

SOUTH EAST ASIA

Colonial History

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Colonial History

Edited by Paul H. Kratoska

Volume II

Empire-building during the Nineteenth Century



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EMPIRE-BUILDING DURING
THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

INTRODUCTION

The nineteenth century brought a new wave of colonial expansion to South East Asia, and by the early 1900s the greater part of the region was under some form of Western control. The reasons for this expansion, and the nature of the control exercised, varied considerably. British rule in Malaya grew out of a felt need to forestall the possibility that another power might threaten the trade passing through the Straits of Malacca by acquiring a colony in the Malay Peninsula. British Burma began to take shape as a result of measures taken to defend the eastern frontiers of India, and the process received added impetus from attempts to trade with Burma, and with China through Burma. The hope of gaining access to China through South East Asia also lay behind France's entry into Vietnam, where the Mekong and Red Rivers appeared to offer prospects for trade with the interior. The Netherlands had maintained a presence in the Indonesian archipelago since the 1600s, but the Dutch now extended their control over a much wider area in order to secure this long-established sphere of influence from imperial adventures on the part of other European powers, and protect Dutch interests from the unrestrained exercise of power by local rulers. At the end of the century, the United States acquired the Philippines in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War, and kept the territory with few clear goals except to prevent it from falling into the hands of other empire-minded powers.

While trade and the protection of borders clearly played a significant role in colonial expansion, some historians have suggested additional explanations. One argument suggests that Western businessmen with a particular interest in colonial territories, or in selling supplies to the military, pushed governments into imperialist adventures. Another calls attention to the activities of 'men on the spot' who went beyond the stated wishes of their home governments in acquiring territories or making treaty commitments. Examples of both certainly can be found in South East Asia. Private interests preceded their governments into a number of areas, notably the east coast of Sumatra and the Malay states. And Sir Andrew Clarke arguably exceeded his instructions when he intervened in the affairs of the Malay

states, while the French advance in Laos was an almost single-handed effort on the part of Auguste Pavie.

Imperialist expansion involved substantial risks and uncertain outcomes. In itself, expansion was likely to require military action to achieve control and carry out 'pacification', and further armed force might be needed to suppress future rebellions or repel an outside attack. The strength of the armies at the disposal of colonial authorities was less than they wished others to believe, and military actions needed to be decisive because defeats were likely to embolden further resistance. Having suffered a setback in one of the British Empire's least significant military conflicts, at a place near Melaka called Naning, British officials in Bengal sent overwhelming force into the area, noting that any sign of weakness might inspire additional challenges to British authority: 'Worthless as the object is, we cannot recede without loss of character, and are now bound to subjugate the rebel of Naning *coûte qu'il coûte*.'¹ 'Cost what it will', and the costs could be high. Moreover, colonial governments had to meet at least part of these expenses from local revenues. They also had to cover basic administrative costs such as salaries for the civil service, police and judiciary, as well as expenditure for developing physical infrastructure such as public buildings, transport, communications facilities and ports. Finally, they had to deal with a wide range of domestic issues – marriage and divorce and inheritance, petty disputes and minor infractions of the law, and many other matters – that involved financial outlays and gave little or no return.

In contrast with earlier practice, when the Iberian governments and the private, profit-seeking East India Companies exercised sovereign power over overseas territories, colonial administrations now detached themselves from direct economic control and pursued liberal, *laissez-faire* policies. To raise revenues, they taxed land, imports and exports, prostitution, and non-essentials such as liquor, tobacco and opium. In newly colonized areas the returns were modest, and because home governments expected colonies not to become a drain on the public purse, revenues went to a carefully circumscribed range of activities seen as the proper tasks of government. In the nineteenth century these consisted of little more than defence, law and order, the operation of a court system, tax collection and the provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure. Given that intervention took place in areas of unproven worth, it is somewhat surprising that Western governments showed any enthusiasm at all for colonial adventures.

* * *

This volume begins with an overview of imperialism that compares Britain, France and the Netherlands as colonial powers. The following sections outline details of the process of expansion in the Netherlands Indies, Burma, the Malay Peninsula, Borneo, Indochina and the Philippines. With the exception of John S. Furnivall, who served in the Indian Civil Service in Burma, and Charles Crosthwaite, the authors write as academics, and draw

INTRODUCTION

on archival research undertaken long after the events they describe. Crosthwaite, in his capacity as Chief Commissioner of Burma, was head of the civil administration following the final stage of the British conquest and oversaw the pacification campaign there.

Note

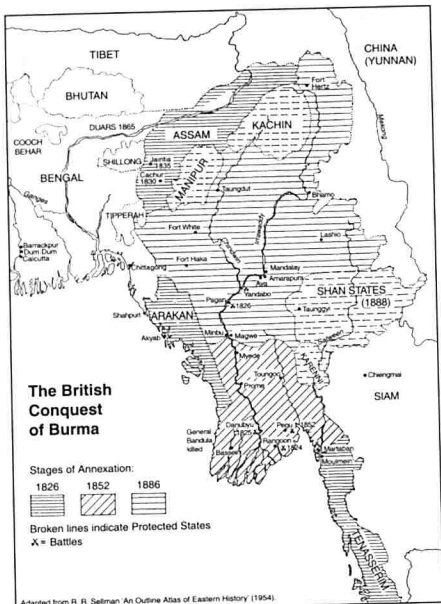
- 1 Bengal Secret and Political Consultations, vol. 363, No. 74 of 25 Nov. 1831: Minute by Sir Charles T. Metcalfe, 5 Nov. 1831.

GENERAL

MAPS OF SOUTH AND EAST ASIA
SINCE 1800

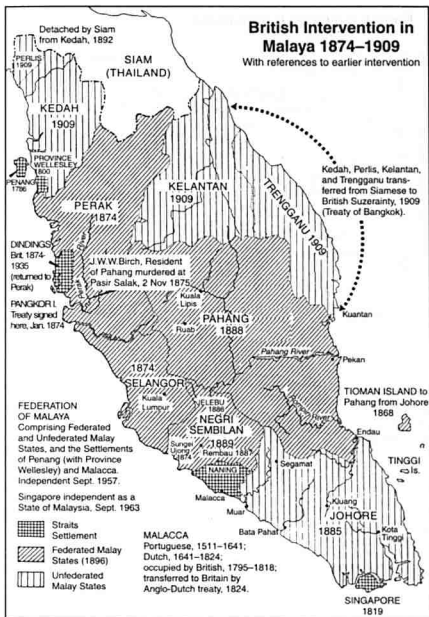
Victor Purcell

Source: Victor Purcell, *South and East Asia since 1800*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1965), pp. 35, 49, 65, 104, 116-17, 181.



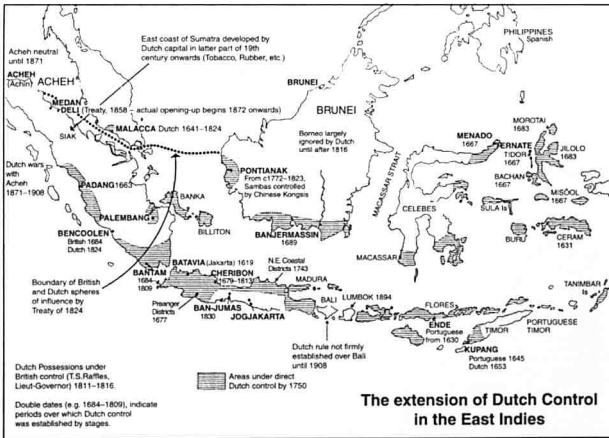
British Intervention in Malaya 1874–1909

With references to earlier intervention



French Advance in Indochina 1859–1907



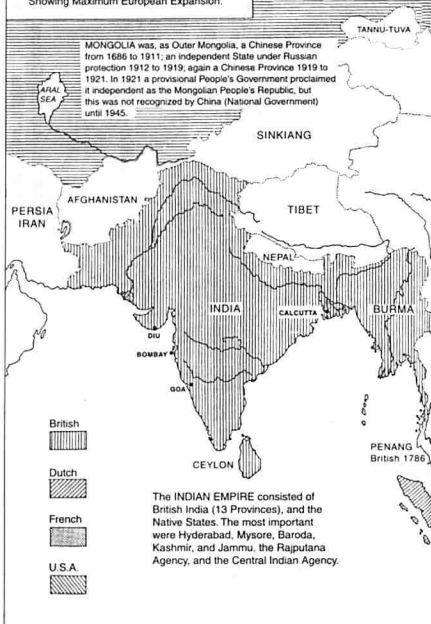


SOUTH and EAST ASIA in 1939

Showing Maximum European Expansion.

SOVIET

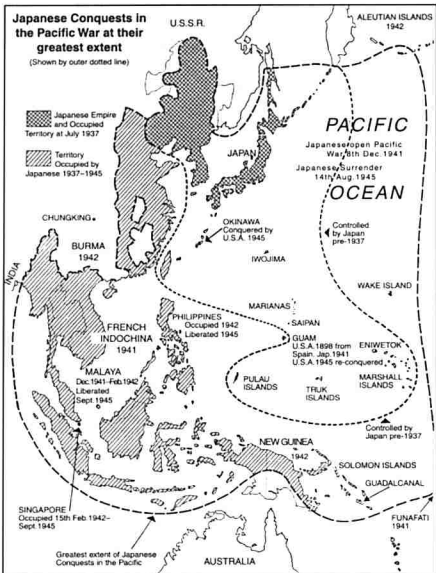
MONGOLIA was, as Outer Mongolia, a Chinese Province from 1686 to 1911; an independent State under Russian protection 1912 to 1919; again a Chinese Province 1919 to 1921. In 1921 a provisional People's Government proclaimed it independent as the Mongolian People's Republic, but this was not recognized by China (National Government) until 1945.





BRITISH MALAYA consisted of the Straits Settlements – Singapore, Penang with Province Wellesley, Malacca, (all British territory), and the Protected Malay States.

Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan, and Pahang were the Federated Malay States, and Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu, and Johore were the Unfederated Malay States.



DIVERSITY AND UNITY IN SOUTH EAST ASIA*

Jan O. M. Broek

Source: *The Geographical Review* 34(2) (1944): 176-195.

The first half of the 1940's may prove to be the most momentous period in the history of South East Asia. At the beginning of this decade the lands between China, India, and Australia were, with the exception of the buffer state Thailand, under the direct control of Western nations. Then, in a few months, the 150 million inhabitants of this region were brought under the rule of Japan. Will the expulsion of the Japanese mean a full turn of the wheel of fortune, a return to the situation of 1940? Obviously not; the war has brought such changes in economic, cultural, and political relations and mental attitudes, in the East as well as in the West, that a return to the *status quo* of prewar years is not only undesirable but impossible.

The colonial question is therefore of greater importance than ever. It is perhaps to be expected that the discussions should center on the subject of political independence, but it is unfortunate that this topic proves so absorbing that little attention is being devoted to equally important economic and social issues. The anticolonial tradition in American history naturally expresses itself in a strong emotional protest against the existence of dependent areas. This attitude can be a powerful lever for progress if it is understood that we are dealing here not with a fortuitous and immoral political relationship but with a deep-rooted cultural and economic complex. The colonial relation is essentially one form of the acculturation process, and as such it is a transitory phase. It was as a dependency of Rome that Western Europe was "exploited," but also enriched, by the more advanced Mediterranean civilization. In time it threw off the Roman yoke, and eventually it surpassed the old Empire.

South East Asia is now in the stage of "imperial devolution." The preoccupation with the political aspect of this process obscures, however, the problem in its totality. If one looks at Thailand or at some of the republics of

tropical America, it is plain that for the masses a higher standard of living and more democratic procedures do not automatically result from political sovereignty. The Philippine commonwealth, while moving rapidly to political independence, has remained economically dependent on the United States. In the other parts of South East Asia prosperity was not based so overwhelmingly on the right of free access to one market, but collectively these lands were in the same position to the Western countries as the Philippines were to the United States. Japan now grants "independence" generously all over South East Asia, but at the same time it insists on a "co-prosperity sphere" in which, obviously, it will rule while the native peoples will remain the hewers of wood and drawers of water. In turn the Western nations attempt to counteract Japanese propaganda strategy by also making political promises. Thus we may anticipate the strange phenomenon that after the defeat of Japan the ambition of the native peoples for political freedom will be stronger than ever but their economic dependence on the Western nations will be the same, if not greater, than before. This divergence of political ideals and economic realities will be the most baffling problem of postwar tropical Asia.

A one-sided approach, focusing on political doctrines, must inevitably lead to disillusionment. The peoples of the liberated countries will discover that independence has not diminished the need for markets, capital, and trained personnel and that it has not solved the problem of security. And the American people, once again, will be dismayed by the persistence of evils that were supposed to disappear when this war for freedom had been won.

It is often assumed that independent sovereignty for all peoples must be the ultimate aim of a just world order. Yet the Soviet Union, with its great variety of peoples, shows a markedly different, and apparently satisfactory, solution on the basis of equal partnership. We cannot *a priori* rule out the possibility that some peoples of South East Asia may prefer a similar interdependent relationship. However, whether the future is to be one of equal partnership or of independence, there must be a period of preparation before such adult status can be attained. The roads to this goal as well as the time required to reach it will differ for different peoples, depending as much on their social-economic structure as on their political cohesion.

These considerations are all too often forgotten in the oratorical demands for freedom now and everywhere. Modern means of communication have made the earth a unity, but they have not created uniformity. The recent discovery that the earth is "global" does not change the fact that peoples are first of all a part of their local culture pattern, each with its own interdependent relationships of man to man and man to nature, its own traditions, institutions, and ways of making a living. Terms such as "democracy," "self-determination," and "independence" receive their meaning from local experience, not from global charters. Instead of offering universal,

ready-made schemes that are likely to prove misfits, we must analyze the specific regional problems and lay plans accordingly.

Regional diversity in South East Asia

In the last year or so various plans have been advanced to fuse the former dependencies into one or two political units administered or supervised by an international authority or mandatory power until the countries are ready for complete self-rule.¹ Quite aside from other difficulties, such schemes do not take sufficient account of the diversity of South East Asia.

The natural environment shows a great variety of conditions. The dominant fact is the fragmentation of the lowlands by either seas or mountains. Great plains at one time existed where we now find the drowned Sunda and Sahul shelves, but the present plains beyond the amphibious coastal swamps are relatively small. Within the lowlands there are strong contrasts in soil fertility.² The best soils are those derived from volcanic deposits. These are found along the inner curve of the great southern island arc, from Sumatra east to the "fishhook" around the Banda Sea, and in the northern arc (part of the East Asiatic island festoons) running from Formosa through the Philippine Islands south to northern Celebes and Halmahera (Fig. 1).

In contrast, British Malaya, Borneo, and western New Guinea are non-volcanic; moreover, the heavy equatorial rains have thoroughly leached the soils, limiting the range of suitable crops and resulting in lower yields than in the volcanic lands.

Burma, Thailand, and French Indochina have no active volcanoes, and their alluvial deposits are on the whole less rich than those of, say, Java; on the other hand, their soils are less leached than those of the equatorial zone.

Settlement, largely determined by the search for wet rice fields, reflects these differences. The population is highly concentrated on the alluvial plains, except those of New Guinea, Borneo, Sumatra, and Malaya, where swamps or leached soils prevail (Fig. 3). External forces have accentuated rather than smoothed out the contrasts. The Chinese arts of dike building and intensive farming have enlarged the carrying capacity of the Red River delta and the Annam coast; Java and Luzon, the most favored islands of Malaysia, have become centers of colonial development and have seen their populations increase tenfold since the beginning of the nineteenth century. In these three areas population pressure has reached the danger point. In lower Tongking and Java the average density to a square mile is about 1000 people. In central Luzon it is 600, but unsatisfactory conditions of land tenure add to a pressure that otherwise would seem comparatively moderate.

There are signs, however, that the peak of concentration has been reached. The census figures of recent decades indicate – even if ample allowance is made for errors in enumeration – that the average annual rate of population growth has been much higher in certain sparsely populated areas than in the

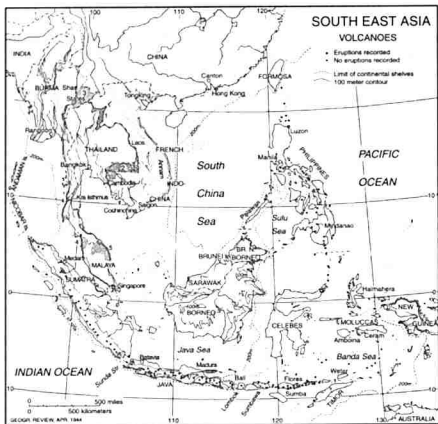


Figure 1 Orientation map. The 100-meter contour line (omitted for the smaller islands) brings out the small extent of lowland areas in South East Asia. The 200-meter bathymetric line indicates the extent of the continental shelves. Tectonic movements in these shelves have subsided; the uplands are dominated by erosional activity, and relatively extensive coastal plains have resulted from deposition. In the zone between the Sunda shelf on the west and the Sahul shelf on the east, and continued to the north in the Philippines, recent and continuing vertical movements are reflected in the mountainous island chains, separated by deep sea basins. The distribution of volcanoes is based on W. D. Smith: *The Philippine Islands* (Handbuch der regionalen Geologie, No. 3), Heidelberg, 1910, pp. 13 ff. (map of Philippine Islands on p. 14); F. von Wolff: *Der Vulkanismus*, Vol. 2, Part I, Stuttgart, 1923, pp. 159 ff. (Fig. 12 is an adaptation of W. D. Smith's map); *Atlas van Tropisch Nederland*, 1938, Sheet 5; L. M. R. Rutten: *Voordrachten over de geologie van Nederlandsch Oost-Indië*, Groningen, 1927. The large number of volcanoes in northern Celebes necessitated the use of smaller symbols in that area.

In March, 1941, the Japanese government, acting as "mediator" in the Thai-Indochinese war, allotted parts of Laos and Cambodia (1 and 2) to Thailand. The other boundary changes were announced by the Japanese radio early in July (*New York Times*, July 6, 1943). Parts of the Shan States, of which Kentung and Mōng Pan were mentioned by name, were added to Thailand (3). Also, the four northern Malay States, Perlis and Kedah (4) and Kelantan and Trengganu (5), were "ceded" to Thailand.

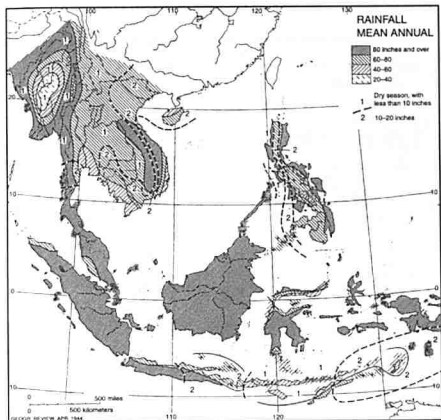


Figure 2 Rainfall. This highly generalized map is an adaptation from Philips' Comparative Wall Atlas of Asia (Climate), edited by J. F. Unstead and E. G. R. Taylor; Oxford Wall Maps: Asia, Mean Annual Rainfall, compiled by A. J. Herbertson and E. G. R. Taylor, 1909; C. Braak: Klimakunde von Hinterindien und Insulinde (Handbuch der Klimatologie, Vol. 4, Part R), Berlin, 1931. The rainfall for the dry season is based on the six months May to October in the Northern Hemisphere and November to April in the Southern Hemisphere. The areas marked 1, including Burma, most of Thailand and interior French Indochina, the northwestern Philippines, and the middle part of the Lesser Sunda Islands, have a pronounced "dry monsoon." Where these areas are well exposed to the rain-bearing winds (Burma coast, western Philippines), the rainfall during the wet monsoon is so large that the annual total is more than 80" and often is greater than the precipitation in equatorial areas (e.g. Akyab, on the Arakan coast, 207").

Areas marked 2 have a less pronounced dry season and are transitional to the areas with "year-round" rainfall. Java, for example, is under the influence of the Asiatic (N.W.) monsoon from October to May; from April to November the southeast monsoon prevails, which brings rain to the south coast but in general is drier than the northwest monsoon. As a result, western Java and the entire south coast has a high annual rainfall (more than 80") and no dry season, but the northeast has a rainfall between 60" and 80" and some months that are practically dry.

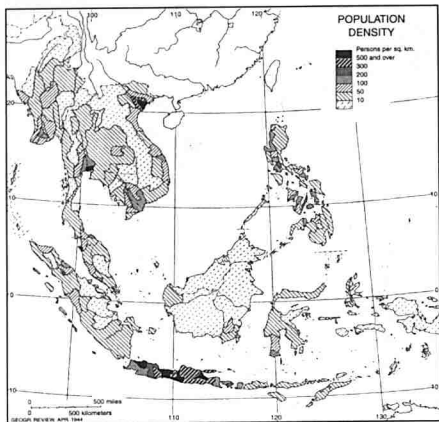


Figure 3 Population density. In order to present a comparable picture for the whole of South East Asia, the year 1940 or 1941 was chosen, and densities were calculated for administrative districts. This use of administrative districts for the sake of uniformity explains, for instance, the rather low density of the Annam coastal region, where the districts include large areas of sparsely settled uplands adjacent to the crowded coastal strip. The scale of the map required, of course, some generalizations where there were many small districts with differing densities (Tongking, Cochinchina, Java). Cities, where they formed separate census units, were included in the adjacent districts.

Sources: *Yearbook of Philippine Statistics*, 1940, p. 7; *Malayan Year Book*, 1939, pp. 36-37; *Statesman's Year-Book*, 1943, pp. 90-92 and 182-194; *Verslag van de volkstelling* [Netherlands Indies], 1930 (figures of this census were multiplied by 1.12 for the Indonesian population, 1.13 for "Europeans," and 1.14 for "Chinese and Other Foreign Asiatics" to obtain the 1940 estimate); *Annuaire Statistique de l'Indochine*, 1930-1931 and 1937-1938, pp. 51-52 and 15-16 (the percentage of increase between 1931 and 1936 was used to compute the population figures for 1941); *Statistical Year Book—Siam*, 1933-1935 and 1936-1937, pp. 71-72 and 50-51 (estimate based on rate of increase between census years 1929 and 1937); *Census of India*, 1931, Vol. XI, *Burma*, Part 2, pp. 2-3 (estimate computed on basis of increase between census years 1921 and 1931. Certain remote areas were, however, excluded from the census. See explanatory note, Part 2, p. 1, and Part 1, Report, p. 223).

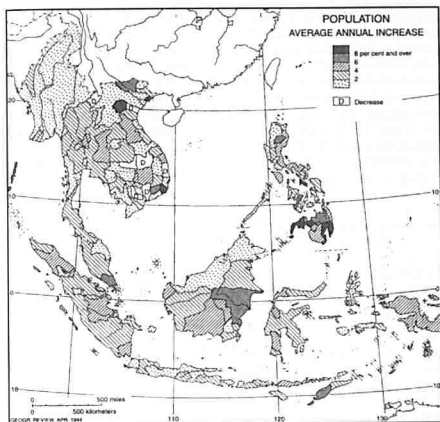


Figure 4 Population change. This is, so far as known, the first attempt to give a comprehensive view of the crude rate of population growth in South East Asia, but the map cannot rise above the level of available information. The cartographic presentation points up clearly the doubtful quality of census data over large parts of this region (see, for instance, French Indochina or the contrast between Burma and Thailand). However, the enumeration methods employed in the Philippines, Java, Bali, most of Sumatra, northern and southern Celebes, British Malaya, and Burma proper indicate reasonable accuracy. In Burma and the Netherlands Indies the rates of growth refer to the periods 1921-1931 and 1920-1930, respectively. The increase shown in southern Sumatra (Lampongs) is doubtless below the rate that prevailed in the 1930s, when Javanese immigration was accelerated. Altogether, the rates are high, as the corresponding percentages for some other countries show: Japan proper, 1.12; India, 1.5; Italy, 0.98; U.S.A., 0.72; Great Britain, 0.4.

The map is based on the crude gain (or loss) between the two most recent official censuses. For sources see the preceding page.

traditional cores (Fig. 4). This is not to say that the trend is towards an even distribution throughout the region; even a small absolute increase in numbers in an almost empty district will result in a substantial percentage of growth. It does mean, however, that the spread of modern civilization, in such forms as roads, hygiene, or development of resources, raises some potentially favorable areas to a higher level of opportunity, either for the local population or for immigrants. The high rate of increase in southern Sumatra and, especially, in Mindanao reflects the immigration of Javanese and Filipinos respectively. In western Malaya and eastern Sumatra around Medan the rate is also strongly influenced by immigration, but here most of the immigrants have been "birds of passage," who arrived in large numbers during the boom years of rubber estates and tin mines and left in times of depression such as the early 1930s. Elsewhere the high rates of growth, if not the result of erroneous census estimates, seem to be largely caused by increase of the local population.

It should be repeated that the sparse settlement of, for instance, the plains of Borneo and New Guinea is no accident; their carrying capacity is inherently lower than that of the present areas of concentration. Proper regard for the rights of the local populations demands extensive reservation of arable lands for their future needs. This means that the area available for resettling the surplus population of the present crowded districts is much more restricted than would appear at first glance. It underscores the invalidity of Japanese claims for living space in these southern regions and serves as a warning against schemes for colonization by European refugees after the war.

The racial distribution also reflects the natural environment. The rugged and heavily forested uplands act as barriers between the lowlands. This is particularly true of the mainland, where north-south ranges have imposed a linear pattern on the migrations. In the archipelago the sea has acted as a link rather than as a barrier, so that here we find a more nearly concentric pattern of coastal and interior peoples. The consecutive eastward migrations of different racial groups have all left their mark on the region, from the oldest recognizable element, the Negrito, in remote jungle retreats, to the latest, and dominant, group of Mongoloid peoples. Of more significance for the postwar world, however, are the language groups, because these are an important factor in the pattern of nations, existing or emerging, in South East Asia (Fig. 5).

The isolated valleys of the Irrawaddy, the Menam, the Mekong, and the Red River and the narrow coastal plain of Annam have served as migration routes, as cultural cores, and as political key areas for, respectively, the Burmese, Thai, Cambodians, and Annamese. The numerous migrations and cultural impacts have created a highly complex situation. The early settlers have either been absorbed by the later groups or been pushed into the uplands. The Mon-Khmer peoples now appear as fragments all over Farther

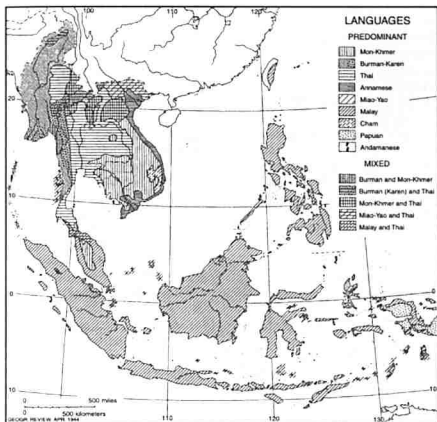


Figure 5 Languages. This is a simplified version of a more detailed manuscript map compiled by Dr. Paul K. Benedict and the author. Small "islands" of foreign language stocks, such as cities and plantation and mining areas, had to be omitted (for instance, one-half of Rangoon's population was Indian, more than three-fourths of Singapore's Chinese). The Andamanese languages had to be given a separate symbol because they have no known affinity to any other language. The 400 native Negritos are now only a remnant, a small minority compared with the 20,000 Indians and Burmese in the penal and free colonies around Port Blair on South Andaman Island. Cham is generally recognized as a branch of the Malayan language family; its location indicates sea-borne migration, perhaps from South China (P. K. Benedict: Thai, Kadai, and Indonesian: A New Alignment in South Eastern Asia, *Amer. Anthropologist*, Vol. 44 [N.S.], 1942, pp. 576-601).

Sources include: Atlas van Tropisch Nederland, 1938, sheet 96; A. L. Kroeber: Peoples of the Philippines, *Amer. Museum of Nat. Hist. Handbook Ser. No. 8*, 1919; L. de la Jonquière: Ethnographie du Tonkin septentrional, Paris, 1906; Henri Maspéro's chapter on languages in "Un empire colonial français: L'Indochine, edited by Georges Maspéro, Vol. I, Paris and Brussels, 1929, pp. 63-80; Wilhelm Credner: Siam, das Land der Tai, Stuttgart, 1935; P. Schebesta and K. Streit: Völker- und Stammkarte der Orang-Utan von Malaya, *Petermanns Mitt.*, Vol. 72, 1926, Pl. 21; E. H. Man: On the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the Andaman Islands, London, 1932; *idem*: The Nicobar Islands and Their People, Guildford [1932?]; Census of India, 1931, Vol II, The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Vol. XI, Burma, Part I, Linguistic Map.

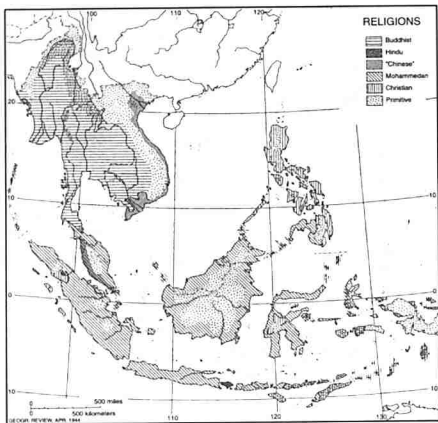


Figure 6 Religions. For large parts of the region data on religion are either lacking or vague; one reason is, of course, that the subject defies exact definition. What is described in the legend as "Chinese" religion is a mixture of Buddhism, Confucianism, and ancestor worship, and it is hard to say where the boundary lies between this and animistic beliefs. The Annamese language boundary has largely been followed. Such transition zones also exist on the frontiers of other religions. The purpose was, as in Figure 5, to show the broad divisions. There are, for instance, Christian missions all over South East Asia, but where they form relatively small minorities, as among the Karen in Burma, the hill tribes of Indochina, or on Java, they have been omitted. On the other hand, Christianity has a strong foothold or even predominance among the Bataks of north-central Sumatra and the primitive tribes of the eastern islands. In this latter area Islam is also still making progress, but mostly in and around local ports. Note the relic area of Hinduism on Bali. The Netherlands Indies census has no complete data on religion but gives detailed information on certain areas with large Christian populations (Volkstelling, 1930, Part 4, pp. 83 ff. and Part 5, pp. 91 ff.). Supplementary statistical information can be found in *Indisch Verslag*, Vol. 2, in the chapter "Eerediensten." The boundary of primitive religion in Borneo follows rather closely the boundary of the Dyak languages.

For other countries the data either have been taken from official sources already mentioned or are based on missionary publications, regional descriptions, and information from former residents.

India, their once solid hold on the region ripped apart by invasions of Burmese, Thai, and Annamese. The continental offshoot of the Malayo-Polynesian language group in French Indochina (the Cham and related peoples) now lives on as a much reduced group in the mountain refuge of the central Annamese range. The most recent immigrants seem to be the Miao-Yao tribes, who have been moving into the northern part of our area during the last centuries, probably under pressure of the Chinese proper.

In contrast with the extreme complexity of the mainland, the island world is rather simple in its basic language features, demonstrating again the unifying function of the sea. Over the entire area, from the Malay Peninsula northward to include part of Formosa and eastward to include the Moluccas (with the exception of northern Halmahera, of "Papuan" speech), the languages belong to one common stock, the so-called Malayan division of the Malayo-Polynesian group.

Within this division there exist, of course, a multitude of languages: in the Philippine Islands there are at least 60 different languages and dialects, and in the Netherlands Indies some 25 languages and about 250 dialects are reported.³

The social crazy quilt we see today in South East Asia is, however, only partly a result of the wanderings of what are now considered the indigenous peoples. One can go even further and say that the differences between them would be rather small had it not been for the impact of outside forces, first of more advanced Oriental civilizations, later of the Western world.

Before the Westerners found the way to tropical Asia, it had been for centuries a "colonial area" for both Hindus and Chinese. That meant – just as it does today – on the one hand exploitation by profiteering merchants and tribute-seeking conquerors but on the other hand cultural enrichment, whether directly through active proselytizing or indirectly through imitation and adaptation. It was particularly the Hindu expansion in the early centuries of our era that introduced to the primitive, pagan, tribal societies of South East Asia the higher forms of religion, philosophy, literature, architecture, and political and social organization. The temples and palaces of present-day Burma, Thailand, and Bali and such classic monuments as Angkor in Cambodia and Borobudur in Java are symbols of the mighty impulses that came from India. These cultural advances were fairly strong in the lowlands but weak and retarded in the uplands. The cultural influence of China was, on the whole, limited but predominates among the Annamese in the coastal area of French Indochina; here Confucianism, Buddhism, and ancestor worship mingle in true Chinese fashion and the Annam court and the mandarin bureaucracy bear clearly the stamp of Chinese tradition.

Later, about the fourteenth century, another outside force, Islam made its impact on the region. Although its source was in the Near East, the new religion and its concomitant social-economic tenets were carried to the Indies by Mohammedan merchants from northwestern India. It spread

steadily from the trade centers along the Strait of Malacca eastward and northward, and by the time the Portuguese arrived, Islam was dominant in the coastal regions of the Indies and had pushed north as far as Mindanao.

The political upheaval caused by the advent of Islam no doubt facilitated the penetration by Europeans, who could play the contending factions against one another. And, more important, the geographical limits of Islam at the time of the European invasion go far towards explaining the present peculiar position of the Filipinos in South East Asia. It is well known that Moslems are virtually immune to Christian missionary activity. Spanish colonial policy, which placed much stress on the spreading of the Christian faith, was very successful among the animist population of the Philippine Islands (except for the remote mountain tribes) but was never able to convert the Mohammedans of Mindanao, Palawan, and Sulu. The so-called Moros are to this day a group apart from the Filipinos, and it appears that this Moslem minority has grave misgivings regarding its future position in an independent Philippine commonwealth. As to the remainder of the country, it must be said in justice to the Spaniards that it was they who, by their conversion policy, Westernized the Filipinos and thereby created the spiritual conditions that led to the revolt against Spain and subsequently made possible the rapid progress in self-government under the American regime. This is too often forgotten by those who criticize what they consider the political or educational backwardness in the Indies or Malaya. It is interesting to note that in the Moro provinces of Cotabato (Mindanao) and Sulu the rate of literacy is the lowest in the Philippine Islands: although on the average 50 per cent of the Philippine population over 10 years of age can read and write, the percentage is 20 or less for these two provinces.⁴

There are other aspects of Western colonial policy that have tended to increase the contrasts between the parts of South East Asia. The trade of each of the countries shows that there has been very little exchange within the region. What intraregional commerce did exist was either for transshipment at Singapore or shipments of rice from the surplus lowlands of Cochinchina, Thailand, and Burma to such deficit areas of plantation economy as British Malaya and Sumatra. French Indochina and the Philippines, because of protectionist policies, had between one-half and three-fourths of their trade with France and the United States respectively. British Malaya and the Netherlands Indies were less dependent on their home countries, partly because of the world-wide demand for their products and partly because of a long tradition of free trade. Thailand, being outside any empire structure, also had more diversified trade, but this too was largely with the industrialized countries of the middle latitudes. Only Burma had its major market and supply area close by, namely in India, which took more than half its trade. Thus the commercial structure of the countries of South East Asia shows great similarity to that of the raw-materials-producing countries of Latin America: they face the world, turning their backs to one another.

Each colonial power has ruled, developed, or exploited its empire according to the ideologies and social and economic practices of the home country. The Americans have stressed political development, the French cultural assimilation, the British and Dutch economic progress, the former more in a *laissez faire* manner, the latter in a more paternal form. No doubt the foreign domination has created greater unity *within* each dependency. If the manifold peoples of the Netherlands Indies now begin to feel the bonds of an Indonesian nation, if the native leaders on the Peninsula look forward towards a unified national Malay state, it is due to the unification under Western rule and the penetration of Western ideas of nationalism. At the same time, however, this rising national consciousness within each dependency sharpens the division between the political units of South East Asia. For instance, the Malayan peoples of the Peninsula, the Indies, and the Philippines have many basic cultural traits in common, but the different forms of colonial rule have created divergent interests that cannot be ignored. It seems out of the question that the Filipinos, eagerly awaiting their independence, would agree to be part of a Malayan superstate, especially if this were placed under international supervision. And even if they were willing, the Indonesians would most likely reject the scheme because they would fear the power of the politically more advanced Filipinos and the possible friction between Moslem and Christian interests. A union of British Malaya and the Netherlands Indies would not present these particular problems, but – quite apart, of course, from Dutch or British objections – it is doubtful whether the Indonesians would welcome the addition of a substantial and concentrated Chinese minority such as exists in British Malaya.

On the mainland one finds similar hurdles in the path towards a fusion. National consciousness among the Burmese, Thai, and Annamese is relatively strong, rooted in old traditions and fortified by resistance to Western dominance. Japan rewarded Thailand by giving it parts of French Indochina (in Laos and Cambodia), of British Malaya (the four northern states), and of Burma (part of the Southern Shan States). The annexations in Laos and part of the Shan territory may have some ground in that the inhabitants show more affinity to the Thai than to the peoples of Thailand's neighbor states. The other additions, however, are based on tenuous claims of former suzerainty. There is little doubt that this generosity of Japan is resented by Thailand's neighbors. Whatever boundaries result from the future peace conference, they will cause ill feeling and form a hindrance to close collaboration within a federation.

Regional problems

In view of these contrasts and divergent interests one may well ask whether there is any sense in dealing with South East Asia as a regional unit. The answer is that, in spite of all the differences noted, there are certain

considerations of a broader nature and of far-reaching significance that give validity to the concept.

There is, in the first place, the "colonial" character of the region. In recent years there has been increasing acceptance of the thesis that "the colonial powers are not only in a position of trustees towards the colonial areas under their rule, but that they also owe a moral obligation towards the rest of the world to account for their stewardship."⁵ Although an international administration over the whole region is neither a practical nor a desirable solution, there is much to be said for a regional supervisory organ embodying this "third-party interest," at least if this principle finds application to all colonial areas of the world. In this line of thought the colonial powers, after the expulsion of Japan, would resume charge of their respective dependencies but would be accountable to an international authority.

The function of this international body should not, however, be limited merely to supervising the progress made towards self-government. Political rights are meaningless unless they rest on a sound social and economic foundation. If the outside powers, in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter, wish to have a part in the political development of the dependencies, they will also have to accept a share in the responsibility for the material welfare of these lands. It would be strange indeed if public opinion, say in the United States, could demand that full democracy be established in Malaya and at the same time disclaim any concern for the economic conditions in that country. This raises the question of the economic future of South East Asia to cardinal importance.

Role of raw-materials export

In the past the export of commodities gained from field, forest, and mine has provided the revenues with which to pay for improvements. A peasant society is naturally poor in capital. The investments made by Westerners and, to a smaller extent, by Chinese and Indians (the latter mainly in Burma) have, no doubt, been profitable to them. But the native peoples have also gained on the whole, not only by better opportunities for employment, but especially by obtaining roads, ports, waterworks, hospitals, experiment stations, and other durable improvements. There are, of course, differences of opinion as to whether the native peoples have received their fair share of the profits and, if not, how this should be corrected after the war. Nevertheless, improvement of living conditions will still depend largely on the import of capital, equipment, and services. Will South East Asia be able to pay for these necessities in the traditional manner?

We are now painfully aware that South East Asia had been developed into a veritable treasure house of raw materials. It produced almost all the natural rubber, cinchona bark, abacá (Manila hemp), kapok, teakwood, and pepper of the world, three-fourths of the copra and tapioca flour, more than half the

palm oil and tin, and one-third of the agave fibers (sisal and henequen). The region was also of great importance for natural resins and gums and for essential oils; for instance, most of the jelutong (an ingredient of chewing gum) and three-fourths of the citronella oil came from here. Another product, seemingly minor but actually highly important, was the versatile insecticide rotenone. Its production has expanded rapidly in the last ten years, and British Malaya and the Netherlands Indies had almost a monopoly on the world market.

In addition, South East Asia produced considerable quantities of cane sugar (14 per cent of the world production), tea (18 per cent), tobacco, spices, and rare metals such as tungsten (22 per cent).⁶

South East Asia has experienced an extraordinary economic development since about the middle of the nineteenth century. While the economy of Latin America stagnated because of the abolition of slavery and the instability of governments, colonial South East Asia, brought closer to Europe by the Suez Canal, became the great tropical supply center for Western industry. This paramount position is now seriously threatened from two directions: preparation for war and the war itself have led to the development of synthetic substitutes in the industrial countries and the introduction or expansion of natural production in the tropical parts of India, Africa, and, especially, South America. Not all these ventures will succeed, but even if only a part survive the war, it will mean a considerable competition for South East Asia. This competition will not be merely on the basis of price and quality – on which tropical Asia might, on the whole, have the stronger position – but will also involve political and national considerations. The lesson of the danger of relying on distant countries for strategic raw materials may result, in Europe as well as in America, in the maintenance of home production of synthetics at whatever cost; concern for the large capital invested in the new industries (for synthetic rubber in the United States some 625 million dollars) would certainly support such a policy. Or, for instance, the “good-neighbor policy” towards Latin America might induce the United States to give preference to the new or revived products of that region. Expansion of trade outlets in other countries may partly make up for the loss elsewhere. For instance, if China is helped to its feet and its transportation system and industry are developed, resulting in greater consuming power, it may become a substantial customer for rubber, fibers, industrial fats and oils, and foodstuffs. Even so, it is hard to see how South East Asia can regain its former export volume. The repercussions on the social-economic structure will be severe, unless, as suggested above, the more advanced nations recognize their responsibility for doing more than expressing sympathy with political ideals.

New opportunities

The future will demand a new approach. It is too early to draw up any specific long-range plans, and the problems differ, of course, for the different countries of South East Asia, but some brief suggestions may illustrate the possibilities.

The decline of exporting may, to some extent, prove a blessing in disguise if countered by a constructive readjustment policy. A shift in emphasis from a few export commodities to a more diversified agriculture would increase economic resistance in depression years. The disastrous period of the early 1930's taught a hard lesson, and some beneficial changes occurred, but they were minor compared with those that the postwar period will require. British Malaya, especially, needs more home production of food; normally it imported about two-thirds of its rice consumption.

Another item for a long-range reconstruction program is resettlement, either to relieve the population pressure in overcrowded areas or to furnish a new livelihood for workers in depressed export industries. In the preceding decade energetic efforts were made to promote emigration from Java to Sumatra and from Luzon to Mindanao. The initial results were promising, but too small to afford any material relief as yet.⁷ This work will have to be resumed on a much larger scale.

The development of manufacturing industries is another approach to betterment, and more stimulating than the spread of subsistence agriculture under the resettlement schemes. Moreover, it will be a necessity if the shrunken export markets do not provide enough money to buy manufactured goods abroad. The favourable results obtained in Java in the 1930s under a social policy of encouraging small-scale factories for the production of daily necessities are guideposts for the future.⁸ In addition to Java, central Luzon, lower Tongking, and possibly the districts around Rangoon, Bangkok, and Singapore may well become centers of consumers' goods industries, selling on the Oriental price level. This activity, in turn, induces the establishment of more basic industries, as the experience of Java has shown. Such industrial centers will also supply the outlying agrarian regions, and closer trade relations will result. This was already noticeable in the Netherlands Indies; under the stimulus of expanding factory production, the value of Java's exports of manufactured goods to the other islands rose from 34 million guilders in 1934 to 70 million in 1940.

The question whether South East Asia will develop a heavy industry is still academic. The possibilities cannot be discounted merely because the region has little or no metallurgical coal and relatively small iron deposits. These twin elements of the early Industrial Revolution are becoming less important as technology advances. Because of its heavy rainfall and strong relief, South East Asia has considerable potential water power. In addition, metal alloys and plastics are bound to play a much greater role than in the past. The

region has many metals, such as tin, aluminum, chromium, manganese, and tungsten, and enormous forest reserves, which some day will yield the raw material for various kinds of wood plastics.

Industrialization and the concomitant changes in social-economic organization will tend to lower the birth rate, as has happened in other countries. It is only by this process that we can hope to break the vicious circle in which a rise in living standards is nullified by increased survival.

The development of manufacturing will, again, depend largely on the assistance of the Western nations in supplying capital, equipment, and technical assistance. This may seem an invitation to the present industrial nations to cut their own throats, but experience has shown that the flow of trade among industrial countries is greater than that between industrial and raw-materials-producing countries.

Towards a regional bloc

Although South East Asia will thus be still dependent on Western countries, the peoples of the region can strengthen and speed up their progress towards economic self-determination by regional collaboration.⁹ A political, territorial fusion directly after the war would, as discussed above, cause more harm than good; but a regional bloc, working along functional lines, appears as a distinct possibility. Even if an international colonial authority should not materialize, a purely regional organization for consultation and coordination could be set up. The recently created Anglo-American Caribbean Commission¹⁰ is an example of such regional collaboration. A number of committees, acting under a secretariat as the regional clearing-house, should examine the problems of the region as a whole as well as the intraregional sources of friction.

For instance, although the problem of raw materials can, obviously, be solved only by world-wide agreements, a united stand by the countries of tropical Asia would considerably strengthen their position at the conference table. Other regional topics needing discussion and, where feasible, a common policy, are regulation of immigration, labor conditions, intraregional shipping, and aviation. Furthermore, there should be a regular interchange of information on such matters as education, public hygiene, nutrition, resettlement, rural credit, agricultural methods, and industrial development in order to promote the rapid spread of effective welfare policies.

Local unity

This idea of community of interests – whether from an internal or an external viewpoint – also appears in the character of South East Asia as a transit area. This has long been recognized for the Malay Archipelago and the adjacent Peninsula: these lands astride the equator act as a barrier

guarding the gateway between the Pacific and Indian Oceans and at the same time form steppingstones between Asia and Australia. Together with the other two bottlenecks of world shipping – the Caribbean with the Panama Canal and the Mediterranean with the Suez Canal – Malaysia forms the trinity of strategic thoroughfares on which world sea power rests. French Indochina and the Philippines, flanking the South China Sea, guard the portals to the Malacca and Sunda Straits; Thailand borders on the Pacific as well as on the Indian Ocean and controls the Isthmus of Kra, the potential site for a canal linking the two oceans. This strategic position of South East Asia has been emphasized in recent years by the emergence of Burma as a transit zone between China and the Indian Ocean. Air transportation will certainly play a large role after the war, but it will not replace land and sea transportation. It would seem that the future system of skyways will even accentuate the position of South East Asia as a crossroads center. Here the great-circle route from the Pacific coast of America via Japan to East China, the Philippines, and Singapore meets the transpacific “island hopping” line via Hawaii and also the route from Australia to India and beyond to West Asia and Europe.

These functions give South East Asia a vital place in the world's circulatory system and make its security a matter of international concern. In this respect no part of the region can be separated from the whole; when Japan penetrated into French Indochina, the entire structure of Western domination in South East Asia was doomed. In the same way, if and when Japan is expelled from either Burma, Sumatra, or the Philippine Islands, its entire newly won empire will start to crumble.

This strategic interdependence has even more direct bearing on the fate of the peoples of South East Asia as they approach the stage of self-rule. The historical development points clearly at the eventual emergence of at least six national states in this region. They will be flanked by Australia, India, and China, and to the north will be Japan, which in spite of defeat may remain a potentially formidable nation. If for the moment we leave open the question of Japan's future power and omit Australia as actually only a small nation in terms of population and remote from most of the South East Asiatic countries, the contrast between South East Asia and its immediate neighbors becomes even stronger.

The thought occurs that the fragmentation of South East Asia into six separate states or more may create an “Asiatic Balkans,” destined to become a pawn in an eventual struggle for political or economic supremacy between its great neighbors. Speculation on such contingencies can hardly form a compelling argument for the establishment of a regional bloc. We have seen, however, that there are other – and urgent – problems that require regional solution. Cooperation on concrete questions of colonial emancipation, security, and welfare may gradually establish a sense of unity that will transcend local divergences. It is through this organic evolution toward

interdependence that South East Asia will become strong enough to ward off outside pressure and gain genuine freedom.

The concept of the national sovereign state is essentially a product of European culture. No one will deny the stimulative qualities of a vigorous national life, but neither can anyone fail to see what chaos has been caused by nationalistic anarchy. While the Western world is searching for an escape from this impasse, tropical Asia is struggling towards national self-determination.

Must these peoples travel the same road as Europe did, or will they be able to subordinate patriotism to collective regional interests? It seems not yet too late – if the Western nations recognize their true responsibility – to guide South East Asia towards a future in which “interdependence” will be as challenging a word as “independence” is today.

