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Introduction

Shortly after the fall of Singapore in February 1942, the Japanese professor Komaki Tsunekichi of the Kyoto Imperial University made far-reaching proposals for revising the Eurocentric cartography of the West by placing Japan and Asia at the centre of the map. Both Europe and Africa were designated part of the Asian continent, while America was renamed the Eastern Asia continent and Australia the Southern Asia continent. All the great oceans were seen as one and given the single name the Great Sea of Japan (Dower 1986:273).

These proposals to refashion the cartography of the West reveal that in the new Great East Asian Order the Japanese saw themselves as the centre of the world and as the nucleus of all other races. They would be the leading race of the future and would dominate all other races and peoples in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.¹ This aim was made quite clear in the Japanese plan for the leadership of nationalities in Greater East Asia drawn up in August 1942. In this plan the Japanese people were the pivot of all the Great East Asia Peoples' Cooperative Body.² It stated that they had the duty to give leadership to other people. Besides them, they included the Korean, the Manchurian, the Mongolian, and the Han people as members of this body. In what was designated the Southern Area, the so-called Nanpo, containing the present-day states of Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, various national minorities were distinguished from the indigenous peoples. First to be mentioned were the Overseas Chinese followed by the Indians and the Europeans and Americans. The Overseas Chinese and Indians were seen as Asian peoples who were entitled to

¹ The borders of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere were not fixed. Before the Second World War Australia and India also used to be considered to pertain to this Sphere. Later on only the occupied regions in East and Southeast Asia were reckoned to it.
² Dower(1986:273) stated that the ultimate ideal of the Cooperative Body was to place the whole world under one roof and to bring about the existence of a moral, peaceful, and rational prosperity, in which all peoples of the world would assume their proper place. This was an improvisation on the popular slogan of the eight directions under one roof, hakko ichiu, which Westerners often interpreted as signalling Japan's plan for world conquest.
become Japanese nationals. This was not the case with Europeans and Americans who were seen as temporary residents. At best they would have their power restrained or at worst they would be expelled.\(^3\)

All the national groupings just mentioned, with the exception of the Europeans and Americans, would be allotted their proper place in the new East Asian order, but there was definitely no place for the white race in the new order in Asia. One group not mentioned as a distinct people in the plan for the leadership of nationalities was that composed of the mixed-blood offspring of Asians and Westerners, generally referred to in English as Eurasians, living in the Southern Area.\(^4\) The Japanese saw them neither as a group of people to be distinguished from other nationalities nor as a national minority. This attitude may perhaps be explained by the fact that the Japanese themselves had an aversion to intermarriage with other people and considered mixed-bloods to be inferior (Dower 1986:277). This still does not properly explain why the Japanese did not mention the Eurasians as a distinct group of people: it may have been because of racial prejudice or because, in their eyes, the group of Eurasians living in the Southern Area was too small to be taken into account. Consequently, in the context of the Greater East Asian Order, the Japanese saw only the Overseas Chinese and the Indians as national minorities.\(^5\) In the island of Java when confronted with a large community of approximately 200,000 Eurasians,\(^6\) the Japanese military administration had to consider them a distinct group of people. In a proclamation to Eurasians issued in January 1943, the Japanese military administration in Java stated that, although the Eurasians were registered as Dutch nationals\(^7\), the Army had followed its universal policy of improving the lot of all peoples, with a special concern for the Eurasians, and had therefore decided to adopt a provisional wait-and-see attitude in the hope that they would appreciate the realities of Greater East Asia. Should the Eurasians cooperate with the Army, they would be treated liberally like the indigenous inhabitants. Recalcitrance would not be tolerated and should they show a lack of self-discipline and self-control and engage in subversive activities, the measures utilized against enemy nationals, such as the Europeans and Americans, would also be applied against them.\(^8\)

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\(^4\) The position of the Eurasians differed in the British, Dutch, and French colonies. In the Dutch case a sizeable group of mixed-bloods possessed Dutch citizenship.


\(^6\) See De Jong 1985, 11B:868. The largest group of Eurasians during the war lived in the occupied Netherlands East Indies.

\(^7\) See for the question of acknowledgement the Dutch nationality for Eurasians Van Marie 1951.

\(^8\) The complete text of this document is recorded in Benda, Irikura and Kishi 1965:72-3.
The focus of this article will be on the policy pursued by the Japanese military administration in Java towards the minorities, in particular towards the Eurasian minority resident in the island. At the beginning of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia in March 1942, there were about 300,000 ‘European’ nationals (the Eurasians included), most of them resident in Java, and about seventy million Indonesians scattered throughout the whole of the Indonesian Archipelago. The most pertinent question this discussion will raise is to what extent Japanese military rule can be held responsible for the general increase in racial tension leading to violent outbursts against the Eurasians in Java after the end of the war in August 1945. The tension between the Indonesians and the Eurasians seems to have become acute immediately after hostilities ceased. This pattern contrasts with what had happened to the Chinese in Java, who had already been the target of looting, robbing, and murdering by Indonesians during the invasion of Java by the Japanese Army at the beginning of March 1942. At that time the Japanese had protected the Chinese from the fury of the Indonesians. They made it quite clear that the beating up or murdering of Chinese would not be tolerated (Touwen-Bouwsma 1992). After the ending of the war, however, both the Chinese and the Eurasians became the target of the fury of the Indonesian people.

