the missives sent to the Swedish General Consulate in Shanghai on March 31, 1943: Rustad thanks Vice-Consul Lund in Shanghai for two Postcards, that he received “*some time ago...*” If these arrived by mail in the 11-day interval back to March 20, when he had heard no reply, or if these were older is unclear but it implies communication. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148. Hong Kong had long had an untenable connection with Shanghai, the only way for letters to reach Stanley internment camp was through neutral intermediaries. Brodersen and Kvamsø might have learnt about Shanghai from relaying letters. Leck (2006) 309

<sup>293</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411/0001.

constituted by democratic ballot vote, after Minister Knudtzon called for the community to vote on June 12 that year.<sup>294</sup>

Many of the conditions needed to constitute a layman committee were met in Shanghai, and relations with the Swedish General Consulate (GK) which had taken some responsibility for Norwegian affairs and the outlying areas were quickly established, and news flowed freely, locally, partly because the coastal network was well equipped, institutions and highly advanced infrastructure like functional telegraph and tramway lines and educated management. The constituting body of the “Norwegian Committee” in Shanghai was made up of four Norwegian Shanghai residents, from in the French Concession and the Western district. Each of them had strong ties to trade and industry in the Shanghai-area.

The establishment of the Norwegian Committee in Shanghai was announced in a circulating letter in August.

**To: Norwegians in Shanghai 23, August 1942.**

*“Since the Japanese requested our departed General Consul to establish a small Norwegian Committee, whose task should be to function as an intermediary between the Norwegian Colony and the Japanese authorities. Such a committee has been constituted with Mr Hans Berents, Edvin Fasting and Søren. Hohlfeldt elected as boardmembers. Mr. Finn Berge serves as committee-deputy. Inquiries may be sent to The Norwegian Committee, addr. Room 72, M.M Building Quai de France, Shanghai, where Mr.G. Sevald will pass on letters.”<sup>295</sup>.*

The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) had simultaneously created an interest section at the Swedish General Consulate (GK), which would be known as the “Norwegian delegation” (*Norska beskickningen*) in a separate wing to the Swedish GK’s own staff. The Norwegian delegation was manned by a team of former staff at the Norwegian GK, namely Secretary Nation Sun and his assistant and numerate clerk T.A Pan and trainee secretary Norwegian Gunnar Sevald. Since none of them were of diplomatic rank, and in the case of Sun and Pan, Chinese nationals, they were not encouraged to embark on the evacuation ships, after the break in diplomatic relations. In practice this team worked in cooperation with the Shanghai Committee. Sevald who was known as honorary secretary at the GK,

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<sup>294</sup> See page 82.

<sup>295</sup> My translation, the original reads: “Til: Norske i Shanghai. 23.august 1942 *Siden de Japanske Myndigheter anmodet vor avreiste General Konsul. om dannelse av en liten Norsk Komite, viss opgave skulle vaere at funktionere som bindeled mellem den Norske Koloni a de Japanske Myndigheter i almene saker a en saadan Komite er ny valgt bestaaende av D/Herrer Hans Berents, E.F Fasting samt S. Hohlfeldt med Herr F.Berge som varamann...Meddelsler kan sendes til Den Norske Komite, adr. Rom 72, M.M Building, 9 Quai de france , Shanghai, hvor Herr G.Sevald vil seørge videre forsendelsen.* ” Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

also served as the head secretary of the Norwegian Committee, this is also evident in the circular letter above, these organization's functions were, however, nominally different.<sup>296</sup>

What the two separate organizations perceived as their primary function is best extracted from their correspondence. Among the best correspondence for this purpose is Hans Berents' who served as Chairman of the Norwegian Committee, descriptive 4-page reply letter to Norwegian Nils Ihlen Sopp, written on August 13, 1945. Sopp inquired about the Committee and the GK's respective roles and responsibilities throughout the war, after community criticism over comfort money adjustments, and Berents stated intelligibly what he believed his committee had been working with thus far.

*“Our Committee has in different ways attempted to provide guidance and support to the Norwegian community, in addition we have served as an intermediary between our countrymen and the functioning government, and we believe, that the goodwill and consideration we have been shown in the last few years, is at least partly the result of our contact with this government, and our understanding of their wishes...The money that is wired here...for the provisioning of Norwegians, comes from the Swedish MFA's department that is taking care of protecting foreign interests. How this (money) is arranged in Stockholm, we (Norwegian Committee) do not know, but it is obvious that this money is debited the Norwegian state...Since the necessary funds is received, administered and distributed by General Consul Pripp's directives, the Norwegian Committee could do little else than ask if assistance from the committee was desired.”<sup>297</sup>*

The Swedish GK also sent several letters in reply to inquiries about Sweden's new role in the autumn of 1942, while Norwegians scrambled for space on the evacuation ships. What these letters stated in common, was that the Swedish GK would not act as a representative for Norwegians in negotiations with the Japanese, and in turn referred to the Norwegian Committee in Shanghai or implied personal responsibility. In an illustrating reply letter to Sweden's Honorary Consulate in Wuhan (Hankow) on June 3, 1942 two months after Sweden agreed to take care of Norwegian interests, Malte Pripp interestingly instructed the Honorary Consul there not to officially act as a protective power for Norwegians despite the Swedish MFA's intention to act as protective power. The letter reads:

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<sup>296</sup> See page 59. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411/0001

<sup>297</sup> My translation, the original reads: “Vår Komite har på forskjellig vis forsøkt å være til støtte og veiledning for for Norske borgere her, samt å tjene som et bindeledd mellom våre landsmenn og den fungerende regjeringen, og vi tror at den velvilje og imøtekommenhet som er blitt vist oss Norske i disse år, skyldes ialfald for en del vår kontakt med disse myndigheter, og forståelsen av deres ønsker...med hensyn til de pengebeløp der sendes hit...til forpleining av trengende nordmenn her ute, kommer disse fra det Svenske utenriksdepartement's avdeling som ivaretar fremmedes interesser. Hvordeles dette arrangeres i Stockholm vet vi ikke, men det er jo klart at pengene debiteres den Norske stat. Herr. General Konsul Malte Pripp forvalter således de pengemidler som efter hans utarbeidete budsjett anmodes sendes hit fra Stockholm ... Eftersom de nødvendige pengemidler mottas, bestyres og utdeles under Generalkonsul Prippts direksjon, kunne ikke den Norske Komite gjøre annet enn å forhøre seg om komitéens assistanse var ønskelig.” Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

*“I have the honor to inform you that that neither Sweden nor any other power, will be recognized by Japan as protective power for Norwegians in Japan and occupied-China. We have however received consent from the Japanese MFA to do support work for Norwegians in Japan and here. Norwegians who turn to thee about negotiations with the Japanese should generally be advised to negotiate with the Japanese by themselves. Should you later wish to interfere, there should be no hinders for you to contact the Japanese unofficially. If Norwegians in your district become necessitous I ask you to report it to this mission. Since this Consulate has some means to give them support”*<sup>298</sup>

A letter with close to perfect-match phrasing was forwarded to Swedish Missionary E.G Hallin in Beijing, that same day. Sweden was therefore surely *de-jure* not a representative for Norwegians, but as the letter suggest, personal but unofficial involvement was possible, and there are ample examples of Swedish Ministers attempting to help Norwegians in distress. In one letter from 14 October 1943. Swedish Consul Engstrom in Tianjin reported to the Malte Pripp at the Swedish GK in Shanghai that he had attempted, on his own initiative, to negotiate the release of 16 Norwegian interned in Weihsian Internment, but because of anti-espionage measures, he was unable to make it happen; he also feared for more Norwegian internments on these grounds. The Consulate in Tianjin further informed the Swedish GK that they had lost all contact with Norwegian missionaries in Zhangjiakou (Kalgan) and Qiqihar(Tsitsihar) In North China.<sup>299</sup>

Negotiatin for neutral Norwegian status in Shanghai was therefore the onus of the Norwegian Committee, and they would be the negotiator for Norwegians interests in conversations with the Japanese authorities. The letters above also strengthens the argument, that Norwegians in Shanghai, the northern outports and the inland missionaries were largely left alone to negotiate with Japanese authorities themselves, as the working Swedish diplomacy could not represent Norwegians officially.

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<sup>298</sup> My translation, the original reads: “*Har jeg äran meddela, at varken Sverige eller någon annan makt kommer att av Japanska regeringen erkännas såsom skyddsmakt för Norge i Japan eller det ockuperade Kina. Man har emellertid uppnått ett medgivande från Japanska Utrikesministerien för Sverige att bedriva understödverksamhet blant Norrmän i Japan och här. Norrmän som vända seg til Eder, når det gäller mellomhavanden med de Japanske myndigheterna böra därför i almännhet rådas att direkt vända seg til dessa. Å endra sidan synes det mig att intet hinder møter at Ni i ömmande fall inofficielt vänder Eder til de Japanske Myndigheterna. Skulle Norrmän i Eder distrikt råka i nöddställd belägenhet. Ber jæg Eder rapportera saken hit. Då Generalkonsulatet har möjlighet att i viss utstrækning lämna dem understöd.*” <http://runeberg.org/statskal/1942/0238.html> 04.24.2018.

<sup>299</sup>. Leck (2008) 661,669,673,681. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0257. Anwei Grini Jensen (Anwei Danielsen) Authored the book “*Med Mor; Fange I Kina 1941-45*” and appeared in an episode of the tv-show “*Tore på sporet*” broadcast on Norwegian-broadcasting-corporation “*NRK*.” She spent much of her childhood in Weihsian Internment Camp, and she lost her father to raiding Japanese soldiers. This fate befell several missionaries in northern China, Mongolia and the puppet state. “*Manchukuo*” due to the tough door-to-door fighting, lax international supervision and I argue, lack of representation, as there was no Committee, and only sporadic help from people like Minister Engstrom. (See page 68,69) Anwei was unsure sure why her family was interned, but Engstrom’s letter suggests they were interned on grounds of espionage.