Notes

- * The maps contained in this article are based on material collected for a research project on South East Asia financed by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Coolidge Foundation and sponsored by the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations.
- 1 See, for instance, “The United States in a New World, II: Pacific Relations,” *Fortune*, Supplement, August, 1942; Ely Culbertson: *Total Peace*, Garden City, N. Y., 1943, especially pp. 323–334.
- 2 E. C. J. Mohr: *Climate and Soil in the Netherlands Indies*, *Bull. Colonial Inst. of Amsterdam*, Vol. 1, 1937–1938, pp. 241–251; *idem*: *De bodem der tropen in het algemeen, en die van Nederlandsch-Indië in het bijzonder*, 2 vols. (in 6 parts), *Koninklijke Vereeniging “Koloniaal Instituut” Mededeeling No. 31, Afd. Handelsmuseum No. 12*, Amsterdam, 1933–1938 (a translation by Robert L. Pendleton, entitled “The Soils of Equatorial Regions, With Particular Reference to the Netherlands East Indies,” will shortly be published by Edwards Brothers, Ann Arbor, Mich.).
- 3 *Census of the Philippines, 1939*, Vol. 2, p. 333; “Atlas van Tropisch Nederland,” Koninklijk Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap in collaboration with the Topografische Dienst in Nederlandsch-Indië, 1938, Sheet 9b.
- 4 *Census of the Philippines, 1939*, Vol. 2, pp. 298 ff. and 385 ff. Literacy for females is particularly low: 13.1 per cent in Cotabato and 16.1 per cent in Sulu. It may be added that literacy in the pagan Mountain Province is 29.1 per cent.
- 5 “War and Peace in the Pacific: A Preliminary Report of the Eighth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations . . . , Mont Tremblant, December 4–14, 1942,” International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, 1943, p. 56.
- 6 The percentages refer to 1938 or 1939 and are taken from the *Statistical Year-Book of the League of Nations and the Agricultural Export Crops of the Netherlands Indies* (annual) for 1940.
- 7 The number of colonists leaving Java rose from 20,000 in 1937 to 53,000 in 1940. For a description of the new resettlement program see “Agricultural Colonization and the Population of Java,” *The Netherlands Indies*, Dept. van Economische Zaken, Netherlands Indies, Vol. 6, No. 8, 1938, pp. 11 ff.; “Javanese Colonization in the Outer Provinces,” *ibid.*, No. 9, 1938, p. 15; G. H. C. Hart: *Towards Economic Democracy in the Netherlands Indies*, [*Netherlands-Netherlands Indies Paper*

- No. 5], Netherlands-Netherlands Indies Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1942; Wibo Peekema. Colonization of Javanese in the Outer Provinces of the Netherlands East-Indies, *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 101, 1943, pp. 145-153. In the Philippine commonwealth, under the auspices of the National Land Settlement Administration, it has been reported that 11,500 persons were settled in Mindanao in 1939 and 1940.
- 8 P. H. W. Sitsen: Industrial Development of the Netherlands Indies, *Bull. 2*, Netherlands - Netherlands Indies Council, Institute of Pacific Relations.
- 9 Bruno Lasker: Welfare and Freedom in Postwar South East Asia, *Amer. Council Paper No. 3*, American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, New York, n. d. (mimeographed); "International Action and the Colonies," *Fabian Soc. Research Ser. No. 65*, 1943.
- 10 See the note "Planning for the Caribbean" in the record section of this number of the *Geographical Review*.

FAREWELL TO EMPIRE

William L. Langer

Source: *Foreign Affairs* 41(1) (1962): 115-30.

Now that the liquidation of Europe's overseas empires is all but complete, the world is in travail, beset by problems of readjustment and groping for new relationships that may make possible the peaceful and prosperous coexistence of more than a hundred states of widely differing characters and needs. The age-old expansion of Europe in terms of military power, settlement, trade, proselytism, territorial rule and, finally, social dominance has come to an abrupt end. Thoughtful people, particularly in the Western world, are bound to reflect on this epochal upheaval, and to realize that one of the very great revolutions in human affairs has taken place. They must be impressed, not to say awed, by the thought that the political and social structure of our planet has undergone such fundamental alterations at the very time when science and technology are opening to view the vast possibilities as well as the dangers of the space age.

Historians and political scientists have for some time been grappling with the problems of expansion, without, however, having come to anything like generally accepted conclusions. Political controversy has seriously beclouded the meaning of the terms *imperialism* and *colonialism*, while scholarly analysis has revealed ever more clearly how loose and unmanageable these words and concepts really are. I take it that, in its broadest sense, imperialism means domination or control of one nation or people over another, recognizing that there may be many forms and degrees of control. But there is probably no hope of ever constructing a generalized theory of imperialism. Indeed, the most violent differences of opinion persist with regard to the causes and character even of modern European expansion, with little if any prospect of reconciling the Communist doctrine, so positively formulated by Lenin, with the manifold theories advanced by Western "bourgeois" writers.

However, among non-Communist critics and students substantial progress is being made in the evaluation of European imperialism. The initial phase of expansion, consequent to the great discoveries of the fifteenth and

sixteenth centuries, involved largescale settlement of Europeans in sparsely populated areas of the world. This in turn led to the gradual conquest of vast territories, along with complete subjection and at least partial extermination of the natives. But this earlier stage of imperialism, while it certainly remade much of the globe in the European image, had relatively little bearing on recent and contemporary problems of expansion. For in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries most of the American colonies of Britain, Spain and Portugal attained their complete independence of European rule. In the sequel Canada, Australia, New Zealand and eventually South Africa became British dominions, independent of the mother country in all but name. Meanwhile Siberia, which was overrun and partially settled by Russians in the seventeenth century, became an integral part of the contiguous Tsarist state.

This process of settlement and territorial extension occasionally brought in its train the destruction of highly developed cultures like those of the Inca, Maya and Javanese. But in general it touched only primitive, thinly populated regions, which previously had been outside the main stream of history. Such was the case also with the trading posts and military establishments acquired in the East by the Portuguese, Dutch, British and French in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only with the military victories of the British over local potentates and the repeated extension of their territorial domination in India did modern imperialism, in the sense of the rule or control of one state or nation over an alien people or culture, become a reality. Even so, India remained a rather special case, an almost unique instance of a private company over a long period of time ruling a huge area of highly developed cultures and constantly expanding its territorial control even at times when the home government was opposed to any extension of its responsibilities. For the European powers had, by the early nineteenth century, become highly skeptical about overseas commitments. It is true that both the British and the French made substantial territorial acquisitions in these years, but they resulted largely from the efforts of local officials to safeguard existing establishments and further trade. Only in Russia, where the government engaged in systematic encroachment and eventually in the conquest of the Transcaucasian principalities, was there anything like purposeful expansionism, though on this side of the Atlantic the war against Mexico was certainly a comparable demonstration of imperial acquisitiveness.

II

Imperialism revived only in the period after 1870 when, however, it developed to such a degree that most of Africa was quickly partitioned among a few European powers and some form of domination or control was established over many Asian peoples. Concurrently Russia, operating against

adjoining countries, imposed its rule upon most of Central Asia and, having earlier acquired the Maritime Province on the Pacific, inaugurated a policy of peaceful penetration of Manchuria and Korea.

To account for this phenomenal spread of European authority is certainly a fascinating and challenging assignment for the historian. Innumerable theories, both general and special, have been advanced in the search for an adequate explanation. They run the gamut from the hard-hitting, straightforward propaganda of Lenin's "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism" to the highly sophisticated and daringly original speculation of Schumpeter's "Sociology of Imperialism." But the one conclusion to be safely drawn from all this ratiocination is that modern imperialism constituted a most complicated episode of recent history, that it was the expression of many and varied forces and motives, and that the economic explanation, so cogently argued by Hobson in his "Imperialism: A Study" (1902), and so fondly cherished by Lenin, is as inadequate as it is popular. Humanitarian, religious and psychological factors were clearly important, to say nothing of considerations of national power and pride. It should never be forgotten that the present condemnation and rejection of imperialism by the Western world is a very recent development. Prior to 1920, if not even later, European rule of overseas colonies was considered honorable and altruistic – definitely in the best interest of the "backward" peoples. It has been pointed out with complete justice that the campaign against the slave trade and the effort to propagate Christianity were among the prime motive forces behind modern expansion, and that the imperial powers as well as their agents were moved, with some exceptions, by a desire to play a beneficent role in the world, to fulfill a noble, national mission.

Recent monographic studies of various aspects of modern imperialism suggest also that certain elusive, not to say irrational, forces contributed to the dynamism of expansion. Schumpeter, and indeed both Kautsky and Hobson before him, gave emphasis to the atavistic feature of imperialism. That is to say, they saw it as a survival in modern society of an outworn, feudal-militaristic mentality, devoted to conquest for its own sake, without specific objective or limit. One might underline also the importance of basic human traits such as aggressiveness and acquisitiveness, along with the urge to dominate, as fundamental to any analysis of imperialism. To do so would leave open, however, many instances in which powerful states with dynamic populations showed no inclination to express these drives in terms of expansion and domination. The American people's rejection of imperialism almost as soon as it was tried, in the wake of the war with Spain, would be a case in point.

Yet it does seem that there was something feudal or at least aristocratic about imperialism, even in its modern phase. It was, in fact, frequently criticized on this score. Colonies, it was said, were desired by the ruling classes in order to provide for their "clamorous and needy dependents." They were,

according to James Mill, "a vast system of outdoor relief for the upper classes," and, in the words of Richard Cobden, a "costly appendage of an aristocratic government."¹ And much later, in 1903, Henry Labouchere referred to imperialists as magpies: "They steal for the love of stealing." Certainly the men who made the decisions for expansion were, in England, peers and great landowners, and on the Continent aristocrats, notables and soldiers. Bismarck, than whom no statesman of modern times had a keener sense of the requirements of power politics, reckoned at all times with the dynamism of the traditional military castes. He encouraged Russian expansion in Central Asia on the theory that it was better to have the military engaged there than on the European front. In the same spirit he attempted to divert the attention of the French from the blue line of the Vosges by supporting their activities in North Africa. And a particularly clear demonstration of the operation of feudal-military forces is provided by the history of modern Japan. The Genyosha Society, which was the driving power behind Japan's expansion, represented primarily the samurai elements which had been eclipsed by the Restoration.

It may be argued that the above theory is at least in part invalidated by the fact that imperialism enjoyed great popular acclaim. But actually this proves very little, for it was more true of England than of other countries, and in England, it will be conceded, the lower classes were traditionally interested in the doings of the aristocracy and readily applauded its achievements. Actually the common man, in England as elsewhere, knew little of the issues and policies involved in imperialism. Colonial affairs, like foreign affairs, remained the preserve of the ruling class. As for continental countries, it is perfectly clear that popular interest in and support for colonial enterprise were never widespread or sustained. Explorers, missionaries, publicists, professors and certain business interests were the prime movers in the cause of overseas undertakings.

With further reference to the economic interpretation of imperialism, I would say that recent studies of specific cases reinforce the proposition that business interests were much less important than considerations of national power and prestige, to say nothing of national security. A new analysis of the partition of Africa² contends convincingly that Britain, concerned by the disturbance of the European balance of power by the German victories of 1870-1871, was driven primarily by concern for its communications with India to assume control of Egypt, and that this move in turn had such repercussions on international relations as to precipitate the "scramble for Africa." It certainly becomes increasingly clear that much of modern imperialism reflected problems of power in Europe itself during a period when the alliance systems had produced a temporary deadlock.

The competition for markets and for sources of raw materials as well as the search for new fields for capital investment were much talked of in the heyday of imperialism and underlay the argumentation of a host of writers

on economic imperialism. But it is well known now that in actual fact the colonies played a distinctly subordinate role in the foreign economic activities of the major imperial powers. These powers at all times remained each others' best customers. At the height of the colonial age, in the early twentieth century, less than a third of Britain's exports went to the dominions and colonies, and less than one-half of British foreign investment was in the Empire. The major European investments in this period were in the United States, Russia, the Ottoman Empire and Latin America, where there could hardly be any question of true imperial domination.

If in fact the European governments in the 1880s and 1890s plunged headlong into the scramble for colonies, they were evidently acting in panic. Confronted with the entirely novel problems arising from progressive industrialization, and alarmed by the depression that set in 1873, as well as by the strong tendency on the Continent to abandon free trade in favor of protection, they sought to safeguard their overseas economic interests by acquiring actual control of as much territory as possible. They hoped thereby to ensure themselves against unknown eventualities. Failure to act seemed improvident and dangerous. I would call this "preclusive imperialism," and would describe it as obviously a concomitant of the onrushing industrial revolution. A misguided effort, this reaction to hypothetical dangers, as we can now recognize; but in the late nineteenth century it evidently was so compelling that most statesmen, even the skeptical Bismarck, were carried away by it.

III

The final accounting suggests that the colonies brought their masters but indifferent returns. It has been frequently argued that even though the European governments may have spent more on their overseas possessions – especially in terms of defense, police, administration and public health – than they ever received in return, private interests made huge profits through the ruthless exploitation of native labor and natural resources. Bookkeeping in these matters is extremely difficult, because it is impossible to isolate and allocate specific items of expense. The best recent studies indicate that the governments, and so the home countries, did in fact make large and continuing outlays, in many ways anticipating more recent policies of aid to underdeveloped nations. An admirable analysis of the finances of the Congo⁴ arrives at the conclusion that that colony, unusually rich in raw materials such as ivory, rubber and copper, was indeed a source of considerable enrichment for Belgium as a country, but that between 1908 (when the Belgian government took over the colony from King Leopold II) and 1950 the Brussels government spent 260 million gold francs on the Congo in return for only 25 million francs in taxes and other income. In like manner an eminent French authority⁵ has estimated that even in the period prior

to 1914 the Paris government spent two billion gold francs on the French colonial empire.

In the large, the profits taken by private interests seem to have been anything but exorbitant – indeed, little above the average returns of home investments. Of course there were instances of huge profits made through forced labor and other forms of ruthless exploitation, as in the Congo of King Leopold, in German Southwest Africa and in British South Africa. No one would excuse or condone such practices, but again it is important to retain a proper sense of proportion. The mercantilist idea that colonies existed solely for the purpose of enriching the mother country persisted for a long time. Leopold II of Belgium, for example, was an ardent admirer of the Dutch “culture system” as enforced in the East Indies, and was interested in the Congo exclusively for the revenue it might bring. As for the treatment of the natives, it may be doubted whether it was any worse than that meted out to Russian serfs and American Negro slaves until past the middle of the nineteenth century. Sad though it may be, the fact is that the human race became sensitive to suffering only at a very late date. When one considers the heartless attitude taken towards the miseries of the early factory workers or even towards the Irish peasantry in the days before the great famine, one is bound to marvel at the callousness of human nature, obviously not restricted to the brutalities of Hitler’s Nazi régime.

Students of the problem have of late devoted much attention to the advantages which accrued to the colonies from European rule. They included defense and public order, suppression of tribal warfare and restriction of patriarchal tyranny, the establishment of adequate administration and justice, the furtherance of public health and, in many cases, substantial contributions to the development of communications.

No doubt the price paid by the colonies was a high one: the subversion of traditional institutions and social forms, not necessarily intentionally, but none the less effectively. To some Europeans as well as to many natives this has been a matter of real regret. But if in fact European expansion was the ineluctable expression of a dynamism generated by the economic and social revolution of the nineteenth century, then it follows that the progressive destruction of static, traditional societies was inevitable under the impact of outside forces. Thinkers and statesmen of the Ottoman Empire, of Japan and of China recognized this feature of the situation at an early date. They saw that the only hope of survival lay in the adoption of Western technology and institutions, however distasteful they might be. The remaking of the world in the Western image began long before the tide of imperialism came to the flood.

IV

The South African War (1899–1902) not only drained imperialism of much of its emotional content but also induced the British and other imperial

governments to reconsider their relations to the colonies. Far more thought was given to the welfare of the colonial peoples, and far more effort was made in the direction of development and improvement. The more liberal régimes encouraged the education of the natives and their participation at the lower levels of the administration. Thereby they fostered the growth of the native élite, members of which presently began to apply the lessons learned from the West to the task of getting rid of Western control. The imperial powers, having themselves inculcated the ideas of equality, self-determination, independence and nationalism, thereby prepared the way for the destruction of their own dominion. For it would hardly seem possible, in historical retrospect, that Western rule could have long withstood the weight of the arguments drawn from its own intellectual armory. Imperialism was bound to lose its moral basis as soon as the principle of equality was recognized and the notions of responsibility and trusteeship were generally accepted. The reaction of British liberals, radicals and socialists to the war in South Africa was in itself irrefutable proof of the incompatibility of democracy and imperialism. Without doubt the anti-colonialist movement that developed in Europe and in the United States following the war with Spain contributed heavily to the growth of nationalism in various colonies during the early twentieth century. So also did the defeat of the Russians by Japan in 1904-1905, for that defeat broke the spell of European superiority and invincibility.

The First World War then set the stage for the actual break-down of imperialism. The fratricidal conflict within the European master race deflated whatever prestige the ruling nations may still have had, while the employment of hundreds of thousands of colonial troops and laborers in the great war opened the eyes of multitudes of natives to conditions in the more advanced countries of the world. It is generally recognized that in 1919, while the victorious powers were busily applying the principle of self-determination to European peoples and as consistently ignoring it as regards the colonial peoples, imperialism had already received the mortal blow. The subsequent inter-war period then witnessed the rapid development of nationalist movements in many additional areas, despite the drastic measures of repression employed by some of the imperial governments. It took only the Second World War, fought as it was in many of the most remote places of the world, to loose the impounded flood-waters of colonial nationalism. The European nations were now so weakened and discredited that they could no longer offer effective resistance. Those which, like France, attempted to hold their possessions found themselves involved in long and costly wars, ending invariably in colonial triumph. In less than 20 years, millions of subject peoples attained their independence and more than 50 new states appeared on the international scene.

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VI

The end of European political domination in Africa and Asia does not alter the fact that the stamp of European ideas and institutions has now been put upon the whole world. Even the Soviet and Chinese Communists rely for their power upon Western technology and to a considerable extent upon the imitation of Western institutions. As for the newly liberated peoples, they have set themselves the same course. No doubt there are in all of them conservative and even reactionary elements which would like, if possible, to return to their traditional society. But in most countries the ruling group consists of men educated in Western schools and convinced that the future lies with the adoption of Western techniques. They have no intention whatever of reverting to pre-imperialist days. On the contrary, they want more and more of what imperialism brought them: greater productivity and a higher standard of living through industrialization; social improvements of every kind, and especially more and better education as a basis for democracy.

Their problems are many, and by no means exclusively economic. The transformation of assorted tribes into modern nations is in itself a stupendous undertaking. Besides, these new states are for the most part too weak militarily as well as economically to stand on their own feet. Their political independence therefore does not by any means imply complete independence. Because of their almost unlimited need for economic and technical assistance they are certainly in some danger of falling again under the influence if not the control of powerful advanced nations, be they Western or Communist.

They can find some insurance against such threats in the antagonism between the free world and Communism, which enables their leaders to play off one side against the other. They are bound to derive some protection also from the strong anti-imperialism that has come to pervade the entire free world and will probably become ever more deeply enrooted. Indeed, the new underdeveloped states will be fortunate if Western disillusionment with empire does not reach the point where it will obstruct seriously the aid programs without which many of the former colonies cannot hope to survive. Happily some progress is being made in the coördination of the economic efforts of the free world through the Organization for Economic Coöperation and Development. The Western world has so much greater an aid potential that it should be possible, with even a modicum of statesmanship, to maintain the connection of Europe and the United States with the erstwhile colonial world.

It is truly noteworthy that, for all the heat and rancor generated by anti-colonialism, so many liberated colonies have chosen to remain members of the British Commonwealth or the French Community. The enthusiastic reception accorded to Queen Elizabeth in India and Ghana provided

occasions for the expression, on the part of their governments, of appreciation for the important contribution made by imperial rule. No doubt considerations of security have a significant bearing on the attitude of the former colonies, but it would seem that in the world at large the old – shall we say atavistic, aristocratic? – notion of domination and exploitation has given way to the concept of association and collaboration. Even in the Communist world it has become fashionable to speak of the “Socialist Commonwealth.”

VII

In bidding farewell to empire we cannot and must not suppose that human nature has undergone a sudden, radical change – that basic aggressive urges will disappear completely and that sweetness and light will soon prevail. The argument of this essay has been that fundamental drives lay behind imperial expansion; that European dynamism, combined with technological superiority, enabled the European nations to settle the largely unoccupied continents and to found European communities all over the globe. It permitted them also, in the sequel, to impose their rule over many peoples of old and highly developed, as well as of primitive, cultures. So marked was Europe's material power and so alluring its political and economic institutions that within a comparatively short span of time the stamp of European civilization was put upon the whole earth.

Europe's political domination is gone. Its cultural influence remains, and there is no likelihood that it will be supplanted in the foreseeable future. The new states, while still vociferously denouncing “colonialism,” may genuinely fear that cultural influence will eventually change to economic control and so to some new form of political domination. The Soviet Government is already accusing the Common Market of being a new device by which the Western powers will attempt to keep the colonial world in an economically subordinate and undeveloped state. In this connection the importance of the erstwhile colonial areas as sources of raw materials for the industrialized nations remains a prominent consideration. But imperialism provided no real solution for this problem, while for the future more, it would seem, is to be hoped from coöperation than from domination and exploitation.

It is highly unlikely that the modern world will revert to the imperialism of the past. History has shown that the nameless fears which in the late nineteenth century led to the most violent outburst of expansionism were largely unwarranted. The Scandinavian states and Germany since Versailles have demonstrated that economic prosperity and social well-being are not dependent on the exploitation of other peoples, while better distribution of wealth in the advanced countries has reduced if not obviated whatever need there may have been to seek abroad a safety-valve for the pressures building up at home. Even in the field of defense, the old need for overseas bases or for the control of adjacent territories is rapidly being outrun.

It is often said that human nature does not change, but it is none the less true that it does undergo changes of attitude. With reference to imperialism it is certainly true that there has been over the past century a marked alteration of mood, reflecting greater sensitivity to human suffering and a greater readiness to assume responsibility for the weak and helpless. In our day, anti-imperialism runs as strong in the West as did imperialism a couple of generations ago. Domination and exploitation of weaker peoples by the stronger, which seemed altogether natural in the past, is now felt to be incompatible with the principles of freedom, equality and self-determination so generally accepted in modern societies. Imperialism has been on its way out since the beginning of the century and particularly since the First World War. Writing on imperialism in this very journal in the days when Mussolini was embarking on the conquest of Ethiopia, I ventured to disparage his undertaking and to describe him as being behind the times. The world, I opined, had outgrown the mentality of imperialism. I could not, of course, foresee that the edifice of colonialism would collapse so suddenly and so completely after the Second World War, but I suggested that if the tide of native resistance continued to rise, the abandonment of the colonies would soon become inevitable. To make this forecast did not require any particular prescience, but only recognition of the forces at work in modern society. At the present day the Soviet Union may still pose as the doughty opponent of a system that is already done for, but by maintaining its own imperial sway it is appearing more and more in the role of champion of an outworn and discredited system.

Imperialism's one great achievement was to open up all parts of the world and to set all humanity on the high road to eventual association and collaboration. In the process much has been lost of cultural value, but much also has been gained in the suppression of abuses, in the alleviation of suffering, and above all in the raising of the standard of living. The seamy sides of industrial society are familiar to us all, but it should never be overlooked that the machine age for the first time in history provided the common man with more than the requirements of the barest subsistence. This in itself has given human life a new dimension. It was perhaps the greatest of Europe's contributions to the world. Without the imperialist interlude it is difficult to see how the static, secluded, backward peoples of the globe could possibly have come to share in it. So much at least seems certain: without the period of European rule none of these peoples or states, not even India, would today be embarked on the course leading to a better and richer life.

Notes

- 1 Klaus Knorr, "British Colonial Theories, 1570-1850." Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1944, p. 356 ff.
- 2 E. H. Norman, "The Genyosha: A Study in the Origins of Japanese Imperialism," *Pacific Affairs*, XVII, 1944, p. 261-284.

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- 3 Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, "Africa and the Victorians." New York: St. Martin's, 1961.
- 4 Jean Stengers, "Combien le Congo a-t-il coûté à la Belgique?" Brussels: Académie royale des sciences coloniales, 1957.
- 5 Henri Brunschwig, "Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français." Paris: A. Colin, 1960.

BRITISH AND DUTCH IMPERIALISM: A COMPARISON

H. L. Wesseling

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- What a pity that you could not stay in the Indies, isn't it Otto?
- Oh no grandmama. It is the most miserable, the meanest, the dirtiest country I know. We should sell those colonies to England. Otherwise they will take them from us one day or another.

Louis Couperus, *The Small Souls*

The words that serve as a motto for this paper are taken from the finest novel about Dutch *fin de siècle* society and indeed, in my opinion, the finest novel in Dutch literature, Louis Couperus' *De Boeken der Kleine Zielen* (The Books of the Small Souls). They form part of a dialogue between the widow of a former Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies and her, obviously, very disappointed grandson, a young colonial civil servant in the beginning of his career.

Couperus knew the Indies well. He had lived there for some time and both he and his wife, Elizabeth Baud, belonged to important Dutch 'Indian families'. The dialogue reveals various aspects of Dutch colonialism. On the one hand the very mixed feelings of the young civil servant: fatigue and disappointment, the awareness of being involved in something too big for Holland's limited possibilities and consequently of doom and danger. Of course the strong *fin de siècle* undertone of the book is a rather special aspect of Couperus' work and not typical for all of Dutch colonialism of that time. But all the same the text is revealing of some of the ambiguities of Dutch imperialism and maybe of imperialism in general. This is what the paper is about.

Somehow it seems an extraordinary silly thing to do, now that we have reached a certain level of sophistication and have gone back as far as pre-Islamic India and Indonesia, to return to such a traditional and flogged to death subject as European imperialism. After all, our conferences are about India and Indonesia and not about Britain and the Netherlands. This is certainly true and I do feel a little apologetic about the subject but it is also true that had India and Indonesia not been European colonies we might not have

studied their histories in a comparative way and we certainly would not have done this in the form of the Cambridge-Delhi-Leiden-Yogyakarta project.

So much apology for the subject and now for the form. Why a *comparative* paper on British and Dutch imperialism? Whether comparative studies are useful at all is open for debate but for us it is rather late in the day to ask this question or at least to answer it in a negative way. It is after all the credo of our whole project. But it is not only a matter of belief. It is rather obvious that by comparing British imperialism to its Dutch counterpart it is possible to determine some similarities and differences and thus to better understand the proper nature of both. Eventually, by comparing various national variations, one can draw some general conclusions about late nineteenth-century European imperialism. This is the general aim of the paper, but the focus is on Dutch and British imperialism and more specifically on the Dutch. While there has been an important and extensive debate on British imperialism, Dutch imperialism has hardly ever been discussed. That makes an additional argument for this comparison: as in a mathematical comparison we can use the known to find the unknown, that is use the British to understand the Dutch.

The debate on imperialism¹

After a century of use, the meaning of the word 'imperialism' seems to have become more confused than ever. 'Imperialism is not a word for scholars', Sir Keith Hancock remarked quite correctly, and a long time ago.² But what choice do scholars have? Either they can give up the word entirely, which is unrealistic as it will be used anyway, or they can try to agree on a specific meaning, which is even less realistic because with every debate the concept has become less rather than more clear. Not much choice thus or shall we say Hobson's choice.

Indeed the whole problem about imperialism started with Hobson. Not that Hobson invented the word – it had already been in use as a political term for quite some time – but he was the first to develop something like a theory of imperialism, and to believe that this was a useful thing to do. As is well known Hobson, a Radical, was deeply impressed by the South African War. What he had in mind when he wrote about imperialism was 'the recent expansion of Great Britain and the chief continental Powers'.³ For him 'expansion' meant the fact that over 'the last thirty years [...] a number of European nations, Great Britain being first and foremost, have annexed or otherwise asserted political sway over vast portions of Africa and Asia, and over numerous islands in the Pacific and elsewhere'.⁴ Thus Hobson was not vague at all about imperialism: it was the establishment of political control. Nor was he vague about where imperialism came from: from the financial milieu in the mother country. Other persons, statesmen, soldiers, missionaries and the like, might play some role, 'but the final determination rests with

the financial power'.⁵ Thus with Hobson we have a definition, a periodisation and an explanation.

Unfortunately it can hardly be said that the many authors after Hobson who used the word and took over part of his argument were equally clear. Soon a great conceptual confusion came into being, above all under Marxist influence. However, in the historical literature before World War II a certain consensus existed about the principal facts. Imperialism was the extension of empire. At the end of the nineteenth century a great and sudden extension of empire had taken place. This was the consequence of certain developments in European economy and society.

This consensus broke down after World War II under the influence of two major political developments: 'the end of empire', that is to say decolonisation, and the rise of two new empires, those of the United States and the Soviet Union. The new world political situation had its impact on the theory of imperialism. The rise of the American hegemony inspired two Cambridge historians to rethink nineteenth-century British imperialism. In their well-known article 'The Imperialism of Free Trade' Gallagher and Robinson developed the concept of 'informal empire'.⁶ They argued that the real heyday of British imperialism was not during the spectacular scramble of the late nineteenth century but rather during the mid-Victorian period of economic and commercial hegemony. What mattered was not the struggle for political control but the quiet exercise of economic power: not formal but informal empire. For Gallagher and Robinson informal empire was not so much another type of expansion as a certain stage in imperialism. It was imperialism before empire.

Thus, in the case of Britain, the 'age of imperialism' disappeared to make place for the concept of an 'imperial century'. This century began with the Napoleonic wars, climaxed in the early days of Queen Victoria's rule and was already marked by gloom and decline in the decades around her famous Diamond Jubilee. In the new interpretation the heyday of the British Empire has been moved forward to ever earlier days. With this continuous antedating of the climax of empire corresponded an equally permanent antedating of its decline – and one could ask oneself the question which of the two tendencies in Thatcherite Britain is psychologically the more interesting one.

In the same years other theorists discovered imperialism after empire. This resulted not so much from a reflection on the rise of the American empire but from a reassessment of decolonisation. The hope that the end of empire had opened up a new stage in the development of the overseas world had not come true. Independence had brought an end neither to social problems nor to economic dependency. Some of the new states became more involved in and dependent on the Western dominated world-system than they had been under colonial rule. Neo-colonialism was the new word and dependency the new theory. For many people it became increasingly clear that the end of empire was not the end of imperialism. The good old days of Hobson's

definition and periodisation were over. According to these new theories imperialism was not only the extension of political control, nor was it limited to a certain period. Other forms of dominance were also labelled imperialist. Empire was only one form of imperialism, one stage in the history of Western dominance, sandwiched between informal empire before and neo-colonialism after empire. The idea of an 'age of imperialism', 1880-1914, was abandoned. It did not make sense within the new conceptual framework of imperialism.

However, it remained a question why one form of imperialism was replaced by another. Hobson's - and thus the traditional - answer to this question had been in terms of economic transformations in the mother country. This answer was also to be questioned and it was again Gallagher and Robinson who ventured a new theory. They argued that changes in the periphery, in the overseas world, rather than in the mother countries were responsible for the changes in the forms of imperialist control. Imperialism is to be considered as a system of collaboration between European and non-European forces. The changing forms of imperialism are in fact changing forms of collaboration that result from changes in the bargaining positions of the two parties. These so-called periphery and collaborationist theories contributed a great deal to our understanding of both British and general imperialism.⁷

Since Hobson many theories have been presented as theories about imperialism in general that are in fact theories about British imperialism. This is perfectly understandable. After all Britain was the imperial power *par excellence*. But for that very reason Britain was not the most typical imperial power. Rather it was a-typical. Therefore theories about British imperialism cannot by simple extrapolation be transformed into general theories of imperialism. And therefore the discussions in other European countries on imperialism have followed different lines and focused on different questions.

In France Henri Brunschwig's *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français, 1871-1914* which appeared in 1960, just one year before *Africa and the Victorians*, set the tone for the debate on French imperialism.⁸ Brunschwig does accept that, in the case of France, there has been a definite imperialist period, viz. roughly 1880-1914. This indeed could hardly be denied. But while traditional in this respect, he is original in the interpretation of this phenomenon. After a careful examination of the economic interests of French imperialism, he reaches the conclusion that to explain it in economic terms would be a myth. The empire did not pay, there was no link between protectionism and imperialism, and most of the French imperialists had no economic motives or interests. Consequently, there must be a different explanation. According to Brunschwig, this is to be found in the rising tide of nationalism in the French Republic, deeply wounded by the defeat of 1870. Thus, his book is basically a refutation of the economic theory of imperialism.⁹

H.-U. Wehler's theory of German imperialism followed a rather different line of thought.¹⁰ He does stress the economic background of imperialism. Yet he agrees that for Germany the empire was not very profitable. But in his view, the link between economics and empire must be sought on a different level. He stresses the economic problems of the new *Reich* (with its rapid and unbalanced economic growth) as well as its social problems (its lack of legitimation because of its creation *von oben*, by force). He considers Bismarck's bid for colonies as a shrewd political move intended both as part of a general more or less anti-cyclical economic policy, and of a social policy seeking to unite the Germans around issues of foreign policy and thus to overcome internal tensions. Wehler's emphasis on the domestic rather than on the diplomatic motives of German imperialism – or, in German historiographical jargon, on the *Primat der Innenpolitik* – and on the continuity of German history forms part of the general debate on the course of German history since 1870. Therefore the debate on German imperialism has very much a character of its own, dominated by political issues and characterised by an almost exclusively Eurocentric approach.

Italian imperialism was also studied from a special perspective, that of the 'new imperialism' of the fascist era. Jean-Louis Miège in a general survey emphasised its political and ideological dimensions, comparing it in this respect to Spanish imperialism (*Hispanidad* and *Italianità*).¹¹ The interpretation of Portuguese imperialism was for a considerable time dominated by Hammond's theory of an 'uneconomic imperialism'.¹² It was Gervase Clarence-Smith who very recently challenged this view and made a strong case for an economic interpretation of Portuguese imperialism.¹³ Jean Stengers has described the extra-ordinary case of Belgium where imperialism was the one-man show of King Leopold II and analysed the singular nature of the King's imperialism.¹⁴ Thus, since the 1960s, we find new theories, revisions and debates on imperialism in all European countries involved, but not in the Netherlands. Let us now see how this silence is to be explained.

Dutch imperialism

The absence of the Dutch in the international debate on imperialism is striking. Until very recently there has been no discussion at all of the Dutch case. In the many volumes on comparative imperialism and on the theory of imperialism and indeed even in most of the international bibliographies we do not find any discussion of it. What is even more surprising is that the same is true also for Dutch historiography. Of course there are scores of studies on Dutch expansion, Dutch colonial policy etc. but none of these authors discusses this subject within the conceptual framework of imperialism.

How is this to be explained? To a certain extent ideological factors may have played a role in this. The traditional self image of the Dutch makes it

very difficult for them to consider themselves as an imperialist nation. From the nineteenth century onwards the Dutch have made a sharp distinction between, on the one hand, the great powers and their abject but inevitable game of power politics and on the other hand a small and peaceful nation like themselves cultivating a policy of neutrality, mutual respect and the promotion of trade and progress. In this context it was also possible and even logical to distinguish between Dutch colonial and European imperialist policies. Thus the prime minister who presided over the final stage of the Aceh War, Abraham Kuyper, found it 'an utter absurdity' to call the Dutch policy in Indonesia imperialist. That was a contradiction in terms as imperialism was per definition a monopoly of the great powers.¹⁵ Now Kuyper was a man of the Right but Dutch Marxist authors and politicians also argued that the economic preconditions for imperialism required by Marxist theory were, in the Dutch case, not fulfilled and that, thus, Dutch imperialism could not and did not exist.¹⁶ Therefore it were not so much ideological reasons but rather conceptual problems why Dutch politicians and political analysts refused to speak of a Dutch imperialism.

The fact that the Netherlands were not discussed in the historical debate on imperialism has a different explanation. There are two reasons for this. The first one is a rather practical one. From its very beginning to today, the debate on imperialism has first and foremost been a debate on the partition of Africa. As is well known the Netherlands were practically the only West European power not to take part in the scramble for Africa. As a matter of fact they sold in 1872 their last possessions on the Gold Coast to England. As they did not play a role in the scramble they were not mentioned in the discussions about it either.

The second reason is of a conceptual nature. However exactly it is defined, the concept of imperialism has strong associations with the idea of expansion and territorial aggrandizement. Historically it is also closely connected with the concept of an 'age of imperialism'. According to this there was one period in European history (1880-1914) in which this expansion took a very spectacular form. This is of course rather obvious in the case of France, Germany, Italy - and Belgium -, but also the British advocates of continuity and informal empire could not and did not deny that during the 'age of imperialism' a huge formal empire was acquired by the British. In the Dutch case however the general pattern of the nineteenth century is not one of expansion but of contraction and concentration on Indonesia. What we do see is the expansion of Dutch authority in the archipelago. But whether this was imperialism and even whether it was expansion, that is to say the establishment of authority, is open for debate. It can also be considered as the realisation of an already theoretically existing authority. Moreover this process was a permanent one taking place during the entire nineteenth century, not something new coming up in the 1880s. This continuity contradicts the concept of an 'age of imperialism', which suggests a break, a rupture. These

are probably the main reasons why implicitly or, as in some papers, explicitly historians have hesitated to speak of a Dutch imperialism.¹⁷

Only very recently it has been argued that the Dutch case is after all not so different from the others, that the Netherlands followed more or less the general pattern and that, thus, Dutch imperialism can be incorporated in the general debate on imperialism. The Utrecht historian Maarten Kuitenbrouwer has developed this argument in an interesting and well documented book.¹⁸ In this book he does not only pay attention to the development of Dutch colonial policy, but he also deals with Dutch international policy in general (for example its diplomacy with regard to the partition of Africa) and Dutch public opinion (for example the agitation about the South African Wars of 1881 and 1899–1902). On the basis of a rich documentation he offers a final analysis of the interaction between domestic, foreign and colonial policy. What interests us here most however are his conclusions.

Kuitenbrouwer argues that the Netherlands definitely were an imperialist power and that its behaviour did not differ much from the general European pattern of imperialism. The first argument is of course essentially a matter of definition. According to the two definitions of imperialism Kuitenbrouwer offers, Dutch imperialism existed already in the seventeenth century.¹⁹ More important is his conclusion that the Netherlands followed the general European pattern, only with a slightly different chronology. Kuitenbrouwer places the beginnings of Dutch imperialism in 1873, but that was only what he calls 'a false start'. He then finds a new expansionist endeavour in the 1880s. Finally, full imperialism comes in 1894 and reaches its climax in the years 1902–1908 (his book ends however in 1902). Although of course these matters of periodisation are always open for debate and refinement his arguments for this chronological schedule are convincing and there is, indeed, nothing in it to suggest that in this respect the Netherlands were very different from other nations.

But whatever the chronology may have been, the question remains whether the Dutch actions in this period were comparable to those of other powers during the age of imperialism. Kuitenbrouwer argues that this is the case. He follows in this respect a suggestion made by Ray Betts in his book *The False Dawn* that the age of imperialism was characterised by two elements, 'contiguity' and 'preemption'.²⁰ I don't think that these are very useful concepts in general nor that they are illuminating for our understanding of Dutch expansion in particular. Contiguity is supposed to mean that power expanded from existing possessions to neighbouring territories. In such a very general form this is of course a truism as it is applicable to all forms of expansion of power in all periods of history. What is much more characteristic for the age of imperialism, however, is that often expansion did *not* follow this pattern but that quite unconnected and most unexpected territories were annexed. After all what contiguity brought the French to Madagascar, the British to Egypt, the Germans to New Guinea or the Italians to Adowa?

Generally speaking contiguity was much more characteristic of the previous period. And it was indeed characteristic of the Dutch in Indonesia in the period of imperialism. That however does not make the Dutch case more similar to the other ones, but rather more different from them.

The second characteristic according to Betts – and Kuitenbrouwer – is preemption. What Betts – following William Langer – understands by this is what in imperial Britain was called ‘pegging out claims for the future’ and in Germany was known as the *Torschlusspanik*. That is to say the claiming of territories without any real need to have them but only to prevent the others from taking them. Here I think Betts is right. This often irrational behaviour is indeed typical for the imperialist period – and this explains, incidentally, why there often was no contiguity. But I do not think Kuitenbrouwer is right in arguing that this was also typical of the Dutch. What Kuitenbrouwer calls the preemptive aspect of the Dutch expansion is something very different. He understands by it the introduction of effective occupation in areas that were belonging to the Dutch sphere of influence in the archipelago but where its authority was not actually present. This was done with the aim not to give the other powers excuses or pretexts for intervention. As a devoted bridge player I might remark this use of the term is quite correct, more correct than the way it is used by Betts and Langer. In bridge the term ‘preemptive’ is used for actions that are tactically aggressive but strategically defensive. That is indeed what the Dutch expansion in the archipelago was all about and therefore in this case the term ‘preemptive imperialism’ is very adequate. But it does not make the Dutch behaviour more similar to that of the others, on the contrary. The confusion comes from the fact that the term is used in two different meanings. ‘Consolidation of the existing’, as Kuitenbrouwer calls the Dutch form of preemption is a policy of the have’s. It is something very different from the *Torschlusspanik* or annexation fever of the colonial have not’s that was so typical for most of the other imperialists.

Thus the question remains whether in Dutch colonial history we can distinguish an imperialist period, different in nature from previous and/or later periods. Was the late nineteenth century such a period? Do we see a new colonial policy, new incentives, new results?

A new policy there was not. The imperialist ambition was more openly confessed and public opinion was more aware of the importance of Empire, but it was essentially the same policy as in the previous periods and the ambitions were not aimed at any larger territory than before. Nor do we find in the Netherlands new incentives for colonialism. There were no new economic or political problems that demanded new forms of imperialism. An imperialist ideology and mentality came only after 1900 and this as the result not as the cause of imperialism. The same colonial policy was indeed executed with more energy and thus there was a greater amount of imperialist activity. But this had not to do with changes in Holland but with the changing international situation.

Imperialist activities could be initiated at various levels. They could come from private initiatives, local government officials, the colonial government, an imperialist pressure group, the cabinet or whatever. But imperialist actions were always the result of a chain of decisions and that as every chain was only as strong as its weakest link. That is to say that imperialist actions could be initiated but also be stopped or misfire at every level. As Fasseur has demonstrated, in the case of the Netherlands Indies the chain consisted of three links: the man on the spot, the Governor-General at Batavia and the Ministry at The Hague.²¹ Generally speaking imperialist ambitions slackened with every step to a higher level. Traditionally The Hague frustrated imperialist ambitions in the East. There was only one exception to this rule, that was when lack of action could create an unclear situation offering to other states the possibilities or a pretext for intervention. Then for a short moment prudence and parcimony had to give way to 'affirmative action'. The new thing about the last quarter of the nineteenth century was that there were more of these situations or at least there was more fear of them. Thus if Dutch imperialist activity increased in this period this was not the result of a new policy but of the changing circumstances. Dutch imperialism was not a matter of action but of reaction. It was – and this seems to be unique – almost exclusively a function of international politics. In short the only reason for Dutch imperialism was the imperialism of others.

Did this result in new acquisitions or annexations? Was the age of imperialism one of territorial expansion in the archipelago? This is a delicate and difficult matter because the answer to the question as to whether new possessions were acquired depends on what one considers as already existing possessions. There is of course no doubt that in 1914 the Dutch effectively controlled a much greater part of the archipelago than they had done in 1815. This extension of effective control was a continuous process that went on from the very beginning right to the end of the colonial period. The question is whether this was a form of *territorial* expansion. Effective control was a thing much debated in theory but very difficult to assess in practice. Anyway it was not the real criterion in the definition of what were colonial possessions. Much more important was the official or silent recognition by the other powers.

It is debatable whether the entire archipelago was accepted as a Dutch sphere of influence. There was no official international recognition of its exact borders. The Treaty of London was on a few points open for discussion and of course the other powers were no party to this. But on the other hand the protection of England, the *arbiter mundi*, was an important asset and in actual practice the other powers never questioned the right of the Dutch to pacify or punish whatever part of the archipelago they wished as long as other powers' ambitions and claims were reasonably discussed and respected. This the Dutch were always willing to do as the treaties with Britain,

Germany and Portugal demonstrate. There were no great disputes about this. As a matter of fact one finds in Dutch colonial history quite a few respectable statesmen, cabinet ministers and governors general who have suggested to sell or give away huge parts of the archipelago, like Borneo or New Guinea – or indeed everything but Java and Sumatra – to some foreign power. This never happened but it is also true that in 1914 – after a century of ‘imperialism’ – the Dutch colonial possessions in Indonesia did not exceed the limits of the Dutch influence sphere of 1815. Nor did they when the Dutch left in 1949. If the same had happened in the case of France, England, Germany etc., Hobson would never have published *Imperialism: A Study* and we would not have discussed the subject today.

Conclusion

What conclusions should we draw from this? Let me first say that in my opinion the important question is not whether we should or should not speak of Dutch imperialism. As there are so many definitions of imperialism this would be purely a matter of semantics. Some definitions include Dutch colonialism and some don't. Nor do I subscribe to the idea that if Dutch policy cannot be properly called ‘imperialist’ it would by any standard be better or morally superior. Imperialism by any other name would smell as bad. Nor finally am I arguing that we should follow Hancock's advice and do away with the term altogether. It won't happen. Imperialism is here to stay – at least as a concept.

In fact the word imperialism is used more often than ever, not only by historians but also and maybe even more so by students of international relations. This leaves us with two possibilities. We can either consider it as a historical concept applicable to a specific period in the history of the expansion of Europe. Or we can define it in such a way that it becomes an analytical tool in the study of international relations in general or of power politics *tout court*. The latest theory of imperialism put forward by Ronald Robinson, the so-called ‘excentric theory’ of imperialism or the ‘Robinson model Mark IV’ – because there are three previous ones – belongs to the last category. In this model imperialism is conceived of in ‘terms of the play of international economic and political markets in which degrees of monopoly and competition in relations at world, metropolitan and local levels decide its necessity and profitability’.²² While older Robinson models, like the ‘imperialism of free trade’, the ‘periphery’ and the ‘collaborationist’ theories, explained several aspects of the transition from imperialism to empire, then to independence, the new model is a convertible: it can both be used in specific situations and as a universal theory. It analyses imperialism in terms of a struggle between big and little brothers, of asymmetry of power and of changing terms of collaboration. Thus formulated history becomes a rather abstract thing. All power relations have some asymmetry and all history is

the history of collaboration – as well as of conflict – between human beings. Perhaps it is therefore better to reserve the term for a specific episode in world history, the expansion of Europe. Then the concept of imperialism can be used as an analytic tool to distinguish specific periods in the history of European expansion and specific forms of interaction between European and non-European actors. What do the British and the Dutch cases tell us about this?

The first question then is the old one of periodisation. Is it useful to distinguish a specific stage in European expansion, the last quarter of the nineteenth century, and label it imperialist? Both the Dutch and the British cases seem to suggest that this is not true. Continuity is much more important. In the case of Britain however there is the undeniable fact that, for whatever reasons, a very considerable and even extraordinary territorial expansion took place in that period. Therefore for Britain one can still defend the thesis of an 'age of imperialism'. This was not the case in Holland. In Dutch colonial history the main transition was the one from old to new colonialism that took place around 1900. It was this new colonialism characterised by a systematic *mise en valeur* and an active rôle of the state that brought a new dimension to Dutch colonialism.

This was not an exclusive or unique Dutch phenomenon. The new colonialism that came into being around the turn of the century was something of a rather more general nature. Only, in the other European countries it received less attention because by that time they were still fully engaged in the territorial partition of the world that was going on and continued until 1914. Holland was not. Then came the Great War in which most European powers were involved. But, again Holland was not and therefore 1914–1918 is not such a watershed in Dutch history as it is in other countries. Only after 1918 it became visible that a new period had begun, that of full colonialism. For this reason Thomas August has argued in a recent article in *Itinerario* that the 1920s and 1930s should be considered as the real age of imperialism.²³ I don't think it would be very helpful to do this because it would make the term even more confusing but I do agree with the idea that – the title of the Second Volume of our proceedings notwithstanding – the *Heyday of Colonial Rule* was not in the nineteenth but in the first half of the twentieth century. Economically, socially and administratively colonialism was only then fully established while at the ideological level a colonial consciousness also came into being.