An analysis of Japanese policy towards the Eurasians in Java and its consequences can also improve our understanding of the aims of the Japanese minority policy in Greater East Asia. Was the intention of Japanese policy really to set group against group, or can the increase of interracial tension under Japanese rule be seen as the unforeseen outcome of their policy? Elsbree (1953:145) states that Japanese policy cannot be accused of deliberately fostering racial antagonism, indeed, it sought instead to mitigate its effects. Cheah Boon Kheng (1985:97) supports this point of view in the case of Malaya. This is counterbalanced by Jones (1954:375-6) who argues that Japanese policy in the occupied areas during 1942-1943 was largely one of divide-and-rule. The Japanese encouraged Indonesian nationalism at the cost of the non-Indonesian minorities. Dower (1986:289) goes a step further and states that, under the guise of racial harmony, the Japanese policy aimed to manipulate the enmity and jealousy existing between the people and pursue, wherever feasible, a shrewd divide-and-rule policy.

In order to get an insight into the extent of the effects of Japanese minority policy in Java on the relations between the Eurasians and the Indonesians, we have to place these relations in a broader time-frame, extending back into the 1930s. To do this, I shall begin by discussing the position of the Eurasians in relation to the Indonesians in late colonial

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9 See Van Marle 1951:106. Van Marle gives detailed figures for the increase of the Eurasians in the Netherlands East Indies from the first contacts with Europeans in the sixteenth century up to the beginning of the fifties of the twentieth century.
society. Then I shall move on to look at their position compared to that of the Indonesians in the Greater East Asian Order. Finally I shall focus attention on relations between Eurasians and Indonesians after the Japanese promise of independence for Indonesia in September 1944.

**The Eurasians in the late colonial period**

The Eurasians were first seen as a somewhat separate entity in the Netherlands East Indies around the turn of the century. For the members of the group themselves the accent was hereby primary laid on being European. The expanding educational opportunities for European inhabitants in the colony during the latter part of the nineteenth century had given the Eurasians a chance to enjoy a Dutch education and absorb Dutch culture. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Eurasians began to emerge as a valuable link between the Dutch and the Indonesians, especially in such institutions as the civil service, the Koninklijk Nederlandsch-Indisch Leger (KNIL, Royal Netherlands Indies Army) and on the plantations (Van der Veur 1961).

As a group, the Eurasians belonged to a privileged class in a plural society in which the Indonesians formed the lowest level, but within itself the group of Eurasians was in no way homogeneous. A number of classes can be distinguished among them. To the lowest class belonged the so-called paupers, of whom most were able to speak and read Dutch, but who generally lived the same way as the Indonesians did. As far as the well-to-do Dutchmen were concerned, they had no contact whatever with these people whom they stigmatized as degenerate Dutchmen. Taking advantage of the better educational opportunities and the expanding economy, the pauper class greatly diminished in numbers in the first part of the twentieth century. Above them was the lower middle class, which included the clerks and lower civil servants. By far the majority of Eurasians belonged to this category. They formed the lower echelon of European society in the Dutch colony. Their social superiors were part of the upper-middle class. They were those Eurasians who had at least finished Dutch high school and occupied the higher positions in the administration or worked as teachers and journalists. In the fourth and highest class were Eurasians who obtained a university degree and were working as doctors and lawyers. In general the numbers of the latter two classes were small in relation to the group as a whole.

The social hierarchy in the colony accorded Europeans so much prestige that most of the Eurasians tried to cover up the fact that they had Indonesian ancestors. To be a European had become the very essence of Eurasian existence (Van der Veur 1960:48). Generally speaking, their opinion

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10 Unless otherwise mentioned, the data used in this section are derived from the excellent dissertation by Van der Veur 1955.

11 See among others Koks 1931:222-63.

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of Indonesians was far from flattering. Of course, the natives who knew their place, such as servants and the small farmers, were allowed some good qualities, but the well-educated and western-oriented natives were despised (Wertheim 1949:107). In their turn the Eurasians bitterly resented the Dutchmen newly arrived from the Netherlands who obtained the highest positions and were well paid compared to their own salaries.

During the twenty years leading up to the outbreak of the war, the fear of a loss of status grew ever stronger among the Eurasians of the lower classes. They were the ones who felt most threatened by the Dutch policy of Indianization, which increased the number of Indonesians in the lower ranks of the Dutch administration at the cost of the Eurasians. Beset by economic problems among other reasons, the Dutch government increasingly preferred well-educated but low-salaried Indonesians to the Eurasians. The latter blamed the Dutch colonial administration for the growing unemployment among their ranks, especially among the younger Eurasians.