The Swedish GK was therefore, for Norwegians, primarily the provider of comfort-money and access to bomb shelters, there is also literature that argue Minister Malte visited internment camps.<sup>300</sup>

This divide does however seem to have been under-communicated and misunderstood, perhaps because of Sevald's involvement as secretary, both to the delegation, and to the Norwegian Committee and Swedish unofficial involvement in Norwegian affair. There also seems to have been a sense that someone was also playing favorites, resulting in people like Ihlen Sopp feeling lost and angry. This tense political climate and the tightening money situation would prove a serious test to community cohesion. Therefore, the committee's printed many circular letters describing their role as solely mediators was dispersed to the Norwegian community even as late as 17 November 1943. That last letter reads:

*"It's been known to us, lately, that misunderstandings have arisen lately in relation to the committee's position on difficulties that Norwegians have had, and still continue to have in Shanghai... if pecuniary help is needed it is important to remember that payments of Norwegian comfort money, so long as there is any, is arranged and paid by the Swedish General Consulate..."*<sup>301</sup>

The clearest critique to their political hegemony and role of the Norwegian Committee was raised from the community of stranded sailors in Shanghai. It is important to note here, that sailors were, as we have seen, often perceived as outsiders to the resident population, fleeting visitors who had little vested interests in China, especially the tramp-freight deckhands. In addition, the sailors seem to have had a powerful sense of patriotism to Norway its fight for independence and their ship mates. They must also have borne grievances over their own internment in early 1941 and the diplomats, and then later the Norwegian Committee's pedantic and passive method of dealing with Japanese transgressions. I argue that their priorities were therefore fundamentally mismatched with the resident community, among whom many had long term interests and family in China. The wellbeing of Norwegian expatriates (Shanghaiers) and internal affairs in China, was therefore more important for Shanghai resident than Norwegian politics and the wider politics of the war.<sup>302</sup>

The most marked divisive issue between sailors and the Committee happened one month after its creation in September 1942. It concerned Captain Rolf Engelsen, who had been given an eviction notice by the Japanese authorities. Engelsen who was a prominent figure in the sailor community then attempted to find a new place to live in, despite the tight housing market, and came up short on money. Engelsen and his wife were therefore made homeless for ten days in October, until he was able to rent a house on October 27 after selling some of their possessions to pay for key-money. In the wake of the eviction, the committee received several letters denouncing them and Secretary Sevald at the

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<sup>300</sup> Johansson (2012) 84,86.

<sup>301</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

<sup>302</sup> See page 34,47,53,54,55. Nielsen (1946) 14.



Norwegian delegation in the Swedish GK for handling the whole affair poorly, as money support had been expected. Engelsens' letter sent on the committee, raises some of the sailor community's primary concerns. The letter reads:

*“As one of the many, who lived in the budding hope, that if I should end up in a position, where the committee could (if it wanted) to help (sic). I protest the committee's' ineffectiveness. The Japanese government commanded me to move out of my apartment, but refused to give me another... I turned to the Committees' secretary Mr. Sevald. This was 31. August. The answer was: - « you do not assume that the committee should act as housing agents, right» (Norwegian idiom) What this “right” is trying to hide, has been a burden on my mind. Could you even believe that i managed to find a house without burdening the committee, a medallion lost? Haven't the “holy trinity” (the committee?) slumbered for long enough? The old tale that we must keep absolutely quiet, we are bound on hands and feet; it stinks, does the committee have interests in that which is Norwegian? Yes: Self-interests.”<sup>303</sup> Several similar denunciations were later received from others the sailor community “...while pleading for help to the committees' secretary. Mr. Sevald he was asked with a smirk, if he assumed the Norwegian Committee were” housing agents.” Can you even imagine what sort of vulgar cunningness Mr. Engelsen must be in possession of?<sup>304</sup> This unequivocally ironic letter was received by the Norwegian committee from Captain Nils Nesbøe, who among other boat-Captains, were prominent figures of authority, their letters, I argue, can therefore be read as expressions of antipathy amongst the sailor-community. It is also interesting to imagine how these simple stories must have circulated within the community, and how this simple “housing agent “anecdote in relation to the Engelsen-affair gained so much traction and became a big enough controversy to start fueling open criticism of the Norwegian Committee, and leading ship captains to start pointing out that the committee was indifferent to the plight of the sailors.*

The sailor community numbering 50 had been idle for a long time by 1942 and the sailors were ship bound with very few options for recreation or privacy. Traditionally the Norwegian Seaman's church had held a significant role in the sailor's lives, the priest would act as mediator, guidance counselor

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<sup>303</sup> My translation: the original reads: “Som en av de mange, der levet i i det blomstrene haap, om at skulle jeg komme i en stilling, hvor komiteen kunne (hvis den ville) hjaelpe, protesterer jeg mot komiteens virkningsløshet. De japanske myndigheter beordret mig at flytte, ut av min leilighet, men nektet at gi meg nogen annen... henvendte jeg meg til komiteens sekretær herr. Sevald. Dette var 31 August. Svaret var: - «de forlanger vel ikke at komiteen skal være husagenter, aassaa? Hva dette aassaa skulle sjule, har jeg meget hodebry med at finne ut. Tenk at jeg fik hus uten komitens hodebry, en medalie tapt. Har ikke den hellige «treenighet» sovet lenge nu? Den gamle visen om at vi maa holle oss aldeles stille vi er bunnet paa hender og fotter; den stinker. Har komiteen interesser i det som er Norskt? Ja: selvinteresse. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

<sup>304</sup> My translation, the original reads: “...Paa henvendelse til komiteens sekreter hrr Sevald med et smil spurgt om han anntok den Norske komiteen for aa vaere husagenter e.l. tenk hvilket utspekuleret freidigheter Hrr Engelsen maatte være i besittelse av!.”

and spiritual leader for the sailors. The Seaman's church institution had in Shanghai long also served as a recreational area, where sailors could play cue and racket sports. It had also supplied a reading room. The seaman's church had been indefinitely closed, when Priest Nielsen decided to evacuate to Hong Kong on the "*Taishan*" in 1937. Nielsen wrote in his autobiography, interestingly, that he visited Shanghai every year until 1941 to provide religious services, he was however, unable to establish a working seaman's church in Shanghai, as he was now occupied in Hong Kong.<sup>305</sup> This lack of a leisure-area was not the main reason behind critique of the Norwegian Committee, but I think that it is an entirely plausible claim that several years of idleness and boredom was a contributing factor to the growth of antipathies, as the community of sailors started feeling hopeless, disillusioned, left out, and later disenfranchised by the establishment of the Norwegian Committee, which was composed of only *Shanghaiers* residents, leaving out possible leaders from the sailor's community, possibly a conflict over representation and interests. 'Minister Pripp points to alcohol as a huge problem in the Swedish community as over 100 Swedish sailors were like Norwegian sailors, stranded in Shanghai. For them, drinking was the cheapest pastime and consolation available. That whole issue of alcoholism in the sailor community is simply called a "constant concern." It is not clear if he was most concerned about their wellbeing or their behaviors, drunk men are after all a liability in a situation requiring cautiousness, at the same time he points out that some died from drinking too much. This was surely a problem in the Norwegian Community as well.<sup>306</sup>

The result of this divide between residents and sailors in the Norwegian community became apparent in a circulating letter dated December 14, 1942. Which announced the creation of the "Committee for Norwegian Seamen." (Komiteen for Norske Sjømenn). The Committee for Norwegian Seamen was established to represent the interests of the sailors, in relation to the Norwegian Delegation and the Swedish Consul and must be viewed as a response to discontent with their position. The decision to constitute the committee was made in early November, after one of many meetings between sailors and the Norwegian Committee, following the Captain Engelsen affair. Its composition was put to a vote on December 12. Captains Ferdinand Semmelmann, and Ola Berggren and crewmates Sofus Isaksen and Ola Ekeland were elected as board members. It seems that the Swedish General Consulate (GK) and the Norwegian delegation thought it was unnecessary to create a Committee specifically for the sailor community, but the Norwegian Committee endorsed its creation. Regardless it seems to have released tension in the community, as it enfranchised and gave the sailors a channel to voice their opinions in the debate on Norwegian status, payments of comfort money, and their own issues. The short circular letter lists a some few bullet points about its intents and goals. It reads:

*"We have long felt like we ought to have a committee that could act as an intermediary and central for the many seamen here in town...The idea has gained general endorsement. (among the seamen)*

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<sup>305</sup> (See page 50,90). Nielsen (1946) 20.

<sup>306</sup> Johannson (2012) 75.

*And the committees' first task has been to arrange for a Christmas dinner, which has been promised money support by the residents, and the Norwegian Committee. As our first goal, the "Committee for Norwegian Seamen" alongside Swedish and Danish sailors, wish to create a permanent reading room, where we can meet to read, play card-games, etc...The Committee will attempt to help the seamen's conditions and seeks to act as an intermediary between the Honoured General Consulate and the Seamen. We humbly ask for your assistance."*<sup>307</sup>

The letter does not ask for seamen to hold any role in representing Norwegian interests, or to have conversations with the Japanese authorities, indeed there is no other source material indicating that the Committee for Norwegian Seamen wished to have a role in this. It can however easily be deduced that some, just like Captain Engelsen were fed up with catering to the Japanese and speaking careful words, this would be the number one point of future conflict, neutrality and cooperation with the Japanese did not go well with all members of the community.

*"The old tale that we must keep absolutely quiet, we are bound on hands and feet; it stinks..."*

### **6.3 Managing Norway's Neutrality.**

Unlike Hong Kong and the National Government in Japan, Norway's break in diplomatic relations did not go unnoted in Shanghai for long. Minister Knudtzon and the Norwegian GK had been in close contact with the different Japanese authorities, and they were prominent figures among the planned repatriates. Norway was therefore listed as having broken diplomatic relations in a Japanese proclamation posted in Shanghai Times on May 13. 1942: With serious implied consequences:

*"The Enemy means in this proclamation, firstly, the enemies at war with Japan. Viz.: USA, Canada, The United Kingdom... And secondly the countries that have severed diplomatic relations with Japan. Viz.:Egypt, Greece, Colombia...Norway."*<sup>308</sup>

Norwegians in Shanghai was therefore defined an enemy in clear text by the Japanese authorities publicly for the first time. Enemy Status had as we have seen already been assigned to some

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<sup>307</sup> *"Det har lenge vaeret folt som et savn at man ikke har hatt en komite som kunne virke som et binneledd og central for de mange sjøfolk her i byen... Ideen har faet alminnelig tilslutning og komiteens forste arbeide har vaeret aa stelle til en julemiddag som er lovet pengeunderstottelse av de fastboende Norske samt den Norske Komite. Som forste maal vil «Komiteen for Norske Sjøfolk» soke sammen med de Svenske og Danske sjøfolk, aa opprette et permanent lesevaerelse hvor man kan mote til lesning, kortspill, etc...komiteen vil forsøke og hjelpe sjøfolkenes tilvaerelse, samt paata sig aa vaere binneledd mellom det aerede Generalkonsulat og Sjøfolkene...tor hofligst aanmode om velvillig understottelse i hvaert henseende."* Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

Norwegians and some Norwegian owned businesses since the Japanese had taken over the concessions. General internment of Norwegian and any other nations had however not yet been suffered. This was probably a result of different rivaling Japanese authorities, and the very autonomous military branches own legal discretion lacking any general guideline. The moderate forces and diplomats favouring reconciliation and compromise in Japan had lost out to ultranationalist warmongers, who had racist inclinations and little empathy for Europeans. This created a disparity between diplomatic and military bureaucracies, making diplomacy a complex matter. The power struggle also made it difficult to tell where real power was exercised, clear instruction was rare and difficult to come by, and letters were often redirected. Therefore, I argue, every neutrality-seeking nation could barter for its rights if the right strongman was convinced.<sup>309</sup>

The proclamation created a rationale for treating Norwegians as enemies even if no final decision had yet been made about Norwegian status in Tokyo and was therefore dangerous for Norwegians. The Norwegian Committee therefore faced another massive challenge right after they took over the role as community representatives in July. They would have to bargain with some central authority for neutrality, and at same meet the Norwegian community's expectations to represent their various interests, just as the Japanese was tightened their grip on Shanghai society.