The interesting thing is that, due to its particular position, in the case of the Netherlands this transition became visible already around 1900. There are indications that also in France and Germany the transition to 'the highest stage of colonialism' – if not of capitalism – took place around this time. It would be interesting to look deeper into this and see whether the traditional *caesura* of 1880 should not be replaced by one around 1900.²⁴

So far for periodization. The other issue is the one of typology or morphology. What general patterns and what specific national articulations can be distinguished in European imperialism? Of course many similarities and many dissimilarities can be distinguished, many classifications can be made and many comparisons are possible. There is a similarity between industrial nations like Britain and Germany on the one hand and France on the other. One could distinguish between old colonial powers (Portugal, Spain, Holland etc.) and newcomers like Germany, Italy or Belgium. One could also distinguish between great and small power imperialism.²⁵ Are there similarities of sufficient importance to make a comparison between Britain and the Netherlands particularly meaningful?

There are of course from a historical perspective many similarities between the British and the Dutch and it is not surprising that a great many comparative volumes have been devoted to the theme of 'Britain and the Netherlands'. Also in overseas history there are quite a few remarkable encounters, confrontations and comparable actions to be noted. In the perspective of the *longue durée* Britain and Holland are distinguished from other old colonial powers like Spain, Portugal and France. They were CAMP nations: Commercial, Atlantic, Maritime, and Protestant. But there are also great differences between the two and in the nineteenth century these had become much more important than the similarities. Britain had become a superpower, the workshop of the world, an expanding society, invulnerable behind its naval defences. Holland was an extraordinary vulnerable small nation at the expense of a united Germany. It was also an industrial latecomer, a country characterised by the spirit of *Jan Salie*, a nation of nincompoops.

All the same there is an essential similarity between the two of them in their attitude towards the new imperialism. Both were essentially displeased with which was happening. Both were in their own and very different ways happy with the world as it was and would have preferred that things would have stayed as they were. That is to say that, as far as the overseas world was concerned, both were satisfied powers. This explains why their reaction to the new imperialism was ambiguous. On the one hand they showed a very real imperialism in the sense of a more systematic and officially accepted policy of economic exploitation. On the other hand for them the new world of imperialism was also full of new problems, of growing competition and possible conflicts. The age of imperialism was an age of new possibilities but also – and more importantly – of new dangers. It was not an age to be welcomed but there was no way of escaping it. In their attitude towards the new imperialism no two other powers were more similar than Britain and the Netherlands: defensive rather than offensive, reluctant and not enthusiastic. In short, their attitude was one of reaction rather than action. In both cases there was more continuity than discontinuity and what discontinuity there was, was due to a change in circumstances, not in policy. The famous

words: 'informal if possible, formal if necessary' seem to be applicable to the Netherlands too.²⁶

But there was of course the important difference that was already mentioned. The British – reluctantly or not – acquired an immense new empire. The Dutch did not even think about it. Their sole concern was to keep what they had, which was very much. No colonial empire was considered to be more attractive, profitable and worthwhile having than the Indies. From Germany to Japan the Indies were looked at with all too greedy eyes. Yet the Netherlands was one of the smallest and most vulnerable states of Europe. This makes the position of the Netherlands unique: it was a colonial giant but a political dwarf. Therefore Dutch imperialism was after all *sui generis*. It followed to some extent the general pattern of European imperialism, introducing a more active and systematic colonial policy after 1900 than before. It was comparable to a large extent with Britain insofar as its attitude towards imperialism was concerned. But due to its unique position it had to follow a very specific policy. In the colonial field it protected its influence sphere, demonstrated a great *souplesse vis à vis* its neighbours, developed the economy of the Indies and – all importantly – kept them open for foreign trade and investment. In international politics it followed a policy of strict neutrality and near to perfect aloofness.

As the age of imperialism proceeded diplomacy became a subject of mass politics and mass media. The tone of the public debate changed, also in the Netherlands. Racist attitudes towards the Indonesians were openly admitted, a brutal policy of mass extermination of the Achinese was publicly advocated. Jingoist feelings of hate against the British because of the South African War were vigorously demonstrated. Many a Dutchman felt humiliated by his country's lack of power and meditated about its glorious past of the seventeenth century. But in actual practice all this did not influence Dutch foreign policy at all. Diplomacy remained in the hands of the 'Western establishment' and they knew all too well that in a world full of dangers a small nation can only walk on tiptoe. It is in this realism that lies the answer to a question perhaps even more puzzling than the one posed by Paul Kennedy: 'Why did the *Dutch Empire* last so long?'²⁷

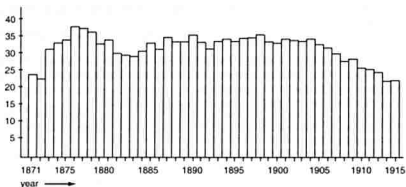
Notes

- 1 Some of the remarks – if not reflections – in this paper are also to be found in an introduction I wrote for Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Imperialism and After: Continuities and Discontinuities* (London 1986) 1–10 as well as in a contribution to the Festschrift for Ronald Robinson, 'The Giant that was a Dwarf' in: Andrew Porter and Robert Holland eds., *Theory and Practice in the History of European Expansion Overseas* (London 1988) 58–70.
- 2 Sir Keith Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs. II Problems of Economic Policy* (London 1940) 1–2.
- 3 J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London 1902) 25.

- 4 Ibidem, 15.
- 5 Ibidem, 65.
- 6 J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, 'The Imperialism of Free Trade', *Economic History Review* Second Series VI, 1 (1953) 1-15.
- 7 Cf. J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, 'The Partition of Africa', *New Cambridge Modern History* XI (Cambridge 1962); R. Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration' in: R. Owen and B. Sutcliffe eds., *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London 1972) 118-140.
- 8 H. Brunschwig, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français, 1871-1914* (Paris 1960).
- 9 The recent book by J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français: Histoire d'un divorce* (Paris 1984) offers many new data and throws a new light on the economic aspects of French imperialism.
- 10 H.-U. Wehler, *Bismarck und der Imperialismus* (Cologne 1969).
- 11 J.-L. Miège, *L'impérialisme colonial italien de 1870 à nos jours* (Paris 1968).
- 12 R.J. Hammond, *Portugal and Africa, 1815-1910: A Study in Uneconomic Imperialism* (Stanford 1966).
- 13 G. Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire, 1825-1975: A Study in Economic Imperialism* (Manchester 1985).
- 14 J. Stengers, 'King Leopold's Imperialism' in: Owen and Sutcliffe eds., *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, 248-275.
- 15 As quoted in M. Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme: Koloniën en buitenlandse politiek, 1870-1902* (Amsterdam 1985) 195.
- 16 Cf. H. Roland Holst, *Kapitaal en arbeid in Nederland* (2 vols.; Amsterdam 1902).
- 17 Cf. J. Schöffers, 'Dutch Expansion and Indonesian Reactions: Some Dilemmas of Modern Colonial Rule (1900-1942)' in: H. L. Wesseling ed., *Expansion and Reaction: Essays on European Expansion and Reactions in Asia and Africa* (Leiden 1978) 78-100; C. Fasseur, 'Een koloniale paradox: De Nederlandse expansie in de Indonesische Archipel in het midden van de negentiende eeuw (1830-1870)', *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 2 (1979) 162-187; H. L. Wesseling, *Myths and Realities of Dutch Imperialism: Some Preliminary Observations* (Paper presented to the Second Dutch-Indonesian Historical Conference, Ujung Pandang, 22-30 June 1978).
- 18 Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme*.
- 19 Ibidem, 8-9.
- 20 R. Betts, *The False Dawn: European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford 1976) 81.
- 21 Cf. Fasseur, 'Een koloniale paradox'.
- 22 R. Robinson, 'The Excentric Idea of Imperialism, with or without Empire' in: Mommsen and Osterhammel, *Imperialism and After*, 286.
- 23 Th. August, 'Locating the Age of Imperialism', *Itinerario*, 10, 2 (1986) 85-97.
- 24 In his paper for the Leiden conference, 'Problems of Comparison: Colonial India and Indonesia in the Nineteenth Century', Gordon Johnson suggests a rather different chronological pattern of economic development. I don't know whether this is true for India. If so, the British case is certainly different from the Dutch one.
- 25 Clarence-Smith distinguishes an 'imperialism of the weak' which he finds in 'the countries of southern and eastern Europe' (Clarence-Smith, *The Third Portuguese Empire*, VII). I don't see very clearly where he finds 'the colonial expansion of the countries of [...] eastern Europe', nor do I understand why an 'imperialism of the weak' could not be found in rather more northern countries like Holland and Belgium too.

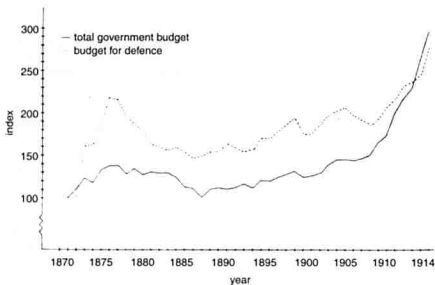
- 26 Cf. Gallagher and Robinson, 'Imperialism of Free Trade'.
 27 Cf. P. M. Kennedy, 'Why did the British Empire Last So Long?' in: P. M. Kennedy, *Strategy and Diplomacy, 1870-1945: Eight Studies* (London 1983) 197-218.

Appendix



Graph I Defence Expenditures as a Percentage of the Total Government Budget for the Netherlands Indies, 1871-1914.

Source: Budgets for the Netherlands Indies.



Graph II Development of the Defence Expenditures with Respect to the Development of the Total Government Budget for the Netherlands Indies, 1871-1914 (1871 = 100).

Source: Budgets for the Netherlands Indies.

THE DEBATE ON FRENCH IMPERIALISM, 1960–1975

H. L. Wesseling

Source: H. L. Wesseling, *Imperialism and Colonialism: Essays on the History of European Expansion*, Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press (1997), pp. 61–72.

Myths and realities

In 1960 there appeared a small book with an arresting title, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français, 1871–1914*.¹ Its author, Henri Brunschwig, who in previous studies had already been concerned with French and German colonial expansion, provided here an interpretative essay. And his interpretation was clear enough. The “myths” were the attempts to find an economic explanation for French imperialism. The reality was different. In fact, French colonial expansion was the consequence of a traditional policy of *grandeur*, strengthened by the virulent nationalism of the late nineteenth century and, in France, colored in a particular way by the defeat of 1870.

In retrospect, Brunschwig's book can be accepted as a significant part of the historiographical developments of the 1960s, in which an important debate about the nature and the causes of modern imperialism took place. In 1961, just one year after Brunschwig's book came out, there appeared the important article by D.K. Fieldhouse, “Imperialism: A historiographical revision,” and in the same year Ronald Robinson and Jack Gallagher published *Africa and the Victorians. The Official Mind of Imperialism*.² In these studies, which were concerned more with British imperialism, criticism of the economic interpretation was also a main theme. Similar debates followed in other countries.

Given the specific intellectual climate that existed in France in the 1950s and 1960s and in which Marxism played such an important role, it was to be expected that Brunschwig's book would lead to vivid controversy. And it most certainly did. But even the Marxists could hardly deny the fact that there was little capitalist interest in the French colonial empire. In order to

rescue the imperialist concept in its Marxist interpretation they therefore argued that French imperialism should be sought elsewhere, not in the colonial empire but in the European periphery, the Russian and Ottoman empires in particular. Thus, the French Marxists came to the somewhat paradoxical conclusion that French colonialism was not imperialist and French imperialism was not colonial.

In 1984 the important study by Jacques Marseille, based on an extensive data bank of French colonial trade, settled the question.³ Following this study, and due to the change in the intellectual climate in the 1980s, the debate has become far more empirical. In the last five years or so a number of important works of synthesis on the French colonial history as a whole have been published.⁴

Looking back on these historiographical developments one can conclude that Henri Brunschwig started an important discussion by asking fundamental questions about the most important aspects of French imperialism. Many of them are still at the center of present-day historical interest. The aim here is to look back to the origins of this debate and to reconsider the issues that were at stake.

Protectionism and imperialism

It is not surprising that one of the most important chapters in Brunschwig's book is the one he called "The legend of protectionism." In the economic interpretation of modern imperialism, protectionism is an important factor. A well-known line of thought holds that with the end of free trade and the closing of the international markets, the race for the colonies began. Colonies acted as providers of raw materials for the expanding European industries and, above all, as markets for their products. Rivalry between the industrialized countries led to protection and overproduction and these, in their turn, to colonial expansion. It was Jules Ferry, the founder of the second French colonial empire, who in elaborate treatises gave this explanation (to him, a defense) of imperialism. On such occasions he waxed lyrical over the immensity of the Chinese markets and proceeded, no less poetically, to call colonial policy the daughter of industrial policy.⁵

However, it must be admitted that this explanation of French imperialism has never been regarded as exhaustive. It has never been customary to explain French colonialism purely on commercial or mercantile grounds. An interesting example of the official view of French historical writing before the Second World War is Hanotaux's opinion in 1933 on the occupation of Algiers: "En occupant Alger, la France remplissait la mission que la Providence et l'Histoire lui avaient confiée . . . Et ce fut, de nouveau, une de ces belles aventures à la française: l'attrance de l'inconnu, la joie du risque, du sacrifice, le déploiement du courage individuel, le désintéressement dans le dévouement, l'élan de la création généreuse et éducatrice." [By occupying

Algeria France fulfilled the mission that History and Providence had entrusted it with . . . and this was, once more, one of those beautiful French adventures: the attraction of the unknown, the pleasures of taking risks, of sacrifice, of showing individual courage, disinterestedness and devotion, the élan of generous and educative creation.].⁶ Naturally, this need not be taken too seriously and, anyway, it is concerned with an earlier period, but other, more laconic historians, like the Americans Th.F. Power on Tunis and J.F. Cady on Indochina, have explained French imperialism in these regions above all in terms of political and, earlier, dynastic motives: pride, prestige, influence.⁷

Brunschwig resolutely puts himself in this tradition: "Ce fut un mythe puissant que celui de l'influence du protectionnisme sur l'expansion coloniale mais ce ne fut qu'un mythe" [It was a powerful myth, the one of the impact of protectionism on colonial expansion. But it was a myth all the same].⁸ His attack on the link between protectionism and imperialism rests on two arguments: no chronological connection or quantitative relationship has been established between the two. This is to say that some countries, Germany, for example, followed a protectionist policy before they had an imperialist one, while others, like France, did not become protectionist until long after the expansion process. Moreover (and this is the qualitative relationship, or rather the lack of it), he argues that the trade balance between France and the colonies gives no reflection of the influence of protectionist laws. That is, there is no noticeable growth in the trade between France and the colonies after the introduction of the Méline protectionist tariff in 1892. However, as Marcel Emerit has shown, this argument is not very strong, as a serious intervention occurred much earlier with the customs reform of 1884 in Algeria, which had a preponderate place in the total trade.⁹

But the chronological relationship deserves closer study. The system of bilateral treaties introduced in France in 1860 had a strong free trade character. The defeat of 1870-1871 and the loss of the industrially important province of Lorraine contributed to the revival of protectionist ideas after 1870. Particularly in agricultural circles, these were strengthened by the great depression of 1873 (which occurred much later in France than elsewhere), but for some time without success. Only in 1881 was there a general tariff review, in which limited protection was introduced for industrial products.¹⁰ This tariff, imposed by the Chamber, was meant as a basis for negotiations, but the government was more inclined to free trade than was the Chamber and generally took a liberal stand at the bilateral negotiations. The export crisis of 1882, however, strengthened the fear and conservatism of French industry, which was not very vital and was traditionally inclined to protectionism. The protectionist movement gradually gained momentum. In 1887, the large ports of Bordeaux and Marseilles came round to this way of thinking.¹¹ Meanwhile, a protectionist lobby for industrial and agrarian products had been formed in the Chamber, acting very carefully in the face

of liberal public opinion and the fear of "dear bread". Its leader was Méline, a former under-secretary in the 1881 cabinet of Ferry, whom he had already (in 1882) converted from support to free trade.¹² In 1892, Méline achieved great success with the introduction of the very heavy tariff named after him.

The chronological correlation between imperialism and protectionism is thus not as simple as Brunschwig claims. Before the breaking of the strike in 1892, there was a gradual adjustment of tariffs, with a slow retreat from free trade ideas and the reemergence of old protectionist thinking. This process occurred simultaneously with, and in part even before, colonial expansion. Of course, this is not to say that a causal connection between the two can be proved. Rather, it may be presumed that various economic factors, such as the loss of Alsace-Lorraine, the stagnation of population growth, and the economic crises of 1873 and 1881, contributed to a reevaluation of colonial possessions, also from an economic point of view. In this connection it is important to remember that mere fear of protection – even if unjustified – may have had some influence. It is generally recognized that English anxiety over the French protectionist tradition with regard to the colonies was often a motive for the propounding of territorial claims. Did not Salisbury tell the French that they would not find England so covetous if they themselves were not so protectionist?¹³ Similarly, in France there was concern over the growing weight of German protectionism and therefore an effort to find prior protection through the acquisition of colonial possessions. One of the most notable aspects of imperialism was precisely its "preemptive" character. It was governed by anxiety and "by pegging out claims for the future," by annexations without need or clear purpose, with no other goal than to be first.¹⁴

"Groupe colonial" and "parti colonial"

One of the heuristic similarities between the historian and the detective is their shared assumption that, in order to find out "who's done it," one has to start from an investigation of motives. To discover who prompted imperialism, one must look at those to whom it was of importance. This reasoning, which limits itself to the consideration of results, is, of course, not watertight, because men can be impelled by the expectation of profit – and thus by economic motives – which are not justified by the results (a phenomenon that is not unknown, for example, among gold prospectors). The starting point, however, is sufficiently interesting, because it puts the question of the profitability and thus the economic motivation of colonialism in another way. For the question is not simply "profit or loss" but rather "profit for whom and loss for whom." Even if there is no "credit balance" from the macro-economic accounting of profit and loss, it is still possible that colonial expansion was initiated by particular groups who had an interest in it. Or – even worse – they took the profits and let the government cover the costs.

This train of thought stems from a number of presuppositions, namely, that there were certain economic interest groups, that they exercised pressure on governments, and that the latter were influenced by them. Let us have a closer look at these interest groups.

One of the most remarkable phenomena of French imperialism is the enormous difference between the fine theory and the meagre practice. This holds true in the economic field as well. It was a French economist, Paul Leroy-Beaulieu, who was the prophet of "modern colonisation" being distinguished not by settlements but by capital investment.¹⁵ The reality was different. The distaste of Frenchmen for colonial investment was one of the permanent problems of the French colonies.¹⁶ This is not to say that there were no economic interests in the colonies at all. In particular, in such trading and industrial cities as Lyons, Bordeaux, and Marseilles (and to a lesser extent in Lille, Roubaix, and Rouen), there was appreciation of their commercial possibilities. Lyons was concerned above all with Asia because of the silk industry, which was threatened from 1855 by the silkworm disease. Already by 1865, this trade with Indochina was of vital importance for the industrial activities of Lyons. Various expeditions were the consequence of this. By 1895, Lyons had thus become an important center for imperialist activities and in 1895 its Chamber of Commerce was proudly described by its vice president as the most colonial in France.¹⁷ A contributory factor was that Lyons was the headquarters of the French branch of the Propaganda Fide, and thus the center of French missionary activities. Besides religious mission, the "mission civilisatrice" also played a role. The typical Lyonnais variant of this was formulated by the president of its Chamber of Commerce in a striking way: "Civiliser les peuples au sens que les modernes donnent à ce mot, c'est leur apprendre à travailler pour pouvoir acquérir, dépenser, échanger" [Civilizing peoples in the modern sense of the word means: to teach them how to work, in order to be able to buy, to spend, and to trade].¹⁸

Marseilles was another city which played an important role in colonial expansion. The Banque Franco-Égyptienne, based there, under Jules Ferry's brother, was substantially involved in the financial penetration of Tunisia, which preceded the establishment of the protectorate under the Ferry Cabinet of 1881.¹⁹ The Marseilles banking and business world maintained an interest in the economic perspectives of the colonies, particularly in North Africa. A typical figure from this milieu was Maurice Rouvier. This somewhat shadowy figure was a powerful man in French politics around the turn of the century. He was many times a minister and also became premier. He is the prototype of the "politicien affairiste," a typical example of the close intertwining of politics and the business world.²⁰ Thus, he maintained close relations with the Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas, of which he had been president and which in Morocco closely cooperated with a German bank, but he was opposed in this by Delcassé, for whom France's political interests were paramount. As premier during the first Moroccan crisis, in 1905, he

actively contributed to the fall of Delcassé. The Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas afterward (as a reward?) received half of a lucrative Moroccan government loan, via a German bank.²¹

Just as the legendary riches of Yunnan in South China played a role in the Lyonnais interest in Indochina, so there was a similar legend in the background of French exploration in the Sudan. Bahr-el-Ghazal, in this region, also aroused the interest of Leopold II and strengthened his honestly confessed desire to acquire a sizeable slice of the "magnifique gâteau africain."²² Stengers has shown that this myth of a new Eldorado had a persistent life and could still be found in 1904 when it was accepted by a serious author like Leroy-Beaulieu.²³ That the expectation would, however, not be fulfilled was propounded in poetical form by Hilaire Belloc as early as 1894.

Oh Africa, mysterious land
Surrounded by a lot of sand . . .
Far land of Ophir! Mined for gold
By lordly Solomon of old,
Who sailing northward to Perim
Took all the gold away with him . . .²⁴

Financial and business interest groups were thus certainly in existence, but it is striking that they were not dominant within the French colonial groups and committees.

Brunschwig has made a first survey of this microcosm, about which more is now becoming better known. The main activity of most of these colonial committees was the issuing of colonial propaganda. To this end, they organized lectures and congresses, but above all, banquets. Not for nothing was the colonial group known as "le parti où l'on dine."²⁵

By far the most serious committee was the Comité de l'Afrique Française, which in addition to propaganda, also devoted itself to colonial expeditions. It was supported financially by banks, but, remarkably enough, mainly by bankers who had no interests in Africa but who were personal friends of members of the committee.²⁶ The committee derived its influence above all from the outstanding relations that many of its members had with government circles. Also influential was its offshoot, the Comité du Maroc. Here, too, the interest was above all of a political rather than an economic nature, although a few members had financial concerns. The main motive was the nationalist-imperialist dream of a French Mediterranean empire with an African hinterland, in which Morocco naturally played an important part. The undoubted leader of these committees – and of many more – was Eugène Etienne, "le guide, le chef, le maître, l'ami." "You will lead me, you will give me orders, you will command me, and I shall obey" wrote the colonial expert Chailley-Bert in an open letter to Etienne, with all the reverence and humility due to this "Notre Dame des Coloniaux."²⁷ These groups and

committees attempted to influence government directly, with a certain amount of success, but also, in an indirect but no less efficient way, through Parliament.

In 1892, 28 deputies formed the *Groupe Colonial de la Chambre*. This group – naturally, it was not a genuine party – grew fast in the following years, and at its zenith in 1902 numbered 200 members. In 1898, a *Groupe Colonial du Sénat* was also formed, and meetings between the two groups often took place. It is difficult to establish the political character of the first group, because it included almost all shades of French political life, with a certain preponderance of *Modérés*, and, later, of Radicals.²⁸ The group was linked to the colonial committees by close personal ties and, naturally, its leader was Etienne. Although the group was thus of very heterogeneous composition and also included many purely nominal members, it was able to exercise considerable influence in matters of foreign policy. This occurred not only because of good personal relations with the ministers of the colonies and foreign affairs but also because of structural factors, such as the French governmental system. Ministerial instability and the weak position of the executive offered pressure groups many chances to influence events. Also, there was no question of interdepartmental cooperation and ministers were independent from and frequently opposed to each other.²⁹

Thus, undoubtedly, at the beginning of this century there was a close intertwining of politics and business. However, it would be wrong to suppose that politicians were just puppets of the world of business. The reality was more complicated. Ministers as often attempted to manipulate and make use of financial forces for political ends as the reverse – with varying success. The problem was that national political interests did not always run parallel with the commercial interests of particular groups, which, moreover, often had a strong international connection.³⁰ French business circles were very pleased with the English takeover in Egypt because this established law and order, even though the Egyptian question brought England and France into conflict more than anything else.³¹ The English and the French conducted a long prestige battle over the construction of a railway in Southern China, finally won by the French, after which English business took most of the profits therefrom.³² When, in 1905, France and Germany were deeply at odds over Morocco, the German firm Krupp was cooperating there with the French Schneider-Creuzot group against their German steel competitors Mannesmann and the powerful French *Banque de Paris et des Pays Bas*.³³

If a theory of governmental incitement by steel barons and arms dealers must be rejected as being too simplistic, the relations between politicians and businessmen do present a genuine and complicated problem. The same social stratum, the same “*classe dirigeante*” set the tone of politics and business and, in their modern approach to the national interest, politics and the economics could scarcely be separated. The true interrelation between politics and the business world must thus be explained not so much in terms of

irresistible pressure from the latter, or of a confusion of private and political interests, but rather of the common social identity evident among the leading figures.³⁴

Imperialism and nationalism

Brunschwig wrote that "C'est dans la poussée de fièvre nationaliste consécutive aux événements de 1870-71 qu'il faut rechercher la vraie cause de l'expansion" [The true cause of French colonial expansion is to be found in the nationalist fever that followed after the war of 1870-1871].³⁵ In his opinion, imperialism is thus essentially nationalist "grandeur" politics, stimulated by the humiliation of 1870-1871. This argument resembles the traditional explanations of French colonialism during the Restoration and the Second Empire as well as in the Third Republic. Princes and ministers thus sought expansion to gain standing. The defeat of 1870 had left behind a legacy of heightened sensibility for national glory and military successes which was expressed overseas. Did not Gambetta write to Ferry, after the latter's establishment of the French protectorate over Tunisia, that he had recovered for France its place as a great power?³⁶

The relationship between nationalism and imperialism is a complicated one in the sense that nationalism certainly did not automatically lead to imperialism. On the contrary, the most fierce patriots after 1870 strongly opposed the policy of colonial expansion which they considered to imply an acceptance of the new order and a deviation from the main task of *Revanche* and the reconquest of the lost provinces. It was Ferry's archenemy, Georges Clemenceau, who declared that "Quant à moi . . . mon patriotisme est en France" [As far as I am concerned, my patriotism is in France].³⁷ What can be seen here is the contradiction, evident in French nationalism immediately after the defeat, between the directions of "rétraction continentale" and "expansion mondiale."³⁸ It is questionable, however, whether this contradiction was so deep-seated. The champions of colonial expansion also considered it, in a certain sense, as a *pis aller*. But because the relations of power in Europe could not be tampered with, it was necessary to seek the French revival elsewhere, that is to say, overseas. This, however, did not mean that the final goal was lost from sight, as their opponents complained. The difference was not so much in the ends as in the means, because the policy of imperialism can also be understood as a form of *Revanche* politics.

The relationship between the two could even be very concrete, such as in exchange plans which existed from the beginning. Already in the Franco-German War of 1870 there was a French proposal to trade all the then colonies for the retention of Alsace-Lorraine, which Bismarck, of course, rejected. There were similar suggestions later by many others (Gambetta, Ferry, Combes, Delcassé, etc.).³⁹ In particular the Asian possessions were considered suitable for trading.

In a different way the first colonial literature of the time introduced a concept of national renewal or rejuvenation. The thought ran that France would rediscover itself overseas. "La colonisation, école d'énergie"; such was a conviction with metaphysical, even mystical implications, which from the beginning existed in manifold obscure forms.⁴⁰ In this connection, Raymond Betts has spoken of a "frontier" function. The colonies were alleged to be for the French what the West was for the United States, namely, a space for the unfurling of action, energy, and national devotion. The at once Arcadian and Spartan colonies were the antithesis of a ramshackle and sick metropolis. Such writers as Joseph Peyre, Ernest Psichari, and Robert Randau described colonization as a great epic, preferably acted out on the wide stage of the immense desert or in the darkness of the jungle. Here, too, great, empty, primitive Africa was clearly the favorite.⁴¹

Many ideas of this kind existed, but one cannot say that there was an imperial sentiment that propelled expansion. A colonially conscious public opinion only developed at the end of the century in the form of pride in the "empire" acquired, thus clearly an imperialism *ex post facto*. The Chamber, too, was not really interested in the colonies, but there, and also in the press, considerable surges of national sentiment can be observed in times of colonial perils. The first example of this occurred with the ratification by the Chamber of the Brazza-Makoko treaties in 1882. With this agreement, an African chief, the Makoko of the Bateke, handed over the sovereignty of large areas of the Congo to France. A contested point remains whether the Makoko fully understood the meaning of this decision. Anyway, after his return to France, Brazza carried on a successful advertising campaign. The press depicted the enormous potentialities and the riches in raw materials of this area, which was praised as "une terre vierge, grasse, vigoureuse et féconde,"⁴² a surprising combination of qualities. The propaganda did not fail in its object. The debates in the Chamber were no less lyrical and the proposals for ratification were adopted unanimously in a flood of patriotic elation. The Chamber had been, so *Le Temps* wrote, "vraiment française."⁴³

Brunschwig and Stengers make much of this event and describe it as the beginning of the "Scramble for Africa." The initiative for the scramble is thus given to France and can be dated to 1882 by this treaty and by the introduction of a protectorate policy in West Africa in January of the following year. As against the well-known view, put forward by Robinson and Gallagher, that the "Scramble for Africa" was only a sequel triggered by the Egyptian question, Brunschwig and Stengers argue that the partition of Africa was an independent process. The true cause lay in the fact that the French ministers of foreign affairs, who were not initially expansionists and scarcely interested in Africa, began to support a forward policy. This new departure can first be noticed with Duclerc in November 1882 and was a consequence of the pressure of public opinion, aroused by concessions to Britain.⁴⁴

Newbury and Kanya-Forstner also think along these lines, but they put the beginning earlier and elsewhere, in 1879 rather than in 1882, and in West Africa rather than in the Congo. Nor do they consider the Minister of Foreign Affairs responsible, but rather, the Minister of the Navy, Admiral Jauréguiberry. He and the Prime Minister, Freycinet, arrived at a reevaluation of the role of the state in colonial expansion that amounted to a revolution in French policy on Africa. Like Brunschwig and Stengers, Newbury and Kanya-Forstner thus place the most influential moves and the decisive responsibility for the "Scramble for Africa" with France. For England it may be true, as Robinson and Gallagher would have us believe, that imperialism was a sequel, a consequence of the partition of Africa and of the Egyptian question. This does not hold for France, which started the process. So, Newbury and Kanya-Forstner attribute a decisive influence to the "official mind," to the plans, ideas, and conceptions of the ministers, junior ministers, and officials; Delcassé, Etienne, Freycinet, Lebon, and so on who made the plans for Africa. That expansion in West Africa was popular is, so they claim, true, but of little importance, because the actors were not under the influence of public opinion but, rather, worked according to a plan of many years' standing.⁴⁵

Rather than seeing the pressure of an imperialist public opinion, we thus see the reverse process: first a reevaluation of colonial possessions from the point of view of international politics in governmental and official circles, followed by a gradual decrease in the anti-colonial spirit of the Chamber, and finally followed by a certain degree of colonial enthusiasm in wider circles. This was, however, not the case until after the great partition treaties of the 1890s, which established the division of Africa. This enthusiasm was above all marked by a nationalistic pride in the newly acquired empire and by an evaluation of colonial possessions in terms of European rivalries. A high point was reached in the years 1894-1896, when the Chamber supported such risky expeditions as that of Marchand. At that time there was truly political pressure from the Chamber and from officials on a moderate Minister of Foreign Affairs like Hanotaux, who could not resist it.⁴⁶

The new phenomenon, apparent in the last decade of the nineteenth century, was that the great powers increasingly wished to demonstrate their position in the world by their colonial possessions. In 1890 still, Caprivi could make fun of these ideas.⁴⁷ Yet, the process was irresistible, and there seemed to be no rest until the whole atlas was colored accordingly. There were annexations without clear reason or intention and even, as Stengers observed, without enthusiasm.⁴⁸ This policy, driven on by anxiety and greed, cannot possibly be quiet explained on rational grounds. It is clear that the minds of European statesmen of this era were to a large extent governed by the social-Darwinist viewpoint that relations between states, too, were ruled by the survival of the fittest.⁴⁹

Colonists and colonials

"On gouverne de loin, mais on ne peut, de loin, que se borner à gouverner" [We administer from far away but, being far away, administering is the only thing we are able to do].⁵⁰ This dictum of a French colonial official was a striking description of the situation. For the problem remains as to how far imperialism can be understood through studying the plans and activities of ministers and others in authority, in short, understanding the "official mind." To begin with, their plans were dependent on the information they received from elsewhere. If only for this reason, the impressions and interpretations of the men on the spot were of great importance. What is more, the officials were largely dependent on the latter for the execution of policy. In many cases the initiatives were taken locally and Paris could do little more than adjust a bit, and more or less wholeheartedly, follow. The picture of an imperialist policy developed in sovereign autonomy in ministries and chancelleries is certainly false. Some authors have gone so far as to see the whole of imperialism as just a sequel, a consequence of positions laid down earlier which were accepted rather reluctantly. With the collision between old and new authority, old and new culture, existing structures collapsed and a sort of power vacuum was created into which men were helplessly sucked.⁵¹

This argument would seem to go too far, at least for France. Colonial and imperialist policies were definitely conceived and executed in France, but they were indeed very largely influenced by the holders of local power. Newbury considered "a steady devolution of executive power from Paris to administrators abroad" to be the most important development of the 1880s.⁵² This was first and foremost true of the military administrators. More than any other group the military stimulated French expansion. As Sanderson wrote in relation to the Sudanese officers, they conquered a subcontinent "while ministers protested and businessmen placed their investments elsewhere."⁵³

French colonial history has often been described as a military epic, with Bugeaud in Algeria during the Restoration, Faidherbe in the Sudan under the Second Empire, and Gallieni in Indochina and Lyautey in Morocco during the Third Republic. In 1897, Lanessan, Governor-General of Indochina, already formulated a sort of "theory of employment" when he declared that France was forced into colonial expansion by the need to create jobs for the army and navy.⁵⁴ While Algeria was the "chasse gardée" for the army, Indochina was explored by navy officers. The navy, which until 1893 was included with the colonies in one ministry, was a nursery for nationalism and imperialism.⁵⁵ Doudart de Lagrée and Francis Garnier organized the Mekong Expedition in Indochina in the 1860s, acting purely on their own initiative, impelled by the dream of a great empire that would realize the promises of Duplex.⁵⁶ Later, the "troupes coloniales" developed. Nominally under the supervision of inspector-generals, in practice they operated virtually autonomously and

without paying much attention to orders. There was a long tradition of this, dating back to General Bugeaud, under whose rule in Algeria "military insubordination was raised to the level of an art."⁵⁷ Particularly in the Sudan was this art carried out to perfection.⁵⁸

Of course, the concern with a successful career played an important role in the choice of a colonial vocation, military as well as civilian.⁵⁹ But there were certainly other factors. The need for action, adventure and a dynamic way of life which could not be satisfied by a garrison life in metropolitan France must have been a major inducement for the military. The historian Gottmann recorded the saying of a colonial expert that the French empire was conquered by "bored officers looking for excitement."⁶⁰ The colonial army offered chances for a varied and responsible existence, and for the exercising of the whole range of soldierly functions. There was a wide colonial military literature which described and glorified this life. It was all smothered in nationalist sauce, in which the ideas of the French vocation and of "la plus grande France" were the most prominent ingredients, all strongly spiced with dislike for perfidious Albion.⁶¹

Understandably, the relations between these men holding power locally and their nominal superiors in Paris were frequently rather tense. Ambitious ministers who wanted to get a grip on things came swiftly into conflict with no less ambitious and self-willed generals. One well-known example of this is the quarrel between Delcassé and Lyautey in the years 1903-1905 over the Algerian-Moroccan border, which was decided by Lyautey to his own advantage.⁶² Such a victory was naturally not unimportant, because it stimulated other commanders to take similar action. Imperial history is thus full of altercations between the metropolis and the periphery. Consequently, not only the "official mind" but also the "military mind" and above all the relations between the two are of significance for the study of the motives of French imperialism.

Conclusion

The investigation of the regional and peripheral aspects of the process of colonial expansion is an important contribution to the history of modern imperialism. The excessively theoretical and dogmatic approach that only looked for the causes in European problems and concerns has given way to a more rounded vision, which alternately focuses attention on the various scenes. It would clearly be wrong to go to the other extreme and to undervalue or even dismiss the role of the metropolis.⁶³ Every event that became a historical fact was actually a chain of events – and thus a chain of causes – which ran from the homeland to the colonies and back and, like all chains, was as strong as its weakest link. Every decision was in fact a series of decisions taken at various times and on various levels. The military appetite for expansion, the pressure of colonial committees, ministerial rivalries,

parliamentary and journalistic opinions, and many other factors form a tangle that is difficult to unravel. The course of the process of expansion was more complicated and the colonial panorama more richly variegated than was supposed in the older literature. That is the prevailing impression received from an overview of the discussion in the past decade and a half.

Notes

- 1 H. Brunschwig, *Mythes et réalités de l'impérialisme colonial français, 1871-1914* (Paris, 1960).
- 2 D. K. Fieldhouse, "Imperialism: A historiographical revision," *Economic History Review* 14 (1961), 187-209; R. Robinson and J. Gallagher with Alice Denny, *Africa and the Victorians. The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London, 1967).
- 3 J. Marseille, *Empire colonial et capitalisme français: histoire d'un divorce* (Paris, 1984).
- 4 The most important are J. Meyer et al., *Histoire de la France coloniale I. Des origines à 1914* (Paris, 1991); J. Thobie, *Histoire de la France coloniale II. 1914-1990* (Paris, 1990); P. Pluchon, *Histoire de la colonisation française I* (Paris, 1991); and D. Bouche, *Histoire de la colonisation française II* (Paris, 1991).
- 5 J. Ferry, *Le Tonkin et la Mère-Patrie* (Paris, 1980), cited by Brunschwig, *Mythes*, 102.
- 6 G. Hanotaux, *Pour l'empire colonial français* (Paris, 1933), 41.
- 7 J. F. Cady, *The Roots of French Imperialism in Eastern Asia* (New York, 1954), 294: "The taproot of French imperialism in the Far East from first to last was national pride - pride of culture, reputation, prestige and influence"; Th.F. Power, *Jules Ferry and the Renaissance of French Imperialism* (New York, 1944), 183-85, 194-99. But see also J. Laffey, "Les racines de l'impérialisme français en Extrême-Orient," *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 16 (1969), 282-289.
- 8 Brunschwig, *Mythes*, 185.
- 9 Marcel Emerit in *Annales E. S. C.* 17 (1962), 1206-1209.
- 10 On the tariffs, see J. Chastenet, *Histoire de la Troisième République*, 7 vols. (Paris, 1952-1963), II, 250-254. On the crisis of 1873 with respect to the colonies, see G. W. F. Hallgarten, *Imperialismus vor 1914*, 2 vols. (Munich, 1964), II, 97; J. Valette, "Note sur l'idée coloniale vers 1871," *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine* 14 (1967), 190. On the situation of French industry, see H. Körner, *Kolonialpolitik und Wirtschaftsentwicklung* (Stuttgart, 1965), 41; and A. Gerschenkron, "Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective," in D. F. Hoselitz, ed., *The Progress of Underdeveloped Areas* (Chicago, 1952), 22 ff.
- 11 See C. W. Newbury, "The protectionist revival in French colonial trade: The case of Senegal," *Economic History Review* 21 (1968), 345; S. B. Clough, *France: A History of National Economics, 1789-1939* (New York, 1939), 214-240; D. Salem, "Sur quelques conséquences du retour de la France au protectionnisme à la fin du XIXe siècle," *Revue d'Histoire Economique et Sociale* 45 (1967), 326-380.
- 12 See Power, *Ferry*, 195.
- 13 Salisbury, in an interview with the French ambassador in 1897, *Documents Diplomatiques Français*, 1st Series, XIII, 117, cited by J. Stengers, "L'impérialisme colonial de la fin du XIXe siècle: mythe ou réalité," *Journal of African History* 3 (1962), 487. See also Newbury, *Revival*, 348. This need for protection was, naturally, mainly a consequence of the relative backwardness of French industry (on this, see the literature cited in note 10). In the first place, the colonies had to serve as controlled export markets (from which stemmed their generally negative

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- trading balance). Although the significance of the colonial trade as a whole was small (see Brunshwig, *Mythes*, 91), exports to the colonies could be of great importance for certain industries, such as textiles.
- 14 See Betts, *False Dawn*, 81; Newbury, *Revival*, 348.
 - 15 P. Leroy-Beaulieu, *De la colonisation chez les peuples modernes* (Paris, 1874).
 - 16 On this, see above all H., Brunshwig, "Politique et économie dans l'empire français d'Afrique noire, 1870-1914." *Journal of African History* 11 (1970), 401-417; and C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, *Le Congo Français au temps des grandes compagnies concessionnaires 1898-1930* (Paris, 1972).
 - 17 J. F. Laffey, "Roots of French imperialism in the nineteenth century: The case of Lyon," *French Historical Studies* 6 (1969), 80. Lyon and municipal imperialism are also dealt with in the later studies by John Laffey, "Municipal imperialism in nineteenth-century France," *Historical Reflections/Réflexions Historiques* 1 (1974), 1, 81-114; "Municipal imperialism: The Lyon Chamber of Commerce, 1914-1925," *The Journal of European Economic History* 4 (Spring 1975), 95-120; "Municipal imperialism in decline: The Lyon Chamber of Commerce, 1925-1938," *French Historical Studies* 9 (1975), 329-353; "Municipal imperialism in France: The Lyon Chamber of Commerce, 1900-1914," *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Society* 119 (1975), 8-23.
 - 18 Cited by Laffey, "Racines," 299.
 - 19 On this, see J. Ganiage, *Les origines du protectorat français en Tunisie, 1861-1881* (Paris, 1959), 145, 644 and 156, 655-656. A sequel to Ganiage's work is J. Rosenbaum, *Frankreich in Tunesien. Die Anfänge des Protektorates 1881-1886* (Zürich, 1971).
 - 20 J. Bouvier, "A propos des origines de l'impérialisme," *La Pensée* 100 (1961), 60. See Stengers, "Impérialisme," 480.
 - 21 P. Guillen, "Les milieux d'affaires français et le Maroc à l'aube du XXe siècle," *Revue Historique* 239 (1963), 397-422. On the important role of the banks, see also P. Guillen, "L'implantation de Schneider au Maroc," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 79 (1965), 165; and Gerschenkron, "Backwardness," 12 ff.
 - 22 Cited by Stengers, "Impérialisme," 490. On the legendary riches of the Sudan, see H. Brunshwig, "Politique," 403; J. Stengers, "Une facette de la question du Haut-Nil: Le mirage soudanais," *Journal of African History* 10 (1969), 579-623; A. S. Kanya-Forstner, *The Conquest of the Western Sudan. A Study in French Military Imperialism* (Cambridge, England, 1969), 264 ff.; Ph. D. Curtin, "The lure of Bambuk gold," *Journal of African History* 14 (1973), 623-631; H. Brunshwig, "Le Dr Colin, l'or du Bambouk et la 'Colonisation moderne,'" in id., *L'Afrique noire au temps de l'Empire français* (Paris, 1988), 65-94.
 - 23 See Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest*, 264; and Stengers, "Facette," 585.
 - 24 Hillaire Belloc, *The Modern Traveller* (1898), cited by G. Shepperson, "Africa, the Victorians and imperialism," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 40 (1962), 1228.
 - 25 C. M. Andrew and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, "The French Colonial Party: Its composition aims and influence, 1889-1914," *Historical Journal* 14 (1971), 103. This excellent article was the first important supplement to Brunshwig's survey (*Mythes*, 111-139). On the origin of a colonial faction in the Chamber, see E. Schmieder, "La Chambre de 1885-1889 et les affaires du Tonkin," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer* 53 (1966), 153-215. Andrew and Kanya-Forstner have continued their interesting research in: "The French Colonial Party and French colonial war aims, 1914-1918," *Historical Journal* 13 (1974), 79-106; "The Groupe Colonial in the French Chamber of Deputies, 1892-1932," *Historical Journal* 17 (1974), 837-866; "Hanotaux, the Colonial Party and the Fashoda

- strategy," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 2 (1975), 55-104. About the "Union Coloniale Française," see also S. M. Persell, "Joseph Chailley-Bert and the importance of the *Union Coloniale Française*," *Historical Journal* 17 (1974), 176-184.
- 26 Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "Party," 104.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 27. An early example of similar Mediterranean-imperial dreams in 1868 is to be found with Prévost-Paradol. See J. Ganiage, *L'expansion coloniale de la France sous la Troisième République, 1871-1914* (Paris, 1968), 41. On this, see also Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "Party," 120; J. P. T. Bury, "Gambetta and overseas problems," *The English Historical Review* 82 (1967), 277-295. About Etienne, see H. Sieberg, *Eugene Etienne und die französische Kolonialpolitik 1887-1904* (Cologne, 1968).
- 28 Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "Party," 107.
- 29 R. G. Brown, *Fashoda Reconsidered. The Impact of Domestic Politics on French Policy in Africa, 1893-1898* (Baltimore, Md., 1970), 139. See also Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "Party," 126 ff.
- 30 There often was opposition between Foreign Affairs and the Colonies. See for example, C. Coquery-Vidrovitch, "L'intervention d'une société privée à propos du contesté franco-espagnol dans le Rio Muni: la Société d'Explorations Coloniales, 1899-1924," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 13 (1969), 67; and Brown, *Fashoda*, 32; but also C. M. Andrew, *Theodore Deleassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale* (London, 1968), 30.
- 31 J. Bouvier, "Les intérêts financiers et la question d'Egypte, 1875-1876," *Revue Historique* 224 (1960), 75-104; and Bouvier, "Origines," 127.
- 32 M. Bruguière, "Le Chemin de fer du Yunnan: Paul Doumer et la politique d'intervention française en Chine, 1889-1902," *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* 77 (1963), 278.
- 33 Guillen, "Implantation," 165-167.
- 34 See Bouvier, "Intérêts," 104; Bouvier, "Origines," 129; and Coquery-Vidrovitch "Intervention," 67.
- 35 Brunschwig, *Mythes*, 185.
- 36 Gambetta to Ferry, 13 May 1881, cited by Brunschwig, *Mythes*, 55. See also C. J. H. Hayes, *A Generation of Materialism 1871-1900* (New York, 1963; 1st ed., 1941), 220: "Basically the new imperialism was a nationalistic phenomenon." J. Stengers, "Leopold II et la rivalité franco-anglaise en Afrique, 1883-1884," *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 47 (1969), 479: "Cette fièvre patriotique et chauvine qui, en fin de compte, a tout décidé (. . .)."
- 37 Clemenceau, *Débats parlementaires*, 31 July 1885, cited by R. Girardet, *Le Nationalisme français, 1871-1914* (Paris, 1966), 108.
- 38 Girardet, *Nationalisme*, 108.
- 39 On this exchange offer, see Hayes, *Generation*, 217. On Gambetta, see G. Wormser, *Gambetta dans les tempêtes, 1870-1877* (Paris, 1964), 229 ff. On Ferry, see F. Pisani-Ferry, *Jules Ferry et le partage du monde* (Paris, 1962), 76 ff.
- 40 See for example H. Brunschwig, "Note sur les technocrates de l'impérialisme français en Afrique noire," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer* 54 (1967), 185.
- 41 Lyautey compared Africa and the Far West in a speech of 12 July 1907, cited by R. F. Betts, "The French colonial frontier," in C. K. Warner, ed., *From the Ancien Régime to the Popular Front* (New York, 1969), 136.
- 42 *Le Constitutionnel*, 7 October 1882, cited by Stengers, "Impérialisme," 475. See also H. Brunschwig, "La négociation du traité-Makoko," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 5 (1965), 5-57.
- 43 *Le Temps*, 23 November 1882, cited by Stengers, "Impérialisme," 475.