The Indo-Europeesch Verbond (IEV, Eurasian League), a socio-ethnic union founded in 1919, tried to defend the social and economic interests of the Eurasians. Membership, from which Indonesians were excluded, was only open to these Europeans who wanted to settle permanently in the Netherlands Indies. The IEV looked for other work opportunities for the Eurasians outside the sphere of the Dutch administration, for instance in agriculture. Its efforts were confounded by the fact that by law Eurasians were forbidden to own land. The IEV failed to change the law in favour of the Eurasian group. It had to content itself with leasing large tracts of land in Java and Sumatra, which it then rented out in parcels to Eurasians who were willing to embark on an agriculture career. Unfortunately these agricultural projects were not successful.

The IEV assumed the role of a buffer between the Europeans and the Indonesians. In 1939 the well-known chairman of the IEV, Dick de Hoog, emphasized that Eurasians were thoroughly imbued with Dutch culture and come what may would stand and fall with Dutch rule (Van der Veur 1960:45). Most of the Eurasians wanted to maintain political and cultural links with the Netherlands, although they saw Java as their homeland. They had hopes of the development of a plural society in the Netherlands East Indies in which the influence of Eurasians would be strongly felt and in which they would occupy an important position. It goes without saying that the attitude of the IEV in defending the exclusive interests of the Eurasians, in its feeling of loyalty towards Dutch authority, and the superior position it saw assigned to Eurasians in a future Indonesia con-

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12 Differences in salaries and pensions between Eurasians and Indonesians also existed in the Indies Army. In 1928 more than 42.6% of the work force in the Dutch administration consisted of Indonesians who were paid the same salary as the Eurasian clerks (Van der Linden and Simons 1990:47).
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flicted with burgeoning Indonesian aspirations for independence and 'Indonesia for the Indonesians'.

The IEV was not the only Eurasian union, although it was by far the largest and the most influential. Other smaller unions such as the Indische Partij of E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, founded in 1912, and its successors Insulinde and the Nationaal Indische Partij should not be overlooked in this context. This political movement favoured equal acceptance of Indonesians and Eurasians and aspired to the winning of an independent Indonesia. It was strongly opposed to the colonial policy which favoured the Dutch newly arriving from the Netherlands, of whom the majority were only temporary settlers. In their view Eurasians were people who belonged to the East, not Europeans. 'The Indies for the inhabitants of the Indies' was their slogan, meaning all Eurasians, Indonesians, other Asian people, and those Dutchmen who wished to settle there permanently. Although this ideology attracted only a small following among the Eurasians under Dutch colonial rule, the movement stayed alive. During the Japanese occupation period, followers of this ideology were given the opportunity to propagate their ideas among the Eurasians, but this time under the slogan 'Asia for the Asians'.

On the eve of the outbreak of the war, the socio-economic position of the Eurasians was far from promising. Unemployment among them had risen to more than 10,000, and over a thousand families were dependent on the support given them by unemployment committees. Exacerbated by the economic competition between the lower-middle class Eurasians and well-educated Indonesians, the tensions between the two groups of peoples increased. The majority of the Eurasians clung to the Dutch. They considered themselves to be part of the Dutch population group and would remain so at almost any cost. Aware of this even before the war the Japanese had carried out a well-mounted propaganda campaign to inveigle the Eurasians away from the Dutch side. Broadcasts from Formosa appealed to Eurasians to abandon their foolish loyalty to the Dutch, pointing out that they had been born in the Indies and were bound by racial ties to the Indonesian population. The propaganda also stressed that the Eurasians had never been accepted by the Dutch and had always been misled, the Dutch promises with regard to landownership for Eurasians being offered as evidence for this assertion (Van der Veur 1955:334).

* A proper place in the Greater East Asian Order

At first the policy of the Japanese authorities towards the Eurasians was rather ambivalent. Only in the course of the occupation did their ideas became more clear-cut. They shrewdly exploited the smouldering tensions between the Eurasians and the Dutch. Differences in policy accorded to Eurasian and Dutch prisoners-of-war (POWs) by the Japanese fostered the impression among both groups that because of their being part Asian the
Eurasians would be better treated. Before the war many Eurasians had found employment in the army. In fact, Eurasians had provided the bulk of the men drafted into the Indies Army (KNIL). In the registration of POWs the Japanese made difference between 'mixed-blood' and 'full-blood' Dutch. In some POW camps in Java Eurasians and Dutch were placed in different sections of the camp, sometimes even in different camps. In some camps the 'full-bloods' among the Indies-born Europeans were actually given the choice of being registered as Eurasian or as Dutch. In the course of May 1942, most of the Eurasian POWs, comprising between 9 and 10,000 men, had been concentrated in Cimahi in the 4th and 9th Battalion camps.

This Japanese segregation policy was the source of increasing tension between the Eurasians and the Dutch. Rumours spread that the Eurasians would be set free, following the example of most of the Indonesian POWs who had already been able to leave the camp in April 1942. These rumours dissipated with the commencement of the POW transports from Java to Burma and Japan in October 1942. The Japanese policy of dividing the Eurasians from the Dutch went by the board. Eurasian and Dutch POWs were imprisoned together again and employed as forced labourers on the Burma Railway or in the quarries and shipyards in Japan.

