

# CHINA AND THE MODERN WORLD: RECORDS OF SHANGHAI AND THE INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT, 1836-1955

A primary source collection vital to understanding and researching the social, political, and economic history of not just the British-dominated yet highly globalised International Settlement in Shanghai but the history of modern China.

International Mixed Court at Shanghai, before 1927 (public domain).

THE
NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

**COLLECTION SIZE:**

Approximately 370,000 pages

**DATE RANGE:**

1836-1955

# ABOUT THE COLLECTION

Comprised of British Foreign Office files from the The National Archives, UK that are directly related to the history of Shanghai and the International Settlement, plus a small number of files selected from the records of the British Ministry of Labour, Treasury, and War Office, this collection deciphers and illuminates the International Settlement as the seat of formative events that shaped the history of modern China as it transitioned from an imperial dynasty to a globally engaged republic.

This collection covers the century-long history of Shanghai and the Shanghai International Settlement from political, commercial, military, cultural, and legal perspectives. It offers unprecedented insight into China's most developed "semicolonial" territory, which was governed by a Westerner-dominated Municipal Council; put in place modern infrastructural mainstays such as electricity and tramways; and saw cataclysmic events that pushed the country toward the eventual establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

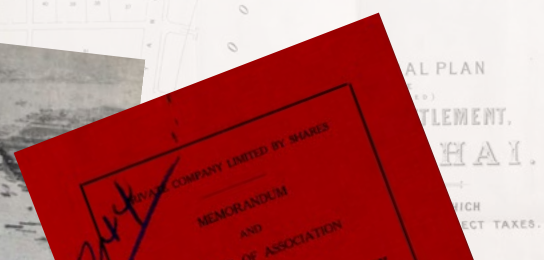
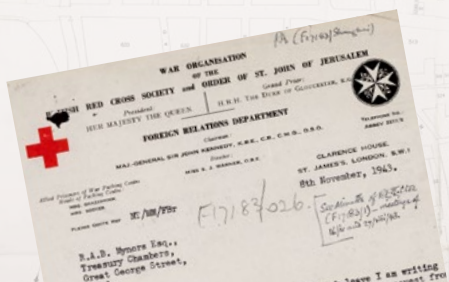
The topics covered encompass politics, law, industry, trade, crime, cultural affairs, and everyday life, and some of the included materials are exclusive to these files.

## VALUE OF THE ARCHIVE

- The archive illustrates a century of social and political life in a "semicolonial" and global city in what is now one of the world's superpowers.
- These files provide a diverse set of valuable English-language archives for researching one of the most dynamic and globalised cities in modern Asia, making it accessible to a Western/Anglophone audience in an area of increasing academic curiosity.
- Given that the Shanghai Municipal Council, which governed the International Settlement, was populated mostly by Anglophone Westerners, and that the Settlement itself was integral to the political, economic, and cultural makeup of the city, researching it is valuable not only for students of Chinese history but also for those researching colonialism, imperialism, urban history, and global cities.
- The material has no overlap with any other searchable collection.

## COLLECTIONS INCLUDED

Content Creator	Series Included	Date Range
Foreign Office	FO 93, 371, 656, 671, 672, 881, 914, 925 and 1092	1836-1955
Ministry of Labour	LAB 2	1941
Treasury	T 160	1939-1943
War Office	WO 32	1927-1935
Public Record Office Maps and Plans	MR 1	1924



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