- 44 H. Brunshwig, "Les origines du partage de l'Afrique occidentale," *Journal of African History* 5 (1964), 121-125. This is a review article of J. D. Hargreaves, *Prelude to the Partition of West Africa* (London, 1963). Stengers attributes great importance not only to the Brazza-Makoko treaty, but also to the introduction by France of a policy of protectorates in West Africa, in January 1883. See Stengers, "Imperialisme," 477 ff.
- 45 C. W. Newbury and A. S. Kanya-Forstner, "French policy and the origins of the scramble for West Africa," *Journal of African History* 10 (1969), 253-276. See also Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest*, 265; H. Brunshwig, *Le partage de l'Afrique noire* (Paris, 1971), 153-156. A general discussion of this controversy can be found in W. R. Louis, *The Gallagher and Robinson Controversy* (London, 1976); and G. N. Sanderson, "The European partition of Africa: Coincidence or conjuncture?" *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 3 (1974), 54.
- 46 Brown, *Fashoda*, 31 ff. See also G. N. Sanderson, *England, Europe and the Upper Nile, 1882-1899* (Edinburgh, 1965), 361; Ganiage, *Expansion*, 43; M. Michel, *La Mission Marchand 1895-1899* (Paris, 1972). On Hanotaux, see Andrew and Kanya-Forstner, "Hanotaux" (cf. above, note 25); P. Grupp, *Theorie der Kolonialexpansion und Methoden der imperialistischen Aussenpolitik bei Gabriel Hanotaux* (Bern, 1972); A. A. Heggoy, *The African Policies of Gabriel Hanotaux 1894-1898* (Athens, Ga., 1972). Brunshwig does ascribe significance to public opinion, but considers that this was driven on by nationalism and not by interest in the colonies. On the contrary, in regard to that, there was only "ignorance et indifférence." Brunshwig, "Partage," 165. On the development of the colonial idea in France, see Raoul Girardet, *L'Idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962* (Paris, 1972); D. B. Marshall, *The French Colonial Myth and Constitution-Making in the Fourth Republic* (New Haven, Conn., 1973); and H. Brunshwig, "Vigné d'Octon et l'anticolonialisme sous la Troisième République (1871-1914)," *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines* 54 (1974), 265-298.
- 47 Caprivi in the *Reichstag*, 12 May 1890; see before 74.
- 48 Stengers, "Imperialisme," 485. On this, see also Sieberg, *Etienne*, 149; and J.-B. Duroselle, *L'Europe de 1815 à nos jours* (Paris, 1967), 341.
- 49 On this, see especially H. Gollwitzer, *Europe in the Age of Imperialism, 1880-1914* (London, 1969). Cf. Newbury and Kanya-Forstner, "Policy," 275: "The age of imperialism was not an age of reason and French policies were nothing if not the product of their age"; and Sieberg, *Etienne*, 149.
- 50 Albert Duchêne, *La Politique coloniale de la France: Le ministère des Colonies depuis Richelieu* (Paris, 1928), 263, cited by C. W. Newbury, "The formation of the Government General of French West Africa," *Journal of African History* 2 (1960), 112.
- 51 See R. Robinson and others in *Journal of African History* 2 (1961), 158-160.
- 52 Newbury, "Formation," 111.
- 53 Sanderson, *England*, 390.
- 54 J. L. de Lanessan, *Principes de colonisation* (Paris, 1897), cited by Duroselle, *Europe*, 337.
- 55 With the exception of the Gambetta Cabinet (14 November 1881-26 January 1882) when a ministry united trade and colonies under Minister Maurice Rouvier. On nationalism in the navy, see H. Brunshwig, *L'Avènement de l'Afrique noire* (Paris, 1963), 172.
- 56 G. Taboulet, "Le voyage d'exploration du Mekong (1866-1868): Doudart de Lagrée et Francis Garnier," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer* 57 (1970), 10. In later expeditions, commercial considerations also played a role. See J. Valette, "L'expédition de Francis Garnier au Tonkin," *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et*

- Contemporaine* 16 (1969), 190; and Laffey, "Racines," 283 ff. The most thorough and extensive treatment of French expansion in Vietnam is by D. Brôtel, *Französischer Imperialismus in Vietnam. Die koloniale Expansion und die Errichtung des Protektorates Annam-Tongking 1880-1885* (Zurich, 1971). On similar expansion in Senegal, see B. Schnapper, *La politique et le commerce français dans le Golfe de Guinée de 1838 à 1871* (Paris, 1961), 203.
- 57 Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest*, 8. See also J. S. Ambler, *The French Army in Politics, 1945-1962* (Columbus, Ohio, 1966), 10.
- 58 Kanya-Forstner, *Conquest*, 270. On the great role of the soldiers, see also M. Crowder, *West Africa under Colonial Rule* (London, 1968), 70-77.
- 59 W. B. Cohen, "The lure of Empire: Why Frenchmen entered the Colonial Service," *Journal of Contemporary History* 4 (1969), 107. This is a chapter from his more recent, larger study on the French colonial rulers: W. B. Cohen, *Rulers of Empire* (Stanford, Calif., 1971).
- 60 J. Gottmann, "Bugeaud, Gallieni, Lyautey," in E. M. Earle, ed., *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton, N. J., 1944), 234. See also the comment of John Stuart Mill on imperialism as "a vast system of outdoor relief for the younger sons of the upper classes," cited in K. Zilliacus, *Mirror of the Past* (London, 1944), 32.
- 61 Sanderson, *England*, 390. On the colonial literature as a source of inspiration, see Cohen, "Lure," 113-114.
- 62 On this, see K. Munholland, "Rival approaches to Morocco; Delcassé, Lyautey and the Algerian-Moroccan border, 1903-1905," *French Historical Studies* 5 (1968), 328-343.
- 63 See Brunshwig, "Partage," 166.

ANGLO-FRENCH RIVALRY

John L. Christian

Source: *The Geographical Review* 31(1941): 272-82.

An apposite instance of the interdependence of geography and history is provided by the tense rivalry between Great Britain and France in South East Asia before 1910. This rivalry, which was essentially a problem in the historical geography and diplomatic climate of the times, had its origin in the astonishingly persistent belief that somewhere between the Bay of Bengal and the South China Sea would be found a short route to the wealth and trade of interior China, particularly Yunnan and Szechwan.

Contemporaries regarded it as axiomatic that a Sino-French or Siamese-French war over French aggressions in Indochina would result in an Anglo-French war. Indeed, twice (in 1893 and 1896) the two countries were on the verge of battle for control of the Menam and Mekong routes to Yunnan. But geography and malaria were against the diplomats. These routes never have come into use; and the area where Burma, French Indochina, and Thailand now march in a common frontier is today one of the least-known regions of all Asia.

Largely because of the existence of close ties between the two countries since the maturing of the Entente Cordiale of 1904, it is easy to forget that they were in acrimonious rivalry in South East Asia for decades, particularly from 1862 to 1904, when Britain kept careful watch over French activities from Oman and Afghanistan in the Middle East to New Caledonia and the New Hebrides in the South Seas. In this instance certain historicogeographical aspects of the problem are basically more important than the usual facets of diplomacy and politics.

Beginnings of French and British interests

Historically, French interest in the lands east of Suez began with the organization of the French East India Company, in 1604, the dispatch of the first French ships to the Orient, in 1611, and the beginnings of the French

Oriental establishments, in the middle of the century. As early as 1631 the French regarded Madagascar as of particular value because of its favorable location for extending their trade to South East Asia.¹ By 1663 French priests were acquainted with coastal Burma, Siam, and Cambodia and in that year made their first crossing of the Malay Peninsula, near modern Tenasserim, while en route to Siam.² Shortly thereafter the French, hard pressed on the mainland of India, proposed that their headquarters be moved to the Pegu coast. The French naval expedition of six ships that reached the Bay of Bengal in 1690 had as its object the establishment of commerce with Burma and Siam. (In fact, the failure of the trade of the British East India Company in Burma and Siam in the seventeenth century was traced to the superiority of French influence in those states.)³

In the eighteenth century Dupleix was interested in Burma and Siam because of the abundance there of teakwood for shipbuilding, and he suggested to his superiors that they acquire a portion of the Burmese coast.⁴ During Burma's internal strife that resulted in the establishment of the Alaungpaya dynasty in 1755, the French made the mistake of aiding the defeated Talaings, while the British aided the conquerors. As a result, Alaungpaya acquired a supply of French arms, including 1300 muskets and forty 24-pounders, together with 200 French gunners, with which Burma became the premier state in South East Asia. The French, meantime, evened the score by inciting the Burmese to destroy the British colony on Negrais Island.⁵

In the nineteenth century Britain sent to the native states of South East Asia numerous embassies that had as their primary or secondary purpose inquiry into the extent of French influence in these states. For example, the missions to Burma of Symes in 1795 and 1802 and of Canning in 1803 and 1809; that of Crawford in 1822 to Siam and in 1826 to Burma; that of Finlayson in 1821 and Crawford in 1830 to Cochinchina; and those of Captain Burney, Sir James Brooke, and Sir John Bowring to Siam in the first half of the century were all interested in British trade and French ambition.

The Indochinese Peninsula

Ever since the early merchant adventurers were forced to pass through the Strait of Malacca or the Sunda Strait to reach the China coast the great Indochinese peninsula has been of interest to Europeans, principally as an obstacle to a direct route to the Far East, as that term is generally understood. In the past century it became common knowledge among Europeans in the Orient that at one point, far above the head of navigation, the Yangtze flows within 600 miles of the northern reaches of the Bay of Bengal, whereas it is some 4300 miles by sea from Calcutta to Shanghai. It was only natural that early cartographers and pioneers of commerce should assume that the most direct route to interior China would be along one of the great

meridional rivers of the Indochinese peninsula to the Yangtze.⁶ At one point, somewhat north of the present Burma Road, the Yangtze, Mekong, and Salween are compressed within a distance of 48 miles (separated by ridges reaching up to 8000 feet above the floor of the adjacent valley).⁷ But the Irrawaddy, contrary to early beliefs, does not rise on the Tibetan plateau as do the other great meridional rivers⁸ and thus occupies a unique place among the rivers of South East Asia, as Professor L. Dudley Stamp has recently pointed out.⁹

Geographical and historical knowledge of the area within 300 miles of the point where the frontiers of Thailand, French Indochina, and Burma now meet was extremely sketchy until the beginning of the present century. For example, Dupuis, in his study of Tongking in 1872, prepared a map that showed the Burmese possessions reaching to the Black River, within 200 miles of Hanoi, into territory concerning which King Mindon and his successor, Theebaw, had only the slightest knowledge and no jurisdiction.¹⁰ Dupuis was perhaps willing to show extensive Burmese territory in the hope that France would inherit Mindon's holdings; but the map was later to plague the French, who, after the British annexation of Burma, in 1886, found it to their advantage to maintain that Burma had at no time extended even to the Mekong.

Garnier's expedition

In 1858 France seized Saigon; in 1862 the Court of Huế signed a treaty that surrendered Cochinchina to France; and in 1867 Siam was forced to recognize the French as overlords of Cambodia. As a result of the treaty with Annam, Francis Garnier was appointed Inspector of Native Affairs in the new protectorate, with permission to travel on the Mekong. On June 5, 1866, the (De Lagree-Garnier) expedition left Saigon in the first organized European exploration of the hinterland of Indochina from the China side.¹¹ On April 29, 1867, the party reached Luang Prabang, a place seldom visited by Europeans since the Dutch trader Gerard van Wusthof arrived there in 1641.¹² By June the party had reached the point where Burma, Thailand, and French Indochina now meet. Garnier noted there the sale of British cotton goods in the bazaar of Kiang Sen; and De Lagree reported that tribes on the left bank of the Mekong were loyal to Siam. Both explorers observed the presence of Burmese agents with authority at the principal crossings of the Mekong. On August 23, 1867, De Lagree visited Keng Tung, in what was undoubtedly Burmese territory; and thereafter the British in Lower Burma were ever watchful of French designs on territory bordering the upper Mekong. The Frenchmen passed on to Kiang Hung town, which has been under Chinese sovereignty since the Sino-British boundary settlements and treaties of 1894 and 1897, where they noted that both Burma and China had agents in the court. On March 2, 1868, the party left the Mekong, and they

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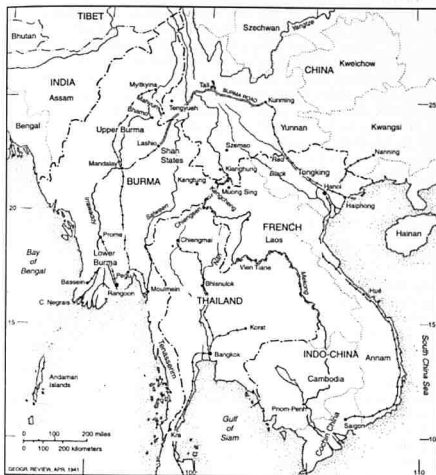


Figure 1

reached Taliyu by a journey that took them directly across the route followed by British and Burmese trade to interior Yunnan. The Moslem Sultan of Tali ordered the Garnier party away from his territory. Garnier explained the action: The Sultan has mistaken us for Englishmen. After the death of De Lagree in Yunnan young Garnier took the party out by way of Hankow, whence they traveled on to Shanghai by the American steamer *Plymouth Rock*. The Garnier expedition touched the Mekong at no point above Kiang Hung, a city to which the Britisher Captain McLeod had preceded them by thirty years. McLeod made his remarkable journey from Moulmein to Kiang Hung with six elephants and was the first European to penetrate China by the Salween route for purposes of examining trade routes.

When once it had been reported¹³ that Garnier intended to "strike the Irrawaddy at Bhamo" and that he was expected also at Keng Tung and Mandalay, British interest in French activities in South East Asia was keen. Major General Albert Fytche, Chief Commissioner of British Burma, proceeded to Mandalay and secured Mindon's signature to a treaty that compromised Burma's independence.¹⁴ Extra-territoriality was secured (abandoned in 1879). British agents were permitted to sit in Burmese customhouses; and Burma's power to control commerce across her territory to China was further restricted. A Resident was authorized for Mandalay, and the Irrawaddy was opened for navigation by British steamers. Captain Stover was stationed as agent in Bhamo and traveled up in November, 1868, by the first British steamer to reach that river port 40 miles from the Chinese frontier.¹⁵ He was not, however, provided with a gunboat, as had at first been suggested; nor did Britain assume control of Burma's foreign relations, as her officers in British Burma had urged.¹⁶

The Sladen and Browne expeditions

After much patient work, General Fytche in 1868 obtained permission from the King of Burma and authorization from the government of India for the dispatch of an expedition from Bhamo to Tali. Colonel E. B. Sladen, Political Agent at Mandalay, set out¹⁷ with a group of six Europeans and a guard of 50 sepoys towards the same goal as the Garnier party that had left Saigon two years before. The Sladen party reached Momein (modern Tengyueh) in September, 1868, three months after Garnier's return to Saigon. Colonel Sladen could get no farther than Tengyueh, however, because of the disturbed state of the country as a result of the Panthay rebellion.¹⁸

Eventually Lord Salisbury yielded to the fears of British commercial interests that the French would entirely absorb the markets of Yunnan and neighboring provinces and sent an expedition to reopen British trade routes (1875). Colonel Horace Browne, accompanied by the geographer Ney Elias, who is remembered for his journey through Mongolia and his survey of the Yellow River, succeeded in getting farther than Manwyne, to Serai, where they learned that Augustus Margary, who had gone on ahead, had been murdered (1875).¹⁹ Browne's party thereupon returned to Bhamo as the last official British attempt to open a direct route to interior China. As a matter of fact, the reports of Grosvenor, Baber, and Davenport, who were sent from Hankow to Yunnan in connection with the British demand for reparation over the Margary affair, convinced the home government that the topographic difficulties of the route from Bhamo to Yunnan and Szechwan were too great for practical railway construction.²⁰

Government of India's lack of interest

British officials in Burma frequently complained of the impossibility of getting the government of India to give any attention to the northeastern frontier. That government was wholly occupied with the northwestern frontier and the danger of Russian aggression through Afghanistan and the Khyber Pass. As early as the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1816-1818 Dr. Francis Buchanan, of laterite fame,²¹ had advised the East India Company against "giving the Chinese any just reason for suspicion by forming pretensions to any part of the mountainous region which separates the two Empires."²² Lord Lawrence, the Viceroy, had advised against the Sladen expedition: "His Excellency can hardly conceive any step more imprudent than for British merchants to settle in Bhamo or a British official to be stationed there for any purpose."²³ In the short viceroyalty of Lord Mayo the government of India, even at the risk of losing control over the trade routes to Yunnan, again stated its policy:²⁴ "The future annexation of Burma, or any of its adjacent states, is not an event which I . . . desire; . . . I should view with extreme regret . . . the necessity of occupation, or of assuming, even in a temporary manner, the government of any of the states lying adjacent to the province now in your charge." In short, the official attitude of the government of India has been summarized as follows: "The condition of the Northeastern frontier caused no Governor-General a single sleepless night."²⁵

Railways suggested

Meantime, British commercial interests continued to demand that the Indian government provide facilities for trade to western China in order to forestall any French plans to acquire prior advantages in Yunnan and Szechwan. The *Parliamentary Papers* alone contain nearly twenty reports on expeditions and proposals with respect to trans-Burma trade with western China and the upper Mekong from 1824 to 1900. The most persistent advocates of British penetration of Yunnan, Szechwan, and Kwangsi from the Bay of Bengal were Captain Richard Sprye and his son, who for half a century (1840-1890) presented numerous proposals for railways and highways into western Siam, to the Shan and Laos States, and to southern China.

Perhaps the best-publicized effort was that by Archibald R. Colquhoun, a deputy commissioner in British Burma, and Holt S. Hallett, a civil engineer. Colquhoun, who was ardently anti-French, resigned his office when the government of Burma refused him leave to survey a railway route from Moulmein to Szemao by way of Chiengmai in Siam. He became a special correspondent for the London *Times*, traveled overland from Canton to Bhamo, and wrote voluminously against French designs on South East Asia.²⁶ The Colquhoun-Hallett railway plan suffered from a general suspicion that it was merely a means for "taking the King of Siam by the hand

and leading him into the great British Indian family."²⁷ Although Colquhoun's line is actually the shortest practicable route from the Bay of Bengal to Yunnanfu (Kunming), it passes through sparsely settled country that is everywhere malarial below 4000 feet. There is not today a railway line, caravan route, or highway, British or French or Siamese, that anywhere follows the Colquhoun-Hallett survey.

British annexation of Upper Burma

French intrigue in Upper Burma, with its consequent danger to British commercial interests, was the principal reason for the annexation of independent Burma, in 1886.²⁸ Jules Ferry had pledged repeatedly that no French arms should be supplied Burma through Tongking. But British suspicions were aroused upon the discovery that a Franco-Burmese agreement had been signed providing for the construction of a railway, the establishment of a Bank of Burma with French capital, control of the Burmese postal system, and establishment of a line of French steamers on the Irrawaddy.²⁹ The die was cast when the British learned of a secret agreement to supply arms from Tongking after the signing of the Franco-Burmese treaty of January 15, 1885.³⁰

The Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, sent a message to the senior official in Lower Burma: "If, however, the present proceedings should eventuate in any serious attempt [by the French] to forestall us in Upper Burma I should not hesitate to annex the country."³¹ After the publication of a "remarkably indiscreet" report by M. de Lanessan on the progress of French activities in Burma,³² the Secretary of State on November 11, 1886, wired the Viceroy: "Please instruct General Prendergast to advance on Mandalay at once."³³

British occupation of Upper Burma was followed by expeditions into the various Shan States tributary to King Theebaw. In 1890 a British party under Sir George Scott reached Keng Tung. Meantime both the French and the Siamese had asserted claims to parts of the former Burmese possessions. During the Franco-Burmese negotiations of 1885 Burma purported to cede part of Kiang Hung across the Mekong to the French. The British, as heirs to Theebaw's dominions, claimed the area but later awarded Kiang Hung to China on condition that it should never be ceded to another power.³⁴ However, the Chinese almost immediately gave part of Kiang Hung to the French.

Further difficulty arose over the substate of Mong Hsing, a trans-Mekong territory ruled by a junior branch of the governing family of Keng Tung. In March, 1894, Mr. Stirling of the Burma Commission visited Mong Hsing; and he was followed, on Christmas Day, 1894, by Sir George Scott and Mr. Wharry, Chinese Political Adviser to the government of Burma, in connection with the Anglo-French Mekong Commission. M. Pavie, the French commissioner, had sent the French flag to Mong Hsing before the arrival of

the British party, and the sawbwa had hoisted the tricolor over his palace. Pavie, who reached Mong Hsing on New Year's Day, had intended to welcome Sir George Scott to French territory. However, Scott had the French flag lowered and ran up his own. For a few months the incident had all the possibilities of an Oriental Fashoda nearly five years before the famous incident on the Nile.³⁵ The London *Times* had columns about the Mong Hsing incident; and Pavie in private conversation with Scott doubted the validity of French claims to the bazaar town. On January 15, 1895, a telegraphic message from the Viceroy announced an agreement with France that set mid-channel of the Mekong as the boundary.³⁶ Thus Mong Hsing, which had flown the British flag and had had a British post office for a year, was acquired by France. Siam's claims were quieted by the Treaty of Chantabun, which transferred all Siamese rights east of the Mekong to France. The remainder of the subordinate state of Keng Cheng went first to Siam but was acquired by France in May, 1896. British interests with respect to the Mekong frontier suffered from frequent changes of policy: Lord Roseberry favored the buffer-state idea;³⁷ Lord Kimberley ordered the occupation of Mong Hsing; then Lord Salisbury, "without exception the worst Foreign Secretary we ever had for matters east of Suez,"³⁸ gave up the state to France. The French secured a strategic, natural frontier for their Indochinese holdings and had the "further gratification of having enlarged them beyond all expectation."³⁹

Later rivalries

Anglo-French rivalry continued in Yunnan along Burma's northern frontiers until well into the present century. Rival railway and mining claims were the most frequent causes of friction. Article XII of the Anglo-Chinese agreement of February 4, 1897, contemplated railway construction in Yunnan and provided for connection with Burmese lines.⁴⁰ No development, however, took place and the British abandoned their surveys beyond Bhamo and Lashio. The agreement between France and China of April 10, 1898, authorized the French to construct a railway from the Tongking frontier to Yunnanfu.⁴¹ This was carried out, but the plans for carrying the line farther were discarded. Activities of French explorers and missionaries in Yunnan along the Burma frontier were watched closely; the British in Burma were only mildly enthusiastic about the explorations of Prince Henry of Orleans from the Mekong to Assam across the top of Burma in 1895. The British were careful to open consulates in Szemao (Es-mok) and other inland treaty ports of Yunnan and Kwangsi that had little trans-Burma trade.

Siam probably owed her independence to the desire of both her neighbors to have a buffer state between them, the British having decided that Burma was "too soft and pulpy" to serve in that capacity. As matters turned out, France got much the lion's share of territory shorn from Siam. There is not

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in Burma today any area that was for any length of time Siamese territory, a fact recognized by the present Thai minister to the United States, who issued a communiqué indicating that, in contrast with her present demands upon the French possessions, Thailand is entirely satisfied with her Burma frontier.⁴²

British development of Singapore after 1819, introduction of steam navigation to the Orient, the opening of the Suez Canal and the American trans-continental railway in 1869 only heightened the rivalry for alternate short cuts to "the greatest market in the world." By 1882 French engineers had completed surveys of a proposed Kra canal; and on June 8, 1883, Ferdinand de Lesseps presented the completed plans to the King of Siam as "la route Française au Tonkin." That distinguished Frenchman spoke of Bangkok as "the beginning of the Menam route to Yunnan."⁴³

By about 1910 the epic age of European imperialism had come to an end; and since that time there have been no considerable additions to the French and British empires east of the Red Sea. Yunnan and Kweichow, for which the rivalry was particularly acute, during the past decade were perhaps less subject to foreign influence than any other provinces of China proper. Lord Curzon (Viceroy of India from 1898 to 1905), for whom frontiers and imperialism in the grand manner had great fascination, forced the Imam of Muscat to renounce the lease of a coaling site to France,⁴⁴ saw The Hague Court decide in Britain's favor in 1905 the question of the grant of the French flag to Muscat dhows, carried on an intimate correspondence with King Chualalongkorn of Siam, and considered that country an outpost of the British Empire.⁴⁵ From the Olympian heights of Simla Lord Curzon took pride in Britannia's supremacy in South East Asia. The Indian Ocean was a British preserve: "At no point in the long stretches of British territory washed by its surf has the flag of any European rival ever been hoisted since the French colours were struck over Cuddalore in 1783."⁴⁶ Curzon dreamed of a grand trunk railway from Calais to Shanghai by way of British India and sent Major Davies to do the necessary survey work in Yunnan.⁴⁷ He believed mistakenly that India and China, the two most populous countries in the world, would in his time be joined by steel rails.

The great delusion that the Irawaddy, the Salween, the Menam, or the Mekong would provide the entrepôt to interior China was the key to Anglo-French policy and rivalry in South East Asia for a century. The delusion died hard. Eventually, however, "loath as most Englishmen are to admit it," trade decided that none of these river valleys provided an economical entrance to China.⁴⁸ Likewise, it was at length realized that Indochina was not the path of empire. Both Britishers and Frenchmen, learning lessons from geography and history, agreed with Sir Henry Yule: At no time has a conqueror from India or Burma passed on to China, nor (with one minor exception) from China to India or Burma; nor did the conquests of any one of the great warriors of medieval Asia embrace any part of both countries.⁴⁹

But the delusion was so persistent and complete that it amounted to a perfect case of mistaken identity. Meantime, "England annexed areas where she had interests to protect, France annexed areas where she *wished* to have interests to protect."⁵⁰

Notes

- 1 The Cambridge History of India, Vol. 5, British India, 1497-1858, edited by H. H. Dodwell, London, 1929, p. 62.
- 2 Adrien Launay: Histoire générale de la Société des Missions-Étrangères, 3 vols., Paris, 1894; reference in Vol. 1, p. 74.
- 3 D. G. E. Hall: Early English Intercourse with Burma (Rangoon Univ. Pubs., No. 1), London, 1928, pp. 138-153.
- 4 V. McL. Thompson: Dupleix and His Letters, New York, 1933, p. 721; and Alfred Martineau: Dupleix et l'Inde française, 1749-1754, Paris, 1927, p. 451.
- 5 D. G. E. Hall: The Tragedy of Negrais, *Journ. Burma Research Soc.*, Vol. 21, 1931, pp. 1-133.
- 6 Bruno Hassenstein: Some Contributions to the Geographical and Cartographical Literature of the Indo-Chinese Frontier Territories, n. p., n. d., gives a useful list of the principal sources on the area before 1900. Reports of early British attempts to penetrate India's northeastern frontier are summarized in "Selections of Papers regarding the Hill Tracts between Assam and Burmah," 10 vols., Calcutta, 1873.
- 7 For a photographic report see J. F. Rock: Through the Great River Trenches of Asia, *Natl. Geogr. Mag.*, Vol. 50, 1926, pp. 133-186.
- 8 A fact first noted in Sir Henry Yule: A Narrative of the Mission Sent by the Governor-General of India to the Court of Ava in 1855. London, 1858, p. 272.
- 9 The Irrawaddy River, *Geogr. Journ.*, Vol. 95, 1940, pp. 329-356 (see note elsewhere in this number of the *Geographical Review*).
- 10 J. Dupuis: L'ouverture du Fleuve Rouge au commerce et les événements du Tong-Kin, 1872-73, Paris, 1879.
- 11 Hugh Clifford: Further India, London, 1904, pp. 129-254, gives a vivid account of the Garnier expedition. The basic source is Francis Garnier: Voyage d'exploration en Indo-Chine effectué pendant les années 1866, 1867 et 1868 . . . , 2 vols. and atlas, Paris, 1873.
- 12 Garnier seems to have been the first to make readily available a translation of Van Wusthof's diary. The translation, which was made for Garnier by M. P. Vækel, was printed, with Garnier's annotations, in the *Bulletin de la Société de Géographie*, Ser. 6, Vol. 2, 1871, pp. 249-289.
- 13 The *London Times*, June 7, 1868.
- 14 Albert Fytche: Burma, Past and Present, 2 vols. (in 1), London, 1878. See the Anglo-Burmese treaty of Oct. 25, 1867, in *British and Foreign State Papers, 1870-71*, pp. 61 and 1305-1308.
- 15 J. G. Scott, assisted by J. P. Hardiman: Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, 2 parts in 5 vols., Rangoon, 1900-1901; reference in Part I, Vol. 1, p. 64.
- 16 Alexander Bowers: Bhamo Expedition: A Report on the Practicability of Re-opening the Trade Route between Burma and Western China, Rangoon, 1869, p. 100.
- 17 The official account is E. B. Sladen: Narrative of the Expedition to Explore the Trade Routes to China via Bhamo, Rangoon, 1869.
- 18 This disturbance hindered the British and aided the French. Captain Strover

- reported that during his first three years in Bhamo "not a single consignment belonging to British firms had reached Bhamo."
- 19 The resultant British demand for compensation gave rise to the famed Chefoo Convention, a recent study of which is S. T. Wang: *The Margary Affair and the Chefoo Agreement*, New York, 1940.
 - 20 Particularly E. Colborne Baber: *Travels and Researches in the Interior of China, Royal Geogr. Soc. Suppl. Papers*, Vol. 1, 1882-1885, pp. 1-201, especially pp. 154-192, "Notes on the Route Followed by Mr. Grosvenor's Mission through Western Yünnan," reprinted from *Parliamentary Rept., China, No. 3 (1878)*.
 - 21 See this number of the *Geographical Review*, p. 177.
 - 22 Papers respecting the Nepal War, London, 1824, p. 45.
 - 23 Letter from the government of India to Fytche, dated Simla, July 13, 1867, in Sladen, *op. cit.*, appendix T.
 - 24 Fytche, *op. cit.*, Vol. 2, pp. 124-125 (letter from Lord Mayo).
 - 25 D. G. E. Hall, edit.: *The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence, 1852-1856*, London, 1932, p. xv.
 - 26 A. R. Colquhoun: *Across Chryse*, 2 vols., 2nd edit., London, 1883; A. R. Colquhoun and H. S. Hallett: *Report on the Railway Connexion of Burmah and China*, London, 1887. See also H. S. Hallett: *A Thousand Miles on an Elephant in the Shan States*, Edinburgh and London, 1890.
 - 27 Philippe Lehault: *France et Angleterre en Asie*, Paris, 1892, p. 562.
 - 28 The British were fully aware of Burmese and French plans, which were reported in detail to the government of India. The Blue Book "Correspondence Relating to Burmah since the Accession of King Theebaw, in October, 1878," has 266 pages of dispatches, C. 4614 in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1886.
 - 29 Comte A. Mahé de la Bourdonnais: *Un français en Birmanie*, Paris, 1891, pp. 295-306.
 - 30 C. 4614 (*op. cit.*, footnote 28), No. 105.
 - 31 Sir Alfred Lyall: *Life of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava*, 2 vols., London, 1905; reference in Vol. 2, p. 118.
 - 32 J. L. de Lanessan: *Rapport fait au nom de la commission chargée d'examiner le projet de loi portant approbation de la convention complémentaire de commerce, signée à Paris le 15 janvier 1885, entre la France et la Birmanie*, Paris, 1885. Lanessan became an aggressive governor general of French Indochina (1891 to 1894).
 - 33 C. 4614 (*op. cit.*), No. 122.
 - 34 Sir Edward Hertslet: *Hertslet's China Treaties*, 3rd edit., revised by G. E. P. Hertslet, with the assistance of Edward Parkes, 2 vols., London, 1908; reference in Vol. 1, pp. 99-109.
 - 35 The Mong Hsing-Keng Cheng incident is treated definitively by Clarence Hender-shot: *The Conquest, Pacification, and Administration of the Shan States by the British, 1886-1897* (Diss., Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1936). The best French account is contained in "Mission [Auguste] Pavie Indo-Chine, 1879-1895: Géographie et Voyages," Vol. 5, Paris, 1902, pp. 264-284.
 - 36 "Livre Jaune: Affaires du Haute-Mekong et de Siam, 1893-1902." By Article IV of the declaration, the two governments agreed that all commercial and other advantages conceded in the two Chinese provinces of Yunnan and Szechwan either to France or to Great Britain by their respective conventions of March 1, 1894, and June 20, 1895, and future privileges should "be extended and rendered common to both powers."
 - 37 G. L. LaFuze: *Great Britain, France, and the Siamese Question, 1885-1904* (Diss., Ph.D., Univ. of Illinois, 1935), discusses the various proposals for a buffer state.

- 38 G. E. Mitton [Lady Scott], edit.: *Scott of the Shan Hills*, London, 1936, p. 166.
- 39 *Ibid.*, p. 215.
- 40 J. V. A. MacMurray, edit.: *Treaties and Agreements with and concerning China 1894-1919* (Publs. Carnegie Endowment for Internatl. Peace, Division of Internatl. Law, Washington), 2 vols., New York, 1921: reference in Vol. 1, pp. 96-97.
- 41 *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 124.
- 42 *The New York Times*, Oct. 6. 1940. Britain took compensation in the Malay states of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah, and Perak, which had been under loose Siamese protection before their cession to Britain in 1909.
- 43 La Bourdonnais, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-241 and 265-284, discusses French interest in a Kra canal and contains a copy of De Lesseps' report.
- 44 Lovat Fraser: *India under Curzon and After*, New York, 1911, pp. 86-91, gives a convenient summary of French attempts to secure a base at the mouth of the Persian Gulf.
- 45 Curzon wrote a brilliant defense of Britain's record in Siam (G. N. Curzon: *The Siamese Boundary Question*, *The Nineteenth Century*, Vol. 34, 1893, pp. 34-55).
- 46 G. A. Ballard: *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*, London, 1927, p. 287.
- 47 H. R. Davies: *Yün-nan: The Link between India and the Yangtze*, Cambridge, 1909. Davies urged construction, for political reasons, of a meter-gauge line from Burma to China at a cost of £20,000,000.
- 48 Clifford (quoting Colborne Baber), *op. cit.*, p. 294. A governor general of French Indochina came to the same conclusion. "French Indochina cannot be considered as a country of commercial transit. Saigon can never compete with Singapore" (J. L. de Lanessan: *L'Indo-Chine Française*, Paris, 1889, p. 478).
- 49 Yule's introduction to William Gill: *The River of Golden Sand*, 2 vols., London, 1880.
- 50 E. V. G. Kiernan: *British Diplomacy in China, 1880-1885*, London, 1939, p. 187.

PROGRESS AND WELFARE IN SOUTH EAST ASIA

J. S. Furnivall

Source: J. S. Furnivall, *Progress and Welfare in South East Asia: A Comparison of Colonial Policy and Practice*, New York: Institute of Pacific Relations (1941), pp. 9-24.

Liberty and commerce

In due course the rationalisation of economic life produced the Industrial Revolution in England. This changed the circumstances of colonial relations, gave colonial policy a new objective, and required new methods in colonial practice.

Manufacture by machinery produced goods on a large scale at a low price and gave a new importance to commerce; for the first time it became possible to sell Western goods to Eastern peasants, and trade took the place of tribute as the end of policy. At the same time Adam Smith was developing his social philosophy, advocating equality before the law and freedom from government control over person, property and trade. These views were favorable to commerce, and the current of opinion turned in the direction of what came to be known as Liberalism. In colonial relations Liberalism exercised a strong humanitarian influence, for it assumed that all men were equal and implied a higher view of native character. The Dutch had justified compulsion on the ground that natives were incapable of responding to the economic motive and would not work for gain, but the new commercial policy was grounded in the Liberal faith that in this one point at least the Oriental was "a man and a brother." Moreover commerce required, and the Liberal philosophy implied, a new attitude to native welfare. The Dutch Company had made most profit from natives who were unpaid, or underpaid, whereas English manufacturers, selling goods to natives, wished to see them wealthy. The new policy aimed therefore to substitute paid for compulsory services, and left the cultivator free to grow what paid him best instead of requiring him to grow certain crops under compulsion; both in public and private

affairs, in taxation and commerce, it encouraged the use of money. With these new aims, indirect rule ceased to be expedient. The regents were no longer needed as agents of compulsion, and the exercise of their authority on Eastern lines prejudiced the introduction of a new system based on the Western principles of the rule of law and economic freedom. Throughout the nineteenth century, therefore, so far as the promotion of commerce was the end of colonial policy, direct rule tended to supersede indirect rule.

The event proved that the faith of the manufacturers in Liberal principles was justified; for Orientals were keenly responsive to the economic motive, and the market for European manufactures rapidly increased. Humanitarian philosophers, however, assumed that the whole body of Liberal doctrine was universally applicable and that the free working of economic forces would be uniformly beneficial. But subsequent experience has shown, as we shall see, that these assumptions were unsound.

Netherlands India, 1800-30

On the fall of the Company, colonial policy became a subject of keen debate between the advocates of ancient ways and the advocates of reforms on Liberal principles. The issue was still unsettled when, in 1811, the British took over the archipelago to defend it against Napoleon. Raffles, who was sent to govern Java, was a conspicuous exponent of Liberal principles, and immediately set about introducing the rule of law by remodelling the administration on the lines then recently devised in India. The central feature of this system was the division of each Indian province into Districts, where a District Officer exercised undivided authority as Magistrate and Collector. Raffles adopted this plan in Java, but for the District Officer retained the Dutch title of Resident. He deprived the hereditary officials, the regents, of all political power, and replaced them by a system of village rule under elective headmen. Freedom of person, property and trade was the keynote of his policy, and he required the people to pay taxes in money instead of rendering compulsory service.

Liberal views prevailed among the Dutch when they regained possession of their colony in 1816-19. But they had no manufactures and no shipping, and Dutch rule on English principles brought prosperity to English commerce while leaving the Dutch to foot the bill. Within about ten years the Government was obliged to pawn all the Dutch possessions in the East to a firm of British merchants in Calcutta. Meanwhile Liberal principles had done little for the peasant, as the attempt to relieve him from oppression by the hereditary chieftains threw him into the clutches of the moneylenders, mostly Chinese. At the same time the subversion of hereditary authority multiplied crime and unrest. Thus in Java the Liberal experiment led to bankruptcy and rebellion, and in 1830 the Dutch adopted a new plan, based in large measure on the former system of the Company.

Burma, 1826-97

The merchants who founded the English East India Company in 1600 were very similar to their Dutch rivals in their objects and ideas, but from about the time of the Industrial Revolution and the spread of Adam Smith's doctrines, their systems of administration rapidly diverged. The growth of trade brought British subjects to Rangoon and at the same time British rule in India expanded until it reached the frontier of Burma. Political and economic contact between a mediaeval and a modern State created friction, and this led to war. In 1826 the Company annexed two provinces: Arakan, bordering on Bengal; and Tenasserim, which was rich in teak and was valued as a trade route to Siam and China. The sharp lesson of the loss of these two provinces was neglected by the Burmese kings, who could not see that Burma must accept the modern world or forfeit its national independence. In 1852 a second war resulted in the occupation of Pegu and Martaban, linking up the older provinces and including the potentially rich Irrawaddy Delta. In 1857 the Company was taken over by the Crown and, shortly afterwards, in 1862, the four provinces were amalgamated in a single Local Administration as British Burma and placed under a Chief Commissioner. Finally apprehensions of French aggression precipitated a third war, which in 1886 completed the absorption of Burma in the Indian Empire. In 1897 the country was raised to the status of a Province under a Lieutenant-Governor.

British rule in Burma was inspired from the outset by the new Liberal principles. The first proclamation of the British Government undertook "to provide an Administration on the most liberal and equitable principles," and to promote "the most free and unrestricted internal and external commerce."¹ In Tenasserim a Commissioner was appointed to administer the Province under the supervision of the Government of India. The Province was divided into Districts, corresponding roughly to the Residencies of Java, and in each there was appointed a District Officer who was Collector, Magistrate, Civil Judge and responsible also for all other administrative functions. The Commissioner superintended the working of the machines and was the appellate court in criminal and civil cases. The law was based originally on the common law of England. In the earliest British settlements in India, as with the Dutch, only the servants of the Company were under European law, and the natives remained under their own laws. But in British India English law was gradually adapted to local conditions and, in matters of chief concern to the maintenance of order and the promotion of commerce, the jurisdiction of the Courts was extended to every one alike: each class however still remained under its personal law in questions regarding succession, inheritance, marriage or any religious usage or institutions. This principle was applied in Burma. Thus the system was closely similar to that adopted by Raffles in Java. But there were two important points of difference. In Java Raffles deprived the regents of power; in Burma the

corresponding hereditary officials (*thugyis*) were retained, but only for the collection of revenue, and were converted into quasi-officials, without local ties, but differing from ordinary officials in being paid by a commission on the revenue collected instead of by a fixed salary. The other point concerned the village: in Java Raffles instituted a village system; in Burma the village was left to itself.

As circumstances required, the District was divided into small units, and natives were gradually trained to help in the administration, first in the collection of revenue, then in matters of police, and then as subordinate magistrates and judges. But they were required to work on Western lines under European supervision. Thus the system was one of Direct Rule. Two other points deserve attention. The organization was territorial, not functional. The machinery, designed primarily to administer the law, was rational and simple; every administrative officer from top to bottom did much the same work, and the native officer in his smaller charge had much the same functions as the District Officer, the hub on which the whole machinery revolved. Secondly, all were servants of the law. They were not officers of police and, apart from general supervision exercised by the District Officer, none had any authority over the police; the whole system was based on the rule of law.

This system still prevailed when the four provinces were amalgamated as British Burma in 1862. Meanwhile, as need arose, the District Officer had been given the assistance of special officers for police, public works, education, public health and so on. Economic development required the increasing recruitment of such officers, and the amalgamation of the provinces was naturally followed by the appointment of departmental heads to supervise the special services, and this by the growth of a secretariat to act as a clearing house between the various departments. But the District Officer still remained the hub of the whole system until the passing of Liberalism was signalled by the appointment of a Lieutenant Governor in 1897.

Malaya, 1786-1896

Although Malaya came under British rule later than Burma, the first settlements there were founded earlier. After the Industrial Revolution British ships encroached on Dutch preserves in growing numbers. The entrance was guarded by the Straits of Malacca and in 1786 the East India Company acquired a footing here by the occupation of Penang, made sure in 1800 by the purchase of Province Wellesley, a narrow strip along the opposite mainland. Malacca was occupied on behalf of the Dutch in 1795, returned after the Peace of 1815, and then re-acquired by treaty in 1824. But the key to the Straits lay further south. This was secured in 1819, when Raffles, disregarding Dutch claims, took advantage of a disputed succession in Johore to obtain a station in Singapore. These four posts became known collectively as the Straits Settlements. Friction between the British merchants in the ports

and the mediaeval Malay States in the interior became more acute when about 1850 valuable new tin mines were discovered in Perak. The merchants began to press for a more active policy against the States. When unable to obtain satisfaction from the Indian Government, either under the Company or, after 1857, under the Crown, they agitated for the transfer of the Settlements to the Colonial Office. In 1867 they were successful and the Straits Settlements became a Colony, under a Governor at Singapore.

Continued agitation, reinforced by French expansion in the Tropical Far East, induced the Home Government to recognize "the duty forced upon England as the dominant power to interfere in the Malay States . . . the duty was imperative from motives of humanity alone, but it was equally certain that to undertake it would be highly beneficial to British interests and British trade."² In all these States, continual disputes between rivals to the throne gave frequent opportunities for intervention: unsuccessful claimants asked for British aid, and this was given on condition of the acceptance of protection. Protectorates were established in Perak (1874), Selangor (1874), Pahang (1887), and the nine States of Negri Sembilan (1876-89). Subsequently, when the doctrine of *laissez faire* was losing favor, the inconvenience of separate petty States became apparent, and in 1896 they were united as the Federated Malay States.

Raffles, on the foundation of Singapore, insisted, with his usual combination of idealism and practical politics, on freedom of trade: "one free port in these seas must eventually destroy the spell of Dutch monopoly."³ Free trade has remained a dominant tradition in the Colony. In other respects the system of rule under the Company developed along the normal Indian lines of direct administration. In the words of Raffles, Government applied "the general principles of British law to all, equally and alike, without distinction of tribe or nation."⁴ In the Colony, then, consisting of a group of ports, commerce was the supreme object of policy, and the promotion of Liberal principles by a system of direct rule was the natural sequel.

In the Malay States, however, conditions suggested a different system. Trade was comparatively insignificant and the main object of intervention was to suppress disorder consequent on the influx of Chinese miners. With the support of British authority the local chieftains could manage this, and it seemed unnecessary to incur the trouble and expense of direct administration. Moreover, during the seventies, every one accepted the Liberal principle that Government should do as little, and cost as little as possible. The Home Government, when sanctioning intervention, stipulated that the Colony should be responsible for the cost; and the Colony passed on the responsibility to the States. Whenever it intervened it imposed the condition that its protégé would meet all expenses. He was required to accept a British Resident, whose expenses should be a first charge on the revenues of the State; this was secured by provisos that "the collection and control of all revenues and the general administration of the country should be regulated under the

advice of the Resident," and that his advice "should be asked and acted upon on all questions other than those touching Malay religion and custom." The system contemplated was one of indirect rule through the sultans.

But the officers deputed as Residents had been trained in the administrative system of the Straits, and it was this system that they introduced. Just as in Burma, the same officer was Magistrate and Collector and general factotum, administering, indifferently to all classes, law based on the Indian Penal and Procedure Codes. In due course each State was divided into districts and these were subdivided; but in each unit of administration a single officer held charge, and he was the agent, not of the local sultan, but of the British Government. In practice the system of direct rule was adopted. Almost the only features distinguishing it from British rule in Burma were the sultan and his State Council; but the sultan was little more than a figurehead and the Council was ornamental rather than useful; it met infrequently – perhaps not more than once a year; it did not see the estimates; all the legislation was in English, which neither the Malay nor Chinese members understood; and its whole proceedings were dominated by the Resident as chairman.

Each State remained nominally autonomous. But under the rule of law, more Chinese came in to work the mines, trade grew, and the States came into new contacts with one another and with the outside world. Gradually the forms of political autonomy lost all relation with economic facts. Meanwhile each Resident, very loosely subordinate to the Governor at Singapore, went his own way, and, though economic conditions were linking them more closely, their ways diverged more widely, even in the primary concerns of government, law and revenue. Communications were defective and, when at length the construction of a main railway line was undertaken, each short section had to be entrusted to a separate State Railway Department. Such anomalies were intolerable to a generation that was coming to regard the Empire as an institution to be run on business lines, and in 1886, with the nominal consent of the sultans, the States were united with the style of the Federated Malay States, under a Resident-General, subject to the direction of the Governor of the Colony as High Commissioner.

Indo-China, 1858-97

That the Dutch and English came to the Tropical Far East for commerce there can be no question; but the French intervention in Indo-China was in large part due to the aspirations of Napoleon III for a cheap halo of military glory, and for a strategic base near China. The Empire, however, was closely linked with business, and trade with China was one object of Napoleon's policy. French missionaries had long been working in Annam, and the persecution of these missions gave a pretext for war in 1858. Saigon was taken in 1858 and the three southern provinces of Cochin China were ceded to the French in 1862, though their position remained insecure until

the annexation of the rest of Cochin China in 1867. At that time Norodom, King of Cambodia, was at issue with both Siam and Annam, and in 1863 he placed himself under French protection. In 1867 Siam renounced its claims over Cambodia except for two provinces, Battambang and Angkor. But Cochin China was of little use for trade with China, and the French turned their attention to Tonkin. Difficulties arising out of a commercial expedition in 1872 led to military operations and to a treaty in 1874 which opened up three ports. After that, interest in colonial adventure languished until revived by Ferry. In 1882 advantage was taken of a massacre of Christians for a new advance. In 1883 a Commissary-General was appointed, and Annam accepted French protection which was confirmed in a further treaty in 1884, and recognized by the Chinese in 1885. During these troubles Siam consolidated its hold on Laos, between the Mekong and Annam, cutting off Tonkin from Cochin China except for a small strip along the coast. Continual friction led to war, and in 1893 Siam was compelled to cede to France the region east of the Mekong. Adjustment of the common frontier with Burma occupied the next two years, but in 1895-96 the French organized a Protectorate in Laos. In 1898, as an outcome of the Boxer uprising, the French obtained a lease of Kwang-chowan, an outpost in Kwangtung. Finally, in 1907, when the *entente cordiale* with England gave the French a free hand against Siam, they took over the two provinces of Cambodia still in Siamese possession, and thus rounded off the modern French empire in Indo-China.