From the very beginning of the occupation of Java, the Japanese policy was aimed at the elimination of all Western, notably Dutch, influences. Within a month or so, the Japanese authorities had already introduced the Japanese calendar which commences in 660 BC, so the year 1942 became the year 2602. Japanese time which was one and a half hours ahead of Java time was also adopted. So, instead of the sun rising at six o'clock in the morning, it now rose half past seven. The use of Dutch was forbidden and Japanese and Indonesian were made the official languages. Only newspapers and books published in the Indonesian language were allowed. All schools were closed. When Indonesian schools were re-opened some time later, their textbooks and curricula had been reshaped to inculcate anti-Western and pro-Japanese doctrines. The Japanese also introduced a new social hierarchy comprising the following grades: at the top were the Japanese followed by the Indonesians and other Asiatics (Chinese, Arabs, and Indians), below them were the Eurasians, and the Europeans. The last-mentioned groups were treated as foreigners. This policy fostered the self-esteem of the Indonesians. The openly anti-Western character of Japanese rule encouraged the Indonesians to regard

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13 The number of Europeans, Dutch, and Eurasians, made prisoners-of-war involved 45,000 men. With the exception of 6,107 men, they were drafted from Java for slave labour elsewhere. See among others De Weerd 1946:8.
14 RIOD, Indische Collectie, Diary no. 7.
15 Some experiences of a Dutch soldier before, during and after his imprisonment as a POW of the Japanese in 1942-1945. RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 047507.
the Dutch and Eurasians not only as foreigners but as inferiors as well.

At first sight the Japanese showed very little difference in their behaviour towards Eurasian and Dutch civilians during the first months of the occupation. Like the Dutch, the Eurasians were treated as foreigners. Their bank accounts were frozen and the payment of old age pensions was stopped. They also had to pay the same high fee for the compulsory registration as the Dutch; 150 guilders for men and 80 for women aged 17 or older. Many Eurasian families found themselves in financial difficulties because of these measures. Although the registration fee was the same for Eurasians and Dutch alike, the Japanese did make a distinction between full-blood and mixed-blood Dutch. The ancestry and racial descent of those registered were checked. If a person chose to be registered as Eurasian instead of Dutch, he or she had to prove by means of family papers or official proof from the still functioning Dutch Government Archives that somewhere along the line there had been an Indonesian forebear (Van der Veur 1955:335). It was said that only with such an asal-oesoel could Eurasians stay free from internment. Those who could not offer such proof were reckoned to be Dutch and were considered eligible for internment. The consequence of this ordinance was that a striking number of families, who before the war may have denied any trace of Indonesian ancestry, now gladly placed themselves in the group of the Eurasians.

The Japanese policy towards the Dutch was aimed to isolate this social group in order to prevent all contact between them and the Indonesians. This was one of the reasons for concentrating the Dutch (men, women, and children) in camps in the course of 1942. Prominent Dutch men, who included those Eurasians who belonged to the highest class in colonial society, were among the first to be interned by the Japanese. Later on, all Dutch men between the ages of 17 and 60 were interned, followed by the Dutch women and children. By the end of 1942, most of the Dutch were held in camps. Initially the bulk of the Eurasians remained at liberty, provided that they could prove that they had Indonesian blood. De Jong (1985:869) argues that the Japanese intended to use these Eurasians for their own political purposes. Taking account of their part Asian descent, they saw in the Eurasians a group of people who could be convinced of the leadership of Japan in Asia and could be used to build up the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

16 At the end of the war 62,532 persons (20,676 males, 28,169 females, and 13,687 children) were interned in Java. See De Weerd 1946:8.

17 Not all scholars are convinced of the political motives behind the Japanese decision not to intern the Eurasians. Referring to the Eurasians, De Weerd (1946:83) said that they occupied mainly the middle strata of technical and administrative occupations in which they could not easily be replaced. In other words, the Japanese needed them economically. The Japanese replaced the Eurasians in the higher ranks, but according to De Weerd there were no Japanese available for the large group required to fill the
In the first proclamation issued to Eurasians by the Japanese military administration in January 1943, to which I have already referred, the Japanese pointed out that they were enjoined to regard themselves as Asians and to adapt themselves to the new order. It was emphasized that one of the ideals of the Japanese Army was that each people should have its proper place in this order. The Eurasians were also condemned as still being too westernized. They would have to mend their ways, and should they not comply they would be subject to severe punishment. There were some Eurasians who advocated cooperation with the Japanese Army. In an article in the daily Tjahaja of 27 January 1943, the Eurasian P.F. Dahler, an adherent of the ideology of the Indische Partij, warned the Eurasians that the choice between remaining Dutch or becoming Indonesian was imminent.