It seems apparent in the primary source material that Norwegian status like that of other nations was in a particularly serious predicament by September, and there was surely a sense of urgency to deal with the question of status. Japanese acquisition of properties had continued through the summer directed by the "New Enemy Property Control Committee" on grounds of Norway's "enemy" status, and as a result only three Norwegian big-businesses were yet to be appropriated. The French nationals' status as pro-Axis was had also been decided on at the end of the month, as a result the French Concession was now governed by pro-Vichy French officials, and Frenchmen remained neutrals.

On top of these ills befalling the Norwegian community General curfews were imposed that month. A cut-out of a proclamation from Shanghai Sunday Mercury on 28 September 1942 also ordered a for armbands to sort neutrals from enemies "*1. On and after October 1. All nationals of these countries which have either declared war on, or severed diplomatic relations with Japan, shall wear a red- armband of 10cm width on their left arm whenever they are outside of their own residences...3. A person who has violated above regulation shall be subjected to punishment.*"<sup>310</sup> It did not materialize exactly like that, as only some nations that had broken diplomatic relations were given distinct armbands. People from nations at war with Japan wore red armbands, marked with the first capital letters for their country, and some neutral nationals like Greeks and Belgians and 29 other friendly enemies, like Norway were later given pink armbands marked X. This ongoing process to designate

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<sup>309</sup> Yuki Tanaka (1996) 209. See page 45,46,61-65.

<sup>310</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411. Leck (2006) 385.

enemy nations and neutrals or pro-Axis meant that internment became a real threat for those nationals that were viewed as enemies.<sup>311</sup> This prompted the Norwegian Committee to focus on negotiating with the different Japanese authorities, who in turn warned Norwegians not to break any laws. The Committee then carefully wrote a warning that was passed around inside the community as a circulating letter, this warning is transcribed below:

*“Only for private circulation. September 1942.”*

*“The Norwegian Committee has been told by the Japanese authorities that Norwegians have to be very careful when speaking, and in our actions. So, we do not complicate or ruin our position. They emphasize that any activity that can be understood as unfriendly and/or words that can be deemed partisan, can easily lead to difficulties that can involve other people than the one directly responsible, therefore, political discussions of any kind, must be avoided.*

*Since we are neutrals in the war in the far-east, we must always remember this. And read all the proclamations and regulations from the Japanese High Command and the Civilian Government and follow these instructions literally. The above requests might seem natural and self-evident. But they can easily be forgotten during a conversation, and we hope that every single member of the Norwegian colony will follow these requests always, and act in compliance. By doing this we strengthen and protect our best interests and our position, and by doing this we do our best to cooperate with the High Command and the Government, in the common purpose to maintain peace. - Hans Berents.”<sup>312</sup>*

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<sup>311</sup> See Chapter 4. The list of things that could have gone wrong is massive, and breaking instructions included such things as possessing long range radios, breaking curfews and blackouts. Japanese proclamations also requested that neutrals and Chinese would help with identifying GMD resistance fighters and hinder them from escaping after the sabotage missions. A point raised in chapter 4 also relates to available internment camp space. In February 1943 850 Americans in Weihsian and Shanghai repatriated on the Teia Maru, opening the option to intern others Leck (2006) 88,89, 298,497

<sup>312</sup> *Kun for privat sirkulasjon September 1942.*

*Den norske komitee er av de japanske myndigheter blitt tydet at vi som norske maa veere meget forsiktede saavel i tale saavel som handlinger. For ikke aa komplimentere og oodelegge vaar stilling her.*

*Det fremheves at hvilke som helst handlinger som kan bli forstaat som uvenlige. Og/eller ord som ansees unoytrale, lett kan lede til vanskeligheter. Som kan beroore mere enn den de personer som er direkte ansvarlige, derfor.- maa politiske diskusjoner av hvilken som helst art maa unngaas.*

*Da vi som nooitrale i krigen i det fjerne oosten, maa vi alltid huske dette. Videre studere alle proklamasjoner og forordninger som utsendes av overkommandoene og de sivile myndighetet. Og folge disse instruksjoner bokstavelig. Overstaaende anmodninger kan synes naturlige og selvinnlysende. Men de kan lett glemmes i en konversasjon, og man haaper at av hvert eneste medlem i den norske koloni vil huske disse anmodninger til enhver tid. Og vil handle overenstemmende. Derved bestyrker og ivaretar vi best vaare interesser og vaar stilling, og derved bidrar vi vaart beste til aa samarbeide med overkommandoene, og myndighetene mot det felles maal aa opprettholde fred. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411*

In the circulating letter the Norwegian Committee advised the community to be compliant and cooperate with the Japanese authorities, and it leaves little doubt about the severity of the situation, the stakes. Failing to comply with Japanese requests in any respect, could be interpreted as belligerency. The Norwegian Committee also rightly emphasize the prospect of collective punishment, and for a good reason, given the historical example of collective punishment and internment of Norwegians in Hong Kong, examined in chapter 4 of this thesis. Any similar transgression could therefore probably lead to internment for Norwegians in Shanghai as well.

In October 1943 the Norwegian Committee had an important breakthrough when Committee Chairman Hans Berents and Edvin Fasting was invited alongside Swedish Vice-Consul Gustaf Lund to a Charity ball for the Imperial Japanese Red Cross, to which the Committee had donated some money.<sup>313</sup> At this ball Berents was soon introduced by Minister Lundh to a man only referred to as “Japanese Attaché Tsuruta” in the source material. The conversation they had that night was later recounted in two reports, written some weeks later.<sup>314</sup> Tsuruta would discuss the subject of Norwegian status only after the Swedish Minister had left the party, probably owing to the rejection of Sweden as protective power.

Tsuruta then told Chairman Berents that he had been told by the Norwegian Minister (Knudtzon) that Norwegians were 100% Pro English. Minister Knudtzon had also publicly recognized the London Government instead of the “National Unity Party in Norway”<sup>315</sup> Too this situation Berents replied that Norwegians were first and foremost Norwegians and cared little for the interests of bigger countries and this greater war. Tsuruta seems to have continued pondering over the question of Norwegian alignments, the recount reads:

*“Mr. Tsuruta called attention to the two Norwegian Governments. One of them in London, the other in Oslo. We replied that we would not discuss this matter, least of all the Government in Oslo which was led by Quisling, who used to be an ultra-red communist. Quisling to whom no real Norwegian could have any trust, as he had now gone to the other political extreme. Chairman Berents emphasized that such political questions about Quisling should not be asked Norwegians as it would create discord and suffering for us, and we were sure this was not the aim of the Japanese. Mr Tsuruta seemed surprised and reassured by this, but he continued to go on about our Government in London and our money support scheme. The Chairman replied (evadngly?) that the Government was not represented in out here: but that we have great admiration for our King and the Norwegian people...The*

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<sup>313</sup> <http://runeberg.org/vemarvem/sthlm62/0869.html> 24.04.2018. Elisabet Engelsens has the receipt from the charity- bazar-ball in her personal archive.

<sup>314</sup> I have not been able to find any information about Attaché Tsuruta, but it is highly likely that he was one of Japanese General Consul Yano’s many assistants who dealt with foreigners. What is sure is that he was not an Internment Camp Commander. Leck (2008) 210,217,218.

<sup>315</sup> (See footnote 9.)

*Committee hoped to remove friction between Norway and Japan, and that the Japanese would do the right thing, to let us be, and perhaps recognize the representative of our brother-people (Sweden) as our official speaker. It was all like a fight to keep Norwegians out of the Internment Camps are hearing so much about these days. But our statements seemed to reassure the Japanese and further attacks were not suffered, and our position became more sufferable.*<sup>316</sup>

I argue Tsuruta might have been genuinely convinced by some of Berent's arguments, such as the claim that Pro-Axis Minister-president Quisling was a communist, something that Tsuruta must have inquired about from the professional Japanese spy agencies later. They surely must have heard about Quisling's work with emergency relief in Russia and his hand in creating the National Unity Party, often misinterpreted as communistic because of its national socialistic conceptions.<sup>317</sup> Communism was considered wicked by the Japanese Military Government and convincing Tsuruta that Quisling was a communist, could therefore be a very important argument. Most Japanese were also highly nationalistic and royalist, and Tsuruta could therefore have sympathies, or at least some respect for Berent's and the Norwegian's firm loyalties to the Norwegian King. Quisling on the other hand, must have been everything that the militaristic Japanese despised in politicians, an unpopular collaborator and pawn for a foreign nation.<sup>318</sup>

Other than the argument for cultural understanding, Norwegians had given little reason to be perceived as enemies in Shanghai or anywhere else, as there is no proof that any Norwegian in any way had gravely offended the Japanese nor been openly partisan before that point in time. Norway's long quest to be perceived as a peace-nation and neutralist had also led Norway's government to only impose lax sanctions on Japan throughout and after the "Manchurian Crisis" affair in 1931. Berent's tapped into

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<sup>316</sup>My translation, the original reads: "Mr Tsuruta fremholdt dig de 2 regjeringer vi norske hadde, den ene i London og annen i Oslo. Vi kunde imidlertid ikke gå med på å diskutere dette spørsmål aller minst regjeringen i Oslo som der ble fastholdt var ledet av en tidligere ultra-rød kommunist. Quisling. Til hvem ingen reel Nordmann kunde ha nogen tillid. Eftersom hen nu var gått til den annen ytterlighet. Formannen (Berent's) Fremholdt videre at slike politiske spørsmål angående Quisling ikke burde stilles Nordmenn her ute da dette vilde skape ufred og lideler for oss, og vi var sikker på at dette var langt fra Japanernes hensikt. Mr. Tsuruta lot til å bli overrasket samt noget beroliget over denne fremstilling og gav seg tilsynelatende på dette punkt, men han fortsatte å presse på om vår London regjering samt om den støtte vi fikk financialt. Hvortil formannen meddelte at denne regjeringe ikke var representert her ute: men vi hadde stor beundring for var Konge og for det Norske folk... Komiteen håpet å fjerne friksjonspunkter, samt at Japanerne ville gjøre det for oss riktige, nemlig å la oss få være i fred og så kanskje annekjennende broderfolkets representant (Sverige) representant som vår offisielle talsmann. Det var som en kamp for å slippe å sende Norske til interingsleir, hvorom vi hørte så mange rykter disse dager. Men våre uttalelser lot til å berolige Japanerne og det viste seg at ytterlige angrep blev ikke gjort på oss, og vår stilling ble mer tålelig ..." Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.. Seeberg, Filseth(2000) 112,113.