The position of the French in the Tropical Far East differs from that of the Dutch and English. The Dutch in Java and the English in India inherit a long tradition of political relations with their subjects, dating from before the rise of modern industry; French rule in Indo-China is little older than the Suez Canal. They came to the traditional medieval East from the modern rationalist West, confident in the superiority of reason over custom, fortified by the technical advances of the modern world in politics and economics, and strong in the belief, favored by these circumstances, that they represented a higher civilization.

French traditions encouraged them to impose this civilization on their Eastern subjects, and at the same time to stress the economic aspect of their mutual relations. In far greater measure than the Dutch they inherited the Roman system of positive government; in far greater measure than the English they had developed a strong central Government; and, unlike both Dutch and English, they had been fused in a revolutionary furnace into a homogeneous whole, and treasured the ideal of assimilation to a common norm. And they had still one other distinction; in a rational world they were pre-eminently rational. The shrine erected to the Goddess of Reason had been overturned, but nothing could prevent Frenchmen from paving her their private devotions. In the colonial literature of England one does not readily find a rational theory of empire; it is justified, if at all, on moral

grounds. The Dutch in innumerable treaties explore the bed-rock of first principles, but they start from practical experience. The French start from theory, and they aim logically at applying theory in practice. Now the only rational basis of dominion is the advantage of the ruler. Both Dutch and English seek their own advantage in their dependencies, but the French accept this relation as the axiom on which to found their system of rule. Thus French colonial policy has a strong vein of "realism." French colonial practice, however, reflects another aspect of French social life – its strong agricultural interest. During the nineteenth century colonies were chiefly valued as markets for manufactures, and agriculturists regarded them with indifference, or even with suspicion, as possible competitors. The balance of agricultural and industrial interests in France resulted therefore in alternate waves of colonial enthusiasm and apathy.

Under the Empire there was no separate Colonial Office, and Cochin China, as primarily of military importance, was placed under the Admiralty. In 1881, when Ferry was urging the commercial value of colonies, it was transferred to the Ministry of Commerce and an Under-Secretary for Colonial Affairs was appointed. The people of Cochin China were French subjects, but Tonkin was a Protectorate and the people were not subjects but protégés, technically foreigners; Tonkin therefore remained under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But Tonkin depended on Cochin China for funds and in 1887 all the French territories in Indo-China were united under a single Governor-General. Finally, after many changes backwards and forwards between the Ministries of Marine and Commerce, a separate Colonial Office was established in 1894.

When Cochin China came under French rule, it had little commercial value and the French proposed to administer it indirectly through native officials. But the local officials were Annamese who fled to their own country; the French tradition of positive centralised rule conflicted with the local autonomy of Oriental rule; and the French doctrine of assimilation together with a belief in the superiority of Western culture encouraged a disregard of local custom. Also, with Chinese immigration, trade grew rapidly, especially after the famine of 1864 in China, which gave a new impulse to the export of rice not only in French territory but in Siam, and Burma. All these things favored direct rule. Moreover, unlike the English and Dutch in earlier days, the French had the material power to enforce direct rule, and they carried it further even than the English in Burma. In Indo-China as elsewhere an hereditary official constituted the link between Government and people: the Dutch emphasized his hereditary standing; the English emphasized his official character; but the French turned him into an official, graded, paid and pensioned. This official was the head of the *canton*, or group of villages. Above the *canton* was the *arrondissement*, corresponding roughly to the Dutch Residency and the English District, and under a single French official who combined all the functions of government.

Under Napoleon III France was second only to England in industrial development, and it was thought that Free Trade should be as profitable to the French as to the English. For some years that tradition survived the downfall of the Empire, as congruous with the new outburst of republican enthusiasm in 1870. This led in 1879 to the appointment of the first Civil Governor with a mission to remodel the administration of Cochin China on lines more consonant with republican ideas, especially as to the separation of legislature, executive and judiciary. He created a Colonial Council to represent the economic interests of French citizens and to serve as a check on the executive; deprived administrative officers of their judicial powers; introduced French judicial procedure, and constituted an Appellate Court. The results on administration were in many ways unfortunate. The Colonial Council developed into a corrupt official clique, which became all-powerful in Cochin China, and indirectly over the whole of Indo-China. The numerous officials required by the new system could not be adequately paid by European standards, nor recruited from among the natives, as these were French subjects and not French citizens, to whom alone, then and long afterwards, officialdom was open. Indians, however, were available, as they had been endowed with French citizenship during the revolutionary fervor of 1848; they were eligible and they were cheap, and the sacred mission of interpreting French ideals to the people of Indo-China was therefore entrusted to Hindus. Nevertheless, under direct administration, trade grew and cultivation expanded. But France no longer held its former place in industry and, especially after the economic crisis of 1882, was inclining in favor of Protection. Ferry seized the opportunity to expound a new colonial policy. National greatness, he argued, rested on industry; industry in France needed Protection; protected industries needed closed markets, and these could be secured in colonies. France adopted a protective tariff and, under color of the Republican doctrine of assimilation, the same tariff, with certain modifications in French interests, was applied to Cochin China in 1887.

Meanwhile, urged on by Ferry, France had assumed control over Annam and its subject state, Tonkin. The main objective was trade with China through Yunnan. From this standpoint Annam proper was valueless, and, like Cambodia, it was left to go its own way under native rule. Tonkin, however, was the gateway to Yunnan, and closer control was necessary. As in Cochin China, indirect rule was contemplated; but, as in Cochin China, and for very similar reasons, indirect rule was impossible. Direct rule therefore became the practice, though never carried to the same extreme as in the older province. Liberal principles and commercial interests required the abolition of the *corvée* and the payment of taxes in money. Native chieftains could not govern on these lines. But native officials, lacking hereditary authority, could not suppress the disorders consequent on the reforms. The numerous disturbances caused insolvency, and Tonkin came to depend for funds on Cochin China with its rich rice fields, and on Paris. Dependence on Cochin

China gave further power to the corrupt bosses of the Colonial Council, and dependence on Paris not only brought colonial adventure into disrepute, but impaired the authority of the Colonial Government and encouraged centralisation, red tape and Western methods of administration. A first step towards greater efficiency was taken with the formation of a Ministry of Commerce in 1894; but this had little effect until the appointment of a strong Governor-General, Doumer, in 1897.

Results of the Liberal experiment

The main object of colonial policy during the Liberal experiment was the promotion of commerce. This required direct administration on Western principles, allowing free play within the law to economic forces. Prospects of security and wealth attracted foreigners, Europeans and Orientals, Indians and Chinese. Government, the ownership of capital and the direction of economic life were mostly in European hands, but everywhere foreign Orientals intervened between the Europeans and the people. These several elements lived separately and met only in business. Thus the social order, which already under native rule had a plural character, became definitely a plural society, with a distinctive plural economy, and the economic motive, as the highest common factor of the component elements, came to dominate social life to a far greater extent than in the West.

Social disruption was aggravated by political dissolution. Everywhere the hereditary official, who had formerly represented the organic village or tribal group, was absorbed into the Western system and converted into an instrument of foreign rule, either as a figurehead in Malaya, or by transformation into an ordinary official, partially in Burma and completely in Cochin China. This broke up the political and social organization into villages. But the village, except possibly in Annam, had formerly been a social rather than a political unit, and political dissolution therefore was complete.

There remained therefore no political barrier against the spread of Western ideas. The abolition of compulsory services, the introduction of money, the enforcement of uniform law and other concomitants of Western rule, tended to break up the village into individuals, encouraged the assertion of rights by litigation, and multiplied lawyers and money-lenders. Both lawyers and money-lenders were largely foreign Orientals, and their growing influence tended still further to the disintegration of society, and created a feeling of unease.

But under the rule of *laissez faire*, many factors combined to mitigate unease. The people had not resented the customary services due under native rule, but their abolition was a relief. They welcomed also freedom of cultivation, the free disposal of their crops, the higher prices which these fetched, the new opportunities for getting into debt, and the new foreign garments and other goods that they could buy. In general they acquiesced in foreign

rule, so long as it did not patently offend their religious susceptibilities, and toleration was a Liberal ideal that in the East, made easy by indifference, became a major head of policy. Even under direct rule, people were hardly conscious of a Government that on Liberal principles abstained from interfering in their private life and, so long as they paid their taxes and kept within the law, they saw little of the officials, European or native. Of non-official Europeans they saw less or nothing, for these resided in the ports. Almost the only direct contact of the peasant with the new order was with the foreign moneylender, and it was against him rather than against the Government or against Europeans that resentment, if any, was directed. Moreover, those hereditary chieftains who resisted European rule were replaced by others more subservient, and would-be rebels had no natural leaders. Thus people in general accepted the new order. The social disintegration which ensued was a very gradual process and for a long time Western rule on Liberal principles worked satisfactorily.

In some ways it worked beneficially. The disintegration of native society was perhaps a necessary preliminary to rebuilding it on new foundations, and most people will admit that the substitution of the rule of law for the rule of arbitrary will provides a more secure foundation for society. The rule of law promoted commerce but, on the other hand, it required a body of officials cut off from direct association with commercial ends. Thus merchants and officials came to represent the two conflicting aspects of Liberalism, practical and humanitarian. The officials were usually of higher social status and better educated than the merchants, and came to regard themselves as superior to the mere traders and the chosen representatives of humanitarian Liberal ideals.

Unfortunately, their power to give effect to these ideals was very limited. For the most part they came into contact as magistrates with the worst side of native life, and this tended to blunt their sympathies. They were themselves part of the administrative machinery of law and could not inform the law with will. Moreover any constructive policy must be continuous, and officials were transitory. A man with an interest in education might be followed in a few months by one interested in sanitation or some other fad. Spasmodic efforts of this kind probably do more harm than good, and the normal progress of an official tended to be from enthusiasm to cynicism. High ideals could be clothed with substance only in so far as they coincided with economic demand. There was a demand for lawyers and for subordinates and clerks in administration and in commercial firms, and therefore a demand for Western education; but instruction in excess of the demand merely reduced the earnings of those who found employment had fostered discontent among the surplus. There was no demand for education on Oriental lines because the Eastern world was passing, and native schools decayed and died. In like manner material conditions imposed themselves on all other aspects of life outside the economic sphere. Meanwhile the economic process was at work to the advantage of money-lenders and others, chiefly

foreigners, who were most responsive to the economic motive; it enriched some, impoverished many and promoted dissatisfaction among all those whose ideas were not circumscribed by economic ends. The peasantry were losing their land, and their debts were growing more burdensome; as years passed on, time demonstrated more convincingly the unsoundness of the Liberal assumption that economic freedom within the law would be uniformly beneficial. The benefits of the Liberal experiment were in great measure exhausted, and unease was turning to unrest. In India the century closed in "gloom and depression;"¹ the French in Indo-China surrendered to "the psychology of despair,"² and even in Malaya there were regrets that British rule had failed to stimulate "the dormant energies of the Malays."³ Everywhere local conditions called for a new colonial policy.

Notes

- 1 Furnivall, J. S., *The Fashioning of Leviathan: The Beginnings of British Rule in Burma*, p. 6. (Burma Research Society, Rangoon, 1939.)
- 2 Swettenham, Sir Frank, *British Malaya*, 1929, p. 174.
- 3 Winstedt, R. C., editor, *Malaya* (1923), p. 145.
- 4 Emerson, R. E., *Malaysia* (1937), p. 84.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general history of the United States from its discovery by Columbus in 1492 to the present day. It covers the early years of settlement, the struggle for independence, the formation of the Constitution, and the expansion of the country across the continent. The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from 1789 to the present day. It covers the early years of the Republic, the struggle for slavery, the Civil War, and the rise of the United States as a world power. The third part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from 1865 to the present day. It covers the Reconstruction period, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era. The fourth part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from 1914 to the present day. It covers the First World War, the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the Second World War. The fifth part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from 1945 to the present day. It covers the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the present day.

THE DUTCH

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REV. J. VAN DER

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Introduction

DUTCH EXPANSION IN THE INDONESIAN ARCHIPELAGO AROUND 1900 AND THE IMPERIALISM DEBATE¹

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Few works on modern imperialism (1880-1914) include Dutch political and military behaviour in the Indonesian archipelago. Theories concerning colonial expansion in this period have been based almost exclusively on the activities of the big powers, scrambling for new territories in Africa. The small country of the Netherlands, expanding its colonial frontiers within its nominal sphere of interest, did not arouse much interest, the less so as its history and sources are not easily accessible due to an internationally little known language.²

Even Dutch historians did not show a burning interest in acquiring a place under the imperialist sun. For nearly three quarters of a century, until about 1970, the Dutch public and Dutch historiography considered Dutch expansion to be different from that of other colonial powers, because this expansion under the so-called Ethical Policy had the high minded goals of "pacifying" and developing the indigenous population. The close connections between this policy and the expansion of Dutch administrative power into the Outer Regions of the archipelago were rarely recognized. The Dutch self-image as a peaceful, neutrality-loving nation did not allow for imperialism, which was identified with greed and power games. In the following pages, however, I want to argue that there are a number of reasons to include Dutch policy with regard to the Outer Regions of the East Indies around 1900 as a case of modern imperialism. Analysis of the official correspondence between the Indies government in Batavia (now Jakarta) and the Ministry of Colonies in The Hague on the decision-making preceding military expeditions brings to light an array of

motives behind Dutch expansion in the Indies that fits in with theories of modern imperialism.

The debate on modern imperialism

Whether or not one wishes to include Dutch expansion in Indonesia around the turn of the century in the debate on modern imperialism depends largely on how this term is defined. Imperialism has been called a "masked word", an ambivalent and emotional notion with a large range of uses: some 17 definitions of the word imperialism have been noted.¹ The term can be used in a historical or a political sense. In the former, more appropriate to a historical analysis, modern imperialism serves as a label for the historical process of the apportioning of the non-western world by the western powers between 1870 and 1914, and the motives and preconditions associated with this process.

It is only since the 1970s, after a conference of the Dutch Historical Association,⁴ that Dutch historians have started to discuss the question whether or not Dutch colonial policy in the Outer Regions can be regarded as modern imperialism. The debate has raised new interest in this aspect of colonial history; it has led to new archival research and started a lively polemic among Dutch scholars.⁵

Following in the footsteps of American scholar R. F. Betts, Utrecht historian M. Kuitenbrouwer identifies two general characteristics of modern imperialism as relevant for the Indies: "contiguity", the outward extension of authority from older settlements, and "preemption", preventive occupation motivated by economic and nationalist rivalries with other countries.⁶ Rejecting his stance, Leiden historian H. L. Wesseling contends that "preemption" should be interpreted as "pegging out claims for the future", or as a paper partition, and should not be applied to the process of realizing old claims as the Dutch did around the turn of the century. Moreover, contrary to the views of Betts and Kuitenbrouwer, Wesseling considers "contiguity" an invalid criterion, since modern imperialism was a historically new phenomenon that reached out for completely new areas of the world. Dutch expansion, on the contrary, was "more of the same": it continued existing colonial policies and was precipitated by international processes instead of by its own motives.⁷ Reinforcing Wesseling's argument for continuity in Dutch colonial expansion, Fasseur had argued earlier that expansion continued in spite of the official policy of "abstention".⁸ As a true mediator, economic historian J. T. Lindblad (Leiden University) has recently attempted to close the gap between the two viewpoints. Incorporating in the definition of imperialism "an intensification of actual control", while retaining "the emphasis on formal political domination", he recognizes renewal within continuity.⁹ His views are supported by an excellent study on the role of the *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij* (KPM, Royal

Packet Company) in the formation of the Dutch colonial state in Indonesia around 1900.¹⁰

Modern imperialism, indeed, seems not to have been a completely new phenomenon after all, but part of an older tradition of colonialism, even when it reached out for new territories. These new regions were subjugated because of existing colonial or national interests, often starting from established bases of formal or informal power. Without a preceding tradition of colonialism, there could have been no modern imperialism. Therefore, along with Lindblad, I prefer a broad definition of modern imperialism as "the process of acceleration of colonial expansion between 1870 and 1914, in which the division of nearly the whole non-western world resulted in the political domination of western states over these non-western regions".¹¹

Such an acceleration of expansion undeniably took place in the Indonesian archipelago around 1900, and it indeed resulted in political domination. However, when one compares Dutch expansion with that of other countries, three differences are immediately evident. First, the heyday of Dutch expansion started a little later than international imperialism – not until 1900; second, the Netherlands extended its power largely within already nominally fixed and recognized boundaries; and, finally, the expansion was "ethically" motivated. The question remains whether these differences are really significant enough to exclude Dutch expansion in the Indies from the phenomenon of modern imperialism.

In older Eurocentric theories of modern imperialism, three causes are considered central: economic interests of the metropolis (the colonial power); international competition; and diversion of attention from internal problems.¹² As preconditions, technical and military ascendancy, improved communications, social-Darwinist feelings of superiority and growing scientific interest in the non-western world are often mentioned. By the 1960s, however, these theories started to be "decolonized". The focus shifted to preconditions in the colonies themselves, with their sub-imperialisms and their cooperating or non-cooperating indigenous elites. Moreover, emphasis has been placed on the continuity of western interests in the non-western world as well as on the complex pluriformity of motives and causes.

In his survey of western imperialism, British historian D. K. Fieldhouse recapitulates these new lines of thought. With British historians J. Gallagher and R. Robinson he proposes viewing continuity as a characteristic of imperialism: European expansionism at the end of the nineteenth century was "the end of an old story, not the start of a new one".¹³ Moreover, he confers paramount importance upon impulses coming from the periphery (the colony): "Europe was pulled into imperialism by the magnetic force of the periphery."¹⁴ In the 1890s, all problems in the periphery were answered according to a single international model: military expansion and a more direct form of colonial rule. In the third place, Fieldhouse draws attention to

the complexity of the various motives for expansion, especially to the politization of the economic factor:

The vital link between economics and formal empire was . . . neither the economic need of the metropolis for colonies nor the requirements of private economic interests, but the secondary consequences of problems created on the periphery by economic and other European enterprises for which there was no simple economic solution.¹⁵

Fieldhouse's model has broadened the framework of modern imperialism and opened avenues to the study of imperialism of others besides the great powers, and outside Africa. For researchers on Dutch expansion the model provides the heuristic tools to investigate whether or not Dutch expansion is similar to that of other countries. To what extent was this process in the Indies influenced by international competition or fear of other powers? How strong were economic demands? What role did ethical considerations play in bureaucratic decision-making? What were the decisive factors in this process? What continuity and discontinuity can one discern? How strong was the periphery: was Dutch expansion decided on in Batavia or was it "made in Holland"? And what technical and military preconditions were required for this expansion? Analysis of the decision-making process in the Dutch colonial government culminating in the most important military expeditions and establishments – such as those in North Sulawesi, Irian Jaya, Jambi, Kerinci, Southeast Kalimantan, South and Central Sulawesi and Bali – may offer some clues to what went on in the official colonial mind. Let us turn first to some facts and figures about Dutch expansion in the archipelago.

Dutch expansion

Focused on trade, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch colonialism had not been interested in expensive territorial gains. The Dutch East India Company, the official representative of the Dutch government in Asia, preferred an extensive network of diplomatic and trade relations with indigenous rulers to direct colonial rule. At the end of the eighteenth century, outside Java, the Moluccas and the Minahasa (North Sulawesi), the East India Company controlled only a few settlements along the coasts of several islands. During the nineteenth century, the influence of the Dutch government gradually increased in the islands outside Java, the so-called Outer Regions. By the 1840s, however, the first financial surpluses of the Java-based Cultivation System were received in the Netherlands. Worries about expensive expeditions in the Outer Regions that would drain these profits prompted the Dutch government to dictate a policy of "abstention" from expansion of colonial rule. In 1841, Dutch Minister of Colonies J. C. Baud even ordered a withdrawal from recently occupied posts in Sumatra

and forbade any further expansion in the Outer Regions. His orders however, were not without ambivalence, for at the same time he advocated the (cheap) extension of political contracts with indigenous rulers, requiring them to recognize on paper the sovereignty of the Indies government. The "colonial imagination"¹⁶ considered the Indonesian archipelago, with its five main islands (Java, Sumatra, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, Irian Jaya) and thousands of smaller ones, to be Dutch "possessions", or at least to fall within the Dutch sphere of influence. Contrary to instructions from The Hague, however, the Indies government became increasingly embroiled in military operations, sometimes after overcoming the objections of the Dutch government, other times presenting it with a fait accompli. As a result, by the 1860s large parts of the archipelago had relations of some kind with Batavia, varying from direct rule to control through contracts. Nevertheless, the policy of "abstention" officially prevailed throughout the nineteenth century, continuing long after the outbreak of the difficult and costly Aceh War in 1873.¹⁷

The Aceh War marked the beginning of a new era of expansion: in this first phase of "reluctant imperialism" (1873–1894/96), a "transitory stage",¹⁸ the fear of a "second Aceh" inhibited moves to expand elsewhere in the archipelago. Only after the victory in Lombok (1894) and the successful changes in military strategy in Aceh (1896/98), which again imbued the Dutch nation with a long-lost sense of colonial self-assurance, was there a shift in policy regarding the Outer Regions. A flood of military expeditions, leading to a significant extension of administrative control, swept over the archipelago: Jambi (1901–1907) and Kerinci (1902–1903) on Sumatra, Ceram in the Moluccas (1904), Banjarmasin in Southeast Kalimantan (Borneo) (1904–1906), Bone and other regions in South and Central Sulawesi (Celebes) (1905–1907), Bali (1906) and Flores (1909), both part of the Sunda Islands.

This second phase in the expansion of colonial authority was carried out not only by military means, but also by the peaceful renewal of existing contracts and the establishment of government posts. In the 1890s, for instance, North Sulawesi (Tomini Gulf) was brought under tighter control by creating new government posts there. Similarly, in 1897 the Dutch government decided to station two civil servants on hitherto only nominally occupied Irian Jaya, a decision which was carried out one year later. Colonial authority in Batavia now wanted to achieve effective rule over the distant regions instead of only nominal power.

Governor-General J. B. van Heutsz (1904–1909), who had been a general during the Aceh War, personifies this high tide of Dutch expansion (1896–1909). He was responsible for an intensification of military measures, ending long-standing regional conflicts by guns and machete (klewang). Under Van Heutsz's leadership, the Dutch empire was "rounded off":¹⁹ the colonial state – with its defined boundaries, more uniform administration, a beginning of political participation and welfare policies – dates from this period.²⁰ As

Indonesian legal historian G. J. Resink contends, the so-called "three hundred and fifty years of Dutch colonial rule" is a myth – or, at best, a Javentric reality, for only in Java was the Dutch colonial presence felt that long.²¹ Van Heutsz's departure to the Netherlands opened a third and final phase in the history of Dutch expansion: the aftermath (1909–1915), in which only a few incidental actions were undertaken.

The periphery: initiative and continuity

Moving militarily from west to east as it did, the Dutch government could easily be suspected of a large-scale plan of action for the whole of the archipelago. However, there is no evidence of such a master "conspiracy". Even after 1890, as The Hague loosened the strict rules concerning the policy of abstention,²² the initiatives for expansion of colonial rule came from the periphery. Decisions to act were always taken in reaction to local incidents. If one defines policy as an overall project, designed in the metropolis for execution in the colony, the word "policy" seems inappropriate to the Dutch situation. The brains behind these expeditions were not in The Hague but in the Indies. The initiatives came from local colonial administrators who no longer wished to accept the existing situation. Their requests for more administrative power, approved by the Indies government in Batavia, often led to complications in the region that in the end could only be resolved by military means.

Events in Jambi, Kerinci, Banjarmasin and Bone illustrate this. In 1898, the Resident of Palembang had taken the initiative to depose the raja (sultan) of Jambi because of his unwillingness to comply with Dutch demands. One year later the Indies government gave its approval for this decision. However, the solution did not turn out to be a lasting one. Failing to find a successor due to the opposition of the influential ex-raja Taha, deposed in 1858 but continuing as Jambi's indigenous leader behind the scenes, the Indies government decided in 1901 to usurp the raja's authority; it moved a police force into the interior. This was done with ministerial consent.²³

The reason for the expedition to Jambi's neighbour, independent Kerinci, was closely related to these troubles in Jambi. By 1901, Kerinci was serving as a refuge for Jambi warriors, giving rise to complaints by civil servants in the area. Government attempts at peaceful contact were halted after the murder of two emissaries, at which point the Indies government entered into war. By the time The Hague was informed of the decision, the army was already on its way. Governor-General W. Rooseboom had to work hard to convince his superior, Minister of Colonies A. W. F. Idenburg, of the justifiability of the decision.²⁴

In the Banjarmasin region of Southeast Kalimantan, opposition to the extension of Dutch administration into the interior by the former raja's family, the *Pegustian*, deposed in the 1860s, precipitated suggestions by the

Resident for a more active policy. In the opinion of the Indies government (1905), the resulting escalation could only be resolved by military means. The Hague was informed and remained silent, thus tacitly giving its approval.²⁵

Complaints by the Governor of Celebes in 1903 about the unwillingness of the *raja* of Bone to cede his tariff rights to the Indies government caused rumours of bellicose Dutch preparations, and similar bellicose reactions in Bone. It did not take long for the Indies government to decide on a military expedition, authorized by the Minister of Colonies.²⁶

In each case, we see the same pattern of local requests for action being granted by the Indies government and – sometimes beforehand, sometimes afterwards – gaining the authorization of the Dutch government. It was an old pattern, familiar from the nineteenth century²⁷, except that local civil servants now needed to do less urging, Batavia took quicker decisions for action, and The Hague no longer ever let the Indies government down. The year 1890 had seen the last decisive veto from The Hague, when, after the military failure in Flores, the Minister of Colonies was directed by the Dutch parliament to recall the expeditionary forces.²⁸

It is clear that the periphery provided strong impulses to Dutch expansion in the Indies. Another characteristic of modern imperialism, namely “continuity”, applies to the Dutch case as well. Continuity can be noted in political relations within the Indies. In all the above cases, except for Kerinci, some ties already existed between the Indies government and the indigenous rulers or populations through contracts. The contract with Jambi dated from 1833, the *raja* (sultan) of Banjermasin had been ousted from his position in the 1860s and his realm had come under direct control, while Bone had had two centuries of contracts. Only in the case of Kerinci was a colonial relationship imposed where there had been none before. Kerinci, however, bordering on Jambi, is a clear example of “contiguity”.

So empire was forged in the periphery, or even in the periphery of the periphery. The process of extending frontiers (contiguity and continuity) was recognized by the participants: member of Dutch parliament (and later Minister of Colonies) Idenburg stated in 1901, in remarkably modern language, “that the legal order, introduced and assured in our territory, has been repeatedly threatened and *attacked at the borders* and hence must be defended”²⁹ (my italics). Or, as the Governor of Celebes, responsible for the expedition to Bone, plaintively wrote in 1903: “It is the curse of each colonial power, that it is forced by circumstances to enlarge the frontiers of its direct administration”.³⁰ Modern historians thus affirm what contemporaries already knew, the importance of contiguity (Betts, Kuitenbrouwer) and continuity (Fieldhouse, Wesseling) in maintaining colonial control. Or, to quote Fieldhouse again: it was “the end of an old story”, resulting however in new forms of administration.

What the participants did not seem to recognize was that the colonial power itself was responsible for “the circumstances” that “forced” them to

extend their territory. In most cases, the refusal of non-cooperating rulers (Jambi 1901, Bone 1905, Bali 1906) to accede to Dutch demand of more "modern" rule served as a reason for Dutch intervention. This pattern is similar to that found elsewhere in the world.³¹ The Dutch were indeed "pulled into the periphery", although they did not seem to realize the extent to which they themselves initiated the local troubles that pulled them. It was increasing Dutch demands and pressure that brought about the growing Indonesian opposition. We will return to the reasons behind these increasing Dutch demands later.

For the moment, suffice it to say that, after 1900, the Indies government had only one answer to these cases of non-cooperation by indigenous rulers: military pressure or intervention. Military intervention could succeed owing to technological and tactical developments in the Indies army, improved communications such as telegraph and shipping lines, and political support from the so-called Short Declarations.³² Especially after the coming of Governor-General Van Heutsz, the "Aceh strategy" was followed: the use of a mobile military police force, trained in guerrilla warfare, and the temporary concentration of military and civil authority in the hands of a single military officer, one with experience in Aceh.³³

The patterns of decision-making observed in the four cases above show obvious parallels with the general phenomenon of modern imperialism (focus on the periphery and continuity/contiguity): the local colonial government took the initiative and had the greatest say in the matter, while the lack of indigenous cooperation with their demands triggered off a military reaction, which continued (or intensified) an existing relationship. Variation in the local conditions of these incidents explains the great variety of motives in the decision-making process.

International competition

Because the Dutch embarked on military expansion later than their colonial colleagues, the motive of international competition, of great importance in the general debate on modern imperialism (cf. preemption), has drawn considerable attention in the Dutch imperialism debate (Kuitenbrouwer, Wesseling).³⁴ However, close reading of the Dutch colonial sources shows that competition figured only incidentally in the decision-making process. True enough, the Aceh War (1873) had been precipitated partly by a hasty reaction to rumours about American and Italian support for the Acehnese in their opposition to Dutch encroachment. That these rumours later proved to be false did not diminish the weight of the "preemption" motive in this affair.³⁵

Fear of British influence stimulated government activity in only a few other examples: in North Kalimantan, in North Sulawesi and in Irian Jaya. In 1877 a British private company had received from the sultan of Brunei (in

Kalimantan/Borneo) sovereign rights over territory where the Dutch claimed authority. Two years later, when this cession became known in Holland, the Dutch government decided to send a man-of-war to hoist and protect the Dutch flag at Batu Tinagat, the "official" border. However, neither this action nor diplomatic protest had any result. The British company received a Royal Charter and Holland did no more than complain, until 1888, when the British government proclaimed a protectorate over North Borneo. Then the Dutch government, the weaker party, recognized political reality and accepted a commission of inquiry. In 1891, both parties signed a British-Dutch convention, under which Batu Tinagat became English.³⁶

Fear of private foreign adventurers looking for gold and other minerals also influenced the peaceful extension of the civil administration over Central Sulawesi (Tomini Gulf) in the 1890s.³⁷ Further to the east, Irian Jaya is the clearest example of fear of foreign intruders playing a role.³⁸ This island had seen a Dutch civil servant only briefly, from 1828 until 1836. At that point the region had been relinquished because of unhealthy and unsafe conditions. In the 1860s, Protestant missionaries had started to work in northern Irian Jaya. Discussion within the government on what to do there had been taken up again in the 1880s, but all officials agreed that a government post was useless in view of the nomadic and sparse population, the large territory and the unhealthiness of the region. Even the coming of foreign neighbours – the Germans in the north (1883) and the Australians in the south (1884) – did not immediately stimulate renewed interest: in 1885 a British-German settlement recognized the northern boundary with the Dutch. So there seemed no reason to worry.

At the end of the 1880s, however, opinions changed. A private Australian request for a large grant of land (one million acres) made the Indies government realize its weakness and lack of "effective control", agreed upon at the international Conference of Berlin in 1884–85.³⁹ The placement of national scutcheons, Dutch stone lions, in the aerial roots of the coastal rhizomes⁴⁰ and the yearly visits of the navy were not really effective means of controlling the Papuan population. This idea of more control won ministerial approval in Holland, but it took nearly another decade to make more concrete plans. Fear of international complications was indeed a stimulus to do so. Troubles about "Dutch" Papuans raiding British territory had been settled in 1896 by a border treaty.⁴¹ But Papuans did not stick to fictive western boundary lines, so this was no guarantee of peace in the future.

Fear of foreign competition, however, was only one motive among many in this case. In 1891 the Dutch steamer line KPM had opened a monthly boat service to Irian Jaya, which brought it within closer reach of Batavia and caused a rise in the export of bird plumage and wood products.⁴² This in turn resulted in growing unrest among the indigenous population, as well as in a new Dutch awareness of the Papuans' "lack of civilization" and in repeated requests from missionaries for government protection. Fear of

international competition thus figured alongside "ethical" concern for the people and bureaucratic concerns about Dutch prestige and law and order.

Only in a few cases of expansion and only between 1873 and 1898, then, did fear of international competition play a visible role. In other cases, no such motive is mentioned in the official discourse. "Preemption" was therefore not a factor of importance in Dutch expansion, as Kuitenbrouwer assumes, nor was the international "example" of imperialism the explicit stimulus to various actions, as Wesseling suggests.⁴³ At most, we can concede that the international agenda of modern imperialism provided Dutch expansion with a context which was so well known that it needed neither description nor explicit reference.

This lack of the "foreign factor" is not really surprising. Fear of other countries had been reduced by formal or informal international recognition of the Indies boundaries. During the nineteenth century, Dutch relations with the chief colonial power in the area, Great Britain, had been satisfactory. As a European "dwarf" but a colonial "giant", the Dutch had always been dependent on the protection and cooperation of the British. In contracts (Treaty of London 1824) and diplomatic contacts these "exclusive lords of the East"⁴⁴ had divided up their sphere of influence. Points of tension at common borders had troubled relations incidentally (for instance in Sumatra and Kalimantan in the 1840s), but on the whole the relationship had been an advantageous one, resulting in a free hand for the Dutch in Sumatra in exchange for much-coveted free trade in the archipelago for the British in 1871/73. The treaties of 1891 and 1896, moreover, settled the last border questions in Kalimantan and Irian Jaya. Fear of private adventurers, a continuing worry ever since James Brooke's success in Kalimantan, remained a cause for alertness. But the Indies government had handled several of these cases successfully in the mid-nineteenth century in Kutai, Palembang and Siak.

Other nationalities (from the USA, Germany, Italy), active in the area as traders, did not threaten the Dutch presence either. Portugal, with colonies neighbouring the Indies, recognized the borders of Timor in 1893 and 1897 on paper, and in 1904 and 1913 in the field. Another neighbour, the USA, had shown no interest in territorial gains in the archipelago in the nineteenth century; it was satisfied with its opportunities for trade. The American presence in the Philippines, after 1898, did not cause Dutch reactions either.⁴⁵ One may conclude that before the boom of Dutch imperialism, the frontiers of Dutch control had already been secured. Hence, expeditions on the three main islands (Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi) and on smaller ones like Bali took place within an internationally recognized territorial context. In the discourse of government decision-making the expeditions were presented as purely local or internal affairs without any reference to foreign powers.⁴⁶

This does not mean that colonial politics took place in an international vacuum. Dutch colonial and foreign policies were closely intertwined.

Because of its colonies, the Netherlands could play an international role; 30 per cent of its foreign policy issues in those years were connected with colonial matters.⁴⁷ Officials manifested a clear awareness of the fragility of colonial possessions, especially in view of the rise of Japan after 1900.⁴⁸ After 1900 an expanded territory reinforced this sense of military weakness and prompted Dutch officials to look for international protection against new powers in the region. However, attempts in 1909 to start a defensive cooperation with the USA in a South Sea Convention failed.⁴⁹ Plans for large-scale fleet construction came to nothing because of Dutch parsimony and because of the outbreak of World War I. International affairs did not, however, directly influence the decision-making process related to Dutch expansion.

Economics and Dutch expansion

Economic motives, too, are either lacking in the official discourse, or appear in "mutilated" form. Almost never were economic reasons cited as the main justification for military actions. Only the 1890 expedition to Flores, still during the first phase of "reluctant imperialism", was organized clearly with a view to an expected availability of tin; but after a series of military failures this venture was stopped by The Hague.⁵⁰

In view of the strong influence of economic interests in colonialism in general and in modern imperialism especially, this absence of economic motives in Dutch expansion may occasion surprise. Even more so, since the period of Dutch imperialism was certainly one of economic growth: by the 1890s industrialization in the Netherlands was proceeding at a faster pace than ever before;⁵¹ and the years around the turn of the century brought rapid expansion of private enterprise in the Indies.

Lindblad has argued that non-Marxist economic factors (needs of private industry and fiscal requirements of the Indies government) indeed played a role in Dutch expansion in the Indies.⁵² In the process of extending colonial power, economics often triggered new interests. Private capitalists, investing for instance in mineral exploration and exploitation, indirectly pressured the government for cession of exploitation rights from indigenous rulers, as happened in North Borneo and North Sulawesi in the 1890s. Consequently, civil servants were stationed in the region, as government policy did not allow private entrepreneurs to enter areas where their safety could not be guaranteed. However, even Lindblad states: "This is not to say that Dutch rule was extended or consolidated with overall economic expansion in mind."⁵³ According to the documents on expeditions the economic motive was not the main concern of the colonial bureaucracy, although there are some beautiful examples of apparent economic and capitalist influences in the decision-making (Jambi and Bone).

Jambi (South Sumatra) seems a clear case of economic interests playing a role in government actions. Oil was discovered in neighbouring Palembang in

the 1880s. The government refused to grant exploitation concessions in Jambi to private companies as long as the sultanate had not yielded its exploitation rights to the Indies government. The sultan refused indirectly but effectively. This lack of cooperation led to pressure being brought to bear upon the sultan to abdicate, which he did in 1899. A sultanate without a sultan, however, proved to be even more difficult for the colonial government to manage and after two years the Indies government usurped the sultan's authority and moved a police force into Jambi. Jambi's response was a guerrilla war lasting until 1907.

Oil had been the trigger for change in the relationship, but it was not the only reason. The sultanate had also refused to deliver criminals and to cooperate in other respects with the colonial government. It had always been slow in fulfilling its contractual obligations. Moreover, the Jambi people had suffered hardship under the sultan's rule. So power and ethical considerations coincided with the economic motive, which was "politicized" during the process and became overshadowed by bureaucratic needs. When in 1903 the Resident of the region had made a bureaucratic mess of the exploration concessions and came into conflict with the government bureau for mining affairs in Batavia, the new governor-general, Van Heutsz, closed Jambi to private oil companies as of November 1904, decreeing that more knowledge should first be obtained about the feasibility of extraction. His personal preference for state exploration and state exploitation coincided with the fiscal need of the Indies government to curtail expenditure. Ending a bureaucratic mess, however, was the primary concern. It was not until 1921 that a mixed company, partly state and partly private, would begin to exploit oil in Jambi. In Jambi, economic and bureaucratic motives were closely intertwined.⁵⁴

The same held true for the decision that led to the Bone expedition (South Sulawesi) in 1905. Here the raja, La Pawawooi, had refused to cede import and export duties to the Indies government, as required in vague and general terms in his earlier contract. Since Makassar/Ujung Pandang would lose its status as free port in 1905 and be included in a customs/tariff union in the eastern part of the archipelago, this refusal directly influenced the state treasury. The more so, since the prince of Bone led other Sulawesi rulers in opposing the colonial request for cession. But here again, economic concerns coincided with other Dutch complaints about the political behaviour of the raja: he had extended his power beyond the legal limits of the contract, oppressed his people and assumed supremacy in the region. Here again, we find an economic trigger for a broader pattern of complaints of a bureaucratic and "ethical" nature.⁵⁵

In the military expeditions to Jambi and Bone, economic interests clearly played a role. In other cases, no economic motives were mentioned. Irian Jaya had little to offer, as civil servants frankly admitted; neither did Kerinci, Ceram, Southeast Kalimantan or Bali, to cite just a few examples. Here,

other motives for military intervention prevailed: in Kerinci its function as refuge for Jambi guerrillas, in Ceram the internal strife of the Alfurese population, in Banjermasin the opposition of the former raja's family, in Bali (the princely state of Tambanan) the non-cooperation of one of the last independent rajas.⁵⁶

The cases of Jambi and Bone, the only cases where economic interests of the colonial state were an important reason for military intervention, illustrate to what extent these issues were "politicized", developing into problems of administration and control. Private entrepreneurs interested in Jambi could not manipulate the colonial government effectively or directly, because the government carefully guarded its autonomy. Only when problems of state authority and state finances were involved did the government decide to take action.

Financial concerns tended less to stimulate than to curb expansion, just as had been the case under the official abstention policy of the nineteenth century. Balancing the colonial budget was still the main worry of Minister of Colonies A. W. F. Idenburg (1902-1905) and this made him frown upon too much military activity, such as in Kerinci. He approved only those expeditions which seemed absolutely unavoidable.⁵⁷ When he appointed Van Heutsz as governor-general, they both agreed on a colonial programme in which a healthy budget was the key element. Ironically, in view of Van Heutsz's later operations, they stated that to keep down costs in the Indies, military expeditions should be avoided as much as possible. Van Heutsz was not allowed any expeditions without ministerial consent, and he had to give evidence that new taxes and other arrangements would make the administrative structure in the newly won regions pay for itself.⁵⁸ In practice, however, neither Minister Idenburg nor his successor D. Fock ever let down their governors-general, although they sometimes asked for more information or complained about the consequences of military actions.

It was Van Heutsz's good fortune that he could profit from rising tin prices on the world market starting in 1905, which provided him with some economic support for his policies. Moreover, the Outer Regions' exports exhibited exceptionally rapid growth, quadrupling in value between the late 1890s and the first half of the 1910s due to increased production. Even if not caused by it, economic expansion did take place *after* more direct colonial control had been introduced, connecting the Outer Regions to the world market for new products like oil, copra and rubber.⁵⁹ However, the extension of Dutch rule did not have overall economic expansion as a first priority; no grand design of Dutch colonialism was being followed. Such an aim would not have been reconcilable with the "liberal" preference of the Indies government for abstention from economic affairs nor with economic thinking in general in that period. Large-scale economic planning dates only from after World War II. The economic growth of the Outer Regions was a result of the incidental and individual actions of private pioneers and local

administrators, backed by a government striving for standardization and state formation.

We may conclude that economic interests were part of the general context within which Dutch imperialism took place. However, in the official discourse economic motives were generally not cited; economic motives were politicized and "translated" into bureaucratic problems. Meeting the costs of empire, moreover, was unexpectedly made possible by growing expansion of the exports of the Outer Regions.

Ethical imperialism?

It is not only antipathy to imperialism – with its unfavourable implications of capitalism and militarism, already evident around 1900 – that has prevented Dutch administrators, politicians and later historians from characterizing their actions as imperialistic; ethical notions have clouded Dutch views as well. Dutch expansion was viewed as a means of attaining the high-minded goal of "civilizing" the indigenous peoples. "Here, we are only going to do simple civilizing work", the Minister of Colonies declared in 1897 in the Dutch parliament in defence of his plans for Irian Jaya.⁶⁰ Expansion was defined in these terms with renewed vigour with the adoption of the Ethical Policy (1901), when the interests of the indigenous population began to receive more attention.⁶¹ Local colonial administrators, requesting stronger measures from Batavia, never forgot to inform their superiors of the misdeeds of indigenous rulers towards the local population or of the hopeless situation of the latter (for instance in Irian Jaya in the 1890s, in Jambi at the end of that decade and in Bone a few years later).

At the Ministry of Colonies in The Hague, these issues received ample attention and were used by the minister to defend military policies in the Dutch parliament. The short-lived and little-known Minister T. A. J. van Asch van Wijck, who died in office (1901–1902), may have been the most forceful speaker on behalf of these ethical motives. During his ministership the Ethical Policy was officially proclaimed. In 1902 he wrote a short memorandum in which he collected remarks from the official Indies correspondence concerning Jambinese misfortunes through indigenous rule. This memorandum would serve him in the parliamentary debate and can still be found in the Colonial Archives.⁶² In a report on Bone a few years later, ministerial civil servants at the ministry changed the sequence of the complaints against the *raja*, putting his exploitative history first.⁶³ Ethical considerations justified military expansion, especially in the eyes of the public in the Netherlands.

The long-lasting influence of these ethical considerations was due to various reasons. First, they followed a long tradition of animosity and distrust towards indigenous rulers. Western observers of indigenous states did not have much respect for rajas who typically left their "work" to crown princes

and went out fishing or hunting (a Malayan royal prerogative), who had enormous harems of wives and co-wives (e.g. the princes of Central Java), and who possessed only weak power over their restive subjects. The Calvinist mentality of the Dutch did not approve of these "excesses", which, moreover, made these rajas most unreliable as co-agents of Dutch rule. Their disdain was reinforced during the nineteenth century as a result of the process of state formation in Europe and the extension of social consciousness in the European political field. Hence, the ethical declaration of "peace to the huts, war to the palaces".⁶⁴

Second, ethical notions of a historical mission expressed a Dutch version of nationalism and superiority. Consciousness of belonging to a small nation with a large responsibility was widespread among the country's elite and permeated colonial as well as foreign policy. It was seen as the historical mission of the Dutch to put indigenous peoples in contact with western civilization. Or, as Idenburg stated in a report to Queen Wilhelmina in 1904:

the best way to assure a lasting and undisturbed possession of our colonies is the establishment of a peaceful, righteous and enlightened administration, which makes the blessings of our domination best known and valued to the millions of subjects of Y. M. [Your Majesty] there, and only in this way are we able to fulfil *the high mission, that is put on our shoulders by the possession of these extended regions*. That . . . rigorous measures, admittedly in combination with humanitarian concerns, may be the obvious road . . . has been proven by experience in many parts of the archipelago; moreover it is revealed clearly by the policy pursued in Aceh and Dependencies as of 1896 (my italics).⁶⁵

Between the many political parties there was no disagreement about this task and responsibility, which continued a long tradition of Calvinist morality in Dutch foreign policy.⁶⁶ Even the socialists agreed on the Dutch ethical mission in the Indies. Moreover, for the general public in the Netherlands, ethical perspectives were the easiest to understand. Gradually involved in the political process through the extension of the vote between 1870 and 1918, the voting public was not acquainted with the intricacies of colonial policies and reacted emotionally on moral grounds. Besides, ethical convictions were strong and seriously believed at a time when "ethical" and "moral" were often-used adjectives.⁶⁷ They fitted in with the emotional and "emotionological" climate of the day.⁶⁸

A combination of historical mission, righteous government and vigorous authority characterized the strongly paternalistic Ethical Policy. To the advocates of this policy, expansion did not necessarily conflict with "ethical" policies designed to promote the welfare of the indigenous population. None of the strong proponents of the Ethical Policy (member of parliament C. T. van

Deventer, journalist P. Brooshoofd, scholars C. van Vollenhoven and C. Snouck Hurgronje) ever attacked the Dutch government for its imperialist stance. They regretted the need of expansion by military means, but regarded the expeditions more or less as "an imperative". Expansion might even be a prerequisite of welfare policies: "Without a vigorous state, without order and safety, no Ethical Policy".⁶⁹ Ethical or welfare policies in the Indies, a variant of the social policies introduced in European states around the turn of the century, required a strong government. Like the economic motive, the ethical motive was "politicized".

Whether or not this ethical imperialism was a Dutch prerogative is debatable. The Americans had no other motive when attacking the Spanish in 1898.⁷⁰ The French awareness of "une mission civilisatrice" has a strong tradition, while the years around 1900 saw new notions of colonial administration on behalf of indigenous populations developing in other colonial countries as well.⁷¹ It thus seems a little presumptuous to claim ethical imperialism exclusively for the Dutch. At most, we may conclude that the Dutch, belonging to a small nation with a strong Calvinist tradition, felt more at ease with ethics and ethical motives than with the international discourse of power and economics.