Despite their rhetoric the Japanese still treated the Eurasians as foreigners. Whenever possible Eurasians were dismissed from positions that were subsequently given to Indonesians. Most of the Eurasians were deprived of their means of livelihood, which wreaked havoc on their living conditions. Shortage of work meant that many Eurasians were unable to earn their own living and were reduced to being dependent on the aid doled out by the Eurasian Affairs Office established in July 1943. It was this policy of barring the Eurasians from the labour force more than anything else that aroused strong resentment towards the Indonesians among the Eurasians. In June 1943, the Eurasians were forced to register again. In certain areas the Japanese went so far as to establish eight different categories for Eurasians, depending on the percentage of their intermediate ranks, and Indonesians could not take over owing to a lack of sufficient numbers of trained personnel. Van der Veur (1955:198) is also of this opinion and adds to it that it was not a pleasant prospect to have to intern all 300,000 European residents in the Indies. De Jong (1985:869) asserts that the motive behind allowing the Eurasians to remain free was a political one and had little to do with the lack of skilled personnel or with the sheer size of the European group.

The Eurasian community in Malaya was hectored and admonished in the same way as its counterpart in Indonesia. In contrast to the Eurasians in Indonesia, the Eurasian community in Malaya did not constitute any serious problem for the Japanese. See Jones 1954:386.

P.F. Dahler worked as controleur in the Dutch civil service and later on till 1935 in Balai Poestaka. In 1922 he became a member of the Volksraad (People’s Council) as representative of the Indische Partij. In 1918 he made the acquaintance of E.F.E. Douwes Dekker. In 1934 he was on the editorial board of a weekly named Penindjaan, with the Indonesians Amir and G.S.S.J. Ratulangi. At the same time he was editor-in-chief of the Bintang Timoer. Besides this he taught in several Indonesian schools, like Pergoeroean Rakjat and Kesatrian. He was tireless in his efforts to convince the Eurasians to see themselves as Indonesians. RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 003614.

Statement of P.F. Dahler, ‘Indo-Nederlanders moeten Indoneziërs worden [Eurasians have to become Indonesians]’, Tjahaja 27 January 1943. RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 003614.
Kantor Oeroesan Peranakan. Head office for Eurasian Affairs under Japanese military rule (photo RIOD)
European blood.\textsuperscript{21} A person who had less than 50 per cent Indonesian blood could expect internment and many were indeed incarcerated. More often a rule of thumb was applied and the colour of a person’s hair and eyes proved to be the determining factor for the Japanese in deciding whether a Eurasian was a European or Asian (Van der Veur 1955:335-6).

A second unequivocal proclamation of Japanese policy towards the Eurasians was issued on 19 September 1943 in order to secure the cooperation of the Eurasians in this period when the tide of war was turning against Japan. Instead of treating the Eurasians as foreigners, the Japanese began to treat them as belonging to the Indonesian population, setting the Eurasians as one group alongside the former. In doing so the Japanese stipulated that the Eurasians had to realize that from then on they had to feel and act as members of the Greater East Asia community under the leadership of Japan and had to renounce their European ancestry. Again the proclamation ended with the covert threat that failure to comply would mean use of force. As a token of their generosity the Japanese authorities permitted the Eurasians to send their children to the Indonesian village schools (De Weerd 1946:84).\textsuperscript{22} Acting as their mouthpieces two prominent Eurasians, P.F. Dahler mentioned earlier, and A.Th. Bogaardt,\textsuperscript{23} explained the motives of the Japanese authorities to the Eurasians. Both made it plain that the Japanese demanded the complete abandonment of Eurasian racial arrogance and of their loyalty to and feelings of solidarity with the Dutch. Racial arrogance was wrong and stood in the way of the Eurasians taking their proper place among the other Asian peoples in Asia.\textsuperscript{24}

Their words fell on deaf ears of both Eurasians and Indonesians. The Indonesians were convinced that the differences between the Indonesians and the Eurasians were too deeply rooted to be eradicated overnight. The response of the Eurasian group was fairly reactionary. It utterly rejected the idea of being equated with the Indonesians. Some went so far as to say that they would rather die than be treated as an Indonesian.\textsuperscript{25} In fact the policy of the Japanese authorities, who were pressing them to become Indonesians made them more aware of the broad cleavage which existed between the Indonesians and themselves.

\textsuperscript{21} The following categories were used in the city of Bandung and environs: totok father-totok mother(born in Indonesia); totok father-indo mother; indo father-totok mother; totok father-indonesian mother; indo father-indo mother; indo father-indonesian mother; indonesian father-totok mother; indonesian father-totok mother; indonesian father-indo mother.

\textsuperscript{22} See for the complete text of this announcement RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 008911-008912.

\textsuperscript{23} A.Th. Bogaardt was of Eurasian descent and before the outbreak of the war acting mayor of Batavia. Unlike P.F. Dahler, he was respected by the Eurasian group.