<sup>317</sup> Garau (2013) 696-704. Articles accusing Quisling of plotting for socialist revolution also circulated in China: Norwegian minister of defense accused of communist plot. (1932, Jun 22). *The China Press* (1925-1938) Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.resources.asiaportal.info/docview/1371714327?accountid=164172>

<sup>318</sup>. Hata (1996) 263. Tanaka (1996) 262. 206.

this argument, I have found no sources that show that Karsten Larssen in Hong Kong similarly argued it, though he surely did, but with how convincingly?<sup>319</sup> This argument for neutrality is heavily featured in all of Berents' letters to the different Japanese authorities, where he continuously points to the Japan and Norway's historically good relations. For example, and most clearly in a letter to the Japanese General Consul. One month before meeting Tsuruta, on September 22, 1942, On the recurring theme of armbands. Berents argues that:

*“ The members of the small Norwegian Community are perturbed to find themselves groups up with the enemies of your country, because the best relations have always existed between the people of Japan and the people of Norway... We will naturally abide by any decision your authorities should make in a matter of this kind, but would like to emphasize that our small country, with half the population of Shanghai and only a handful of Norwegians here, do not consider themselves as enemies of your great empire. But as neutrals in the far eastern struggle.”*<sup>320</sup>

This polite and in my view somewhat submissive letter continues that tradition of neutralism. Hans Berents grandchildren described him to me as a “*Fredsmann*” A man of peace. Berents had been involved many *pro-bono* initiatives, for instance NGOs like The International Relief Committee. He also acted as President for Service Clubs like The Engineering Society of China and the close-knit society in Shanghai Rotary Club in 1936-1937. Berents was also among the funding members of the Norwegian Society (Det Norske Samfund) And he also served as Major in the SVC paramilitary. Therefore, he could claim some integrity among Shanghai's upper echelons and as leader of the Norwegian Community during the war. His character and stance must therefore have been essential to Japans perception of Norway, and in him they must have seen a man who would choose to cooperate.

<sup>321</sup>

The recount of the Tsuruta affair (footnote 314) concludes that the situation seems to have become much better for Norwegians in October. This is also evident in the other primary source material and the Norwegian Community had surely reached a milestone in their neutral status. This is clear from permissions given Norwegians, like hunting permits for members to several Berents family members when it was opened for hunting in October, hunting of course required a tool, a weapon, and Enemy nationals were not allowed to keep guns. For enemies refraining from handing in weapons after

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<sup>319</sup> Norwegian Policy makers had since the Manchurian Crisis prioritized keeping a low profile, so they would not provoke Japan's ire, even keeping an Honorary Consulate in Yingkou in Japanese Manchukuo, despite not recognizing the state officially. This neutralist line led Japanese Deputy Foreign Minister Matsuzo Nagai to tell Norwegian Minister to Tokyo Ludvig Aubert, after aubert argued sympathies for the Japanese cause, that good relations still existed between Japan and Norway, even after the Manchurian Crisis. Jenssen (2016) 50,55,56,79

<sup>320</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411

<sup>321</sup> <http://rotaryshanghai.org/wp-content/uploads/history/roster/Roster-1949.pdf>. Seeberg, Filseth (2000) 91,92,96,97. Berents received many accolades for his work in the NGOs, chief among these was a silk banner and thank you letter from GMD President Chiang-Kai-Shek now kept by his descendants. Normansforbundets.9. Hefte 1946. Årgang 39.



February 25, 1942 would incur severe punishments. Norwegians were also given access passes to go between the different concessions, something that had created much trouble until that time. George Kulstad describes in his memoir, that he enjoyed trips around and out of the city proper where he was most bothered by the Japanese area lockdowns and whenever he had to go close to Japanese checkpoints, where he noted that he did not have to bow down like the Chinese.

This new neutral status gave Norwegians unpredictable rights and privileges that could be revoked at any time. A dangerous prospect, especially as Berents fears of internment in Shanghai was realized in 1943 when internments of enemy nationals in Shanghai started. Cooperation would be more important than ever to retain neutral status and to this end the Norwegian Committee was surely determined to cooperate.<sup>322</sup>

Outside of his candid and cautious letters, Berents most clearly displayed his personal willingness to cooperate both smartly and visually. For instance, by wearing a buttonhole badge from the Imperial Japanese Red Cross proudly on the collar on his jacket. In a letter kept by Elisabet Engelsen addressed to an Esq. Oshima dated 1944. Berents argue that he would like to donate money to the Japanese Red Cross who had held the Charity Bazar two years earlier, something he argues he has been doing for the last couple of years. In the side notes he asked for a new badge

*“If you could let me have another buttonhole badge of the Imperial Japanese Red Cross, I shall be much obliged to you. Since the one I have used for so many years, is dirty and worn. With my best wishes for the continued success of the Red Cross activities of your country”<sup>323</sup>*

The implicit importance behind why Berents would want a new pristine badge is to me obvious. Berents could not openly support the Japanese military or the Japanese government, not least with money, supporting a Japanese NGO however, could be considered important contributions to the Japanese cause, and the posturing in wearing the badge is cooperative in spirit. Additionally, the Imperial Japanese Red Cross was nominally a relief organisation under the wider Red Cross International umbrella, so there could be some understanding for supporting it in the Norwegian community. It is important to note that the Imperial Japanese Red Cross has been known to be very particular about its expenditure, which was spent almost exclusively on Japanese military, and it was later criticised for not helping civilian internees. Berents could instead have sent the little money the committee had to the BRA, ARA relief organisations or the Swiss IRC knowing that it would be well

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<sup>322</sup> Leck (2006) 77, 221-136. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411 Kulstad (2014) 30-35

<sup>323</sup> British Relief Organisations, American Relief Organisation, International Red Cross. Berents's letter to Oshima is kept in Elisabet Engelstad's personal Archive.

spent, there is therefore good reasons to argue that the donations were politically motivated, with the aim to remain in good graces with the Japanese Authorities. <sup>324</sup>

Maintaining good relations seems to have been paramount throughout the war, and circular letters about removing Allied Propaganda from Norwegian properties and reminders to remain cooperative were posted on several occasions. On May 8, 1945. VE-Day (Victory in Europe Day) when Nazi-Germany surrendered. A day widely celebrated by many free Shanghaiers, Berents held a private speech to resident members in the Norwegian Community in the privacy of Committee member Fasting's House. The handwritten speech notes show that he refrained from using any celebratory wording or gestures, most importantly they did not sing the Norwegian national anthem, and circular letters from that time also advised other Norwegians to follow that example. After all Japan would not surrender for another few months, so the Japanese could still impose sanctions for any oversteps. Some people seem to have noted that the Japanese gave of a feeling of resignation, and some descriptions describe more compliant Japanese soldiers and officials. At the same time terrorism and assassinations returned to 1937 levels, provoking Japanese reactions. Instead of celebrating the event, the notes indicate that he arranged for a minute of silent contemplation for all the Norwegians that had died during the war, a gesture of venerating the dead that the Japanese would have cultural understanding for. It was just another cautious move by the committee. <sup>325</sup>

The Committee's catering and cooperation with Japanese instructions was as not well received by all parts of the Norwegian Community. Nesbøe, Engelsen and Holmgren who had previously individually denounced the Norwegian Committee with letters during the Engelsen affair, seems to have created a sort of Pro-Alliance interest group that also sent several later denunciations to the Norwegian Committee. <sup>326</sup> Nesbøe wrote a most telling letter to the Norwegian Committee on November 10, 1943. In this letter he seems to have taken a stance about his displeasure over remaining neutral, something he thought of as an insult to the Free Norwegian government and the King. He goes further

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<sup>325</sup> Allied propaganda was often put in form of tags or scribbles in public. Common propaganda included the "A-B-C-D=V" (American-British-Chinese-Dutch-Victory) symbol. Mockery of the Japanese flag for looking like a fried egg was also common. Leck (2006) 87,385. <http://www.yasukuni.or.jp/english/about/index.html> 28.04.2018. Tanaka (1996) 203. Some like the French in Shanghai argued that they remained pro-Vichy even after VE-day, so they would not risk their status, Germans were then considered enemies. Others like the free Jews celebrated VE-day in their private clubs with some restrictions and started wearing victory symbols like red paper flowers on their collars. Leck (2006) 385. Willens (2010) 174.

<sup>326</sup> The Committee for Norwegian Seamen manifesto argued that the board was made up of "reasonable men". I interpret this as an implicating statement, some would wish for open resistance against the Japanese, this was not perceived reasonable. Neither Nesbøe, Engelsen nor Holmgren held any office in that committee. See page 103,104.

to implicate, as I interpret it, that the Norwegian Committee would be viewed as despicable collaborators after the war ended. The letter, taken out of context reads:

*“Gentlemen, do you think you have the right to tell the local authorities, that all Norwegian subjects in Shanghai are neutral to what has been going on, and is still happening back home in Norway? In other words, give up loyalty to our King and our legally elected government: all because you gentlemen, perhaps, hold that view. (We are not in doubt about your views, for you have uttered them in public, and we have witnesses.) When you know that there are many among our compatriots who are ready to step forward, anytime, anywhere as loyal Norwegians. Why then hide among the loyal and put all of us in a false light in this matter. What will the state say when this is all over? All we risked was some very minor restrictions, such as getting a coloured armband or the like. Why did you not let every one of us pick a side in this this conflict? Where are your loyalties, where is your patriotism???* It is overridden by empty platitudes and arguments. That loyalty probably followed the fortunes of war on the eastern-front. Sadly.”<sup>327</sup>

Considering that Nesbøe and others like him sincerely wished for Norwegians in Shanghai to start fighting or somehow resisting the Japanese, clearly considered an enemy state because of its Tripartite pact with Germany and its war with nations allied to Norway, and other factors like cheap alcohol. It is strange that no serious incidents took place, Incident that could have changed Norwegian status after the meeting with Tsuruta.<sup>328</sup> There are simply no mentions of such an event in the primary source material and it seems that Norwegians complied with the Japanese instructions throughout the war. As the example of Hong Kong proves any single altercation, escape, or other unfriendly action towards the Japanese could quickly have tipped the balance and ended with internment for the Norwegian community, Norwegian status was all up to Japanese discretion, and an armband was not simply a trinket like Nesbøe puts it. So many westerners were interned in China, even at the time of writing the letter, and the clear majority of them were interned in Shanghai. This can also have been a reason for letting Norwegians remain free, as internment camps were full to the brim despite the repatriations, something I also argued was an obstacle for early internment of Norwegians in Hong Kong. Men like Nesbøe must also have asked themselves if resisting the Japanese was worth the effort, as they also had little options for effectively taking the fight to the enemy, also, who knows what kind of