Bureaucratic concerns

If economic reasons were not paramount in the discourse, if international fears were only partly relevant, and ethical notions used mainly to justify colonial behaviour in The Hague, what then were the most important motives of officials behind the military expeditions of the early twentieth century in the Indies? In each case, one common denominator can be found: the fear of diminishing the prestige of the colonial government, and the need to maintain vigorous Dutch authority. In the beginning of the 1890s some questions were still raised about the legitimacy of this power: in 1893 governor-general Pijnacker Hordijk was reluctant to side with the Muslim Sasaks on Lombok in their revolt against their Balinese Hindu ruler, because, in his opinion, the contract of 1843 did not allow for such a move. He was overruled by the Minister of Colonies.⁷² To his successors and their advisers, the legitimacy of colonial authority was beyond doubt and any impediments to this authority were seen as a direct threat of colonial rule. This self-assurance was reinforced by the ethical notion of a "civilizing" mission and the widespread Dutch contempt for indigenous rulers. Bureaucratic concerns with power and prestige were paramount, and more important than economic and ethical considerations. Or they reinforced each other, as was stated in 1892 by the head of the civil administration department in Batavia, with respect to Irian Jaya: "*the prestige of our nation among foreigners does not allow us to leave the population of Irian Jaya in their miserable and depraved condition*" (my italics).⁷³

No one formulated this concern more sharply than the famous Arabist Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, who had put his scholarly knowledge at the command of the colonial government. As adviser in the Indies from 1889 to 1906, he can be considered the brains behind Dutch imperialism.⁷⁴ His analysis of the power of the *ulama* (Islamic leaders), the real opponents of the Dutch in Aceh, brought about a change in military tactics. Together with Van Heutsz, he created the blueprint for a new military strategy of active guerrilla warfare and drafted the Short Declaration. His reports on Jambi, Kerinci, Banjermasin and Bone, submitted between 1900 and the end of 1904, contain clear examples of bureaucratic considerations. Adopted by the government, they acquired the status of policy statements.⁷⁵

Extremely critical of the policy of abstention, Snouck was a strong advocate of vigorous but righteous colonial government. In all cases, he defended administrative action, and, if this failed, military action. In his 1902 recommendations on Kerinci he stated the "truth that who is not for us is against us".⁷⁶ Or, as he wrote in his recommendations on Jambi: "Steadily we have to work at the reform of indigenous misgovernment along our administrative principles; we will not bring any indigenous state one step further, nor will we win one inch of influence, if we leave the practices of extortion and tyranny of the indigenous rulers intact."⁷⁷ In 1904 he considered it "redundant to prove that strong action against the vassal state Bone is urgent and could only be postponed for very pressing reasons more important than the maintenance of Dutch authority in the government of Celebes".⁷⁸ Maintenance (and extension) of Dutch authority was clearly Snouck's primary concern.⁷⁹

The central role of bureaucratic concerns can be illustrated by the way the Jambi dilemma was handled. In 1898 Batavia ordered that, as a preliminary step towards resolving the oil question, all matters concerning the raja's position should first be settled. And, as mentioned above, mismanagement by the Resident of exploration permits led to Batavia's decision to close Jambi to the oil industry. A desire for bureaucratic clarity thus prevailed over other motives. The same held true for the expeditions to Ceram in 1904 and to Bali in 1906: in the former, intertribal Alfuresse wars had been met with desultory military and administrative measures, until Van Heutsz decided upon definite military action for prestige reasons.⁸⁰ In Bali, royal contempt for official damage claims in connection with the looting of a ship in 1905 escalated into military action, with no other reason than worn-out patience and injured prestige.⁸¹

The centrality of prestige need not surprise us. Official discourse of the period, analysed here as far as motives for expansion are concerned, betrays the main preoccupations of the colonial administration. Whether the writers were military men, scholars or civil servants, they spoke the language of governance. Maintenance of Dutch authority was their first professional aim. They did not look very far ahead, but restricted themselves to issues of

immediate relevance. Hence, expansion was motivated by their institutional interests: a desire for systematic maintenance and extension of administrative power. This professional aim runs through all their recommendations, reports and decisions.

This focus of the official mind on bureaucratic concerns does not mean that Dutch expansionism in general can be explained by the sole factor of the desire to acquire and consolidate power, in other words that economics, ethics and international politics played no role at all in Dutch modern imperialism. In this article attention is focused more on the "subjective views" of the participants, than on the "objective factors".³² Although not unrelated, they are not identical. The "subjective views" represent the priorities of the participants, actively involved in the process of colonial state formation; they spoke a language with its own emphases, accents and silences, when translating their duties and professional convictions into official discourse.

The Dutch East Indies had been geographically "imagined"³³ as early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, both in the Netherlands and in the Indies. By the end of the century, this imagination had come to focus not only on the region, but on the way that region should be administered and put under Dutch control. Just as nationalism has been defined as "le désir de vivre ensemble", the desire to live together,³⁴ so the Dutch official mind became more strongly imbued with a similar psychological notion, "le désir du pouvoir", the desire for power, and by a fear that indigenous rulers would impinge upon this desire.

This "désir du pouvoir", or "colonial imagination", was strongly reinforced by the new national self-assurance derived from the Dutch victory in Lombok in 1894,³⁵ following many military failures (Aceh, Flores). The victory was made possible by technological developments. According to the Dutch military historian Petra Groen, the nineteenth-century policy of abstention had been dictated by the technical limitations of the military apparatus. A simple profit-and-loss analysis showed that military expeditions in impenetrable jungles would not pay off; this had reduced the possibilities for expansion.³⁶ The desire for effective power was now stimulated by technical improvements resulting in new and better-trained military police and a new national shipping transport system in the archipelago, the KPM. These developments made possible a "systematic expansion of the administration" (Kuitenbrouwer) or "intensification of formal control" (Lindblad), the Dutch variant of modern imperialism.

A last question concerns the reasons behind Dutch officialdom's need for prestige and authority. Why these growing demands of the Indies government for exploitation rights, tariffs and security? These demands should be seen as an extension of nineteenth-century state formation in the west, which involved the extension of state authority over the lives of the population and the growing claims of the society upon the state. State formation did not stop

at the borders of western countries but was exported to their colonies and adjacent territories as well. Colonial state formation was an extension of western state formation. The tariff union law in the eastern part of the archipelago, that led to the subjugation of the prince of Bone, and the law on mineral exploitation rights were both approved by the Dutch parliament in 1899. This growing government authority called for increasing standardization of prescriptions and regulations; hence indigenous rulers had to comply voluntarily or elsewhere forced to do so.⁸⁷

At the root of the troubles in the periphery lay the growing discrepancy between the western state and the colonies (as Fieldhouse has argued for other parts of the world) as well as a decreasing distance between the two through better communications. Steam power and the telegraph had made the globe smaller. In this respect, modern imperialism in general, and Dutch imperialism in particular, originated in Europe, even though it may seem to have started in the periphery: it was carried out by Europeans, expressing European national "imagination".

Concluding remarks

Having analysed the official discourse on the expansion of Dutch authority in the Indies by military and administrative means around the turn of this century, we may conclude that there are many reasons to include this expansion in the general historical phenomenon of "modern imperialism". A broadening of the theoretical framework of modern imperialism has opened the way to new views on Dutch imperialism as well.

Although it happened during the period and in the context of worldwide imperialism, Dutch expansion was motivated only incidentally by foreign pressure (e.g. Irian Jaya 1898). Betts's characterization of imperialism as containing an element of "preemption" does not generally hold for the Dutch case. International competition was part of the context, but did not lead to a general fear causing expansion. Dutch imperialism was imperialism-in-depth, more than in-breadth, that is, within existing geographical borders instead of extending into new regions of the globe. And it contained strong elements of continuity and contiguity, as pointed out by Fasseur and Wesseling. This, however, is no reason to deny the existence of Dutch imperialism, since in recent theories "continuity" (Fieldhouse) and "contiguity" (Betts) have been included as elements of imperialism.

Only in a few cases did economic motives lead to Dutch action. And, as in other cases of modern imperialism, these economic motives were first "politicized" (Fieldhouse). The same holds true for ethical motives, which were never the decisive factor but were subordinated to bureaucratic concerns. Moreover, these ethical motives were voiced more powerfully in The Hague than in the Indies, and were used to justify military expeditions to the Dutch public. They accorded with the traditional "civilizing" mission of the Dutch

in the Indies and with long-standing assumptions about misgovernment by indigenous rulers.

Just as elsewhere in the world, the local (Batavian) government played an important part in the process and provided a beautiful example of sub-imperialism. The Netherlands was "pulled into the periphery" (Fieldhouse). The source of all the problems, however, was not the periphery, that is, the indigenous rulers themselves, but was Eurocentric: the expanding demands of economic privileges (tariffs and mineral exploitation) and the task of the modern western state to provide for the safety of European entrepreneurs, missionaries and civil servants.

Dutch imperialism was indeed "the end of an old story" (Fieldhouse), but at the same time also the start of a new one, that of twentieth-century colonial state formation – a process of integration, centralization and standardization. It brought about the linking of the Indonesian economy to the world market. It resulted in foreign domination in many details of personal life, a process of westernization which in turn led to the forceful reaction of nationalism and at last to Indonesian national independence.

Notes

- 1 An earlier version of this article was published as a working paper of the Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, E. Locher-Scholten, "National Boundaries as Colonial Legacy: Dutch Ethical Imperialism in the Indonesian Archipelago around 1900", in F. Gouda and E. Locher-Scholten, *Indonesia and the Dutch Colonial Legacy* (The Woodrow Wilson Center, Asia Program, Occasional Paper, no. 44, 2 September 1991), pp. 10–23, 31–35. Similar ideas are developed more extensively in my recent study on Jambi, E. Locher-Scholten, *Sumatraans sultanat en koloniale staat. De relatie Djambi-Batavia (1830–1907) en het Nederlands imperialisme* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994). I want to thank my colleagues Dr. Maarten Kuitenbrouwer and Dr. Jur van Goor and various of my students, as well as the anonymous reviewer of this journal for the clarifying discussions on this subject and critical comments on a former text. I am grateful to Rita de Courcy, who corrected my "Dutch" English.
- 2 Space is lacking for a survey of the complete literature on modern imperialism. Recent readers include H. U. Wehler, *Imperialismus* (Köln, Berlin, 1970), W. J. Mommsen, *Imperialismus. Seine geistigen, politischen und wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen. Ein Quellen- und Arbeitsbuch* (Hamburg, 1977); R. Owen and R. Sutcliffe, *Studies in the theory of imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972); D. K. Fieldhouse, *Economics and Empire 1830–1914* (London: Macmillan 1984, first ed. 1973). Works on the history of colonialism tend to include Dutch colonialism, see for instance R. von Albertini, *Europäische Kolonialherrschaft 1880–1940* (Zürich, 1976), D. K. Fieldhouse, *The Colonial Empires. A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1982); W. Reinhard, *Geschichte der europäischen Expansion* (4 vol.: Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1983–90).
- 3 B. W. Schaper, "Nieuwe opvattingen over het moderne imperialisme", *Bijdragen en Mededelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 86 (1971): 4–5.
- 4 The results were published in *ibid.*, pp. 1–89.
- 5 This article is based on publications of this new research, mentioned below, as

- well as my own work on Jambi and Bone, Locher-Scholten, *Sumatraans sultanaat*, and E. Locher-Scholten, "Een gebiedende noodzakelijkheid". Besluitvorming rod de Boni-expeditie 1903-1905", in *Excursies in Celebes. Een bundel bijdragen bij het afscheid van J. Noorduyn als directeur-secretaris van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land-en Volkenkunde*, ed. H. A. Poeze and P. Schoorl (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1991), pp. 143-64.
- 6 R. F. Betts, *The False Dawn. European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1975); M. Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland en de opkomst van het moderne imperialisme. Koloniën en buitenlandse politiek* (Amsterdam/Dieren: de Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985); translated as *The Netherlands and the Rise of Modern Imperialism. Colonies and Foreign Policy* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 1991).
 - 7 H. L. Wesseling, *Indië verloren, rampspoed geboren en andere opstellen over de geschiedenis van de Europese expansie* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1988), pp. 187-88; also Idem, "The Giant that was a Dwarf or the Strange History of Dutch Imperialism", in *Theory and Practice of European Expansion Overseas. Essays in Honour of Ronald Robinson*, ed. A. Porter and R. Holland (London: Frank Cass, 1989), p. 64.
 - 8 C. Fasseur, "Een koloniale paradox. De Nederlandse expansie in de Indonesische archipel in het midden van de negentiende eeuw (1830-1870)", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 92 (1979): 162-87.
 - 9 J. Th. Lindblad, "Economic Aspects of the Dutch Expansion in Indonesia, 1870-1914", *Modern Asian Studies* 23 (1989): 5.
 - 10 J. N. F. M. à Campo, *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij. Stoomvaart en staatsvorming in de Indonesische archipel 1888-1914* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1992).
 - 11 Even this definition has its problems. By opposing western and non-western countries, it tends to exclude Japan as a colonizing power; hence, western is meant here to include Russia and Japan.
 - 12 Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland*, pp. 7-17; *The Netherlands*, pp. 2-17. These three factors reflect the different approaches to expansion in England, France and Germany, illustrating national traits of a general phenomenon. See Wesseling, "The Giant", pp. 58-59.
 - 13 J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade", *Economic History Review*, 2nd series VI, no. 1 (1953): 1-15; Fieldhouse, *Economics*, p. 460.
 - 14 *Ibid.*, p. 463.
 - 15 *Ibid.*, p. 476.
 - 16 B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London, New York: Verso, 1991), *passim*.
 - 17 Fasseur, "Koloniale paradox".
 - 18 Lindblad, "Economic Aspects", p. 7.
 - 19 *Imperialisme in de marge, De afronding van Nederlands-Indië*, ed. J. van Goor (Utrecht: Hes, 1986).
 - 20 See À Campo, *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*, p. 27; also S. Rokkan, "Dimensions of State Formation and Nation-Building: a Possible Paradigm for Research on Variations within Europe", in *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. C. Tilly (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 562-600.
 - 21 G. J. Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths. Essays in Legal History and Historical Theory* (Den Haag: Van Hoeve, 1968).
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 - 23 Locher-Scholten, *Sumatraans sultanaat*, pp. 197-234.
 - 24 H. J. van der Tholen, "De expeditie naar Korintji in 1902-1903: imperialisme of

- ethische politiek?", *Mededelingen van de sectie militaire geschiedenis landmachtstaf* 10 (1989): 71-85.
- 25 E. van Breukelen, "De Nederlandse gezagsuitbreiding in de Zuider- en Ooster-afdeling van Borneo 1900-1906" (seminar paper Utrecht University, Utrecht, 1991).
 - 26 Locher-Scholten, "'Een gebiedende noodzakelijkheid'".
 - 27 Fasseur, "Koloniale paradox".
 - 28 P. J. Jobse, "De tin-expedities naar Flores 1887-1891. Een episode uit de geschiedenis van Nederlands-Indië", *Utrechtse Historische Cahiers* 1, no. 3 (1980): 45-54.
 - 29 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal 1901-1902* (The Hague: Staatsdrukkerij), p. 109.
 - 30 Governor of Celebes to the Governor-General, 21-3-1903, in General State Archives, The Hague (ARA), Ministry of Colonies (Col.), verbaal (vb.) 16-7-1904 X 15.
 - 31 See on the role of the indigenous powers in modern imperialism the well-known article of R. Robinson, "Non-European Foundations of Imperialism. Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration", in Owen and Sutcliffe, *Studies*, pp. 117-42.
 - 32 In the 1890s the mobile forces of the military police were organized, and improved armaments for the Indies army were introduced. The telegraph started in the seventies and was gradually extended, while shipping communications made a jump forward when the Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij (Royal Packet Company) began its services in 1891. The Short Declaration was a three-point contract, drafted by Snouck Hurgronje (see below) in 1898. It stipulated the sovereignty of the Indies government, forbade indigenous rulers from having international contracts and required strict obedience of Indies government regulations. It held indigenous rulers on a long leash which could be shortened at will by the colonial government.
 - 33 Contrary to French colonialism, this militarization of the colonial administration was only a temporary affair - even under Governor-General Van Heutsz, himself an army general - and was never extended beyond the length of the military expeditions. The explanation for this temporary character of army influence in the Indies government is to be found in the weak military tradition of the Netherlands.
 - 34 See also I. Schöffers, "Dutch 'Expansion' and Indonesian Reactions: Some Dilemmas of Modern Colonial Rule (1900-1942)", in *Expansion and Reaction: Essays on European Expansion and Reactions in Asia and Africa*, ed. H. L. Wesseling (Leiden: Brill, 1978), pp. 78-100.
 - 35 Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland*, pp. 59-67; *The Netherlands*, pp. 88-101.
 - 36 Kuitenbrouwer, *Nederland*, pp. 77-79, 111-12; *The Netherlands*, pp. 119-22, 177-81.
 - 37 A. I. P. J. van Beurden, "De Indische 'Goldrush', goudmijnbouw en beleid", in Van Goor, *Imperialisme*, pp. 179-226.
 - 38 The expansion was a limited one: one civil servant in Fak-Fak in the western part of the island, and one in Manokwari in the north. In 1901 a civil servant was posted in Merauke (southeastern Irian Jaya).
 - 39 See Historische Nota, ARA, Col., vb. 18-12-1897, no. 32. At his conference, convened by Bismarck, the European powers agreed upon rules and restrictions of their expansion in Africa. Among these the requirement of "effective occupation", instead of authority on paper, was of prime importance. In the following years these rules were tacitly extended to other non-Western regions, see H. L. Wesseling, "Nederland en de Conferentie van Berlijn, 1884-1885", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 93 (1980): 559-77.

- 40 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1897-1898*, p. 172.
- 41 P. W. van der Veer, *Search for New Guinea's Boundaries: from Torres Strait to the Pacific* (Canberra/The Hague: ANU Press/Nijhoff, 1965), pp. 61-70.
- 42 À Campo, *Koninklijke Paketvaart Maatschappij*, pp. 185-205.
- 43 Wesseling, *Indië verloren*, p. 66. In economics, fear of foreign influences played a certain role. The KPM was set up in order to exclude a too strong influence of British shipping in the archipelago (*ibid.*, pp. 40-74). American oil companies were only restrictively allowed. With regard to the military expeditions, however, the role of "preemption" was restricted.
- 44 The quote is from British Foreign Minister George Canning in 1824. See N. Tarling, "British Policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago 1824-1971", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 30 (1957): 128.
- 45 N. A. Bootsma, *Buren in de koloniale tijd. de Philippijnen onder Amerikaans bewind en de Nederlandse, Indische en Indonesische reacties daarop 1898-1942* (Dordrecht-Holland/Riverton-USA: Foris Publications, 1986), p. 19.
- 46 This view was to characterize Dutch colonialism until far into the twentieth century. In the period 1945-49, it dawned only slowly in Dutch political consciousness that the "Indonesian Question" could not be resolved by such a parochial stance and that one had to bow to international pressure by the US and the UN.
- 47 C. B. Wels, *Aloofness and Neutrality: Studies on Dutch Foreign Relations and Policy-making Institutions* (Utrecht: Hes, 1982), p. 192.
- 48 Cf. a quote from the progressive liberal, "ethical" member of parliament C. T. van Deventer in 1902, noting the "voracious gazes" of the big powers on the Dutch Indies: "What is it we have to do and are able to do, we with our weak forces, against so overwhelming a superior power? My response is: first of all we have to be righteous". See *Leven en arbeid van mr. C.Th. van Deventer*, ed. H. T. Colenbrander and J. E. Stokvis (3 vol.: Amsterdam: Van Kampen, s.a.) III, p. 84.
- 49 N. A. Bootsma, "Nederland op de conferentie van Washington, 1921-1922", *Bijdragen en Medelingen betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden* 93 (1978): 114.
- 50 Jobse, "De tinexpedities".
- 51 Griffiths has shown that this industrialization was more an industrialization-in-depth than in-breadth, a renewal and modernization more than an increase in labourers involved. The number of persons employed in industry remained the same from 1889 to 1909. See R.Th. Griffiths, "The Creation of a National Dutch Economy: 1795-1909", *Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis* 95 (1982): 513-38.
- 52 J. Th. Lindblad, "Economische aspecten van de Nederlandse expansie in de Indonesische archipel", in Van Goor, *Imperialisme*, pp. 227-66.
- 53 *Ibid.*, p. 18.
- 54 Locher-Scholten, *Sumatraans sultanaat*, pp. 197-234.
- 55 Locher-Scholten, "'Een gebiedende noodzakelijkheid'".
- 56 See for Kerinci Van der Tholen, "De expeditie"; for Ceram P. H. M. Groen, "'Soldaat' en 'bestuursman': her Indische leger en de Nederlandse gezagsvestiging op Ceram: een case study", *Medelingen sectie militaire geschiedenis landmachtstaf* 5 (1982): 203-244; for Banjarmasin Van Breukelen, "Nederlandse gezagsuitbreiding"; for Bali H. Schulte Nordholt, *Een Balische dynastie. Hierarchie en conflict in de Negara Mengwi 1700-1940* (Ph.D. diss., Free University, Amsterdam, 1988).
- 57 Locher-Scholten, "'Een gebiedende noodzakelijkheid'", p. 155.
- 58 Schriftelijke gedachtenwisseling omtrent punten regeringsbeleid, Free University Amsterdam, Collection Idenburg, 20-7-1904.
- 59 Lindblad, "Economic Aspects", p. 16; also J. à Campo, "Orde, rust en welvaart.

- Over de Nederlandse expansie in de Indische archipel omstreeks 1900", *Acta Politica* 15 (1980): 145-89.
- 60 *Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1897-1898*, p. 175.
- 61 Although many earlier illustrations of a new colonial consciousness can be noted, the year 1901 is generally taken as the start of this policy because of the formulation of a Dutch "moral calling" with regard to the Indonesian population in the government's annual statement. See on the Ethical Policy E. Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek in fragmenten. Vijf studies over koloniaal denken en doen van Nederlanders in de Indonesische Archipel 1877. 1942* (Utrecht: Hes, 1981), pp. 176-208. Also J. de Jong, *Van batig slot tot ereschuld. De discussie over de financiële verhouding tussen Nederland en Indië en de hervorming van de Nederlandse koloniale politiek* (Groningen: Eigen Beheer, 1989).
- 62 ARA, Col., vb. 12-3-1902, no. 41.
- 63 Locher-Scholten, "'Een gebiedende noodzakelijkheid'", p. 154.
- 64 W. Izereef, *De Zuid-Celebes-affaire. Kapitein Westerling en de standrechtelijke executies* (Dieren: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1984), p. 8.
- 65 ARA, Col., vb. 16-7-10-4, lt. X 15, report to the Queen.
- 66 J. J. C. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles. A Study of Dutch Foreign Policy* (Leiden: Nijhoff, 1985), pp. 3-55.
- 67 Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek*, pp. 177-81.
- 68 The term is Carol and Peter Stearns', and implies that emotions and ideas about emotions have their own history. See Carol Z. Stearns and Peter N. Stearns, "Introduction", in *Emotions and Social Change, Towards a New Psychohistory*, ed. Carol Z. Stearns and Peter N. Stearns (New York and London: Holmes and Meier, 1988), pp. 1-22.
- 69 G. Gonggrijp, *Schets eener economische geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Haarlem: Bohn, 1938), pp. 172-73.
- 70 Bootsma, *Buren*.
- 71 Locher-Scholten, *Ethiek*, p. 196.
- 72 J. van Goor, "De Lombok-expeditie en het Nederlands nationalisme", in van Goor, *Imperialisme*, pp. 27-28.
- 73 Director Binnenlandsch Bestuur to the Governor-General 6-2-1892, Historische nota in ARA, Col., vb. 8-12-1897, no. 33.
- 74 Snouck had been a close companion of Van Heutsz in Aceh in the nineties, but their relationship was strained after 1903 due to a difference of opinion about government policy in that region. After 1904, Snouck's influence waned: Van Heutsz took to his adjutant H. Colijn as his adviser on the Outer Regions. Snouck Hurgronje left the Indies in 1906 and got a professorship in the Arabic languages in Leiden.
- 75 His reports are all published in *Ambtelijke adviezen van C. Snouck Hurgronje 1889-1936*, ed. E. Gobée and C. Adriaanse (3 vol.; The Hague: Nijhoff, 1957-65), III, pp. 2015-2174.
- 76 *Ibid.*, p. 2017.
- 77 *Ibid.*, p. 2034.
- 78 *Ibid.*, p. 2106.
- 79 However, direct rule was not his favourite method of administration. Quoting the Arab proverb "Kind over kind is grace", he defended indirect rule by indigenous rulers. These should be western educated; disliking Islam Snouck preferred westernization. Moreover, in his opinion, the colonial government should base its administration on as much information about their subjects as they could possibly collect, an endeavour in which he actively participated. His emphasis on western education for the indigenous elite, his later understanding of Indonesian

- nationalism and his sharp criticism of the Dutch civil service in the Indies made him a relative progressive in the 1910s and 1920s, sharply attacked by colonial conservatives. See Locher-Scholten, *Sumatraans sultanaat*, pp. 210-14.
- 80 Groen, "'Soldaat'".
- 81 Schulte Nordholt, *Balische dynastie*.
- 82 H. L. Wesseling, *Verdeel en heers. De deling van Afrika 1818-1914* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 1991), p. 455. In this most recent work Wesseling argues - in line with Fieldhouse - that as far as the causes of a modern imperialism are concerned a strict separation between economics and bureaucratic/administrative interests of the modern state is not really relevant, because this distinction gradually diminished in the nineteenth century development of the western state (Wesseling, *Verdeel*, pp. 455-59).
- 83 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, for the concept of the geographical space as a cultural (literary) theme, Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993), passim.
- 84 The idea stems from the French philosopher Ernest Renan in his analysis of the concept of the nation (1882), cited in J.Th. Petrus Blumberger, *De nationalistische beweging in Nederlandsch-Indië* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1931), p. 3.
- 85 Van Goor, "Lombokexpeditie", pp. 63-64.
- 86 Groen, "'Soldaat'", p. 208.
- 87 They could react in two ways, either by accepting new contracts (as for instance many rulers in Kalimantan did), or by resisting Dutch claims (Jambi, Kerinci, Banjarmasin, Bone and Bali). See for Kalimantan I. Black "The 'lastposten': Eastern Kalimantan and the Dutch in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries", *Journal of South East Asian Studies* 16 (1985): 281-91.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF THE DUTCH EXPANSION IN INDONESIA, 1870-1914

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The time appears due for a reappraisal of the economic argument in the imperialism debate. For decades the standard procedure has been first to refute Hobson and Lenin on empirical grounds and then to present a non-economic explanation for the European overseas expansion during the era of modern imperialism (1870-1914). Presently a new paradigm is gaining acceptance. It is an approach which puts the emphasis solidly back on the economic side but without its Marxist connotations. Cain and Hopkins took the lead with their theory of 'gentlemanly capitalism'; they link the landed South and City finance with Imperial policy thus explaining overseas expansion by referring to macro-economic changes at home.¹ Davis and Huttenback associate the profitability of Empire investments with their 'two-England hypothesis' for British business: London investors stood apart, profited more and exerted a greater influence.² It is my intention to show that a similar type of non-Marxist economic argument applies also to the case of Dutch expansion in the Indonesian archipelago at the time of modern imperialism.

Any comparative approach to modern imperialism embracing also the Netherlands is likely to highlight the peculiar and unique position of the Dutch on the spectrum of imperialist performance. It was a small country with a vast colony and it was virtually the only European nation not to partake in the scramble or, for that matter, to acquire any new overseas territories during the period 1870-1914. May we in fact speak of a Dutch imperialism at all at this time? This has indeed become a matter of considerable controversy and it is necessary to review the Dutch historiography on this point before proceeding any further. The first part of this article will

demonstrate that the concept of 'imperialism' may be profitably applied to the Dutch colonial past.

Economic arguments come in many shapes. There is the highly localized instance of the individual pioneer or colonial administrator penetrating virgin territories, thus eventually bringing about formal incorporation and effective occupation. Economic and political, or even psychological, motivations are likely to mingle freely and a better understanding of why conquest took place presupposes that these factors be disentangled on the micro-level of observation. Then there is the more global approach concentrating on structural shifts in the spheres of both economics and politics and extending to longer periods and larger areas. It will be argued here that we can fully appreciate the momentum of overseas expansion only by accounting also for its macro-economic framework. In short, expansion implied both that vested interests were being built up on the spot and that the emerging colonial state possessed an economic foundation of its own. The second and third parts of this article will survey the micro and macro aspects of Dutch imperialist expansion in Indonesia respectively.

On Dutch imperialism

Contemporary Dutch reaction to other nations' imperialism was often one of disgust and moral condemnation. What the French did in Indochina, let alone the British in South Africa, was something fundamentally different from the reluctant assumption by the Dutch of their responsibilities towards the indigenous peoples of the Indonesian archipelago. The exclusive concentration on existing possessions and the ethical undertones of colonial policy as it was pursued from 1900 onwards combined to make the Dutch conduct overseas deviate so markedly from the general norm at the time of modern imperialism. This axiom dominated the Dutch historiography on the recent colonial past throughout the traumas of decolonization and even beyond. It was only seriously challenged after 1970. Since then two lines of thought have been developed, one preserving the tradition of Dutch uniqueness in colonial history and the other stressing the similarities with other imperialist nations.

The reasons for rejecting the traditional view have varied considerably. Some tend to tie it up with the question why colonial expansion occurred in the first place. Schaper believes in a multitude of mutually reinforcing motives, as opposed to economic ones alone, both in the Dutch case and in general.³ Wertheim applies the orthodox economic argument, the Hobson-Lenin hypothesis, to the Dutch case which then automatically loses its special status.⁴ Van Tijn discards all but an economic rationale for the intensification of colonial policy and expansion towards the end of the nineteenth century. He suggests a complex of economic incentives and also a specifically Dutch intervening link between private capital interests and public policy: an imperialist attitude of mind culminating in the Ethical

Policy of the twentieth century.⁵ Even in the attempts to squeeze the Dutch into a broader pattern some of the unique Dutch flavour is being retained.

Kuitenbrouwer did the most elaborate study so far on Dutch colonial policy-making during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. His scope of analysis includes also Dutch reactions to the Anglo-French rivalry in Africa and the Boer War. He asserts that the Netherlands does fit the general pattern of modern imperialism even if the Dutch expansion got underway at a comparatively late date. He labels the outbreak of the war on Aceh in 1873 a 'false start' and conceives a full-fledged policy of expansion emerging only after the conquest of Lombok in 1894. Pre-emptive policy and sheer geographical contiguity are said to have dominated also the Dutch brand of overseas expansion. Moreover, the Dutch experience was found to resemble the British one rather than, for instance, the Portuguese one which in turn only serves to underscore his conclusion that the general norm applied also to the Dutch case.⁶

The hesitancy among the defenders of the traditional axiom to use the term 'imperialism' in connection with Dutch expansion has found its justification in the lack of determination and cohesiveness in colonial policy as it was actually being executed prior to 1900. Fasseur defines the uncoordinated expansion outside Java between 1830 and 1870 as 'frontier imperialism' in which initiatives emanated from the periphery rather than from the centre.⁷ By implication, if that was what expansion looked like also after 1870, it would indeed be difficult to include the Dutch among the overt imperialists. To this Schöffers adds that the Dutch policy was a gradual and reactive one — there was Dutch expansion because others expanded.⁸ Wesseling, finally, attaches great importance to the fact that the Netherlands abandoned its last African possession, Elmina on the Gold coast, on the very threshold of the scramble. He does not question only whether the Dutch fitted into a more general pattern but also, and more importantly, whether there was any Dutch version of modern imperialism at all.⁹

The publication of Kuitenbrouwer's analysis has revitalized the discussion. Wesseling presents three reasons why Kuitenbrouwer reaches the wrong conclusion. First, he misreads Betts when borrowing the latter's term 'pre-emption': Betts speaks of 'pegging out claims for the future', not of filling in claims inherited from the past. Secondly, it is true that contiguity was crucial in Dutch expansion but not that it characterized modern imperialism in general. Thirdly, in differentiating between expansion before and after 1894 Kuitenbrouwer allegedly overlooks the fundamental continuity in Dutch expansion in Indonesia.¹⁰ In my opinion, the former two points of criticism are valid but the last-mentioned one is not. As will be demonstrated, it all depends on how one defines 'imperialism'

With a concept as degenerate as 'imperialism' we easily run the risk of getting lost in semantic quibbles.¹¹ It is imperative not to define it too loosely so

as to embrace just about all expansion that ever took place. Yet an overly restricted usage of the term is equally unfortunate. If we limit the definition of the term to sheer formal annexation of new colonial territories, it follows logically that there was no Dutch imperialism in South East Asia in the nineteenth century. The Dutch State possessed a legal claim to sovereignty over the entire Indonesian archipelago as soon as the British permitted it to accept its inheritance from the defunct East India Company in 1816. Nonetheless, it is indisputable that the Dutch hegemony over the Indonesian peoples and lands looked very different in 1914 as compared to 1816. In the meantime, formal claims had been translated into effective control. Empty treaties had become instruments for exercising alien authority and the colonial rulers had penetrated beyond the superficial level of Malay princes and entered into direct communication with the colonized peoples themselves. To exclude such far-reaching changes from the analysis of imperialism would be to do injustice to history.

The extension of the term 'imperialism' beyond a mere formalistic content has the advantage of adhering more strictly to the contemporary practice of letting essence take precedence over form. This principle was elevated into a rule of conduct by the Berlin Congo Conference in 1885; henceforth rights of colonial possession had to rest upon effective occupation and not on claims alone.¹² The chief danger, however, with a broader term lies in its invitation to fuzziness – where do we draw the line of demarcation between what is imperialism and what is not? Extensions of the term to include also informal rule have abounded in the literature but this has not always resulted in a more acute perception of the object of inquiry.¹³ A more fruitful strategy appears to retain the emphasis on formal political domination but to incorporate an intensification of actual control within that frame of reference.

Dutch colonial rule was primarily effectuated outside Java. There, in the vast and thinly populated Outer Provinces, the Dutch claims to sovereignty were the flimsiest and the external boundaries the least precise. Effective control was attained by a great variety of means including outright military annexation which to those immediately concerned could hardly have differed much from what an invasion of 'new' colonial territory would have brought. This was the case with the expedition to Lombok in 1894, the offensive warfare in Aceh from 1898 and the so-called pacification of Jambi in 1906, to name but the most conspicuous examples. An intensified Dutch presence in one of the Outer Provinces frequently also implied confrontations with other imperialist powers in adjacent areas, for instance, British interests in Sumatra and Borneo (Kalimantan) or German ambitions in New Guinea. Even expansion within the existing colony, therefore, did not preclude the undertones of international rivalry that were so characteristic of modern imperialism.

The idea of viewing Dutch nineteenth-century expansion in Indonesia as a

kind of rounding-off of Empire is not new but it has only recently received more attention in the historiography. According to Schöffler, this forms the very basis of the Dutch claim to uniqueness among imperialist nations.¹⁴ Van Goor may be credited for having invented the not wholly unambiguous term 'imperialism on the margin' to describe the consolidation of Dutch colonial rule.¹⁵ Rounding-off does indeed imply that the boundaries or margins of the sphere of interest be definitely established. More in general and not accidentally, a greater acceptance of that conception has coincided with an increasing interest in the history of the Outer Provinces in recent years.

The process of rounding-off of Empire did not gain momentum very quickly. Throughout the better part of the nineteenth century Dutch policy towards the Outer Provinces was aloof and cautious. Only reluctantly and when absolutely necessary did the colonial Government choose to intervene in the internal affairs of the Outer Provinces. The general attitude was one of abstinence born out of the conviction that the Netherlands Indies was an unmanageably large colonial possession for such a small nation. As late as in 1873, the very year when the Dutch went to war with Aceh, the Governor-General himself was able to suggest in all earnest that western New Guinea be left to Italian adventurers because the Empire was large enough already. Such a statement from the highest quarters of authority would in later years have amounted to little short of treason.¹⁶

The discontinuity in Dutch imperialist expansion becomes all the more apparent when we contrast the agitation and commotion during the first decade of the twentieth century with the placid days of the policy of abstinence. That first decade was the time of Van Heutsz who from 1903 as Governor-General ordered the pacification of several Outer Provinces. Lieutenant Christoffel gained a dubious reputation for ruthlessness after his troops had swept through Jambi, Flores and Central Borneo. Subjugation by Malay princes to Dutch rule was speeded up by extensive use of so-called Short Declarations, standardized formulas for ceding authority. At the same time the Ethical Policy was pronounced official doctrine thus making explicit that the Dutch had the aspiration to 'elevate' the colonized subjects economically and culturally. Needless to say, this was a task that left no room for any further reticence.¹⁷

Opinions vary on the date at which the attitude of abstinence was abandoned to the benefit of a more determined policy. Fasseur claims that even the declaration of war on Aceh formed no real break with the past and that a fundamental shift of policy occurred only in 1898 at the time of escalation in the Aceh war.¹⁸ As we saw, Kuitenbrouwer prefers a slightly earlier date of decisive change, Lombok in 1894. An indication that the shift had begun earlier may be found in a comparison between the Dutch reaction to the arrival of James Brooke in Sarawak in 1841 and the establishment of the British North Borneo Company in Sabah in 1878. In the former case, the

Minister of Colonial Affairs protested formally on grounds of the Treaty of London of 1824 but took no further action. On the latter occasion, however, a gunboat sailed north and Dutch detachments were placed in the immediate vicinity to prevent any further southward expansion on the part of the British.¹⁹ We may reconcile the divergent judgements by defining a transitory stage between the 1870s and the 1890s when the traditional policy of abstention was becoming increasingly obsolete but the time was still not ripe for a full reversal of priorities.

Rounding-off of Empire may be viewed as a version of colonial state formation. It is instructive to draw a parallel with the process of state formation in general, especially when put in terms of a continuous interaction between centre and periphery. Such an interaction would involve at least three types of movement: the penetration of the periphery by the centre, the drive towards standardization in the periphery as ordered by the centre, and the increasing participation of the periphery in the centre.²⁰ We recognize the three kinds of movement also in the Java-based expansion throughout the Outer Provinces. First, military men and administrators were dispatched from Java and spread throughout the other islands. Second, actual policy in the newly subdued territories often aimed at a harmonization of procedures in order eventually to attain the one homogeneous entity. Third, the opening-up of the Outer Provinces for world trade brought about a process of economic expansion that was to advance the position of the Outer Provinces at the expense of Java.²¹

The different types of movement within the process of colonial state formation possessed various economic aspects. We may connect both the penetration of 'new' areas and the strive towards standardization with the build-up of vested economic interests on the micro-level of expansion. Future gains would accrue to either private investors or the colonial State itself but were in any case tied to specific individuals or institutions. The economic aspect of the increasing participation of periphery in the centre, however, is likely to be less tangible and easily pinned down; here we encounter the macro-economic forces at play beneath the process of colonial State formation. The economic foundation of the colonial state was to an extent found in the very growth potential of the territories brought under effective control.²²

Granted our wider usage of the term 'imperialism', we may presently reaffirm that a Dutch version of modern imperialist expansion did exist. There was a discontinuity in Dutch expansion with respect to the preceding period and in this sense the Netherlands formed no exception to the general rule. The exception may rather be found in the high degree to which the imperialist experience consisted of an effectuation of control over an existing colony, a rounding-off of Empire. What remains to be seen is how important were the economic undertones of that imperialist experience.

The micro-economics of expansion

In the event the extension of Dutch colonial rule on the local level in the Outer Provinces was propelled by initiatives on the part of both private pioneers and the civil servants of the colonial State. There was an incessant interplay between these two agents of expansion, the one reacting to the action of the other thereby eliciting renewed action. Nevertheless in most specific instances it does appear possible to identify one or the other as the stronger force. In the subsequent survey we shall first focus on cases where the interests of private capital predominated and then proceed to those more determined by public policy. Our survey does not claim to be exhaustive but a certain degree of representativity may be inferred from the dispersion of the examples, both in spatial terms throughout the archipelago and in time.

The sultanate Siak in East Sumatra evoked much interest among investors and bureaucrats alike during the 1870s and 1880s. In 1858 a treaty had been concluded between the sultan and the Dutch sovereign but this was a gesture to deter adventurers from the Straits Settlements rather than an initial attempt to extend Dutch rule to this region. Permanent Dutch rule was only considered a viable option after the success of the Deli tobacco further north had suggested a more dynamic future for the placid sultanate. The interior of Siak was also rumoured to contain tin holdings. In 1873 the creation of the residency Siak for the northeastern coast of Sumatra altered the sultanate's status radically and brought it irremediably into the orbit of effective Dutch rule. The new Resident pursued a deliberate policy of guaranteeing security for men and property so as to attract private capital investments and stimulate trade. Tin was discovered upstream and an Amsterdam firm acquired the mining concession. But the optimism about Siak was short-lived. The tobacco failed because of poor soil conditions and the tin exploitation was unprofitable. In 1887 the sultanate faced the political repercussions of economic disappointment when the capital of the East Coast residency was moved from Siak to Medan in Deli. Nevertheless effective Dutch rule had been established and it was there to stay also after its original economic impetus had weakened.²¹

Northeastern Kalimantan remained unknown and uninviting until the appearance of enterprising Englishmen in Sabah in 1878 triggered off a chain-reaction that eventually led to the inclusion of this territory in the Dutch colonial state. Prior to 1878 the supposed Dutch suzerainty meant next to nothing to the dwellers of the three local sultanates, Sambaliung, Gunung Tabur and Bulungan (in order of proximity to the nearest stronghold of Dutch authority). After the arrival of the British North Borneo Company, however, the Dutch Government rushed to enter into formal agreements with the three sultans and to set up a naval station in the immediate neighbourhood. But the political reaction to the British pioneer awakened the interest of Dutch investors. By 1885 several Dutch

combinations had requested the rights of mining exploration and exploitation in this area, some without doubt in order to bar rivals. But the concessions were not granted as long as Government protection was deemed unsatisfactory. The transfer of the Dutch officer in charge from Tawau at the border to the capital of Bulungan in 1889 signified a shift of Government priority in favour of permanent control. Between 1893 and 1897 the three local sultans were, one after another, forced to relinquish most of their authority, especially, with respect to economic activities such as the granting of concessions and the collection of customs duties. More administrators moved in and at least in one of the sultanates, Sambaliung, coal mining was eventually to transform local economic life.²⁴

Attention from potential private investors acted as a catalyst to further political involvement also in the principedom Gorontalo in northern Sulawesi. In 1885 a request by the firm Bauermann & Parmentier to look for gold in Gorontalo galvanized two men into action: the mining engineer Van Schelle who surveyed the gold reserves and the Assistant-Resident, Scherer, who brought order in the political chaos that had existed there since the death of the last rajah. Both initiatives enhanced actual Dutch influence considerably. In 1889 Gorontalo was brought under direct colonial rule (as opposed to indirect rule via a Malay prince). This initiated a process which in the course of the 1890s brought all of northern Sulawesi under effective Dutch control.²⁵

Dutch interest in Flores among the smaller Sunda Islands was stimulated by expectations that proved widely beside the mark. Legend had it that the Rokka Mountain in the interior possessed vast amounts of tin but no-one had ever examined the spot itself. Nevertheless scores of applications from private explorers were filed with the colonial authorities in the 1880s. In 1887 an official expedition was sent out but it returned without ever having reached the mountain of tin. Renewed applications from presumptive investors called for another attempt. The second expedition was undertaken in 1889 but met with unexpected armed resistance on the part of the Rokkanese. The subsequent Dutch defeat changed the policy towards Flores into a matter of prestige. A military expedition followed in 1890 but only in 1907 was the island effectively incorporated into the colonial organization. Meanwhile the tin legend had been disgraced altogether as the Rokka Mountain was found to contain no ore.²⁶

For later links between private capital interests and expansionist public policies we turn again to Sumatra, more specifically to Aceh in the north and Jambi in the southeast. Both regions belonged early to the Dutch sphere of interest but only at a late stage was colonial authority effectively exercised. In both regions the interests of the emerging oil industry in Indonesia proved decisive.

In Aceh the longest and most atrocious war in the archipelago was fought but in the beginning and for many years economic motives were ostensibly

lacking. War was declared on Aceh in 1873 for reasons of political prestige and to mark the true boundary of the Dutch sphere of interest with respect to the British one. But as the war dragged on economic considerations successfully gained ground. The colonial Government designed ambitious plans for the port of Sabang off the northern tip. More importantly, the oil reserves in Tamiang and Perlak in the northeast lay in the combat zone and were inaccessible to private explorers. In 1896/97 a juxtaposition of events compelled the Government to change its policy. First the defection of the Aceh headman Teuku Umar from the Dutch cause made it clear that a prolonged halfhearted commitment would render only more frustrations. Shortly afterwards, the Royal Dutch requested access to the Aceh oil-fields as the company's wells in East Sumatra were drying up. In 1898 the newly appointed Commander, Van Heutsz, ordered the ruthless 'pacification' of much of Aceh, including Tamiang and Perlak that were both soon opened to private investors. During that concluding phase of the war on Aceh the Royal Dutch started to produce from oil-fields under heavy protection of the colonial army.²⁷

In Jambi the Government had interfered already in 1858 by deposing the ambitious sultan Taha and replacing him with a loyal uncle protected by the Dutch garrison at the capital. Yet Taha continued to hold his sway over the indigenous population of Jambi from his retreat in the interior. For decades Dutch authority was in fact only felt in and around the capital of Jambi. This effectively impeded the entrance of private pioneers. There was considerable interest in the region among investors around 1880 but scientific expeditions frequently ended with casualties and the authorities held back. Official policy changed after 1900 when oil had been discovered and Jambi was drawn into the rivalry between the Royal Dutch and Standard Oil about the supply monopoly in Indonesian oil. In 1903 alone there were more than 2,000 requests for drilling in Jambi, allegedly all from straw-men of Standard Oil. In that very year the Dutch military expedition penetrated the interior and in 1904 the aged Taha was killed in his retreat. Jambi was 'pacified' and brought under direct rule but the region's rich oil reserves were to be tapped only at a far later date.²⁸

In all these cases - Siak, northeastern Kalimantan, northern Sulawesi, Flores, Aceh in later years and Jambi - the prime impetus to a more expansionary policy was the interest taken by private capital in the area. Often this interest was based on overly optimistic expectations but the political reaction materialized before the value of the promises could be fully assessed. At times, as in northeastern Kalimantan, the process was set in motion by an external pressure but again this does not detract from the force of economic ambition. More often than not the Government assumed a rather ambiguous attitude towards prospective pioneers, notably when welcoming private interest in 'new' territories but refusing to authorize exploration because of the lack of public facilities there. Concessions were

even granted on condition that the firm or individual applicant agreed to defray any additional outlays of the Government on colonial administration and protection of European subjects and property.²⁹

Official Dutch policy with respect to private investment in the colonies changed radically as the Cultivation System was dismantled from 1870 onwards. During the four preceding decades the Government had chosen to exploit Java as if it were one huge State plantation producing sugar, coffee and indigo.³⁰ Now the doors were flung wide open for private enterprises, not only on Java but increasingly also on the other islands. Data are scarce on the volume of these investments but estimates on total assets converge on figures such as 200 million guilders at the most in 1885, about 750 million in 1900 and one and a half milliard in 1914.³¹ The precise distribution over Java and the Outer Provinces is not known but the available evidence suggests that the proportion of the Outer Provinces in the grand total was continuously rising.³²

The reorientation of Dutch policy after 1870 had a profound impact on the revenue basis of the colonial policy. The traditional surplus on the budget of the Netherlands Indies turned into a deficit about 1878. The deficit grew larger as the proceeds from the Government estates declined whereas the public expenditures in the colony increased. There is something paradoxical about the simultaneous relinquishment of State profits on Java and ever more compelling commitments elsewhere, particularly after war had been declared on Aceh. The Government had to look for new sources of revenue, direct and indirect taxation in the colony itself. The share of taxation in total Government revenue climbed from 33% in 1867 to 58% in 1897 whereas the proportion contributed by the proceeds from sales of tropical products dropped from 50 to 11% during the same period.³³ Public finance in the colony grew intertwined with the level of activity in the private sector.

One of the strategies adopted by the colonial Government to strengthen the tax basis of its operations was to stimulate private exploitation of the natural resources in the Outer Provinces. This could be accomplished in one of two ways, either by reacting to signals from private investors or by inviting pioneers to settle in previously neglected regions. As we have already seen, the former approach implied expeditions and administrative interference in regions touched by private interest, at least as it was not too costly in the short run. The latter approach was the more active one in which the initiative to expansion was explicitly tied to the fiscal aspirations of the colonial Government. We shall consider a couple of variations on the latter theme.