\textsuperscript{25} See for the speeches of Dahler en Bogaardt, RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 032281.
The Djawa Hokokai form used to make a donation to the Perang Kemerdekaan fund (photo KITLV)
The Eurasians and the imminent Independence of Indonesia

Cooperation among all racial groups was made an essential part of Japanese policy in the course of 1944. The Japanese insisted upon inter-racial harmony in all territories within the sphere of their influence. They saw this policy as a means of developing all the resources of each country to the fullest extent. It would engender in the minds of the people that spirit of national consciousness and patriotism which would bind together the different units of the empire (Elsbree 1953:139). Besides a tonarigumi (ward community) system, they established the Djawa Hokokai (Java Public Service Association) in March 1944. The tonarigumi was designed to ensure a better grip on the daily life of the people and each unit consisted of fifty to hundred persons. The head of the tonarigumi, the kumicho, supported by his assistants, the hancho, was responsible for such matters as the distribution of scarce foodstuffs and the cleaning up of the ward. On a far grander scale the idea behind the Djawa Hokokai was to mobilize as many people as possible to achieve Japanese war aims. While there were other mass organizations for Indonesians, like Poetera (Poesat Tenaga Rakjat, Centre of the Power of the People)\(^26\), the Eurasians, Arabs, and Chinese were expected to join this new organ. Indonesian leaders deeply resented the fact that Eurasians could be members of the organization, since they regarded the presence of the Eurasians as being there to fulfil a watchdog function (Van der Veur 1955:201). For their part the Eurasians were not willing to join the organization voluntarily. The propaganda disseminated by the Djawa Hokokai, especially that directed against the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands, aroused deep antipathy among the Eurasians and formed an obstacle to those who considered joining the organization.\(^27\)

In order to propagate their policy of cooperation among the Eurasians, the Japanese also used the persuasive powers of persons who belonged to the pro-Indonesian group under the leadership of P.F. Dahler. During a meeting of Eurasians, organized by the pro-Indonesian group in Jakarta in January 1944, Dahler tried to convince his fellow Eurasians to choose to become Indonesians and cooperate with the Japanese. He told them that if the Japanese authorities were satisfied with their attitude, Eurasian POWs would be released on the birthday of the Tenno Heika (Japanese Emperor) on the following 29 April, for which requests could be submitted to the

\(^{26}\) Poetera was established by the Japanese military administration on 8 March 1943. It was one of the first mass organizations in Java in which nationalists such as Soekarno participated. The organization was under the strict control of the Japanese authorities and was meant to mobilize the people to achieve Japanese war goals. By the beginning of 1944, it was clear that the organization was a failure. The Djawa Hokokai was set up in its stead.

\(^{27}\) Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (BUZA), NEFIS/CMI, no. 2550, ‘De Indo-Europeesche gemeenschap gedurende het tijdvak 8 maart 1942 tot 15 augustus 1945’ [The Eurasians in the period 8 March 1942 to 15 August 1945].

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authorities. Many Eurasian families thereupon did submit requests, but in vain. This caused distress and aroused distrust among the Eurasians about the real intentions of the Japanese. Another consequence of the Japanese policy of cooperation was that the old contrasts within the Eurasian group itself, namely those who were pro- or anti-Indonesian were highlighted more than ever.\textsuperscript{28} Obviously the Japanese found the Eurasians a difficult group with which to deal. In order to tighten their control over them, the Japanese ordered the establishment of Eurasian Committees in all the big cities in Java. The underlying motive behind these committees was to encourage the Japanese policy of cooperation. In the future they would coordinate all financial aid for the support of Eurasians. Besides this social support role, the committees functioned as a kind of labour exchange office. Employment was offered to male Eurasians, most of them youngsters, in rope factories and technical workshops. Eurasian women and girls were offered such work as the knitting of socks for the Japanese army or spinning thread. The enthusiasm for this kind of employment was not overwhelming among the Eurasians. The wages paid were very low and, last but not least, they had to work under the supervision of Japanese or Indonesians, who were still looked down upon by most of them. The screws were now tightened. Eurasians who refused to work together with Japanese or Indonesians were no longer eligible for any financial support. Other consequences of a non-cooperative attitude were that the children of dissidents were not permitted to attend the Indonesian schools and they were not exempted from paying the heavy registration fee imposed on all Dutch nationals, from which Eurasians who were willing to cooperate and to consider themselves as Asiatics were freed.\textsuperscript{29}

Japanese policy shifted even further in the direction of the national element after an announcement made by the Japanese prime minister, Koiso, in the Diet on 7 September 1944. He promised Indonesia independence some time in the future. This was of tremendous importance to the Indonesian nationalists. It changed the concept of Greater East Asia into Indonesia Merdeka (Van der Veur 1955:202). In the wake of this announcement Japanese policy laid more stress on the national consciousness and the intensification of belligerence towards the Allied powers. The national minorities, the Eurasians, Chinese, and Arabs, were permitted to participate in the anticipated glory of the Indonesians. Therefore, shoulder to shoulder

\textsuperscript{28} De Jong places the contrasts in the Eurasian group during the Japanese occupation in the context of pro- or anti-Dutch. In my opinion it would be more in accordance with the reality to place these contrasts in the context of pro- or anti-Indonesian sentiments. It was not so much the loyalty to the Dutch as the aversion of the Eurasians to being made equal with the Indonesians that caused them trouble with the Japanese authorities. See for a detailed overview of the Eurasians in the Netherlands Indies during the Japanese occupation, De Jong 1985, 11b:867-910.