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<sup>327</sup> *“Har mine herrer ret til aa sette de lokale myndigheter i den tro at alle Norske undersaatte i Shanghai er helt nøytrale med hensyn til som har foregaat, og fremdeles paagaar, hjemme i Norge? Med andre or sir fra os lojalitetet til vaar konge og landets rette folkevalgte styre: fordi om mine herrer personlig,muligens, har den synsmaate. (Mine herrers synsmaate er man ikke i tvil om, for det har mine herrer uttalt, omtalt i vidners paahoor). Og Naar mine herrer er klar over at saa mange av vaare lokale landsmenn er rede til a fremtre, naarsomhelst og hvorsomhelst, som lojale nordmenn,hvorfor da skjult seg blant de lojale, med at sette oss i alle i falsk belsynings i dette sporsmaal? Hvad mon vil statsmaktene ha aa si naar saken blir fremlagt i tidens fylde? Alt man her risikerte var noen ganske faa restriksjoner, saasom aa faa et ett kuloort baand rundt jakkeermen E.L. Hvorfor lot ikke mine herrer hver enkelt av oss faa lov til aa velge vaar egen side i dette spoorsmaal? Hvor er lojaliteten, hvor er patriotismen???* Tilsidesatt med tomme taalemaater og argumenter.- Den lojalitetet fulgte vel krigslykken paa oostfronten, dessverre...” Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

<sup>328</sup> Malte Pripp pointed out that some Greeks who were in a very comparable political situation to Norway were worried that sailors would cause trouble with the Japanese Authorities. Johansson (2012) 76,77.

repercussions any sort of armed uprising would have led to, this must have been something to consider for the sailors, especially since that there were still women and children present in Shanghai. In addition, like Chairman Berents so often pointed out, there was yet no standing declaration of war between Japan and Norway.

## **6.4. Living Conditions During the Last Three Years of the Japanese Occupation of Shanghai**

Between 275-300 Norwegians in Shanghai remained free throughout the war, but there were as we have already seen some exceptions. Firstly the 6 Norwegians who had attempted to flee Hong Kong to Shanghai on the SS Pakhoi were caught by Japanese authorities and sent to Kiangwan internment camp, there they received money aid from the Swedish Consulate and alms collected by the Shanghai Norwegian Committee from the residents. There were also cases like that of Peter Alv Kulstad who remained interned for almost three years in Japan before returning to Shanghai. Most Norwegians people however remained free. Their living conditions were largely adequate, and it seems like most people with some few exceptions were able to pay some of their own upkeep by selling their personal possessions, as we have seen in chapter 3 Norwegian businesses had been profitable in the years before the attack on Pearl Harbor.<sup>329</sup>

The Kulstad family is perhaps a good example of the average Norwegian family dependant on relief aid. Helen Kulstad received relief funds by the Swedish Consulate since she was head of family, that money given was then collectively pooled into a household budget where also family friends like Captain Semmelmann who lived with the Kulstads and some other sailors deposited their money. That money was then spent to buy food for that specific collective. The Kulstads were able to live without facing any major challenges during the occupation outside of having to mainly eat tasteless millet gruel with vegetables grown on night soil and chewy water buffalo meat. Only on occasionally was treats like sugar, milk and other rationed foods like rice and bread available. Most interestingly George notes that he never went to bed hungry while many of his friends from other nations at his school and stateless people had a much tougher time during the occupation, especially as the conditions worsened

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<sup>329</sup> See footnote 258. Berents argues that there were 300 Norwegians in Shanghai during the war in the Norwegian's Worldwide booklet. Normansforbundets.9. Hefte 1946. Årgang 39. Minister Kildal told the Shanghai Herald on October 27, 1945 that there were 275 Norwegians in Shanghai during the war. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148.

in 1943-44 and the value of the CRB which was the circulating money in Shanghai, like all other Japanese invasion money lost value.<sup>330</sup>

There is no correspondence explicitly related hunger in the sources but perhaps the Kulstads had a more stable income than other Norwegian families because of the practice of pooling resources, as some Norwegians were given bigger allowances and loans than others, some required no support.

Each Norwegian sailor received approximately as much money as British sailors did from the Swiss IRC, according to a communique between Sweden's General Consulate in Shanghai and the Swedish MFA in Stockholm. This allowance was then adjusted to inflation several times in the next year of 1943-1944 alone. Therefore, they must have had a somewhat dependable income despite the rampant inflation, similarly relief aid to residents was increased almost monthly but because of the inflation it is hard to estimate money worth. Residents did however receive more money than the Chinese-staff at the Norwegian delegation most months, consequentially debts on these Swedish loans grew exponentially, Norwegian Sailors and residents therefore racked up very huge debts by 1945. The Kulstad's total debt therefore amounted of 9000 USD by 1945.<sup>331</sup>

The Committee for Norwegian Seamen created a proposed meal plan in 1943 to make the sailor community's expectations concerning food more tangible to the Swedish Consulate who had to adjust their comfort money handouts to inflation. While the menu does not appear like a feast by any standard, the caloric contents might have been sufficient. The proposed meals plan looks like this, and it probably creates the clearest the indication of what a Norwegian in Shanghai ate each day:

Breakfast:

3-4 Slices of bread. 2,50 \$

1 Cup of tea. 0.90 \$

1 Egg. 1,25 \$

1 Glass of Water. 0.20 \$

Dinner:

Soup, meat, or fish. 5,50 \$

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<sup>330</sup> (See footnote 273) Kulstad (2014) 37-40, 45. Willens (2015) 160-170. Points raised by George Kulstad taken from emails with Dennis Askeland. 07/04/2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12ULwMAKJaY> 11.05.2018. Finish sailors whose protective power was also Sweden suffered much more than Norwegians because no payments were made from Finland's government. Malte Pripp particularly remembered that the Finns had little in terms of clothing. Johansson (2012) 76.

<sup>331</sup> (See page 86) 9000 USD in 1945 amounts to about 125.000 USD in 2018 when adjusted to inflation. Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/L9284/0004, Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/ L9285/0002. *Captain Alv Kulstad and George Kulstad Collection: Box 1, Folder 12 Kulstad, Alv Correspondence, 1949.*

Bread and tea 2.30 \$  
Afternoon tea or? 1.60\$  
Total: 14.55 \$  
(residual amount for supper)<sup>332</sup>

Hans Berents argued in the Norwegians Worldwide booklet from 1946 that most Norwegians had a tough time in Shanghai and that necessitous Norwegians were helped by the Swedish Consulate which he describes as very cooperative. Their aid was however not always adequate to sustain all the needs of every family. One request for support that the Norwegian Committee received concerned Committee for Norwegian Seamen board-member Ola Berggren. Who attached a doctor report to his request for key-money aid in September 1945, that report reads:

*“I certify that the child Randi Berggren 1 ½ year old, daughter of Mr. Berggren 280 R. Chapsal Is suffering from some months (sic) from a serious bronchitis. The main cause of this illness lies in the very bad lodging of the family; the smallest room hardly sufficient for one person has to serve for three. Not enough aid, not the possibility for the (sic) important and urgent care and treatment. In the worse season the danger for the child will surely become bigger. I fear attaques (sic) of pneumonia or tuberculosis with all the bad consequences. I therefore advise very seriously to provide a better and healthy lodging for the family and the endangered child- Dr R Koenigstein.”<sup>333</sup>*

Ola and his family had been evicted from their house on April 24, 1945, just like Engelsen had been evicted from his house two years earlier. Therefore, his three-member family had been forced to move into a smaller house. The sources indicate that Berggren’s request for monetary help was approved even though the war was almost over and with-it Sweden’s responsibilities as protective power. Sailor Knut Knutsen who was afflicted with tuberculosis was also helped by the Norwegian Committee who managed to get him the Japanese authorities permission to move to North China (Manchukuo) where the colder climate was much better for recuperating.<sup>334</sup>

It can therefore be argued that the Shanghai Norwegian Committee and Swedish General Consulate had the means to deal with most of the serious material and medical challenges the Norwegian Community faced. Less grave issues were also addressed, and the Sailor community were finally wired money from Stockholm to create the long-anticipated sailors “reading room” on June 17, 1943.

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<sup>332</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

<sup>333</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

<sup>334</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411. Normansforbundets.9. Hefte 1946. Årgang 39.

<sup>335</sup> Another issue that the Norwegian committee expressed worry about was access to bomb shelter as they were fearing that Shanghai would become a target because of its port-functions. To this end the Norwegian community was invited into the Swedish Association in China's air raid precaution organization (A.R.P) sometime in 1943. The wider A.R.P organisation provided bomb-shelters and a signalling system with flags and sirens to warn about incoming air raids and instructions on how to use blinders and how to create personal shelters. There was however some disagreement over who should get access to the best bombing shelter from July 1944 as Allied bombing raids began, and it seems like there simply was not enough shelters. George Kulstad would usually take shelter in the ground floor under the staircase of his apartment which was reinforced by a casing of bamboo and packed earth, when researching his book, he found that his house was well within the stray bomb danger-zone and air raids were becoming commonplace, his house was therefore probably a priority area to build proper shelters in. Kulstads shelter seems have been made with the A.R.P section D. Precaution instructions in mind judging by his description of the shelter. <sup>336</sup>

Membership in the A.R.P organization must have been important for Norwegians in Shanghai, shelter was however not its most important function. By 1945 the food situation was becoming a serious challenge in Shanghai like in Hong Kong and elsewhere and the Swedish Consulate had spent most of its available funds, as we have seen in chapter 4, simultaneously Japanese military forces started requisitioning food and other supplies in Shanghai. This was probably the lead reasons for Ihlen Soppes questions about community responsibilities, as 1945 was the hardest year yet. (See page 92) To mend the situation the Norwegian Committee suggested that A.R.P who maintained emergency stockpiles could spend these supplies to help necessitous persons should the situation come to that.

*“Because selling foreign currency was difficult and the prices very fluctuating the committee decided to recommend the following procedure to for handouts of relief aid on 15. August (1945): money is distributed day by day for as long as it lasts. Should we run out of money we can hand out the supplies from the stocked A.R.P storages to those who have spent their resources. That person should then be debited the equivalent of the purchase price of the goods”<sup>337</sup>*

Provisioning of food and support work seems to have been among the Shanghai Norwegian Committee and the Swedish General Consulate's primary functions and priority for the Norwegian

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<sup>335</sup> (See page 97) The reading room was opened in the French Concession and named “The Scandinavian Seaman's Institute” it provided the approximately 200 Scandinavian sailors a place to hang out. Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/ L9285/0002

<sup>336</sup> Kulstad (2014)82-87. Leck (2006) 386,387.