West Kalimantan became known among the Outer Provinces because of its gold and diamond reserves and its large Chinese population. The power of the Chinese kongsi's was forcefully broken by the Government in the 1850s but only at the cost of perpetual anarchy. During the 1870s and

early 1880s the lack of safety was said to preclude any serious attempts at exploitation of the region's riches with the aid of European capital and technology. But in 1887 the regional authorities assisted the sultans of Pontianak and Sambas in setting up advertising campaigns in the Netherlands in order to lure Dutch capital to the region, both for estate agriculture and mining. The response was overwhelming. By 1890 almost 100 mining and agricultural concessions had been authorized and it appeared necessary to adapt also the local apparatus of administration to the changing situation. But the speculative component in the concession hunt grew predominant and to its dismay the regional Government realized that most concessions were intended to change hands quickly in Singapore rather than to form the basis for a permanent settlement in West Kalimantan. Eventually this region was to lag hopelessly behind the southeastern part of the island, both in terms of economic growth and tax revenue.³⁴

In Central Sulawesi an external initiative propelled the Government into changing its course of action. In 1890 a party of Australian gold-diggers went ashore trying to obtain rights of exploration from local chiefs. It was then realized that the prevailing political chaos in the region offered no appropriate setting for private pioneering. Before long the treaties with the Malay princes were renegotiated and a new colonial officer at Donggala got as his special assignment to keep an eye on prospective investors in the nearby Kaili district. In the formulation of regional policy the display of colonial power was explicitly linked to the willingness of private firms and individuals to invest in this region. Private interest in Central Sulawesi increased gradually and culminated in 1897/98 but actual investments were slow in forthcoming and the subsequent results turned out disappointing.³⁵

In Aceh the urge to stimulate private investment was particularly strong once the war was over and security could be guaranteed. Already in 1905, the year after the official end of the war, the colonial Government proposed to set up a State rubber plantation at Langsar in the east. Next to rendering profits, this enterprise was intended to set an example to private investors who also wanted to benefit from the new international market for rubber. The estate at Langsar started operations while the factual 'pacification' was still in process and it did indeed serve as a forerunner in one of Indonesia's most successful lines of export production.³⁶

These three cases – West Kalimantan, Central Sulawesi and Aceh after the war – all illustrate how the Government acted as the agent of economic forces on the micro-level of expansion. It paved the way for private capital but this simultaneously served its own fiscal interests. Only by private investments and thriving commerce could the tax-paying capacity of the Outer Provinces be enhanced and that was precisely what the Dutch colonial State needed after 1870. The micro-economics of expansion thus entailed two types of interaction between private economic interest and political

action depending on who took the first step: the private investor acting on his own behalf or the colonial Government in anticipation of the former's arrival.

The macro-economics of expansion

The consolidation of Dutch rule in the Outer Provinces did not take place in an economic vacuum. There were economic forces at work on another level than the one represented by the individual investor or enterprising colonial administrator. The macro-economic framework of the effectuation of colonial rule in the Outer Provinces in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century was one of economic expansion. The Indonesian Outer Provinces were drawn into the mainstream of world trade and ventured on a path of exceptionally rapid economic growth. In trying to assess the precise relationship between the extension of colonial rule and economic growth we easily end up with counterfactual questions such as whether colonial policy would have changed so fast in the absence of economic expansion or whether output could have risen so fast without the protection of effective colonial rule. Suffice it here to say that the two were likely to reinforce one another and that the realization of the vast economic potential of these islands probably formed the single most important impetus to sustained State formation in the Outer Provinces. We shall consider both the growth path in general and some specific manifestations of it in two particularly dynamic regions, East Sumatra and Southeast Kalimantan.

The Outer Provinces rose to prominence by virtue of their export performance (Figure 1).³⁷ Initially the total value of exports remained very stable averaging 41–48 million guilders during both the 1880s and the early 1890s. The ascent began in 1897 and from 1905 the aggregate always exceeded the 100 million guilders. Total value quadrupled between the late 1890s and the first half of the 1910s, from 82 million to 244 million guilders on average. This expansion was rapid by any comparison and it may only marginally be explained by rising world prices in the early twentieth century. The export growth was primarily an increase in real terms reflecting a general enlargement of production capacity.³⁸

The enlargement of exports from the Outer Provinces fitted into a general upward trend for the colony as a whole. Yet rates of increase were higher for the Outer Provinces when considered alone. This is conveyed by index numbers. Using the average level in the early 1880s (1880/84) as a base, we observe markedly higher index numbers for the Outer Provinces from the late 1890s as compared to those pertaining to all of Indonesia: 200 versus 140 in the years 1900/04 and 600 versus 300 in the early 1910s. Consequently, the Outer Provinces came to occupy an ever larger share within the Indonesian total. Prior to 1900 the Outer Provinces accounted for less than 30% of the grand total but on the eve of the First World War their share already

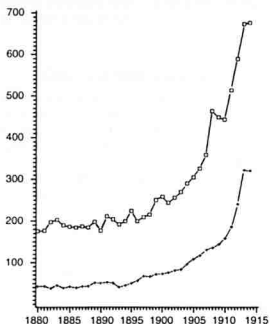


Figure 2 Total foreign exports of Indonesia, 1880-1914. Square = total, star = Outer Provinces. Values in millions of guilders at current prices

Source: See note 37.

exceeded the 40%. Later, in the interwar period, the Outer Provinces were to outstrip Java as an earner of export revenue which in turn implied an increasing discrepancy between the economic and political centres of gravity within the archipelago.³⁹

The expansion of exports from the Outer Provinces was founded on successive shifts in the commodity composition of outgoing trade. The Outer Provinces were very capable of adapting supply to changing circumstances. Tobacco and tin appeared first on the stage amounting to about one-half of the export supply in the late 1880s and early 1890s. After 1900 the pendulum swung towards oil, copra and rubber (Figure 2). The Outer Provinces offered new products on the world market at a time when prospects appeared especially favourable. More importantly, the new commodities were not necessarily introduced at the expense of existing ones, at least not absolutely speaking. For instance, export quantities of tobacco doubled between the late 1890s and the early 1910s from 17,000 to 36,000 tons on average. Yet the share of tobacco in the Outer Provinces' total was halved in precisely that time, from 28% to 14%. Tin quantities increased significantly, too, without the position of this product within the grand total undergoing much change. This is where the true strength of the export-oriented economy of the Outer

Provinces lay. Expansion affected both new and existing lines of production. It was a matter of differential rates of growth, not of growth alongside stagnation.⁴⁰

It has been said about the Indonesian export performance at the beginning of the twentieth century that 'demand was right abroad and supply was right at home'.⁴¹ Such an assessment is even more appropriate for the Outer Provinces than for the whole of Indonesia. Yet in its simplicity this statement overlooks the fact that the supply of exportables in the Outer Provinces could not become 'right' without adjustments outside the sphere of production. The impressive enlargement of capacity in tobacco, tin, oil, copra and rubber presupposed the extension and consolidation of Dutch colonial rule also in the Outer Provinces. This is not to say that Dutch rule was extended or consolidated with the overall economic expansion in mind. That materialized in the context of individual pioneers and their interaction with local administrators, i.e. on the micro-level.

Capacity enlargement and rising non-indigenous populations in the new production areas combined to generate a new demand for both consumer and capital goods from abroad. The foreign imports of the Outer Provinces increased in the wake of exports, from an average of 50 million guilders in the late 1890s to 125 million in 1914. Significantly, however, the pace of expansion was slower here than on the export side. The import index number for the early 1910s was 365 (again with 1880/84 as a base) or slightly more than one-half of the corresponding figure for exports. In fact, imports in the Outer Provinces barely increased by more, relatively speaking, than imports entering Indonesia as a whole. The Outer Provinces accounted for about 30% of the total Indonesian imports both in the 1880s, 1890s and early twentieth

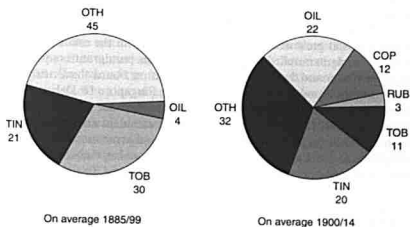


Figure 2 The commodity composition of foreign exports from the Outer Provinces, 1885/99 and 1900/14.

Source: See note 37.

century. The different growth paths of exports and imports resulted in a surplus on the balance of trade that assumed ever greater dimensions.⁴²

A greater capacity to earn than to spend export revenue is characteristic of an economy in transition that has just embarked on its growth path. Effective demand tends to lag behind as population growth is still moderate and as the youngest export production has as yet hardly generated new regional markets. This description fits the Outer Provinces about 1900 only too well. In 1914 population on these islands may be estimated at 11–12 million or about one-quarter of the total for the entire archipelago which, incidentally, implies that export revenue but not import expenditure per capita was far higher in the Outer Provinces than on Java.⁴³ Few links connected the new establishments on these islands with surrounding indigenous lines of production such as subsistence agriculture and traditional forestry. This was particularly manifest in the two forerunners of rapid economic expansion, the regions East Sumatra and Southeast Kalimantan.

East Sumatra gained an early reputation as the eldorado of pioneer settlements. Nienhuys had set the example already in 1860s with his tobacco estate in Deli, the embryo not only of an entire economic sector in the Outer Provinces but also of a new form of society within the Indonesian archipelago. 'Deli' carried connotations that went further than output figures and export targets alone. It became associated with unrestrained expansion, fast profits, extreme prerogatives for employers and even systematic abuses of coolie labour.⁴⁴ Official economic policy subscribed in general to the principles of laissez-faire, but in practice the business climate of East Sumatra was profoundly affected by State intervention in at least two critical areas: the international supply channels for coolie labour and the monetary system in the region itself. In either case State regulation fitted neatly into the wider process of colonial State formation.

Labour was in great demand but in short supply in the estate agriculture of Deli. The planters relied almost exclusively on immigrant coolie labour, both from China and Java. In 1872 an incident on board the British vessel '*Kate*' bringing decoyed Chinese coolies from Singapore to Deli stirred up commotion in the Netherlands. Acting as a spokesman for the combined planters, the Deli Company implored the Government to further orderly recruitment at Singapore so as to forestall new embarrassments. Reluctantly, the Dutch authorities agreed to abandon its traditional attitude of laissez-faire and to enter into negotiations with the Governor of the Straits Settlements. Similarly, in 1888, the Government was pressed to offer temporary accommodation at Medan to arriving Chinese coolies in order to suggest official protection against reputedly ruthless private planters. Such facilities had to be offered in return for the permission given by the viceroys of Kwantung and Fukien to recruit directly in South China. The viceroys demanded an official commitment on the part of the Dutch authorities and the

Government was little inclined to refuse. Significantly, the necessity of institutionalized surveillance of recruitment procedures and working conditions more in general was only recognized by the Dutch authorities after 1900 when the abuses of the so-called Coolie Ordinance became a public scandal.⁴⁵

Chaos marked the monetary transactions in East Sumatra during the heyday of economic expansion in the late nineteenth century. A multitude of currencies were used next to one another and sometimes for different purposes. Coolie wages were paid out in Straits dollars but planters' revenue materialized in Netherlands Indies guilders. The former unit fell under the silver standard whereas the latter one stuck to gold. As silver prices were continually falling against the constant price of gold, this delivered an additional advantage for the planter above his profit margin as expressed in one single currency. In 1903 this additional advantage vanished as the Straits Settlements switched to gold. The planters of Deli responded by organizing a change of old Straits dollars into new ones thus unintentionally making the Dutch authorities more aware of the want of monetary integration on the islands outside Java. Incorporation also in monetary terms was now given high priority, not only with respect to East Sumatra but also for West Kalimantan and other provinces where circulation was chaotic. In 1906 the Government declared its intention to make the Netherlands Indies guilder sole legal tender in East Sumatra and to organize a change of old money into new. The planters protested out of fear of getting too low a rate of exchange between dollars and guilders but to no avail. The actual purge of alien currencies in East Sumatra took place in 1908 and thus made this region an integral part of the Dutch colonial State also monetarily speaking.⁴⁶

Southeast Kalimantan retained the aura of a true pioneer society longer than East Sumatra. The economic expansion began later – only after 1900, the non-indigenous population was smaller, and the isolation of export production from the rest of the economy went much further. Oil furnished the initial impetus to an expansion which within a matter of years catapulted this region into one of the foremost earners of export revenue among Indonesian regions. The rate of growth was higher there than on average in the Outer Provinces. The basis of expansion was widened when indigenous rubber appeared a viable line of export production. Southeast Kalimantan eventually became a region of contrasts, between highly capital-intensive Westernized export production and labour-intensive indigenous alternatives, between a minute Dutch ruling class and traditional life-styles in the thinly populated interior where external impulses had barely reached. In structural terms it was characterized by a type of dualism that allowed for parallel lines of development.⁴⁷ We shall consider one instance of how economic expansion there grew intertwined with the extension of Dutch authority.

The island of Pulu Laut is located off the southeastern corner of Kalimantan at a considerable distance from both the regional capital,

Banjarmasin, and other centres of commerce and administration. From 1903 the island economy was fully dominated by a Western coal mine which for a while ranked as the largest private producer of coal in Indonesia. Within a brief time-span Pulu Laut was equipped with a whole host of new infrastructural facilities including roads, a railway, a port, a primary school and an infirmary. With respect to external communication, a connection with the existing inter-island telegraph network was considered crucial for the capability of the coal company to respond to the latest developments on the East Asian market. The Resident, at the time Major Swart, however, was prepared to add security considerations to the company's request for public financing of the telegraph line linking Pulu Laut with Banjarmasin. Although realizing that there was in fact only one immediate beneficiary to this facility, Governor-General Van Heutsz authorized construction in 1906 on condition that Pulu Laut Coal made a symbolic contribution in the total costs. As it happened, however, the Dutch State became the ultimate user of this telegraph line after it had purchased the mine in 1913. The island society of Pulu Laut was doubtless integrated into the mainstream of colonial life due to the existence of this telegraph.⁴⁸

The macro-economics of expansion entailed State intervention with the double function of fostering both a suitable business climate for private enterprises and a higher degree of cohesion within the colonial State under construction. The standardization of procedures in the recruitment of coolies from abroad, the monetary unification of the Outer Provinces and the elaboration of the communications network between the islands all furthered this double end.

Conclusion

When decolonization approached it was for some strange reason thought in the Netherlands that loss of the colonial possession in South East Asia was tantamount to a degeneration 'to the rank of Denmark'.⁴⁹ Close ties with Indonesia appeared all the more important because the latter had matured into a colonial State in its own right, a cohesive body that was rounded off externally and where effective Dutch rule prevailed internally. The process of rounding-off and consolidation of colonial authority began at the time of modern imperialism and constitutes the Dutch version of imperialist expansion at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This process represents the discontinuity with respect to preceding abstention and the continuity with subsequent nation-building. It was virtually exclusively directed towards the Outer Provinces outside Java.

Rounding-off of Empire carried economic implications on both the micro- and macro-levels of observation. There was an incessant interplay between the interests of private capital and political or administrative measures at the local level. At times the attention of prospective pioneers stimulated the

colonial authorities to take action and increase actual Dutch control over the territory in question. At other times the administrators operated as an agent of private capital interests with the ulterior objective of strengthening the fiscal component of colonial public finance. Expansion took place within a global framework of rapid economic growth which enhanced the position of the Outer Provinces at the expense of Java. The vast economic potential of the Outer Islands could not have been realized without an appreciable degree of consolidated Dutch rule. The growth path itself provided a powerful impetus to sustained State formation. The story of these twin economic aspects of expansion, micro and macro, is told by actual events around 1900 in such diverse places as Aceh, East Sumatra, Jambi, West and Southeast Kalimantan, North and Central Sulawesi and Flores.

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WARMAKERS IN THE ARCHIPELAGO: DUTCH EXPEDITIONS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY INDONESIA

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On August 13, 1814 the East Indies were officially returned to The Netherlands. The Dutch then faced the giant task of restoring, or rather introducing, their political authority in the Archipelago. The Colonial Army was to become the primary instrument of maintaining power and prestige and extending Dutch influence into every corner of it, the more so since the British *intermezzo* had left the peoples of the Indies in a rebellious spirit. The Moluccan population had seen enough of Dutch commercial methods in the past and revolted against their former masters in 1817. Everywhere else local princes decided that the moment had come to shake off the yoke and not accept subjugation again. Apart from the Moluccas, the colonial forces had to quell anti-Dutch revolts on Sumatra (in the Palembang sultanate and the Lampong districts), on Borneo (where Chinese communities rebelled), and even on Java (in Cheribon). They did so with a rapidly increasing force of half-European, half-indigenous composition. In 1816, the army disposed of 1,727 men, which had increased 12,000 by the early 1820s.¹ And such a number was indeed badly needed. When a small Dutch force appeared before Palembang in 1819, it was ignominiously routed. Two years later, a force of over 4,000 arrived, largely Europeans who were provided with a strong naval section. Soon they succeeded in capturing the city and installing a new sultan. Thereafter, it took the Dutch a full century to extend their power over the entire Archipelago. Only after 1900 could they rightly claim that the Netherlands-Indies were theirs. A century of campaigning, of "triumph and disaster". This essay focuses upon the process of warfare in the nineteenth

century Archipelago, on the conduct of war, and on tactics and technology in the long history of Dutch-Indonesian conflict.

Contrasting approaches: Java and Sumatra

Before embarking on a discussion of campaigns of middle and late nineteenth century, it is instructive to pay attention briefly to the great wars of the first half: the Java War (1825-1830) and the Padri Wars (1821-1837). The Colonial Army (usually called *K.N.I.L.*, *Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger*) served, so to speak, its years of apprenticeship. We will see later on in this essay whether and what it had learned from it.

The Military Commission instructed to advise King William I on the organization of a colonial army in 1814, recommended the establishment of a large force in Central Java. The Princes of the *Vorstenlanden* (the Princely States) were diagnosed as the most dangerous opponents to Dutch authority. Soon, this advice proved to be right. Javanese society of early nineteenth century was by no means calm or peaceful. Due to heavy taxes, tollgates and the decline of trade, rural unrest was spread widely over Central and East Java. It was a society "geared for warfare and military endeavor."² The old Javanese military system did still exist. Princes disposed of armed levies, organized parades, gave military training to corps of men and women.³ Prince Dipanagara, who was to lead the war against the Dutch, made able use of these military resources and skills. Although the Dutch could mobilize some 12,000 men (half European, half Indonesian), divided over three regiments and seven forts, they were no match for Dipanagara's forces (probably amounting to 5,000 men) and fighting methods.⁴ Dipanagara skilfully exploited the Dutch weak spot: their large, unmanageable forces and immobility. Thus he succeeded in steadily transferring the war from one area to another, the Dutch being unable to follow him. The first years of the war brought the Dutch army one disaster after another. What they needed were new, fresh troops and a new approach.

They received both. After alarming news from Java, the Dutch Government decided that a special task force of 3,100 men should come to the rescue.⁵ Although the forces arrived in 1827, it lasted until 1828 before the effects became visible on the battlefield. More important, however, was the advent of a new approach. It was Lieutenant-General de Kock, commander of the successful campaign against Palembang (Sumatra) in 1821, who conceived the new strategy for the war. Though the plan was severely criticized and opposed (Governor-General Du Bus de Gisignies declared himself against it), it was resolutely put forward by General De Kock. He fully recognized, that Dipanagara conducted a "small war", with mobile forces, practising hit-and-run tactics. He thought that Dipanagara should be answered in the same way. Therefore, he divided his army in six, then eight and later on ten units, each under its own commander, who was allowed to behave independently

within the broad strategical plan. The columns, as the units were called, had an average strength of 700 men and were composed of infantry, artillery, cavalry, pioneers and Indonesian auxiliaries.⁶ Simultaneously, De Kock ordered the construction of small fortified posts, *bentengs*, with small occupying forces that had to patrol the vicinity and make the area safe and free from Dipanagara's followers. The *bentengs* did also contain food and military necessities, and a small hospital. In this way De Kock succeeded in taking the initiative. Dipanagara's army was slowly forced to withdraw and lost its firm grip on the population. An increasing amount of land was occupied by the *bentengs* of which soon over 100 were constructed. These forts did not make the troops immobile, but were a fully integrated part of the Dutch forward move. They became a greater success still when they attracted the people from all over the country providing them with refuge and shelter from the hardships of the war. New *pasars* (markets) appeared under the protection of the *bentengs*. Thus, in the battle for the domination of the rural people, De Kock seemed gradually to win support, while an increasing number of villagers turned away from Dipanagara, and by doing so brought him personal and financial losses. Dipanagara's attempts at professionalisation of his army, with respect to mobilization, pay, food supply, and command structure, came too late to exert any influence upon the outcome of the struggle.

The ultimate triumph of De Kock does not mean that this was an easy victory. On the contrary, Dutch progress was slow and many problems kept teasing them, amongst which health care, disease, and food supply figured prominently. The war brought terrible destruction to the whole of the Central and East Java. The villagers died by tens of thousands from violence and starvation. It is clear that the conduct of the war and the bitter resistance had surprised the Dutch. They lost 15,000 men (among whom were 7,000 Europeans), while the casualties on Javanese side must have exceeded 200,000.⁷

The Java War had interrupted the Dutch campaigns already going on in Minangkabau (Sumatra) from 1821. With a modest force, but inspired by an offensive and daring approach, the Dutch had scored some triumphs before 1825. It was after the end of the Java War that a new offensive was launched, now incited by Governor-General J. van den Bosch. Minangkabau society was going through a process of rapid social change. The recently introduced coffee cultivation had a profound influence upon social relations in the villages, while changes in the political constellation were caused by the intervention of Wahabite pilgrims from Mecca, the *Padris*, who formed a militant, reformist Muslim group that wanted to purge Minangkabau society of unbelievers and apostates alike. The conflicts and violence resulting from this development were Van den Bosch's main argument for his countrymen to penetrate into the area and play the role of a "third party".

Socially and geographically, however, it was a much more difficult area for the army than Central Java had been. Although the Java War also was a

perang sabil, a holy war, in so far as a number of Islamic leaders supported Dipanagara, the Padris of Minangkabau were more extreme and militant. Moreover, the area itself, with its rugged mountains, steep ravines, small and hardly accessible foothpaths, and unnavigable rivers, would give the Colonial Army many problems and continuing hardships. At first, the Padris seemed intimidated by the large Dutch forces streaming into their country. They withdrew, which made the Dutch believe they had won the day. Suddenly, however, a revolt broke out in 1833, spreading over the entire area and causing the death of 139 Europeans. The Dutch had to start anew.

The Padri Wars, as the Dutch call them, are the story of storming assaults and sieges. The Padri villages were heavily fortified with walls of mud and stones, deep trenches, impenetrable hedges of *aur-aur* (thorny bamboos), and surrounded by covered pits with sharply-pointed bamboo stakes. The fortifications were cleverly situated against the hills. A considerable percentage of the male population was armed. The men were in the possession of long matchlocks and even small cannon of Minangkabau manufacture. Iron smelting and blacksmithing were important crafts among them and there were villages with stores of several hundreds of guns, in some cases as many as 900.⁸ European artillery had but little impact upon these proud fortresses. They always had to be captured by storming assaults of infantry men. How difficult this job could be was demonstrated by the siege of the village of Bonjol in the Alahan Panjan valley: it lasted from July 1835 until August 1837 and brought the army to the verge of a breakdown.

The Colonial Army invaded the area with long and massive columns of infantry and units of artillery, with tens and later hundreds of cannon. They were followed by still larger columns of coolies and porters with arms, food, building materials and other necessities. Van den Bosch urged a quick solution and thought he could reach it by a massive display of force. But the army was unable to maintain its coherence and keep its lines of communication free. The Padris aimed at scattering the supply columns in particular. And when the Dutch, at the cost of heavy losses, finally reached the heartland of the Padris, the enemy retired within the safety of the impregnable forts, ones which even encompassed rice fields to give their defenders self-sufficiency when besieged.

The Colonial Army, afflicted by logistical problems, sickness and death (the latter because it had to remain *in situ* during the rainy season), fell into decay and its offensive stalemated. When Major-General T.D. Cochius, appointed to investigate and make recommendations, arrived in 1836 he met a totally demoralised army. It was spread over a large area and garrisoned in small forts. Most of the soldiers were ill or terribly weakened, feeding themselves from what they could cultivate on the spot, and living without discipline or military exercise.⁹ It was only after the appointment of a dynamic officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Michiels, that a new offensive was launched. First of all, he reorganised the army, induced mobility in the forces

again, ordered the construction of new, better situated forts and artillery positions and by doing so gradually succeeded in encircling the Bonjol fort, which was finally forced to surrender in August 1837. Thus ended the war against the Padris.

These war years had been ones of apprenticeship for the army. Dutch officers had learned what it meant to become involved in a war with Indonesian enemies. They had touched upon the limits of their human and technical reserves and skills. It was unwise to underestimate the enemy and his military skills or to think lightly of tropical climate, terrain, logistics, and health care. Neglecting those would mean that a soldier's life was transformed into misery and starvation. It was wise to adapt to indigenous ways of fighting and use small forces that could move rapidly and strike with surprise. Moreover, officers and civil authorities alike had rediscovered the value of Indonesian soldiers, something which the Dutch East India Company had known long before.

The Indonesian princes for their part had also learned a great deal from the war experiences of these years. It was obvious that the Dutch could be beaten, despite their commitment of large numbers of men and heavy artillery. But it was even more obvious that they had the power to return to the battlefield after two, three or even more setbacks. If no garrisons were locally available, they ordered new, fresh troops from Java, or even from Europe. Dutch resources seemed inexhaustible.

Despite its often poor performance, the Colonial Army had entered the political scene and had to be reckoned with by weak and strong native states alike. Indonesian princes became conscious of the fact that they had the choice between confrontation, or else seeking peace and collaboration. They might then hope to use this army for their own goals. But such a choice was determined by internal conditions and calculations.

The conquest that failed: a long decade of expansion 1846-1862

By 1850 the main body of the army was concentrated on Java, the centre of Dutch power. In other areas of the Archipelago Dutch authority was largely nominal. The army had increased to 21,000 men: 945 officers, 8,400 European and African nco's and men, and 12,000 Indonesian soldiers. Only a small part of the army was permanently stationed outside Java and Sumatra, in the Outer Islands (the *Buitengewesten*):

West Borneo	300
Southeast Borneo	230
Celebes	800
Timor and Flores	100
the Moluccas	1200 (Ternate: 200; Banda: 300; Amboina: 700) ¹⁰

The troops were garrisoned in a few fortifications and port cities and had a restricted task: to maintain their posts and keep law and order in the vicinity. In case of war troops had to be transported hastily from Java by means of the Navy and hired merchant ships. Moreover, the army in the *Buitengewesten* was also the worst-equipped. New material, if it became available, was always given to the Java garrisons, while the troops outside Java received the old, obsolete and cast-off guns and other material. Nor did the *Buitengewesten* receive much systematic political and strategic attention. A Defence Council, established in 1850, set out to make preparations for the military organization and defence of Java, but there was not a word about the *Buitengewesten*.¹¹ Despite their smallness, poverty of equipment and general neglect, the troops in the *Buitengewesten* conducted many small campaigns and even started offensives by the middle of the century in form of expeditions to Bali, Borneo, Celebes, and the Sunda Islands. How were these campaigns conducted and what were the results?

The study of these expeditions demonstrates that military campaigns were then just as difficult as they had been twenty years before. Some resulted in downright defeat. Others ended in the twilight zone of semivictory. Usually, a number of enemies were captured or killed, villages were burned down and rice harvests destroyed, but the war leaders themselves with most of their followers managed to escape, only to reassemble elsewhere. Then a new round of campaigning followed, unless the Dutch decided to leave them alone and wait for better times. Even a victory was seldom followed by the creation of a firm network of administration in the area. A contract was drawn up, a treaty concluded, and the Dutch troops disappeared again as quickly as they could.

Small wonder then, that many officers bitterly complained of the lack of political support! The official Dutch policy, however, was one of political and military non-intervention and the authorities in The Hague (somewhat more than in Batavia) had a thorough dislike of expeditions and all that accompanied them, because of the political consequences, extension of administration and the financial burden which ensued. As long as they did not feel that the colonial possessions were threatened, they opted for a policy of *status-quo*, believing for convenience's sake that other nations would tacitly recognize the entire Archipelago as a Dutch sphere of influence. Only sudden, unexpected changes, like Brooke's arrival on Borneo in 1841 (which led to an "Anglophobia" in the Dutch administration) could – temporarily – change this view.¹² In spite of this policy, numerous campaigns took place, whether justified or not, inspired by the colonial authorities and the "men on the spot". The actions were grudgingly supported by The Hague, mostly for reasons of "restoring prestige".

Nowhere else was the "Pyrrhic" character of the expeditions better demonstrated than in Bali in 1846, 1848, and 1849, during three successive expeditions. It was Governor-General Rochussen himself who ordered an

expedition, since the princes of the kingdoms of Buleleng and Karang Asem had refused to acknowledge Dutch supremacy and to negotiate a treaty. Dutch feelings were hurt and stern measures now had to be taken. A force of no less than 3,500 men was transported by a large naval section from Surabaya to the north coast of Bali. They were accompanied by a landing division of another 1,200 men and over 100 pieces of artillery. On Bali, they faced a heavily-armed opponent, estimated at least 8,000, determined to resist the Dutch.¹³ After ten days of fighting Singaraja fell and both princes asked for a treaty. But the Balinese forces had not been defeated; they had simply withdrawn from Singaraja, somewhat more inland. They were still fully intact, and it was clear that the princes saw a truce as the best means to save men and money, for the time being. After the treaty had been concluded, the Balinese went on as if nothing had happened. And what had happened, indeed?

The Dutch soon understood that they had to send a new expedition, and an even stronger one. This time it resulted in disaster: having landed near Buleleng, it fought for three days without any success. The village was heavily fortified with a wall of mud, stone and trees, upon which artillery had no impact. It was only the marine landing division that prevented a wholesale routing of the troops back to the beach. The supply of ammunition proved to be insufficient and the troops felt utterly demoralized, so that commander Major-General Van der Wijck decided to call off the operation. Dutch authority and prestige were now even more damaged than before and thus a third expedition was deemed necessary. In March 1849 7,500 men arrived on the north coast of Bali commanded by the famous Michiels, then Major-General.¹⁴ Seven steam-driven gunboats accompanied the army, carrying food for four months. The Dutch were clearly prepared for the worst, and rightly so! Everywhere they met opposition of numerous Balinese corps and touched upon enormous fortifications. During one month of fighting they lost 1,600 men and 2,000 coolies from disease alone. A hastily recruited auxiliary corps from Lombok was fetched by steamships and another landing division arrived from Surabaya. After the death of Michiels the campaign petered out and both the Dutch and the Balinese were inclined to negotiate a treaty. In exchange for the formal recognition of supremacy, the Dutch decided not to occupy any areas (they were hardly in that position!), not to introduce any form of administrative control. It was of course absolutely impossible to attempt to demilitarize the Balinese population. Hooyer, a Dutch military historian, subtly comments: "... thus ended the war in a curious way...".¹⁵

Borneo was another battlefield in those years, that of the "kongsi-war". Dutch interest in Borneo suddenly flared up upon the already mentioned arrival of James Brooke in Sarawak and his "sultanate". It was, however, the Chinese mining *kongsis* who became the bone of contention. The three main *kongsis*, Ta Kang, Lan Fang, and San T'iao Kou, themselves the product of

a process of expansion at the cost of smaller ones, extended their influence in the entire southwest of Borneo and established trading relations with Singapore and other port cities outside the Archipelago, from which opium, salt, arms and gunpowder were imported. The Dutch, fearing a British intervention, were waiting for an opportunity to intervene. Finally, the Malayan Sultan of Sambas, whose power was severely curtailed by the Chinese, gave the Dutch a chance by asking assistance against the *kongsis*. The immediate cause of the conflict was the arrival of a *prahu* with arms and gunpowder on the Sedaaw River.

War operations started in 1850, by a naval and military force, but had little result, except for the capture of Pemangkat at the mouth of the Sambas River. When after a truce of a year the war was resumed, the *kongsis* took the initiative and were able to defeat the Dutch several times. They resorted to 'invisible' warfare: covered by the terrain, Chinese snipers scored hits on officers and men from the bush and caused a considerable chaos among infantry columns and coolies. They accompanied the Dutch, never giving them rest, not even at night. The Dutch themselves did not practice night patrols, and thus positions, which they had conquered by day, were lost again by night. After the arrival of 2,000 fresh troops from Java and the appointment of a new commander, the 43-year-old, dynamic Major A.J. Andresen, the Chinese were driven back to their central position, the area of Montrado, where they finally were defeated in 1854. In spite of their defeat, they continued their resistance and succeeded in burning down the greater part of Montrado, resorting to a tactic of scorched earth. The Colonial Army was now in a dangerous position and it could only survive by the practice of brutal violence against the remaining Chinese guerrilla bands.¹⁶

Two aspects of the *kongsi*-wars deserve to be studied in more detail. First of all, the Dutch military found themselves situated in a complex web of bureaucratic relations, which set limits to their activities. They had to deal with the civil authorities on the spot: *resident* Willer and *assistant-resident* Von Prehm, the Civil Administration Department and the Military Department in Batavia, and the Governor-General and his Council of the Indies, also in Batavia. Although Andresen did his utmost to influence the course of events, he was not free to do what he thought best. He almost immediately started an offensive against the *resident*, advocating a strong and forward policy towards the *kongsis* and ridiculing the *resident's* policy of "peace with honour". Such a cowardly policy towards a "perfidious and mendacious nation" would never become a success, he wrote. Since Major Andresen and *resident* Willer soon were at odds, Batavia had to send a mediator: *Gouvernements-Commissaris* A. Prins. After having investigated the matter, he decided to support the military point of view. We should not forget, he echoed Andresen, that we have to do with Chinese, the "most immoral of all immoral nations", and that such a nation will only listen to force.¹⁷ As a result of Prins' efforts, Andresen was appointed "civil and military commander" of

Southwest Borneo. Having won the political battle, he now could turn to the real battlefield.

The second aspect which deserves close attention is that of the conduct of war. Commissioner Prins reported to Batavia that he thought it unwise to listen to the "voice of humanity". Only drastic use of force would accomplish the pacification of the barbarians. This advice ushered in an episode of most destructive warfare from both sides. Although the Dutch held the winning hand, they had severe problems: food supplies had run out, coolies had either died off or deserted by hundreds. The only way out of this was to practise "armed foraging", i.e. armed companies ransacking villages to get rice and livestock. Villages were burned down, inhabitants were shot, if not by the Dutch, then later on by the Chinese, who wished to punish the population for its "collaboration" with the Dutch. Dayak auxiliaries were employed to do the dirty work: the pursuit and killing of small groups of Chinese. A number of captured Chinese leaders, prisoners of war, were publicly executed in Singkawang. The remaining *kongsi* troops practised the "small" war: surprise attacks on Dutch garrisons and army units, night operations, terrorisation of villages, and tactics of scorched earth. The year 1854 witnessed an unprecedented escalation of violence from both sides. Indiscriminately the local population was shot, ricefields and storehouses plundered and destroyed, explosives and mines used in ambushes: Borneo became the scene of many brutalities. Thousands of casualties resulted, particularly amongst the non-combatant population.

At any rate, the suppression of the *kongsis* after four years of destructive warfare was a tangible result, notwithstanding the underground resistance that long continued and made the area far from safe for Europeans. In the interior of Borneo, however, in the Dayak areas around Sintang and the Kapuas River, the 1850s and 1860s were decades of uninterrupted warfare. Due to James Brooke's arrival, it was decided to establish a post at Sintang. Andresen was charged with the first inspection trip inland, by gunboat along the Kapuas River, and in 1855, Sintang was made a Dutch garrison post. Soon the Dutch found themselves engaged in a jungle war with local rulers. More than once the post was besieged by an enemy force, which could be repelled only by gunboats. Military and civil authorities kept quarrelling about the right approach. The civil administration urged the military to accept a restricted task: the defence of the garrison post, while the local officers, on their own initiative and ignoring the orders from Batavia, conducted an offensive approach. Major Kroesen, who was commander in the second half of the 1850s, continued this offensive and his report to Batavia on the methods of warfare is worth quoting, since it demonstrates that he sought to develop an approach that was adjusted to the peculiar circumstances in his district. He said he always applied three general rules:

- keep civil and military rule in military hands;

- use steam-driven gunboats for transport, bombardment, blockade and landing divisions; they are the basis of the army organisation;
- use patrols of 30-75 men, who carry their own food, in order to maximise speed and mobility.¹⁸

In this way he succeeded in subduing the resistance to Dutch occupation for a time. His successor, however, did not adopt the same approach and the gains disappeared again.

Elsewhere in the *Buitengewesten*, too, campaigns were fought, which we will not discuss in this article. In Southeast Borneo e.g., the Colonial Army became involved in a war with the Banjarmasin Sultanate from 1859 until 1863; the sultanate was formally annexed, but resistance remained active there until after 1900.¹⁹ On Ceram, coastal villages were regularly attacked in order to uphold Dutch authority and prestige.²⁰ On Sumatra and Nias, short wars were conducted without lasting success. On Celebes, two large-scale campaigns were conducted against the leading kingdom of Bone in the South. Both the Dutch and the Bonese were expanding their power and influence throughout the nineteenth century. The island had attracted the attention of the Dutch for a long time; Governor-General Rochussen was prepared to augment Dutch influence and conducted a policy of "containment" towards the Bonese kingdom. In the 1850s, an increasing number of "incidents" led to war: Dutch prestige had been damaged. In 1859, General Steinmetz was appointed commander of an expeditionary force to subdue the "reckless Bonese" once and for all. But the enemy proved to be a courageous fighter, who knew how to profit from the terrain, and was able to prevent the Dutch from penetrating into the interior. While the army was still camping at the coast and did not make any progress due to a severe outbreak of cholera, the General decided to withdraw from Celebes. In November 1859 a second force was equipped, this time led by a veteran commander, J. van Swieten, who was assisted by a considerable indigenous auxiliary force under command of the pretender to the Bonese throne, Aru Palakka, accompanied by 1,500 men. This time the Dutch were successful. The coastal fortifications were captured at once and the inland capital, Watampone, was taken and destroyed; the ruling dynasty fled and Aru Palakka was enthroned. Though Bone had become a vassal-state, it was soon obvious that the new ruler would conduct his own affairs, without much regard for the Dutch. The final conquest of the kingdom had still to come.

At this point, we should be able to draw some conclusions from the wars we have so far discussed. First of all, during this "long decade of expansion" the army had increased considerably: at least with 40% in the 1850s alone.²¹ Secondly, a new element had appeared, that of the steam-driven gunboat, which was used in all campaigns and fulfilled important functions. But despite enlargement and partial modernisation of the navy from which the army could benefit, the Dutch experienced many setbacks. Politically, the authorities were mostly unwilling to support the Colonial Army, and when they did,

they tried to limit its task as far as possible. Only "defensive action", the maintaining of a post, and nothing else, was allowed. Needless to say, the officers on the spot – like Andresen and Kroesen in Borneo – went much further and conducted an offensive policy on their own initiative. As to the conduct of war, the Colonial Army was dependent upon naval support and reinforcements from the peace garrisons of Java. Although the army met many serious opponents on the battlefield, the most terrible were always epidemic disease, climate and terrain. The conditions of warfare in a tropical climate seem to have been underestimated time and again. Military skills and resources of the Indonesian enemy were likewise far from correctly appreciated. Tactical adaptations to the "small war" were hardly ever introduced. Kroesen's approach, the use of patrols of 75 men at maximum, tested in the jungle of Borneo, was not imitated. Large-scale expeditions were undertaken; long columns of infantry men and coolies, topheavy artillery sections, those were the means by which the Colonial Army invaded an almost fully unknown area. Logistics remained the weak spot. The use of forced labour facilitated mass desertion. Unable to cope with problems of logistics, tactics, hygiene, health care, and its relationship with civil authorities, the army lost its expansionist drive of the 1840s and 1850s. It found itself in a stalemate position in the 1860s. The Aceh war (from 1873) made matters worse. Everywhere in the *Buitengewesten* garrisons were stripped of their already small forces – all were needed in Aceh, and the native states of the Archipelago were left alone until the end of the century.

Steamships and warfare

Much has been written in recent years about the subject of military technology in colonial wars in Africa, and to a less extent also in Asia. What was the role of new technology in the colonial wars in nineteenth century Indonesia?

First of all, the use of steamships is worth considering. To begin with, the campaigns of the 1840s, steam-driven gunboats increasingly participated. The three Bali expeditions were carried out with assistance of a growing number of steamers. They proved essential for towing schooners and brigs to the beach and for maintaining the lines of communications between Bali and the naval base of Surabaya. In 1848 four steamships were added to the fleet and were employed for bombarding coastal defence works and villages and covering the disembarking troops. They also blockaded the coast, a very effective means of preventing the importation of arms and ammunition. In 1849 as many as seven gunboats accompanied the troops, one of which served General Michiels as his headquarters. Using only a few gunboats, the Lombok auxiliaries were fetched, troops that came to the rescue when the regular troops had begun to thin out dangerously. The Bali campaigns made it perfectly clear that military actions in the *Buitengewesten* would henceforth be accompanied by steam-driven gunboats.

In Borneo the importance of the steamers became clear, in particular for the use on the inland rivers. In the 1840s H.M.S. *Onrust* made the first exploring trips along the Kapuas River. During the *kongsi*-wars steam-driven gunboats were used almost daily. The overcrowded program of H.M.S. *Celebes* shows how important they were during the war in Borneo. In the course of one year it ferried 350 men to Sebaure, guarded the harbor and *pasar* of Sambas, patrolled all along the coast of West Borneo to intercept smuggling *prahus*, made a return trip to Batavia to get more fresh troops, participated in a surprise attack on Seminis, where its unexpected arrival contributed a great deal to the Chinese defeat, and made a patrolling trip upon the Kapuas River.²² H.M.S. *Onrust* was permanently stationed upon the Kapuas to show the flag and serve as a sign of Dutch interest in the area. *Commissaris* Prins and Lieutenant-Colonel Andresen made inspection trips with the *Onrust* to present contracts to the rulers along the river. Thus the steam-driven gunboats were primary instruments of Dutch penetration. Elsewhere in the Archipelago steamers visited rivers and bays never before seen by the Dutch. The "credulous mind of the natives" was easily impressed by such a magnificent vessel, it was thought.

All this, however, does not mean that the gunboat was invincible. There were constraints upon its use. Even the lightest gunboats with a minimal draft could not navigate the Borneo rivers in the dry season. For months patrolling had to be stopped, which gave the enemy opportunity to reassemble. Moreover, gunboats were extremely liable to damage and technical defects: 1/3 of them was continually out of service. And finally, surprise attacks of quick-sailing *prahus*, combined with shooting from the river banks, often resulted in withdrawal and occasionally had even more success. That was shown by the case of H.M.S. *Onrust* in 1859 when it was captured by surprise, while patrolling in Central Borneo; its crew of 60 men were killed and the ship was stripped of its guns and cannon.²³

Arms and the military balance

Until 1867 the Dutch Colonial Army used the simple, oldfashioned muzzle-loader. In that year, Lieutenant F.H. Kuhn, director of the colonial gunsmith school at Batavia, succeeded in converting it into a more up-to-date rifle, a breechloader. From that year the Kuhn-Breechloader was used in the army. The wars and campaigns – so far discussed in this essay – were thus fought with oldfashioned, rather poor guns, usually equipped with a bayonet. Only after 1867 and during and under the influence of the Aceh War did a gradual modernisation take place. As to artillery, the major piece was the rather antiquated bronze Coehoorn-mortar. Modernisation of the artillery sections proceeded even more slowly than that of the infantry arms. The Coehoorn-mortar remained in service until the beginning of the twentieth century, in fact till the end of Dutch military expansion in the Archipelago.

Did the Indonesians have firearms at their disposal, and did they have the knowledge how to handle them? Unfortunately few data are available and little systematic enquiry has been undertaken, at least compared to the arms-in-Africa discussion. The Indonesian opponents of the Dutch fought with a wide variety of different arms: bow and arrow, lance, pike, and *kris*, and a mixture of antiquated and relatively modern firearms. Dutch military authors have made clear that firearms were always available in the Archipelago, sometimes even in large quantities, both imported and home-made. It depended on trading routes, exchange products, mineral resources and the level of technological knowledge (which all could differ considerably according to region) whether firearms were imported or manufactured in local smitheries. We have seen that the Padris of Minangkabau had many firearms, obtained from trade as well as locally made. Less accessible areas or less powerful and rich states did not dispose of large quantities of firearms, but used more traditional weapons. Among the heavily armed opponents were certainly the Chinese *kongsis* in Borneo. They had excellent guns, imported from Singapore, so-called *tjontos*, which could be fired with remarkable precision. Balinese fought largely with lance and pike, but did also have some new arms, hastily imported on the eve of war by international smuggling. The Dutch were of course on the alert about the import of firearms from Singapore and elsewhere. They did their utmost to prevent this "smuggling", without being able to stop it, since they had no full control of the waters of the Archipelago. Steamships proved to be essential in this respect, too: they were successful in pursuing ships with "contraband" and in blockading river mouths.

Though native states may have had important quantities of firearms, the quality of the guns left much to be desired. Princes and commanders seemed not to worry about the art of "rifle maintenance". One factor that has influenced the use of firearms by Indonesians is that firearms training and exercising were largely absent. It was common practice that firearms were distributed among the men on the very eve of war, so that they were not familiar with the handling of the arms. It must be admitted, however, that the use of firearms by the indigenous soldiers of the Dutch Colonial Army itself was likewise of a problematic nature. Although they did receive a shooting training, it remained uncertain whether they all could use their guns correctly. Dutch officers reported that their indigenous soldiers were poor marksmen and many attempts were made to improve their shooting abilities.

D. Headrick, an historian who has recently studied the relationship between technology and imperialism, remarks that the European colonial forces were "among the first beneficiaries of the gun revolution".²⁴ This, however, does not apply to the Dutch in the Archipelago. The introduction of modern firearms in the Colonial Army proceeded very slowly and had in fact hardly begun when the Dutch conquest was completed. Likewise, the idea of a link between the arms revolution of the 1870s and 1880s and a

simultaneous rapid territorial expansion is not applicable to Indonesia. Dutch expansion in Aceh as well as elsewhere in the *Buitengewesten* had come to a standstill during those years. We might conclude that modern firearms and ordnance technology did not play an important role. Technologically, the Dutch Colonial Army was a "backwater", and remained so until after the turn of the century. Undoubtedly, it was not so much technology, but tactics that shaped Dutch-Indonesian warfare in the nineteenth century.

The conduct of war

The Dutch Colonial Army was confronted with many different enemies. It was faced with small guerilla bands, hidden in unaccessible areas, as well as with large groups of heavily armed men, far superior in numbers; with opponents fighting *harum-scarum*, as well as with organised units fighting under a strictly maintained discipline. It was faced with over 10,000 Balinese, drawn up in close battle-array, and it had to join battle with that "immoral nation", the Chinese, of whom 7,000 were armed by the *kongsis* of Borneo. These Chinese probably were the most professional of all armed forces that were encountered by the Dutch. They were divided into separate companies under independent commanders, well disciplined and supported by a standing corps of porters, responsible for the transportation of food, arms and of the construction of earthen walls and other means of defence. On Celebes, the army was brought to bay by a cavalry of 2,000 and an infantry corps, mobilised along firm and time-honoured procedures. Every local chief was responsible for the delivery of a fixed number of armed men and the construction of storehouses, scattered all over the country.

Apart from patterns of mobilisation and organisation, existing fortifications are an interesting subject. All kinds of forts and defensive structures played a major part in Dutch-Indonesian warfare: *kongsi*-houses, surrounded by walls and bastions and protected by artillery and mines; palaces, surrounded by walls and ditches; *hentengs*, constructed on the top of the hills or mountains, protected by an impressive wall of natural and artificial defence works; and *kampongs*, well-defended and situated behind natural barriers as swamps or thick bushland. There were the often formidable obstacles which cost the Dutch much time and even more soldiers. The Colonial Army nearly always had to resort to old-fashioned storming assaults in order to capture such villages, *hentengs* or *kongsi*-houses. Modern rifles were not of great use under such conditions.

The importance of fortifications suggests that the Indonesian enemy often opted for a defensive approach. K. van der Maaten, who published a voluminous handbook on the "small war" in Indonesia in 1896, writes that the indigenous warleaders conducted the war defensively.²⁵ He ignores the fact, however, that many a campaign provides arguments to the contrary. Although the native commanders usually avoided pitched battle, especially in

the open field, they took offensive initiatives time and again, leading their forces secretly to Dutch army columns, patrols, or bivouacs, and launching surprise attacks. Due to their knowledge of the terrain, and accustomed to the hardships of the climate, they often left behind the massive and unmanageable Dutch forces flabbergasted. It was only in the long term, confronted with the capability of the Dutch to return with ever increasing numbers, that they would withdraw to their fortifications and choose weather a siege. But in a sense, Van der Maaten is right: the native commanders generally failed to reorganise and prepare for a long-lasting guerilla war. This would have required a social revolution. Besides, we should bear in mind that the native states of the *Buitengewesten* only had a very limited experience with the Dutch. Dutch penetration did not seem of a lasting nature. The forces went as quickly as they had come, except for a small post here and there, and administrative measures, taken as a result of the military confrontation, e.g. a contract, were usually soon neglected. Though the Dutch military threat remained – the Colonial Army could return for a new campaign – the native states remained free to conduct their own affairs. This was the usual practice during the nineteenth century, and it might have brought the indigenous princes to the conclusion that there was no need for special measures of military and political unification.