\textsuperscript{29} See for more information on the Eurasian committees Touwen-Bouwsma 1995.
with the Indonesians they had to exert themselves in the construction of a new society (De Weerd 1946:96).

The idea of adhering to the policy of cooperation and working on the construction of a new society in which the Indonesians were to form the nucleus was quite impossible for most Eurasians to accept. Obviously the majority of them did not take the idea that the Indonesians would become independent in the future too seriously and they still pinned their hopes on an Allied victory. The first to be confronted with the new measures introduced by the Japanese authorities to enforce cooperation were the Eurasian youngsters. A new registration of this group was ordered in which they had to make an explicit declaration of whether they were pro- or anti-Japan. A number of them still refused to cooperate and declared themselves to be anti-Japan. Others, stated they were willing to cooperate with the Japanese but definitely not with the Indonesians. Arrests followed and in January 1945 large-scale raids took place all over Java. An official Japanese declaration of 26 January 1945 explained that action had been taken only against those male Eurasians who had refused to cooperate with the military regime. They were gaoleed or interned in camps.

The real reason behind the arrests according to a statement made after the war by Hamaguchi, the Japanese head of the Eurasian Affairs Office, was that the Japanese expected an Allied invasion of Java and that it would be dangerous for Japan to allow those Eurasians who had refused to cooperate with them to remain at large. As the war reached a critical point the internment of all Eurasian males was considered, precisely for the very purpose of preventing them from participating in any hostile activities in times of crisis. This statement supports the idea mooted by Elsbree (1953:141), who states that behind the interracial harmony policy lay a strong desire on the part of the Japanese to create national unity in order to prosecute the war more effectively and to provide themselves with increased support in the event of an Allied invasion. To be forced to fight against the Allies was just what the Eurasians in Java feared most. This was one of the cogent reasons that they did not want to join the Djawa Hokokai. As the threat of an Allied invasion mounted, the Japanese introduced more measures to prevent the Eurasians from being able to support the Allied forces.

Meanwhile the preparations for the independence of Indonesia had begun. Dahler was the only Eurasian who participated in the Committee for the Study of Preparations for Independence installed in May 1945. By
means of a number of speeches, Soekarno explained to the non-Indonesian groups what their legal position would be in the new Indonesian state. He made it clear that in the new Indonesia all groups of people would be equal to the Indonesians. The Eurasians present reacted unresponsively to Soekarno’s statement that they would be treated as Indonesians in the new state. Racial prejudice and feelings of superiority towards Indonesians permeated the motion submitted and supported by the majority of the group. The following conditions were formulated in the motion. Any forced assimilation between Eurasians and Indonesians was out of the question. Quite apart from this unequivocal stance, the Eurasians were not prepared to participate in a war against the Allies and, last but not least, the Eurasians wanted to continue to exist as a distinctive group. Only a small minority declared that they wished to become Indonesian nationals and accept all the consequences of doing so, including those inherent in pursuing the ongoing war against the Allies.33

Dahler, as supporter of the assimilation between the Eurasians and the Indonesians, thought the problem caused by the majority of the Eurasians was easy to solve. The Eurasians could choose whether to become European or to become Indonesian. If they wished to become Indonesian, they would have the same status in the new state as the Indonesian people. If they clung to their European descent, it was better to put them on a ship to Europe. Perhaps there were some countries that were prepared to recognize them as their nationals.34 It goes without saying that the attitude of the greater part of the Eurasians frustrated the Indonesians, which only served to exacerbate the existing tension between the two groups of people. After the capitulation of Japan in August 1945, the Eurasians no longer had any choice. They became the target of violent outbursts of anger by the Indonesians. Killings and murder of Eurasians started in September 1945. All over Java they were terrorized. Thousands of them were placed in camps. The last of them were only released in the middle of 1947, just before the Dutch launched the First Military Action.

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that the three-year long period of Japanese occupation corroded the very foundations of the Eurasian community in Java. The Eurasians were bereft of the preferential position they had occupied during the late colonial period. From being almost the top of the social hierarchy they found themselves relegated to the lowest place, behind the Chinese and the Arabs. The Indonesians, on the other hand, had risen from nowhere to second place, just behind the Japanese. The fall in status and

33 Report on the KOP (Kantor Oeroesan Peranakan) and PAGI, 7 June 1946, BUZA, NEFIS/CMI, no. 2330.
34 ‘De positie van de halfbloeden in Indonesië’, Soeara Asia, 24 May 1945, RIOD, Indische Collectie, no. 036756.
their treatment as foreigners, not to mention the rapid impoverishment of most of the Eurasians as a consequence of the measures taken by the Japanese, only served to discredit them more in the eyes of the Indonesians. Japanese policy was racist, but I believe no more so than the policy of the European colonial rulers. Both rulers placed themselves at the nucleus of the world and their own race at the apex of the social hierarchy. During the Japanese occupation the racial superiority of the Europeans and Americans suffered a profound assault and it was the Eurasians, not the Dutch who were isolated in internment camps, who suffered most directly from the ignominy to which the white race had been reduced.