<sup>337</sup> My translation, the original reads: *“Da salg av utenlamsk valute (sic) var vanskelig og prisene usedvanlig fluktuierende besluttet komiteen å anbefale foølgende fremgangsmåte for utbetaling av understøttelse den 15 August: Penger utdeles fra dag til dag i den utstrekning de er tilgjengelig. Skulde kontaktene slippe op skulde man kunde dele ut av de innlagte A.R.P. lagre til dem som tidliger ingen anledning har hatt til å legge inn noget lager. Vedkommende skulde da debiteres i overenstemmelse med den pris varene var innkjoopt til”* Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

community throughout the war, and other roles traditionally practiced by Norwegian Ministers, such as the role to act as arbiter according to Norwegian extraterritorial rights seems to have been neglected. This can be interpreted from several letters that the Committee received. For example, when a request for arbitration in a divorce case was requested of the Norwegian Committee on March 17, 1943 the pending divorcees were simply told to wait for the war to end, and the resumption of the Consular court, or the arbitration of a returning Minister.<sup>338</sup>

## 6.5 Chapter Conclusion

The role of representative of Norwegian interests in Shanghai was played by several actors after Minister Knudtzon and some members of the Consular staff left China in 1942. The Shanghai Norwegian Committee was a civilian constituted representative body and the political-actor that clearest held a role as a secondary diplomatic actor, it performed all the traditional three roles of the diplomat, and the Japanese did not allow other actors to negotiate on behalf of the Norwegian community officially in Shanghai.<sup>339</sup> The Shanghai Norwegian Committee had to bargain with the Japanese Authorities over the political status of the Norwegian Community of Shanghai. Like in other areas and countries occupied by the Japanese this was an unequal relationship where the Japanese had the ultimate authority. To please the Japanese authorities so that Norwegians would not be disfavoured or put into internment, the Shanghai Norwegian Committee made it clear in both speech and action that the Norwegian Committee and the Norwegian community intended to remain cooperative and follow Japanese instructions. This cooperative spirit was not well received by every segment of the Norwegian community and some wished to oppose the Japanese whom they perceived as enemies to Norway. Ultimately no event took place that endangered the Norwegian neutral status and most Norwegians remained free-to-roam in Shanghai until the end of the World War Two in Shanghai, that was likely due to the negotiations and the ingenuity of this Norwegian Committee.

The other two representative bodies in Shanghai were the Committee for Norwegian Seamen who represented the interests and negotiated of the significant sailor community in Shanghai in relation to the Shanghai Norwegian Committee and Norway's nominal protective power Sweden who had a General Consulate (GK) present in Shanghai. The Swedish GK played no official-diplomatic role for the Norwegian Community in Shanghai, the Swedish GK probably helped Norwegians as a social enabler and as an unofficial representative. The Swedish GK through its ties back to Sweden was

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<sup>338</sup> Malte Pripp spent much of his time as arbiter in the consular court ruling over legal disputes. Johansson (2012) 74. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0411.

<sup>339</sup> "Represent a polity. Gathering information for that polity. Conducting negotiations on behalf of that polity." See page 17.



primarily the provider of welfare to the Norwegian community as it helped Norwegians inside and outside Shanghai with relief aid and funds, to combat increased prices the Swedish GK increased allowances and ultimately Norwegians in Hong Kong could cope somewhat well with the difficult situation.

## **7.0 The End of World War Two- Return to Form**

This final chapter examines how the Norwegian representatives provided aid and assistance after the Second World War ended in 1945. It also examines at Norwegian post-war representative actors in repatriation and relief aid efforts. The chapter will also examine how the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs normalized its representative role to again enable track I diplomacy and the resumption of official Norwegian representation in Shanghai. Finally, the chapter addresses the question of reparations.

### **7.1 The Immediate Aftermath of The War- Repatriations and Representatives.**

When the Japanese surrendered to the Allied powers on August. 15, 1945 that signalled the end of the Second World War worldwide. Since the Japanese had not been militarily defeated in China, Japanese soldiers were instructed to keep working as a peacekeeping-force in the Japanese-occupied areas to hinder looting until the Allies could send their own military forces to keep the peace. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and the American air force USAF had gotten properly established and created aircraft runways in Chongqing and Kunming in free-GMD-territory by the end of the war. Therefore, these cities became crucial components of allied post-war relief aid in China and a key base of operations. Chongqing also remained the de facto capital for the GMD also immediately after the surrender.

In 1945 Minister Hassel, then Ambassador in Chongqing was finally relieved of duty. Hassel had become increasingly ill because of the terrible conditions in Chongqing and was finally flown out through India in 1945 to his new posting in Sweden. Secretary Rustad had to remain for the first part of the year.

Hassels replacement was Minister Rolf Rose Anderssen. Anderssen had been Minister in Kolkata throughout the war, and therefore long connected with Chongqing, as he had been a key-person in the sending of supplies to that city over the supply route “The Hump”. His knowledge of the situation in Chongqing was however probably not the main reason he was sent there. Anderssen was primarily recommended by the Norwegian Department of Shipping, as the most suited to replace Hassel because

of his business acumen and his shipping background, as it was believed that the diplomatic mission in Chongqing would need a shipping expert who could help explore Norway's standing in post-war trade in China. Perhaps that is the reason he was called "*commercial attaché*" (handelsråd)<sup>340</sup> Regardless Minister Anderssen's time in Chongqing would prove very busy.

In 1944 US President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) created a Refugee Board called the War Refugee Board (WRB) by Executive Order (Executive Order 9417) to help with repatriation and other relief efforts for "*victims of enemy oppression*" Norway was invited to partake in this directive and Christian. P Rauch at the London Government signed an agreement to cooperate with the WRB April 12, 1944. His letter to US First Secretary Summerville in London read:

*"This Ministry will be glad to inform our principal representatives abroad of the establishment of the War Refugee Board so that they may be prepared to co-operate with the board and the special attaches mentioned in President Roosevelt's executive order..."*<sup>341</sup>

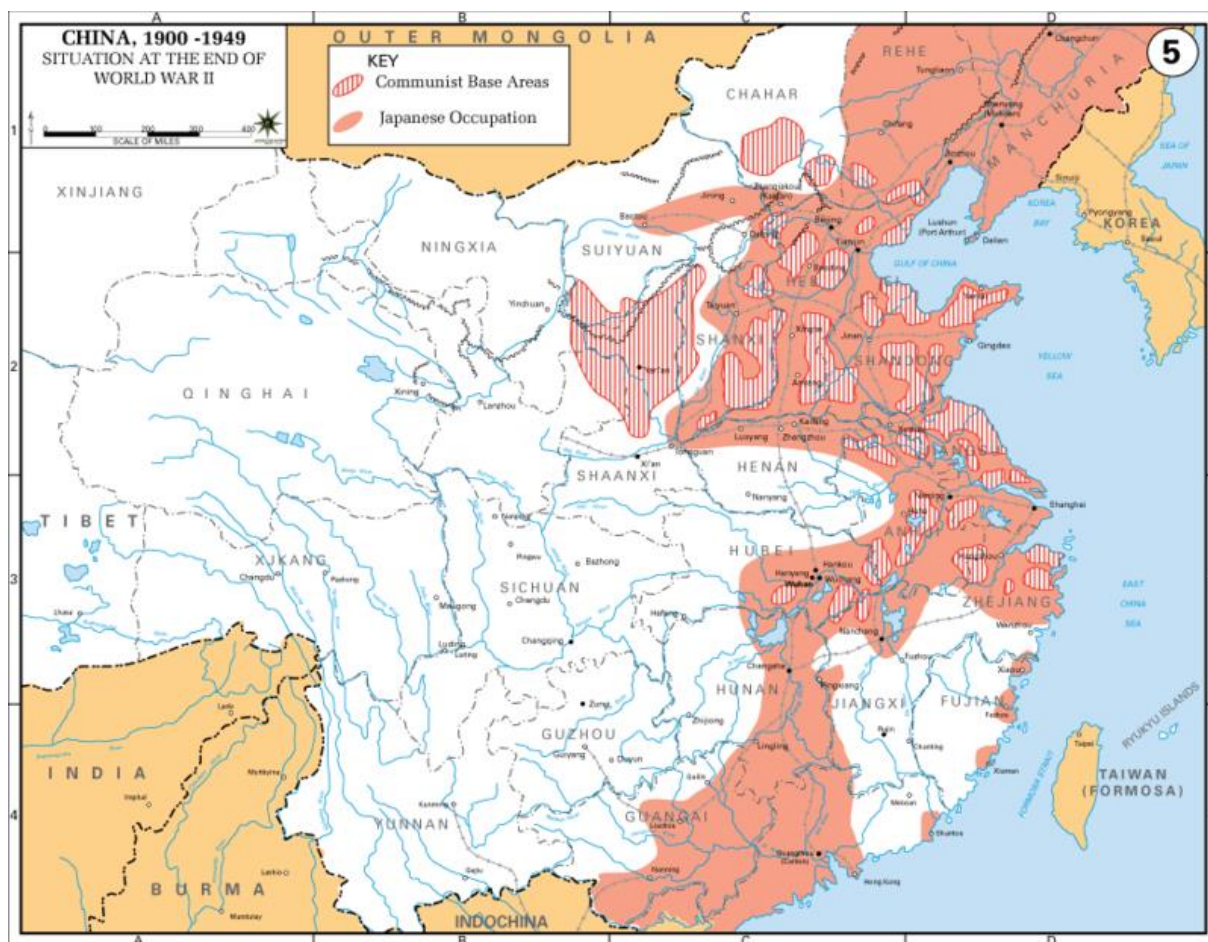
Norway's inclusion in this American relief effort translated in China to Minister Anderssen being allowed to take part in the Refugee board in Chongqing led by US General Wedemeyer the Supreme Commander of the USA in China. US General Richard Hepburn in Kunming separately led prisoner rescue operations. This gave the Minister the chance to learn new information every single day, as information of Norwegians was learnt alongside information about other nation's internees. For the Refugee Board reports were produced daily, and the reports covered every province with foreign populations in it, and it was called the "POW Sitrep" This information might not have been as quickly transmitted to Norwegian decision makers in London, if there was no Minister in Chongqing, as the information would otherwise have been sent to London by proxies or the Swedish General Consulate in Shanghai. In a letter Minister Anderssen stated that the Mission in Chongqing's priorities were now to find Norwegians that the mission had lost communications with.

As the fighting between the Allies and the Japanese started to wind down, Chinese GMD soldiers were shipped out from Chongqing and Kunming to areas that had been occupied by Japan. Outside of wanting to help the many pockets of necessitous refugees and internees throughout China, there were also political considerations after the war, as it looked like the Communist GCD would become a serious political rival and fighting had already again flared up between the GMD and the GCD and therefore contact with camp internees and people in cities was restored quickly, and with much agency, avantgarde troops were parachuted into Shanghai and Beijing already on August 12, to gather information about internment camps.

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<sup>340</sup> <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0020.html>. Utenriksdepartementet Ra/s/2259/dyb/ L9285/0002

<sup>341</sup> Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0013/0010. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=16540> 10.05.2018.



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The first outreach and help given to internment camps happened on 17 August 1945, two days after Japan's surrender, when soldiers and supply air drops were parachuted into Weihsian Internment camp (See page 94), and before September most of the major internment camps had been visited by American or British soldiers or other officials, additionally 900 more air-drop sorties carrying 4470 tons of supplies were flown in to Japanese POW and internment camps in the next month. On 19 August 1945 an American delegation reached Shanghai and established a Military mission to enable effective communication with Chongqing. Later, on August 26, GMD troops entered Shanghai and on September 18, 1945 an American fleet anchored in Shanghai moored at the buoys traditionally reserved for British warships, a political statement that was picked up by many Shanghai residents, Britain's supremacy was over in Shanghai.<sup>343</sup>

<sup>342</sup> <https://www.usma.edu/history/sitepages/chinese%20civil%20war.aspx> 10.05.2018.

<sup>343</sup> Leck (2006) 393,396,402. Willens (2015) 181. Kulstad (2014) 99. The USA and the GMD had become close allies in the war, and China was quickly becoming a divided country as the war was ending. This owed to the GCD

In Hong Kong Stanley camp representative Gimson established a civil government to govern Hong Kong after the Japanese surrender to keep Hong Kong British, when this government was backed up by a British fleet on 30 August 1945, British possession of Hong Kong was secured by military might, and the fleet also made sure that the population was given adequate food rations.<sup>344</sup>

In the earliest reports forwarded back home to the Norwegian London government from August 27, 1945. Minister Anderssen had learnt about some of the Norwegians in Northern China from a telegraphic report from an English commandant. The report told of 34 Norwegians in Manchuria and argued that the 15 Norwegians interned in Weihai were still in good shape. Other than that, Anderssen had gotten into contact with Dr. Martin Osnes in Shenyang (Mukden) through these connections he was able to communicate with former internees, whom he told that they could return to their former places of residency, should they so desire so, and he also urged allied military to support Norwegians. Later in September Minister Anderssen learned about the Klette family who alongside Hans Berents's son Odd Rein Bøe Berents and his family, had been under house arrest in Qinhuangdao. This was learned from a Red Cross telegram. Minister Anderssen also sent many internee lists and other relevant information to the Norwegian government in London, he received prisoner lists and budgets from the various important sources and diplomatic actors like Karssten Larssen in Hong Kong, who urged Chongqing to send a replacement, at the time a difficult arrangement. Larssen also sent extensive lists over Norwegian debts and a Hong Kong population census. The Chongqing mission had become effective at disseminating information.

On October 16, 1945 the Norwegian General Consulate in Shanghai re-opened after Minister Kildal had returned to Shanghai through Chongqing, to act as General Consul in Shanghai and to represent Norwegian interests in the Shanghai area. Kildal was therefore the highest-ranking diplomat until Nicolai Aal returned as Norway's Ambassador to the GMD later that year.<sup>345</sup> The diplomatic mission in Chongqing did however continue to act as the most important information gatherer nationwide. Kildal wrote a 6-page description of the first months in Shanghai after October 1945 and there he argues that much preparation and renovation of both the location and the archives was needed, to make the General Consulate operative again, and another important stated intention, was to re-establish the Consular Service in the traditional treaty ports. Much correspondence from the autumn of 1945 is related to vacancies at the former Norwegian Honorary Consulates. Most interestingly Kildal

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Communists having taken over swathes of land in-between Chongqing and the coastal areas. Because of this the American air-force air-shuttled GMD soldiers to most of the more important cities in China so that these places would not fall under communist influence.

<sup>344</sup> Leck (2006) 397. Emerson (2010) 170.

<sup>345</sup> There were plans to open a Norwegian Embassy in the projected GMD-Capital in Nanjing, this did not materialize because of two reasons, firstly there was little available housing in Nanjing, secondly there was increasingly less reason to establish an embassy in Nanjing because of the uncertainties of civil war in China. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148

convinced former Vice-Consul to Shantou C.R.W Thomson who had been interned in Stanley internment camp to resume his position as Vice Consul in Shantou. By 1947 all the Consular vacancies had been filled, and Yantai and Hong Kong had become full paid Consulates. Secretary Rustad was because of this workload at the General Consulate sent back to Shanghai, after over 3 years in the city he so often called a “*rat-hole-town.*”<sup>346</sup>

This left the Minister Andressen with the task of having to track down and relieve the Norwegian missionaries that had been stuck in the Northernmost areas in China's Heilongjiang province since Pearl Harbor. (nominally Manchuria until after the Tokyo Trials).<sup>347</sup> Andressen found out that the American postal services could not reach these areas, despite the American planes shuttling of GMD troops to Manchuria, likely because of the now intensifying civil war. There were also no working telegraph lines north of the city of Changchun. As a solution he contacted the Norwegian MFA in London. Norway's Foreign Minister Trygve Lie, then negotiated repatriation through Russia who reached out to the forty-four (44) Missionaries in the Tsitsihar. This repatriation took place in the spring of 1946.<sup>348</sup>

In 1945 China for westerners was a shadow of its former self, westerner's businesses had failed, personal fortunes had been eaten up by inflation and China itself was heading towards another bloody civil war, and perhaps most importantly, all western privileges had been given up by all the former treaty powers, a bleak prospect for the future indeed. Therefore, many chose to leave China as there were so few reasons to stay. US President FDR's Executive Order 9417 included an instruction to take “*Victims of oppression*” to “*Places of safety*” This program included in Asia voyages out of China to England, Australia, South Africa, Canada, or New Zealand on so called “liberty ships”. This became the solution for many, others decided to stay and hope for better times. Most Norwegians who wished to evacuate China were helped to their place of origin, or port cities, especially Hong Kong and Shanghai for repatriation sponsored by the American military. There the pending repatriates could choose where to go, but because of the scale of the ongoing evacuation operations of both westerners and Japanese military getting a seat on a ship was a very difficult affair. Many would see their homeland for the first time in those next few years.<sup>349</sup>

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<sup>346</sup> Ambassaden/Legasjonen i Beijing, Kina - RA/S-2610/D/Da/L0014 /0002, Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148. Karsten Larssen is listed as Honorary Consul for Hong Kong in the Norwegian State Calendar for year 1947, he was replaced one year later in 1948 by Einar Ulstrup. Sweden's Role as protective power ended immediately after the Japanese surrender, and Malte Pripp was sent as envoy to Chongqing shortly after the Japanese surrender after the GMD protested that Sweden had no diplomats in Chongqing or Nanjing. Johannsson (2012) 85.

<sup>347</sup> see page 59 ,94. Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina - RA/S-2611/D/Db/L0148

<sup>348</sup> Ottosen (2008) 304, Uglem (1979) 177.

<sup>349</sup> The Torjesen family (see page 48,59) embarked on the SS Samstrule bound for Vancouver in Canada they then made for New York in the USA, and there they disembarked on the SS “Stavangerfjord” which was bound for Kristiansand in Norway; Inger and Anwei Danielsen (Jenssen) could embark on a ship in Hong Kong bound

## 7.2 Reparations

Many if not most Norwegian had lost all their fortunes in China during the Second World War and many had racked up huge debts by receiving comfort money. The Norwegians therefore surely had a tough start when they all eventually ended up back in Norway or elsewhere when the GCD-communists took over China in 1949, and the GMD retreated to Taiwan.

The problem was of course that refraining from receiving aid would lead to certain death for destitute, additionally the debts taken were massive when adjusted to USD. It was therefore felt like an insurmountable burden to its takers. This problem was however erased in 1949 when Norway erased all these debts, but another contentious issue was two years later brought to the fore in the San Francisco Peace Treaty which gave Japan the legal right through its article 16 to deny paying war reparations to internees and others who were victims of Japanese brutality. Norway ratified the peace treaty, and therefore any reparations would fall on the Norwegian state. This legal question was brought up in a Norwegian state proposition St.prp.nr.67: Erstatning til norske statsborgere som satt i japansk fangenskap under 2. verdenskrig in year 2001. The motion to give survivors who had experienced Japanese internment monetary reparations failed on the grounds of unfairness in giving that particular interest group ex-gratia reparations. The proposition instead suggested individual applications for reparations. Both George Kulstad and Kristoffer Bøe Berents have been given generous individual reparations <sup>350</sup>

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for Liverpool in England, when they reached Liverpool they were long neglected by the Norwegian Consul there, who according to Anwei would only help war sailors repatriate; General Consul Kildal personally sent the British repatriation office a request for for Hans and Petra Berents expedient repatriation on grounds of “advanced age” as they were both older than 60 and he personally guaranteed payments. Hans Berents had then spent 42 years in Shanghai. «. Hans Berents made it back to Norway that spring, but most of him family stayed in China for a few more years and his son Hans Petter Berents became Hangzhou’s vice-consul in 1949. then some of his sons decided to move to Australia, where their descendants live today; George Kulstad evacuated China only on September 25, 1949 alongside his mother Helen Kulstad, who had an American passport, their repatriation happened only after a long running problem with getting a visa to the USA for George, as he was a Norwegian passport holder. This had the unfortunate consequence that his mother who had been suffering from tuberculosis, could not get adequate medical support before George was given a visa. Their evacuation route took them through Hong Kong, Hawaii to the USA where they settled down. Kulstad (2014) 139-145. Ottosen (2008) 307,308. 309. Jensen (2004) 64. P 19-N Hans Berents» fra arkiv S-2611 Utenriksstasjonene, Generalkonsulatet i Shanghai, Kina, serie Db, eske nr. 240

<sup>350</sup><https://www.documentcloud.org/documents/1338718-san-francisco-peace-treaty-1951.html>  
[https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/780bf8d4208d4626a5e003bda8d66c73/no/pdfa/stp200020010067000d\\_dpdfa.pdf](https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/780bf8d4208d4626a5e003bda8d66c73/no/pdfa/stp200020010067000d_dpdfa.pdf) 13.05.2018. (see page 10)

## 7.3 Chapter Conclusion

When the war ended official Norwegian diplomats could again represent Norwegian interests in China. At the time of Japan's surrender there was only one (1) Norwegian diplomatic mission in the whole of China, it was situated in the capital of the GMD, Chongqing. In Chongqing the current minister Rolf Rose Andersen had access to the best military intelligence in China and he could therefore produce much information that could later be dispersed around China and back to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London. Minister Andersen also provided advice and negotiated for Norwegians who experienced different problems in the different locations of China. Andersen was therefore able to fulfil two of the diplomats' primary roles. Negotiating for his policy and gathering information for the polity. Later in 1945 Two of the Ministers that had evacuated out of China in 1942 returned to Shanghai, there were in Shanghai able to re-establish the deteriorated Norwegian General Consulate and the Consular services along the coast of China. By 1947 there were no vacancies.