Did the Japanese policy foster hatred between the different races in the areas in Asia which they occupied, in a shrewd attempt to divide-and-rule as Dower (1986:289) has stated? It cannot be denied that the suppressed racial tension which had existed before the war between the Eurasians and the Dutch, on the one hand, and between the Eurasians and the Indonesians on the other emerged into the uncompromising light of day during the first two years of the Japanese occupation, continuously fuelled by anti-white and anti-Western propaganda campaigns. The Japanese began by trying to set the Eurasians against the Dutch and when this last group were interned, they subsequently exploited the animosity harboured by the Indonesians against the Eurasians. My own feeling is that Japanese policy in this period can be characterized as being largely one of divide-and-rule. Their motive, however, was not to encourage Indonesian nationalism against non-Indonesian minorities as Jones (1954:375-6) has argued. The general policy determined at the Liaison Conference on 20 November 1941, that premature encouragement of indigenous independence movements should be avoided, applied to Indonesia in particular (Benda 1965:2). In Java Japanese military rule reined in nationalistic feelings as much as possible in the first two years. The motive behind the divide-and-rule policy was basically racist: to encourage feelings of Asian superiority at the expense of non-Asian nationalities. This far I agree with Dower (1986:289) but only in as far as the first two years of Japanese military rule in Java are concerned.

The Japanese appeal for cooperation from all racial groups became an essential part of Japan's policy in the Southern Area in the course of 1944. Behind this policy of interracial harmony was, as Elsbree (1953:141) states, the strong desire of the Japanese to create national unity in the interest of a more effective prosecution of the war and to provide themselves with increased military strength in the event of an allied invasion. This view finds support in the case of the Eurasians in Java. As the course of war worsened for Japan, increasing pressure was exerted on the Eurasians to cooperate with the Japanese military administration. There were concessions too from the Japanese side. If the Eurasians cooperated they would no longer be regarded as foreigners but treated in the same way as the Indonesians. This did not mean the complete elimination of racial
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overtones. The Eurasians were continuously accused of feeling racially superior to the Indonesians. The consequence of the cooperation policy was that Eurasians and Indonesians alike were forced to work together, for example within the *tonarigumi* and the Djawa Hokokai. Although this policy was only partly successful its effect was that both groups became more conscious of each other and the more they mixed with each other, the more they rubbed each other up the wrong way. The Indonesians did not really trust the Eurasians and the Eurasians in their turn reacted fiercely against everything that in their eyes corroded their status.

The estrangement already existing between both groups of people was only widened and intensified by the promise of independence for Indonesia given on 7 September 1944. To adhere to a policy of cooperation and to work on a new society in which the Indonesians would form the nucleus required an impossible effort from the majority of the Eurasians. Racial prejudice and feelings of superiority made it hard for the Eurasians to imagine themselves at the same level as the Indonesians. They did not want to assimilate with the Indonesians, let alone become Indonesian nationals. They were unable to visualize the fact that the Indonesians might become independent at some time in the future and pinned their hopes on an allied victory. The minority of the Eurasians who supported a pro-Indonesian attitude were despised as collaborators and traitors in the eyes of the majority of Eurasians (Van der Veur 1955:205-6).

Racial tensions grew into open hostility directly after the war. Hundreds of Eurasians were murdered and killed in attacks by fanatical nationalistic Indonesian youth groups in the so-called Bersiap Period during the last quarter of 1945. The violent outbursts against the Eurasians in Java cannot be attributed solely to Japanese policy. I think Elsbree (1953:145) is right in saying that the Japanese cannot be accused of deliberately fostering racial antagonism. Nevertheless, the effect of their policy of interracial harmony and cooperation was counterproductive and that each nationality became more acutely conscious of its own identity and ethnic loyalties. As far as the majority of the Eurasians was concerned to be Dutch and to remain Dutch was still the very essence of their existence. Van der Veur argues (1961:99) that it was the almost total identification of the Eurasians with the Dutch and with the colonial order that made them the target of the growing nationalistic forces among the Indonesians directly after the war.

Although Van der Veur’s explanation is a valuable one, he does not take the effects of the Japanese policy on the interracial relations between Eurasians and Indonesians into account. He makes it seem that it was the Eurasians’ own fault that they were slaughtered by the Indonesians. I believe the whole situation is more complicated. To gain an insight into the slaughter of Eurasians during the Bersiap Period we have to study not only the effects of Japanese policy on interracial relations but also the reactions and the strategies of the groups of peoples involved. In this
article I have tried to answer the question of to what extent Japanese rule can be held responsible for the general increase in racial tension in Java, eventually leading to violent outbursts against the Eurasians in the aftermath of the war. I argue that the increase in racial tension can be partly ascribed to Japanese policy as far as this encouraged an increasing consciousness of an identity and ethnicity. But did the Eurasians and the Indonesians merely passively absorb Japanese policy or did they themselves actively contribute to the increase of tensions between them? To answer that question it is necessary to know more about the feelings and perceptions of the Eurasians and the Indonesians about themselves and about each other, and the changes these feelings and perceptions had undergone since the 1930s.

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