While there were no NGOs nor committees performing secondary diplomatic roles in China after 1945 the US (United States) played a very important role for the Norwegians in China after the Japanese surrendered us directives and policies helped many Norwegians with evacuating the post-war foreign landscape of China and Shanghai. The US and Britain also helped Norwegians with relief-aid.

## 8.0 Conclusion

The actors that had roles as representatives for Norwegian interests in China and Hong Kong in the timeframe of this thesis 1937 to 1947 included both diplomats and secondary diplomats, that is citizen diplomats. There was no uniform solution to the question of who would represent Norwegian interests in the different geographic locations after 1941, and arrangements after the attack at Pearl Harbor were largely done *mutatis mutandis*. In the inland and northern provinces of China no clear diplomatic actors emerged, and each group would need to negotiate for themselves in relation to the Japanese who occupied Eastern China by 1937. In the two most important cities in China Shanghai and Hong Kong citizen diplomats were elected by the communities' votes to negotiate with the Japanese. What each area in occupied-China had in common was that every area faced the same challenges, but each area responded to these challenges differently. These challenges were:

- i) 1937–1941 Prelude
- ii) 1941–1942 Crisis-break
- iii) 1942–1945 Consolidation
- iv) 1945-1947 Return to status quo.

In 1937-1941 the official Norwegian representatives represented every Norwegian in every geographical area of China from the Norwegian diplomatic mission in Shanghai and in Tokyo-Japan. The official representatives would represent all Norwegians in relation to foreign powers. This changed in crisis-break of Pearl Harbor. After that attack, the Japanese occupied the concessions of China and the official representatives came into direct contact with the Japanese who suffered a wealth of transgressions on the Norwegian Community, whom the official representatives argued were neutral. After Pearl Harbor the official representatives still had the prerogatives to represent Norwegian interests. But their diplomatic prerogatives were rapidly disappearing, and the Official representatives had little power Negotiating with the Japanese who did whatever they pleased without the official Norwegian representatives having any power to stop them. This status changed in April 2, 1942, on that day all the official Norwegian representatives in East-Asia repatriated on evacuation ships while leaving other Norwegians behind in China.

At this time the third phase shared between all Norwegians still in China, started. Every geographic area was largely left alone to cope by itself and had deal with the Japanese authorities or escape the Japanese occupied area altogether. In this phase of consolidation two citizen diplomatic representatives were created in Shanghai and Hong Kong both mostly known as “The Norwegian Committee” These committees were unrelated and neither had anything to do with the other. They also had de-jure no other supporting representative actors and would have to cope by themselves in negotiations. That same year of 1942 a Norwegian diplomatic mission was established in the free-GMD capital in China, that station should nominally have a representative function for Norwegians but because of its geographic distance and the poor communications between Chongqing and cities like Hong Kong and Shanghai the diplomatic mission could not help any Norwegians in those two cities, it did however provide some aid to Norwegians who managed to flee to Free-GMD China, but even there it was probably a less important representative of Norwegian interests than NGOs like the Lutheran Federation. The diplomatic actor that helped Norwegian in the coastal cities like Shanghai and Hong was the Swedish General Consulate, Sweden who had intended to act as protective power was not allowed to hold such a function, it could however provide monetary support to Norwegian along the coast who had very serious problems with money, as food was becoming extremely expensive. The Swedish General Consulate was however as powerless as all the other diplomatic actors when it tried to help Norwegians and others who were in the remote northern provinces. Those groupings had to cope by themselves in relation to the Japanese authorities, and they also received no monetary aid from the Swedish General Consulate.

When the Japanese surrendered on August 15 1945 The official Norwegian representatives again became the de facto representatives of Norwegian interests and the representatives who practiced citizen diplomacy quickly disbanded. The official representatives then managed to build up their abandoned Consular services on the coast, and through the help of American intelligence they could



find and aid Norwegians who had been isolated during the Crisis break. After the return to status quo most Norwegians chose to leave China to create a life elsewhere.

The representative arrangements was created in China during the war were created because of necessity as there official Norwegian representatives had left China, and also because the Japanese would not accept any of protective powers. This probably did not affect Norwegians as the Citizen diplomats were as effective in dealing with the Japanese authorities as the official Norwegian representatives had been. The Norwegian Committee in Shanghai got a favourable result from having had citizen diplomats, as they could remain free throughout the war. In Hong Kong most Norwegians were interned because of a minor infraction of the law.

## Central Political Actors

- **Alfred Rustad:** Norwegian secretary to the Embassy in Chungking 1942-1945.
- **Alf Hassel:** Norwegian Ambassador in Chungking 1942-1945.  
<http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0207.html>
- **Rolf Rose Anderssen:** Norwegian Attaché in Chongqing 1945.  
<http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0020.html>
- **Hans Berents:** Chairman for the Norwegian Committee in Shanghai 1942-1945.
- **Reidar Johannesen:** <https://gwulo.com/node/36545>
- **Terje Knudtson:** Charge'd affaires (General Consul) in Shanghai 1938-1942 General Consul Bombay 1943-1946 <http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1948/0292.html>.
- **Otto Kildal:** Vice consul Shanghai 1933-1942. General Consul 1946.  
<http://runeberg.org/hvemerhvem/1973/0301.html>
- **Karsten Larsen:** Honorary Consul and Chairman for the Norwegian Committee in Hong Kong. 1942-1945. <https://gwulo.com/node/36530>
- **Gunnar Sevald:** Secretary for the General Consulate in Shanghai 1936-1942. Head of "Den Norske Beskickningen" 1942-1945.
- **Malte Pripp:** General Consul, Charge d,affaires (1940-1946)  
<http://runeberg.org/statskal/1955/0308.html>  
[https://sok.riksarkivet.se/?postid=ArkisRef+SE%2FRA%2F101010872&s=TARKIS08\\_Balde](https://sok.riksarkivet.se/?postid=ArkisRef+SE%2FRA%2F101010872&s=TARKIS08_Balde)  
[r](#)

## Future Research

In this thesis I have examined the broad lines of Norwegian diplomatic discourse in China during the Second World war. This can be elaborated upon with more particular studies. The source material made available could easily be used for biographical inquiry on the main characters of this story. First, I would like to re-mention that Hans Berents compiled a personal archive, now kept by his family, whom I would urge to allow researchers insight into the archive. This archive deserves examination, as it has only been examined briefly. A biographical study into this enigmatic man would be a very interesting read. I also urge future historians to investigate the diplomatic mission in Tokyo's archive by code: RA/S-2416 Utenriksstasjonene, Ambassaden i Tokyo, Japan. This archive is restricted at the time of writing and might hold revealing information about many themes related to this thesis. To my knowing there has also been little research into the everyday lives of Norwegian diplomats in China, for this I would advise looking into Nicolai Aall's personal archive stored in the Norwegians National Library, it is also mentioned in in Frida Jenssen and Jens Tepstad's thesis as an important source for future research.<sup>351</sup> That archive might also shed important light on how Norway practiced its extraterritorial rights.

## Norsk Sammendrag

I denne masteroppgaven har jeg forsket på diplomatiske aktører i Kina under andre verdenskrig. Diplomati, er et ord som vanligvis assosieres med det offisielle diplomatiet, mellomstatlige bilaterale institusjoner som enkelt sagt passer på sin egen statsborgere, og som også representerer sitt lands interesser i utlandet. Dette systemet ble sterkt utfordret i Kina under krigen og Norges største utenriksstasjoner i Asia, nemlig Shanghai's Generalkonsulat og Legasjonen i Tokyo måtte stenges i 1942, da Norge brøt kontakt med Japan. I stedet ble det dannet en utenriksstasjon i byen Chongqing i innlandet i det frie GMD-Kina. Denne utenriksstasjonen klarte imidlertid ikke å gjennomføre sitt mandat som var å representere Norske interesser, i løpet av de første årene av krigen i Kina, og stasjonen hadde da liten kontakt med omverden. Samtidig var stasjonen kronisk plaget av sykdom og andre dårlige forhold. I stedet dukket det annenhands-diplomat-aktører i Hong Kong og Shanghai etter påskudd fra de Japanske myndighetene. Begge komiteene var best kjent som «*Den Norske Komite*» og ble ledet av henholdsvis Karsten Larssen og Hans Berents. I tillegg ble det dannet en sjømannskomite i Shanghai for å fremme sjømennenes saker.

Disse komiteene kunne representere de nødstilte nordmennene der de var, andre aktører og grupperinger i andre byer klarte ikke å skape lignende samhold, da de var for splittet og spredd ut. Komiteene i Shanghai og Hong Kong fikk assistanse i form av penger tilsendt gjennom det offisielle

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<sup>351</sup> Tepstad (2015) 92. Jenssen (2016) 16.

Svenske diplomatiet som enda hadde sitt virke i Shanghai, og som videre hadde kontakt hjem til den frie norske regjeringen i London.

I 1945 etter at krigen sluttet, kunne Norges offisielle diplomati igjen virke, først i Chongqing da den utenriksstasjonen fikk en viktig rolle i arbeidet med å hjelpe Nordmenn og senere på østkysten av Kina der det snart ble gjenopprettet en utenriksstasjon i Shanghai, og senere det videre konsulatvesen på Kinakysten. Etter 1949 ble hele dette systemet startet avviklet da kommunistene(GCD) som ikke ønsket noen form for utenlandsk omgang ble den de-fakto statsmakt i Kina.

Jeg har sett på store mengder korrespondanse mellom de norske sekundær diplomatiske grupperingene i de forskjellige områdene i Kina, og det offisielle utenriksvesnet til Sverige og den Norske Regjeringen i England. Samtidig har jeg sett på korrespondanse til og innad i India, mellom Nortraships representant og Norske diplomater der.

Gjennom denne undersøkelsen har jeg sett og gjort konklusjoner rundt det jeg har sett. Jeg har hatt lite forskningslitteratur å se til, og har måtte skape mine egne konklusjoner. Støttelitteraturen har hovedsakelig fokusert på lignende problemstillinger i Kina, men har ikke sett det Norske samfunnet under krigen med et diplomatisk representativt øyemed. Oppgaven føyer seg inn i en større kontekst, historien om norsk tilstedeværelse i Kina.

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The Old China Hands Archives in Special Collections & Archives at CSUN- California State University, Northridge:

Olaf Torgersen Collection

Kulstad Collection.

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