The Dutch for their part, lagged behind to their enemy in knowledge of the terrain and were unable to cope with the exigencies of climate and health care. Epidemic disease was much more feared than the Indonesians on the battlefield. But above all, the Dutch seemed to lack an adequate tactical answer to the Indonesian ways of fighting. One of the reasons for that is of ideological nature. The "other world", that of the Indonesians, did not really exist in the mind of the officer. According to many, the Archipelago was inhabited by three sorts of people: princes, priests, and peasants. Princes and priests left nothing undone to exploit the people, the peasant, the "common man". E.B. Kielstra, colonial officer, editor of a military periodical and afterwards a Member of Parliament, wrote: "it is not because of our direct self-interest that we had to intervene . . . but because a true understanding of humanity demands it".²⁶ The Indonesian rulers, so he said, were cruel tyrants, who terrorised the people, organised slave raids, indulged in murder and lust and incited the people against each other. They were responsible for misery, unremitting warfare, slavery, headhunting, sickness and poverty. An even more harmful person was the Islamic priest, that firebrand, who by sheer fanaticism incited the credulous, submissive and friendly people of the East to outbursts of violence and *amok*. In this way, wars in Indonesia appeared as "wars of religion". If it was not the cruel princes, who provoked war, then it was "the religious party" that was responsible for a holy war against apostates from inside and unbelievers from outside. This was the view of the military in a nutshell although it was not confined to the military only; in fact, it was adopted by civilians and even by Islamicists, though on a

more complex level, and as such it is just an expression of European "orientalism".

We ought to do something, the military said, to stamp out these practices, unworthy of human kind. We ought to help the "common man", to abolish slavery and slave trade, headhunting, and exploitation, and create peace and order, *conditio sine qua non* for all the rest. Long before the official "Ethical Policy", the military created an ethical justification for military intervention, meant to influence civil authorities and make them more willing to cooperate with the military.

It is important to realise that the military themselves became the first victim of their own arguments, convictions and justifications. Their "orientalist" view of Indonesian conditions, the idea of the tyrannical ruler, the fanatical priest, and the "common man", who would only be glad to be "liberated", must be held responsible for the often observed underestimation of the Indonesian enemy in Dutch military circles. Without precautions, unacquainted with political conditions, military skills of the enemy, and terrain, in short: ignorant of the social and geographical theatre of war, the army time and again invaded unknown areas only to discover that it had made a new mistake. Tactical instructions were inadequate, they were simply transmitted from The Netherlands and without special adjustment applied to totally different conditions. The army was led in a European way, forced to operate in far-too-large units, unmanageable because of its long columns and top heavy trains. It was only due to individual commanders that sometimes new approaches were formulated, more adapted to local circumstances. I have quoted Major Kroesen's report from Borneo, who employed small mobile columns, without coolies and other obstacles in a time that only large, massive units were sent to the battlefield. But such practical lessons were forgotten.

The turning of the tide

The military offensive of mid-nineteenth century had come to a complete standstill in the 1860s. Despite several successful campaigns, the conquest of the *Buitengewesten* had failed. Too high demands had been made upon the armed forces. Nearly everywhere the Colonial Army withdrew from the interior and military presence was limited again to coastal portions. Incidentally, the forces penetrated far inland and local small-scale actions were still frequent, but large campaigns, with thousands of men and a large fleet, did belong to the past.

There was of course one exception: Aceh. In 1873 and 1874 two expeditions were organised to the northern tip of Sumatra to force the recognition of Dutch sovereignty from the Acehnese. The first one, led by Major-General J. R. Köhler, became a downright disaster. It was General Van Swieten again, who led the Dutch to a modest, but useless victory during a second

campaign. Successful, because of the capture of the *kraton* of the *sultan*; useless, since no further expansion took place. Both campaigns were remarkable because of the Dutch ignorance about Aceh, its political structure and geography. Wholly in line with European warfare, the Dutch thought it necessary to conquer the *kraton* as the "capital" of the kingdom, without, however, knowing the exact position of it. When they finally occupied the palace, they soon realised that it was of no strategic or political importance. The army was ordered to pursue a policy of "active defence", i.e. no penetration or conquest, but to maintain the small northern post, called Kota Radja. This period of "active defence" lasted until General Van der Heijden launched a major offensive in the northern Aceh valley in 1878. It was a short military revival, resulting in the conquest of the valley. But now the civil authorities had had enough: a new civil governor was installed and the war was declared to be won. From that moment, the Acehnese launched attacks almost daily upon the small and still shrinking Dutch force. To stop these attacks, the Dutch decided to withdraw behind a line of fortified posts which enclosed an area of 50km². Now they had themselves locked up in prison-like conditions, daily harrassed by Acehnese bands and sinking away in lethargy.

In the 1890s, however, a new offensive spirit was born. The system of concentration was abolished and a new offensive approach was introduced into the army. This resulted in the conquest of Aceh within ten years and also led to the successive defeat of the other *Buitengewesten* between 1900 and 1910. How was this revolutionary break accomplished?

First of all, there was a striking political change in Batavia as well as in The Hague. Administrators and politicians became convinced of the necessity of a determined forward policy with respect to the still independent native states. The Lombok affair of 1894, a defeat for the Dutch Colonial Army which cost the lives of almost 100 Dutch officers and men, caused a great stir in political circles and public opinion and has undoubtedly contributed much to the creation of a new political consciousness of colonial affairs.²⁷ Governor-General Van der Wijck pleaded for a policy of action against Lombok and other native states. The days of the non-intervention policy were numbered. The "Ethical Policy", adopted shortly after 1900 did the rest: it had a strong military component since peace, law and order were deemed preconditions for the implementation of the new development policy.

Once political constraints had been removed, the army could proceed more freely. Political support alone, however, was not enough. Only a radical break with the past within the army would result in new successes. And this break was accomplished, indeed. The first expression of change was the establishment of so-called "mobile guarding units" in Aceh, destined for patrolling and guarding of bridges and lines of communication. A second more significant step - also in Aceh - was the creation of a corps of

Marechausses in 1890 as a police corps. Under the guidance of Captain C. Graafland, it developed into a military elite corps of a strongly mobile and offensive nature. It combined surprise attacks, marching capacity, speed, rest-less pursuit and – very remarkable in an age of modern technology – the use of the blank weapon, the *klewang* (sword), along with the modern carbine. The corps consisted of Indonesian soldiers, half Javanese, half Amboinese, led by European officers. By operating along these offensive lines, this small corps of several hundreds of soldiers set the example for the regular army.

Probably the most important factor in achieving a revolutionary break with past military practices was the emergence of a new generation of officers, who felt disgusted with the military leadership and approach of the older officers in Aceh. They wanted to escape from the fatal stalemate in Aceh and from the impotence and lethargy that were characteristic of the Colonial Army. It was J.B. van Heutsz who knew to formulate these feelings best and create a new vision of the Colonial Army. He became the embodiment of a new spirit in the army, a spirit of self-confidence and *élan*. Still, the conquest of the Netherlands-Indies was not an easy affair. Ten years of heavy fighting were needed to suppress the Acehnese and after 1900 more campaigns were conducted in Borneo, Celebes, the Sunda Islands and Bali.

We might conclude that the final conquest of the Netherlands-Indies, roughly between 1895 and 1905, was the result of political as well as military changes. The time-honoured non-intervention policy was tacitly discarded by the introduction of the "ethical policy", and in military respect an offensive approach was developed by those officers who wished to get rid of the defensive system, of the concentration behind a fixed line, as it was practiced in Aceh.

Conclusion

Why did the Dutch conquest of the Netherlands-Indies take almost a century? The answer to this question is that the Colonial Army was unable to cope with the exigencies of warfare in the tropics, due to problems of logistics, health and tactics. Moreover, it lacked adequate political support during the nineteenth century up to the 1890s.

In the first half of the century, the army had to conduct two long and heavy wars in Java and Sumatra. Those years were a time of apprenticeship. In Java, General de Kock developed a tactical approach that was adapted to Javanese ways of warfare. Instead of operating with a large united force, he divided his army into ten mobile columns which were to operate independently, while simultaneously, small groups were patrolling the area around the *bentengs*. By doing so, he succeeded in inflicting severe losses upon Dipanagara with regard to space, men, and means. In Sumatra, this approach was not applied. Here the army preferred the use of large columns of soldiers and coolies. To explain this, one must point to the inaccessible

landscape of mountains and ravines, and to the formidable, militant Islamic opponent who had fortifications never seen before. Through the instinct of self-preservation and through not being commanded by the military genius of a General like De Kock, the army stuck closely together. It was made immobile and vulnerable to the often recurring hit-and-run attacks of the Padris.

Around the middle of the century (from 1846 up to 1860), the Colonial Army launched expeditions in the entire Archipelago in a long decade of conquest and expansion, only reluctantly supported by the civil authorities. The number of the forces increased and the use of the steam-driven gunboat, which could penetrate far inland and transport fresh troops quickly into every area, was added to the army. Yet, this attempt at conquest failed. The problems of tactics, logistics and health proved to be unsolvable for the time being. Moreover, the Dutch were still unacquainted with their Indonesian opponents and underestimated their military capabilities time and again. They failed to develop an appropriate body of tactics, or even to bring less conventional methods into practice. It was only by initiatives of individual commanders that the new methods sometimes – and temporarily – emerged. Apart from the already mentioned steamships, modern military technology did not play a significant role. Only later on, during the final years of the conquest around 1900 did modern technology very slowly find its way into the Colonial Army. Apart from the modern carbine, much emphasis was put upon the use of the cold steel, the *klewang*.

The "Netherlands-Indies" remained an *idée fixe* for long time. The outbreak of the Aceh war did not change this situation. It seems, that the humiliation, inflicted on them by the Acehnese, at last brought the Dutch to develop new tactical insights and to take leave of conventional methods. It was the antipathy to the purely defensive system, practised in Aceh, that led to the birth of a new offensive spirit in the Officer Corps. This was symbolised by the fighting methods of the *Marechaussees* and also became manifest in the regular infantry troops. And it was accompanied by a simultaneous change of political attitudes in Batavia and The Hague. This combined military and political offensive led to the final defeat of the Indonesian states in the first decade of the twentieth century and to the end of a century of warfare.

Notes

- 1 P. J. F. Louw, *De Java-Oorlog van 1825–1830* vol. I, (Batavia, 1894) p. 179/180 and 210.
- 2 P. B. R. Carey, *Badad Dipanagara: an account of the outbreak of the Java War (1825–1830)*, (Kuala Lumpur, 1981) p. xliii.
- 3 *ibidem*
- 4 G. B. Hooyer, *De krijgsgeschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië van 1811 tot 1894* Vol. I (Batavia, 1895) p. 59.

- 5 M. P. Bossenbroek, *Van Holland naar Indië; het transport van koloniale troepen van het Oost-Indisch leger, 1815-1909*. (Amsterdam/Dieren, 1986) p. 49.
- 6 P. J. F. Louw en E. S. de Klerck, *De Java-Oorlog van 1825-1830*, vol. V (Batavia, 1908) p. 644, appendix VIa.
- 7 Bossenbroek, *Van Holland naar Indië*, p. 24.
- 8 C. Dobbin, *Islamic revivalism in a changing peasant economy, Central Sumatra, 1784-1847*, (Leiden, 1981) p. 29.
- 9 Hooyer, *De krijgsgeschiedenis*, vol. I, p. 198.
- 10 E. de Waal, *Onze Indische Financiën*, vol. II, (Den Haag, 1877) p. 133/137.
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COLONIAL POLICY AND PRACTICE: NETHERLANDS INDIA

J. S. Furnivall

Source: J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1948), pp. 223-30, 237-51.

The Liberal System, 1870-1900

Liberalism gave a new impulse to economic progress and, for a time, to welfare. But within a few years welfare declined, and progress gradually slackened to stagnation. On the new system, private planters took over the plantations formerly managed by Government, and used the influence of the village headmen to secure labour and produce, as the Government agents had done formerly. Business, it has been said, went on much as before, 'but with many shareholders instead of only one'. Private enterprise tended to be more oppressive than State enterprise. But three things protected the people.

Foremost among these perhaps was the tradition of Dutch rule that Government should protect the people against oppression by their chieftains. Liberalism had a double aspect, practical and humanitarian, and practical men and humanitarians had joined forces to defeat the Culture system. The planters represented in the main the practical aspect of Liberalism; they were interested in economic progress. But the new generation of officials, inspired by Liberal humanitarian ideas, showed a more lively interest than their predecessors in the welfare of the people. They no longer drew a commission on the produce, and their transformation from quasi-mercantile agents into a regular civil service was a step towards the separation of political from economic control. Similarly in the central Government political and economic control were divorced. Formerly the Government had been blinded to the abuses of the Culture system by the profits; now, with the Indies under the control of the States-General, there was a division between the planting interest, profiting by low wages, and the manufacturing interest, which could find a better market with high wages; and both parties, in appealing to

neutrals in Parliament and elsewhere, urged their case so far as possible on moral grounds. Thus under the new system officials regarded it as one of their main functions to protect the people from oppression by their native chieftains acting as agents of the planters, and in this they had the support of Government; the demi-official manual for controleurs directed them to encourage, though without actively instigating, complaints.

The second form of protection was the long-established principle of Dutch rule that native land should not be alienated to foreigners. Under French rule, and even more under Raffles, financial stringency had been relieved by the sale of large estates, often comprising many villages, to be held with almost full sovereign rights over the occupants. On these estates the Government lost its revenue and the services of the people, and oppression by the owners frequently caused unrest. The Government feared that, if the people were allowed to dispose of their land to foreigners, large areas would be transferred to planters and Chinese moneylenders. It accordingly resisted all attempts by Liberals to apply western ideas of property to native land. Planters could obtain waste land on long lease from the Government, or they could rent land on an annual lease from villagers; but they were not allowed to buy village land, and the village retained full control over the disposal of its land in accordance with village custom.

The third protection of the people was the village system. This was not wholly to their advantage, for the planters obtained labour through the village headman, and sometimes enrolled him on the list of their establishment. To this extent they were interested in the maintenance of the village system, and they upheld the tradition of abstaining from interference in the 'holy hamlet'. On the other hand, the village system kept up the rate of wages by reducing the supply of labour available. The Government still required the people to give their services instead of paying taxes in money. Compulsory service was burdensome and wasteful, but men called out to work for Government or the village reduced the labour available for private enterprise. The planters, and liberal interests in general, were zealous for the principle of free labour, which would give them command over a much larger supply, but they did not gain their point until the Liberal period was passing.

Like the Culture system, the Liberal system did not fulfil its early promise; in both cases progress was followed by stagnation and collapse, and 'to many who expected great things from the noble sentiments and shrewd forecasts of Liberal prophets the results were a bitter disappointment'.¹ The practical Dutch idealists who instituted the reforms of 1870, though certainly mindful of potentialities for Holland itself, were quite sincere in their conviction that in giving its chance to private initiative in the Indies, they would be acting in the best interests both of that country and of its inhabitants: free labour in a frame of world free trade would bring to the Indies prosperity and development and to an eager and avid world a great increase of resources. The new system actually had some of these results and they could hardly foresee its

other consequences whereby 'free enterprise eventually became from a social and economic ideal to be almost a byword for capitalistic exploitation'.²

The Liberal period gave a new turn to the policy of indirect rule. The European officials had always been expected to protect the cultivator from oppression by his native rulers; under the Liberal system it became necessary also to protect him from oppression by Europeans engaged in western enterprise. That was not the only change. European officials had always been required to look after European affairs; this was in accordance with the basic principle of Dutch rule that the rule of 'like over like is welcome'. There were native Regents to administer native affairs; Chinese and Indian 'captains' to look after the affairs respectively of Chinese and Indians, and similarly European officials for European affairs. But until 1850, and even until 1870, there was little in Java that was European except the Government. With the growth of private enterprise, European officials had more work in connection with European business, and this emphasized the dual aspect of the administrative system, with Europeans for the rapidly increasing European business, and Regents for the native business, and with the Controleur still acting as a link between these two distinct elements in the administration.

During the Liberal period also, the simple administrative machinery which had sufficed for Van den Bosch grew far more elaborate. The development of trade and private enterprise made it necessary to cut up the residency into *afdeelingen* (subdivisions). But there was a characteristic difference of principle between the manner of constituting subdivisions of the residency in Java and of the district in Burma. In Burma, the principle of Government is one of 'strict subordination'; the subdivisional officer is a subordinate of the Deputy Commissioner, and naturally there is one in charge of the headquarters subdivision as well as at out-stations. In Java the officer in charge of an *afdeeling*, known as the Assistant Resident, is an agent rather than a subordinate of the Resident, and accordingly there is no Assistant Resident at residency headquarters. The Controleurs grew in number and their functions were multiplied, but they were still regarded as merely the eyes and ears of the Resident or his assistant, and they remained without administrative powers. In the native branch of the administration the changes were so great as to give it a new character. Partly for greater efficiency, and partly to serve as a check upon misuse by the Regents of their authority, each regency was divided into three or four districts, and each district into three or four sub-districts, comprising about twenty villages, and a native civil service was created to administer these charges. The Regent and his assistants constitute the Native Administration (*Inlandsch Bestuur*), alongside but not directly subordinate to the European Administration (*Binnenlandsch Bestuur*). The native officials of lower rank are not hereditary, like the Regent, but ordinary civil servants and, although nominally at the service of the Regent, they are more amenable than the hereditary Regent to suggestions by the European Controleur. A comparison of this organization with that of Burma suggests

the far greater intensity of Dutch rule. In Burma the lowest grade in general administration is the Township of about a hundred villages; in Java the smallest unit of general administration is the sub-district of about twenty villages.

The Ethical System and political democracy

The earlier hopes of Liberalism were dispelled by a severe economic crisis, 1883-5, and individual enterprise began to yield place to combination; the economic structure was no longer individualist, but definitely capitalist. Again, from about 1895, the Indies encountered another depression. Meanwhile new interests were exerting an influence on Dutch colonial policy. Low wages were profitable to the planters and to those concerned in the export of tropical produce; but they were bad for the Dutch cotton trade, and chambers of commerce began to press the view that native welfare was declining. In 1902 the Queen promised an enquiry into 'the Diminishing Welfare of the People of Java'. This may be taken to mark the transition from the Liberal policy to what the Dutch call the Ethical policy, based on ideas similar to those which at about the same time in England inspired the doctrine of the White Man's Burden.

The Ethical policy had a two-fold aspect, economic and social. On the economic side it aimed at promoting development by western enterprise with a view to providing funds for the enhancement of welfare. On the social side it aimed at promoting social welfare through the village. Van den Bosch, believing that the Liberal experiment inaugurated by Raffles had multiplied unrest and impoverished the people, used the village as an instrument for maintaining peace and order, and as a lever for increasing material production. Similarly the Ethical reformers, holding that under Liberal rule economic freedom had weakened village solidarity, aimed to strengthen the village and use it as a lever, not for increasing material production, but for enhancing social welfare, and for promoting democratic self-government, an idea which they inherited from the Liberal tradition. These views found expression in the Village Act of 1906, intended to convert the village into a petty municipality on western lines, endowed with power to administer village affairs, property and land in the interest of the people, and functioning under the control of the general body of villagers. It was thought that this would train the people in political democracy, and at the same time would furnish European officials with a 'practical apparatus' for enhancing village welfare, and thereby individual welfare. Thus the Dutch welfare movement and the welfare movement that took shape at about the same time in Burma were based on different principles. In Burma, the Government aimed at promoting individual welfare through the elaboration of administrative machinery; the Dutch aimed at promoting it through the growth of social welfare. It was common to both policies, however, that they required a

great expansion of official machinery, the western superstructure over native life.

In practice the new machinery was used in the interest of efficiency rather than of political education; village meetings were held, and the records showed that they were attended by the prescribed quorum and that resolutions were adopted by the prescribed majority. But this procedure, so far as it was observed, was largely formal; the resolutions usually originated in suggestions from the Controleur. At the same time councils on western lines were constituted for larger rural areas, for urban areas and ultimately for the whole territory in the Volksraad, or People's Council. Representative institutions are examined separately below. Here it is sufficient to notice that the original local councils proved lacking in inherent vitality, and subsequent reforms were directed to linking up the whole system of self-government, from village to Volksraad, in one organic system. As a part of this development the residencies were grouped between 1926 and 1928 into three Provinces under civil servants as Governors.

In respect of administration the chief outcome of the new policy was to change the character of indirect rule. During the Liberal period the Regent was regarded with some suspicion as a survival from the days of arbitrary oppression, and lost some of his authority. Under the Ethical system this tendency was carried further. Many Regents were impatient of new-fangled notions, and the Controleurs, zealous for promoting welfare, came to work more and more through the subordinate ranks of the Native Civil Service, who were readier to interpret suggestions as commands; thus the Regent tended to sink into the background. With the extension of Government activities, specialist officers were recruited to promote education, agriculture, medical and veterinary care and so on, and, alongside the general administrative services, there came into being large departments charged with these special functions. At first the specialist officers worked through the Assistant Residents and Controleurs, but gradually they became more independent, working in direct relation with the native subordinates, and turning to the European civil servants only for assistance in enforcing measures that the people were reluctant to adopt. This was directly contrary to the traditional Dutch policy of ruling through the Regents, with the European civil servants emerging from the background only in the light of benevolent protectors.

Another aspect of the Ethical policy was, in fact, a heritage from the Liberal doctrine of equal law for all. The Dutch rule of 'like over like' recognized a dual system of administration, with Europeans and natives under their respective laws and customs. Many Ethical leaders advocated a unified system of administration, with Europeans and natives all in one combined service administering uniform law. One application of this policy was an experiment in liberating the Regents from the tutelage of the Controleur (*ontvoogdij*). But the chief function of the Controleur had been to look after the Regent, and the new plan left the Regent to look after himself and the

Controleur with nothing to do. The experiment was never popular either with Dutch or natives, and the first Regent to be emancipated declared afterwards that he never noticed any difference. In 1931 it was abandoned.

From the financial standpoint, the Ethical policy looked to the development of the country by western enterprise with a view to providing funds for social services. Like the doctrine of the White Man's Burden, it originated at a time of imperialist expansion, when a rapidly growing demand for tropical produce was attracting western capital and large-scale enterprise. Capitalist enterprise provided much of the revenue expended on social services, but experience suggested that these welfare services were of little benefit to the people. The head of the Credit Service, afterwards Professor of Tropical Economy in Leiden gave a depressing picture of the results. 'I really cannot assure you that the people are any better off for the millions which they have borrowed from the State Banks.' Similarly, he continues, irrigation, emigration, colonization, are catchwords that have lost their lustre; other catchwords – the promotion of export crops, the improvement of hygiene, the relief of taxation – have their ups and downs in the current of policy, as, for example, the cry for industrialization rising and falling with the economic conjuncture. 'But the only popular response to all these nostrums is an increase in numbers, while foreign capitalists and foreign energy take out of native hands a rapidly increasing share of native activities.'¹ Another high official said, 'The welfare of the native population has not been noticeably raised, for higher production is counterbalanced by increase of population.'² The policy was attacked from another side also as purely artificial. One of the foremost advocates of the Ethical system, disillusioned by long experience, exclaimed, 'As soon as we withdraw our hands, everything sinks back into the marsh.' And after a consistent endeavour for over twenty years to strengthen the village community, and use it for promoting welfare, a survey of the results led to the conclusion that 'deplorably little village autonomy remains'.³

Meanwhile a Nationalist movement had been gaining strength. Growing unrest culminated at the end of 1926 in a serious rising in Java and Sumatra. An enquiry into unrest in Bantam supported the view that one source of trouble was the tendency under the Ethical policy to displace the Regent. Thus the Ethical policy was subjected to an increasing volume of criticism on all sides, as a departure from the traditional principle of ruling the people through their own leaders, and as an attempt to westernize the East too rapidly. Opinion turned towards restoring the Regent to the centre of the picture, and thereby bringing the people into contact with the modern world by methods less artificial and more congenial to their ideas.

[...]

Administrative practice

(a) District administration

The foregoing account of the evolution of the administrative system of Java has shown that, despite a superficial resemblance to the system of Burma, it is in fact quite different. There is indeed hardly anything in common between the character and functions of the civil servants of the two countries. In Burma there is one service divided into three grades, there are no Europeans in the lowest grade but even the highest grade is open to natives, and all, from top to bottom, so far as they are engaged in general administration, do the same kind of work. In Burma the Deputy Commissioner, the head of the district, is primarily magistrate and collector; he is a servant of the law, and is directly responsible for the collection of revenue, but in every capacity he must observe legal procedure and act strictly according to law. His subordinates, the subdivisional and township officer have the same functions, and must work under the same limitations. The European civil servant, within a year or so of his arrival in the country, becomes a magistrate of the first class, empowered to impose a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for two years; some four or five years later he becomes a district magistrate, empowered to impose a sentence of transportation for seven years. Subdivisional and township officers are likewise magistrates, with judicial powers varying according to their experience and capacity. The Deputy Commissioner and township officer are personally responsible for the collection and safe custody of the revenue, and are liable to make good defalcations; the Deputy Commissioner must himself count the money in the treasury once a month.

In Java, instead of a single service, there are two separate services, one European and one native, each with its own functions, and in neither service does any officer perform either of the two main functions of the civil servant in Burma. There is a separate judicial service and a separate treasury service, and the administration of justice and collection of revenue form no part of the duties of the ordinary administrative civil service. The European civil servant starts as a Cadet (*adspirant-controleur*) and, even when confirmed as a Controleur, has no magisterial or judicial powers, and no administrative responsibilities of any kind: his function is to keep Government in touch with the people, and to watch over and help the native civil servants. After ten or twelve years he rises to be an Assistant Resident. In the less important charges the Assistant Resident has magisterial powers, corresponding roughly to those of a third-class magistrate in Burma, and tries petty cases on one or two days a week; but he is being relieved even of this work. The Resident does no judicial work. In the native civil service the lowest grade is that of the Subdistrict officer in charge of general administration over a small tract of some twenty villages. Above him comes the District officer,⁶

and at the head of the native civil service is the Regent. The subdistrict and district officers are purely official in character, but the Regent holds his appointment by an hereditary tenure, though he qualifies for it by service in the lower grades or in the police. The Regent has petty judicial powers such as might be specially conferred on a village headman in Burma, and the district officer has much the same judicial powers as an ordinary village headman; but such few cases as they try are disposed of in a very informal manner. No European or native civil servant is a magistrate as the term is understood in Burma. No civil servant, European or native, ever has charge of a treasury or any direct responsibility for the collection or safe custody of revenue.

In Java the administrative officials are not servants of the law but officers of police or policy and, in rural areas, until quite recently there was no organized police force apart from the civil servants and their orderlies. As agents of policy they are expected to maintain, not law and order, but peace and quiet (*rust en orde*), and to see that revenue collections are proceeding smoothly; but these are only incidental to their main function which is, as it has always been, to see that effect is given to the policy of Government: under the Culture system they saw to the encouragement of export crops: under the Liberal system to helping the planters and protecting the peasants: under the Ethical system to promoting village uplift. In the machinery for giving effect to the policy of Government three features deserve special notice: the *Vergadering*; the Subdistrict officer and the Regent.

The *Vergadering* (Gathering or Assembly) is an application to modern administrative practice of the oriental institution which in India has survived as the formal *darbar*, or has languished as the *panchayat*; in Dutch practice it is a meeting in which an official discusses affairs with representatives of the people, and, as in oriental usage, it has both an educative and a democratic character. From the restoration of Dutch rule in 1816 the Resident was expected to hold once a month a *vergadering* of his subordinates for the discussion of current affairs; the Regent held a similar meeting of his subordinates. The practice seems to have been developed by Van den Bosch, and was useful under the Culture system as a means by which the Resident could explain what produce and how much was required, and could ascertain how much was likely to be forthcoming and discuss measures for obtaining more.

During the present century the mechanism has become more or less standardized. The sub-district officer holds a gathering of his ten or twenty village headmen once a week; the district officer holds a gathering of sub-district officers and others so many times a month; the Regent holds a gathering of district officers and others once a month, and the Resident, or at out-stations the Assistant Resident, likewise holds a gathering once a month. The Controleur holds no gathering, but attends that of the Resident or Assistant Resident, and is at liberty to attend the gatherings of the Regent or his subordinates. Attendance is not restricted to administrative officers and

village headmen. At every meeting, from that of the subdistrict officer upwards, departmental officers of the appropriate rank may ask or be invited to attend for the discussion of affairs concerning their department. Forest officers, public health officers, education officers, and officers of the agricultural, veterinary or credit services may attend as necessary to explain policy or smooth out difficulties. Similarly, at the gathering of the subdistrict or district officers, the village officials, the village policeman, schoolmaster, or the man in charge of irrigation may accompany the village headman. Ordinarily only one or two services will be represented in any one meeting, and there is no need for specialist officers to attend unless there is some matter within their sphere of interest to discuss. The Controleur may be present at any of these meetings to represent the views of Government, and to help in clearing up misunderstandings and removing difficulties. Thus, on the one hand, the procedure goes far to cure the evils of departmentalism, as specialist officers are compelled to recognize that their work is not an end in itself, but only one aspect of social life; and on the other hand it seems admirably designed to secure the willing and intelligent acceptance of official policy by presenting it as fully, forcibly and reasonably as possible to those who carry weight among the people, and will have to obtain the co-operation of the people in making it effective. The whole system is indeed one of practical adult education; it is a form of government through social education.

At the same time the *vergadering* has a democratic character. It does not work on western lines with agenda, motions, amendments, numerical majorities and resolutions, but allows an informal discussion in which the presiding officer can gather from representatives of the people, the general sense of the meeting, and can take such steps as may best give effect to it or, if some measure proposed by Government does not sufficiently command approval, can make provision accordingly. Both as an institution in line with oriental democracy and as a means of adult education it is a powerful instrument of official policy, and helps to build up a strong Government based on popular support.

Another valuable feature of Dutch administrative machinery is the Subdistrict officer. In Burma the smallest unit of general administration is the township comprising about a hundred villages. The township officer is a busy man, chiefly concerned with trying cases and collecting revenue. More often than not he is transferred to another appointment within a few months. Education, sanitation, irrigation and so on, so far as they receive attention, are the concern of departmental subordinates who look at them from a departmental standpoint, knowing and caring little for their reactions on other aspects of life. The Government is impersonal; it never comes into human contact with the people as living individuals with a hundred and one different interests. But in Java the Subdistrict officer within his tiny charge can get to know the leading people as human beings, and in his own person coordinates all aspects of administrative activity.

Still more valuable is the Regent. He is a permanent institution; through all the divagations of official policy he remains a link between the past, the present and the future. He can see what is going wrong, because he knows what went before; he can use his personal inherited influence to set it right; and he remains permanently to see that his advice is followed. For example, a Regent showed the present writer a clump of trees on a hillside. Shortage of fuel had led the people to cut down a small copse. He noticed that erosion was damaging the cultivation on the slope, explained matters to the people, and encouraged them, used 'gentle pressure' as the Dutch say, to plant the trees. In Burma no one would stay long enough in one place to notice the erosion until simple remedies were no longer possible; the matter would go from one department to another while the erosion was getting worse, and in the end probably nothing would be done, because a remedy would need the co-operation of several different departments, and no one in any department would stay long enough to see the matter through and, for lack of a few trees, land would go out of cultivation and village harmony would be endangered. Welfare measures do not take root without prolonged encouragement and supervision, and unless recommended by someone with personal influence. The Regent satisfies all these requirements. He is permanent and enjoys general respect. Most of the younger Regents are well educated, and some have been to Europe; they can recommend western welfare measures in a way congenial to the people. In the Ethical period, when enthusiastic Controleurs tried to push reforms through subordinate native officials, they did not understand so well as the Regent the way to make reforms acceptable, and when they were transferred 'everything sank back into the marsh'. Frequent transfers of officials are unavoidable, but, in working through the Regent, transfers may even be a source of strength by bringing the Regent into touch with a succession of new ideas. Many suggestions may fall on barren ground; but some, one here, another there, take root and yield a rich harvest. Thus the Regent has once again become, as in the days of Van den Bosch, the hub on which the administration turns. It is a Regent of a new type, using, as will appear below, the new machinery of representative institutions, but he still embodies the Dutch tradition of ruling the people through their own leaders, and the welcome principle of 'like over like'.

(b) Village administration

The Regent, however, still works through the village. Perhaps the most interesting and instructive aspect of Dutch rule in Java is the consistent effort to conserve village solidarity. There have, it is true, been frequent encroachments on village autonomy. Under the Culture system the village was used to promote cultivation for the State; under the Liberal system it was adapted to the requirements of the planters; under the Ethical system it was used to

promote welfare along western lines. But the Dutch have never abandoned the principle that, so far as the interests of Government allowed, the village should be left to manage its own affairs. The Village Act of 1906 was expressly designed both to strengthen the village community and to adapt it to the modern world, 'to stimulate social growth, and enable local officials to cope with their main function, the care of public welfare'. In the manner of its application three points are of especial interest.

In Java, as in Burma, it seemed common sense that to get better headmen one must give them better pay, and the Government adopted the policy of amalgamating villages so that headmen should collect more revenue and draw a larger commission. But it was soon found that the headman remained a stranger within the new village added to his charge; in some cases, it is said, he hardly dared to show his face there. The readjustment of village charges tended to convert the village from a natural social unit into an administrative unit and, although the headman earned a larger income, he had less and not more authority than before. Thus experience brought a reaction towards leaving traditional village boundaries intact.

When the Village Act was first introduced, the villages were given powers similar to those of a western municipality, and were expected to use them similarly: to prepare a budget, pass it in a legally constituted Village Meeting attended by a quorum of villagers duly qualified to vote, to spend their funds accordingly, and to prepare annual accounts. Other matters of general interest, the leasing of village land to sugar planters, and so on, were dealt with in such village meetings. Before long almost every village had its village treasury to provide funds for everything that the Controleur thought the village ought to want: school, village bank, paddy bank, bazaar, stud bull, pedigree goat, and so on. The people were educated in business principles, and numerous registers were prescribed for the headman, clerk and village priest; but, with anxious care lest democracy should be sacrificed to efficiency, everything had to be put before and passed by the village meeting. That at least was the ideal of policy, but in practice very few villages came up to this high standard. Even the 'village clerk' was often illiterate, and for some villages the records and registers had to be maintained in the sub-district office. The whole machinery was too complicated and western. Some few villages could manage it competently, others not at all. The mistake lay not merely in introducing western machinery, but in treating all the villages alike. Warned by this experience, when measures along somewhat similar lines were adopted for the Outer Provinces, they were applied gradually to selected villages.

A third defect was the experiment of working through the Controleur instead of through the Regent. The Controleur pressed some welfare measure on the people, but his successor would have a different enthusiasm, and strike out along new lines. Some of the reforms, sound enough perhaps in Europe, were so unpopular that the people would not accept them. For

example, the veterinary department wished to improve the breed of cattle by castrating unsuitable bulls; but in Madura, the chief cattle breeding centre, the people sold their animals for slaughter rather than allow them to be castrated. The people could be made to build latrines, but were so careful to keep them sanitary that they never used them. Only with a reversion to the principle of working through the Regents did reforms take root.

(c) Departmental administration

For the Culture system a very simple type of organization sufficed, and it was not until 1866-70 that departmental administration was adopted. With the rapid growth of Government activities during the present century numerous special services were constituted, but they were grouped in large departments, and at the latest reorganization in 1934 the functions of general civil administration were distributed between six departments dealing respectively with justice; finance; internal affairs; education and religion; economic affairs; and public works. At the head of each department is a director. The comprehensive character of these departments is a notable feature of Dutch administration, as it minimizes the evils of departmentalism by enabling the director to take a wide view of several related services and thus co-ordinate their activities. Another device to the same end is the appointment of liaison officers between the departments and services. The Director of Education, for example, has two advisers from the European administrative service to help him in respect of native education. There is also a special liaison officer between the agricultural, credit and civil services.

Much use is made of specialist Advisers, charged with studying important problems, but without any responsibility for policy. There have been Advisers on native affairs, on Chinese affairs, on Japanese affairs, on credit institutions, on native education and on decentralization. These Advisers make a continual study of large issues from a broader aspect than is possible for officials immediately concerned with the daily routine of administration. It was largely through the advice of the Adviser on Moslem affairs that the Dutch finally succeeded in pacifying Achin. This device helps in some measure to minimize a difficulty common to all colonial administration, the lack of institutions and periodicals in which large issues can be studied and discussed by an intelligent and instructed public.

(d) Judicial administration

In accordance with the principle of 'like over like', law and procedure are adapted to the several requirements of the various sections of the public. Since 1915; however, there has been one Penal Code applicable to all sections. If civil disputes between natives come into court, they are decided according to native customary law, including thereunder any statutory laws

that have been made applicable to natives. Religious matters between Muhammadans come before Moslem clerical tribunals.

Petty offences by natives mostly come before the Regent or district officer, who may hear them in the large open verandah that forms part of his official residence; he has no court and his only office is a small out-house that might easily be mistaken for a garage. Local dignitaries sit on a bench with the presiding officer, but the latter alone gives the decision. The whole procedure is very informal, and the penalties imposed are little more than nominal. Other petty offences and misdemeanours by natives or others are tried in the local police court (*landgerecht*) by a magistrate, who until recently was usually the Assistant Resident; a native official (*fiscaal-griffier*, registrar or bailiff) sits beside him, but the proceedings are conducted by the magistrate. Most of the cases before him would be tried in Burma by honorary magistrates, or be dismissed as insignificant. He rarely seems to impose a fine of more than a quarter or half a guilder (sixpence or a shilling), or imprisonment for longer than three days. The procedure is far more informal than could be imagined in any court in Burma. There is no police officer in court. The accused is shown in and sits upon a bench. There is a short and apparently friendly conversation, and the witnesses, if any, join in the conversation without taking an oath. The magistrate announces his decision, scribbles it in blue pencil on the charge sheet together with his initials and that, together with an abstract by the registrar of the offence charged and the decision, constitutes the whole record. The cases on an average last rather less than two minutes. No appeal lies against the order, but the High Court is entitled to intervene on revision, though apparently it never does.

People, other than Europeans, charged with more serious offences come before the *Landraad*. This consists of a judicial officer as chairman and a bench of local dignitaries. The decision is collective, by a majority of votes, the laymen are not merely assessors. The court is attended by a *djaksa* (judge-advocate) and *griffier* (registrar). The president, *djaksa* and *griffier* are all professional lawyers, holding a university degree in law, and the president achieves his position as a judge, only after some years of experience as *djaksa* and *griffier*. Europeans charged with serious offences are tried by a Court of Justice, consisting of a bench of judges, all of whom are professional lawyers; in Java there are three such courts.

Petty civil disputes between natives may be settled in the regency or district court, which indeed do not always distinguish very carefully between criminal and civil matters. The regular court for the decision of more serious questions is the *Landraad*, constituted as for criminal cases. But a visitor from Burma is impressed by the fact that even civil disputes of considerable value or importance may be brought for arbitration to the Assistant Resident, although in law he has no judicial powers or functions. He seems to take it as a matter of course that he should give up much of his time to the amicable settlement of such affairs. 'Why', he asks, 'should the poor people waste their

money on litigation?' Cases of minor importance between Europeans come before the Residency Court, consisting of the chairman of the Landraad, sitting alone with a *griffier*; more serious matters come before the Court of Justice.

Religious questions between Muhammadan natives are dealt with by a clerical tribunal (*priesterraad*) comprising a high cleric and three to eight Moslem religious officials. It has jurisdiction over all religious disputes, so far as not otherwise prescribed, and it applies Moslem Law.

The ultimate authority in all cases, criminal or civil, is the High Court of Justice in Batavia.

Some features of the judicial system are of outstanding interest. One feature is the type of law applied in civil matters between natives; it is not the written law but the customary law. In Burma the courts have recognized certain legal treatises as codes of law, and try to give the codes a strict legal interpretation. In Java strenuous endeavours have been made to ascertain and enforce those customs which have the force of law. Closely allied to this is the procedure adopted. In Burma, under the rule of law, the tradition of settling disputes by an amicable compromise has died; all differences must be referred for decision to the regular courts, and even matters that are not within the cognizance of courts of law must be dealt with so far as possible according to the processes of law. The informal settlement of disputes by civil servants, native or European, is practically unknown. Again, in Java even the official magistrate disposes of matters as speedily and informally as possible, whereas in Burma even the village headmen are expected and encouraged to observe legal forms. On the other hand the courts in Java are manned by professional lawyers, and cases ordinarily come before a bench; in Burma few magistrates or judges have any legal training, and except in the High Court (and in the courts of honorary magistrates) there is no bench of judges, but the presiding officer sits alone.

Representative institutions

One aspect of the Ethical movement was a new stimulus to the Liberal tradition of representative government on western lines. In 1900 the Government was constituted in much the same manner as under the Company. The Governor-General, from the first appointment in 1610, had been given the assistance of Councillors with, nominally at least, a share in the responsibility for government. In 1836 these councillors were for the first time recognized as a formal Council of India, which functioned merely in an advisory capacity, and consisted of a few senior officials. With the growth of private enterprise after 1870, non-officials chafed at the restrictions imposed on them by the States-General. On Liberal principles they urged that the Indies should be 'free'; in other words they wanted to abolish the restrictions on economic progress which The Hague imposed on the Government in Batavia.

and to cut the red tape of bureaucratic rule in the interior. One favourite project was the enlargement of the Council of India by the addition of non-official Europeans, thereby converting it into an instrument of western enterprise, like the Legislative Council established in 1897 in Burma. This was steadily opposed as pre-judicial to the welfare of the people, and the principle of representation was first applied in local affairs. Under the Decentralization Act of 1903 certain of the larger towns were constituted municipalities, and, subsequently, Residents were given a Residency Council, and smaller councils were formed for special rural areas.

These measures were intended to serve a double purpose; to promote efficient administration and to develop local autonomy. But the title of the Act emphasized efficiency rather than autonomy and 'those who held the baby to the font, guided its earliest footsteps'. The large towns had a considerable European element, and the urban councils, though, or rather because of, representing European interests, functioned efficiently. But the other councils languished, doing little to promote efficiency and nothing to introduce autonomy. With the growth of Nationalism after 1906, and especially after 1911, policy inclined in the direction of native representation, and the outbreak of war in 1914 brought a change in the climate of opinion; by 1915 autonomy was in the air. In this new atmosphere criticism of the local representative institutions became more audible, and the principle of representation was extended also to the central government by an Act of 1916 constituting a People's Council, or Volksraad, to advise the Governor-General in matters solely concerning the Indies.

Criticism of the local representative institutions was based mainly on two grounds. The residency council was condemned as a mechanical device giving the semblance of autonomy to an artificial unit; and the various councils lacked the organic relationship of local government in the Netherlands, where rural and urban councils form part of the same system as the provincial councils, which link them up in a single chain of popular self-government to the States-General. Attempts were made accordingly to organize local self-government on lines more congenial to Dutch ideas. The Residency Council was abolished and, in place of it, Regency Councils were constituted and given certain powers of supervision over village administration. This system linked together the two traditional units of native society, the regency and the village, under the guidance of the Regent, whom the common man still regarded as his natural leader. The process was carried a stage further with the creation of Provinces.

Just as the regency was the hub of the native branch of the administration so was the residency the hub on which the wheels of European administration turned. In 1921 there were seventeen residencies in Java and twenty corresponding units, mostly termed residencies, in the Outer Provinces. There was no one between the Residents and the Governor-General. The Residents could not, it was held, be entrusted with extensive powers, and the

Governor-General was therefore overwhelmed with detail. With the growth of administrative activity during the present century decentralization became urgent, and this led to grouping the residencies into larger Governments. In Java the residencies outside the native states were grouped between 1926 and 1928 into three Governments, roughly coinciding with the three major racial divisions: Sundanese, Javanese and Madurese; with two others, much smaller, for the Native States. Subsequently, in 1934, the charges in the Outer Provinces were grouped into three Governments: Sumatra, Borneo and the Great East. The constitution of these Governments was purely a measure of administrative decentralization; but in Java the opportunity was taken to combine administrative and political reforms. For the administration of local affairs the three Governments in Java were constituted Provinces, in which the Governor conducted local administration with the assistance of a Provincial Council, exercising certain powers of supervision over the Regency Councils, and forming a link between the Regency Council and the Volksraad. Thus the Volksraad, the Provincial Council, the Regency Council and the villages were all brought within one system of self-government on the principle obtaining in the Netherlands.

The first Volksraad, opened in 1918, merely had in law the right of being consulted on the budget and on certain legislative measures. But in 1925 a new constitution for the Indies (*Staatsinrichting*) made its assent necessary for the budget and, normally, for other legislation on internal affairs; it was also given power to amend Government measures and to initiate legislation, and was granted the rights of petition and interpellation (i.e. to ask for information),⁷ but not the right of 'enquiry' (i.e. to appoint commissions of enquiry with legal powers to obtain evidence). It cannot change the Government; there are no ministers and neither the Governor-General nor departmental heads are responsible to it, but it can influence policy by a vote of non-confidence, indicating its disapproval of men or measures. Its chief function in full assembly is the criticism of the budget; legislation and other functions in respect of administrative routine are mostly assigned to the College of Delegates, a permanent committee of twenty (later sixteen) members elected in the first session for the whole period of four years that forms the life of the Volksraad, and presided over by the chairman of the Volksraad. Any conflict of opinion between the Governor-General and the Volksraad is decided by the Home Legislature; a conflict as to legislation is decided by the Crown, but the Governor-General may take action in matters of urgency.

The Chairman of the Volksraad is appointed by the Crown; of the other members some are elected and the rest nominated by the Governor-General. Representation is based on the communal principle. Only Dutch subjects are eligible for the franchise or for membership. Three communities are recognized: natives, Dutch and 'others' (preponderantly Chinese); until 1927 the two last categories formed one constituency. The constitution of the Volksraad since 1918 is shown on p. 189.

Membership of the Volksraad*

(a) Elected; (b) Nominated

	1918-21		1921-7		1927-31		1931-42	
	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)	(a)	(b)
Native	10	5	12	8	20	5	20	10
Dutch	} 9	} 14	} 12	} 16	15	15	15	10
Others					3	2	3	2

* Visman, I, 82 ff.

The electorate consists of the members of the rural and urban local councils, and was therefore greatly enlarged when the Residency Councils gave place to Regency Councils. Formerly each community formed a single constituency, but in 1927 the native community was divided into twelve constituencies, with a single constituency or each of the other two groups, then first separated. The total electorate in 1939 numbered 2228, comprising 1817 in Java and 411 in the Outer Provinces. The electorate in Java consisted of 312 members of urban councils, and 1505 members of Regency Councils. The urban members, comprising 98 natives, 177 Dutch and 37 'others', all obtained their seats by election. On the other councils some members are nominated by the local Governor. The membership of the Regency Councils consisted of 774 natives elected, and 334 nominated, together with 231 Dutch and 166 'others', all nominated. In the local councils, constituting the electorate in the Outer Provinces, there were 139 elected members (65 natives, 59 Dutch and 15 'others') and 272 nominated or *ex officio* members (181 natives, 76 Dutch and 15 'others'). Thus out of the total number of 2228 electors, 1003 have obtained the privilege by nomination (515 natives, 307 Dutch and 181 'others'), and only 1225 (937 natives, 236 Dutch and 52 'others') have obtained their seats on local councils by election. In the towns the franchise is restricted to resident males, literate and assessed to not less than f. 300 for income tax. Not many natives have so high an income, and of these some may be barred for illiteracy. As shown above, the Dutch members have a majority over the other two communities together, and in some towns there is even a Dutch majority among the electors. The regency franchise in Java is based on the village, and is granted to all those who by the custom of the village take part in the election of the village headman. Each village chooses one 'elector' for every 500 inhabitants, and these 'electors' constitute the electorate for the native members of the regency council.

One feature of Dutch political life is the multiplicity of parties and, as already indicated, this has spread to India. In the latest Volksraad the twenty-five European members represented eight parties, and one belonged

to no party; of the thirty native members, twenty-three represented ten parties and seven had no party affiliation, and even in the small group of 'other' members there were two and at one time three parties. To a certain extent this is due to the system of nomination, as it is an accepted principle that the Governor-General, or other official charged with the duty of nomination, shall aim at providing for the representation of parties which have not obtained adequate representation in the elections; in practice the Government has nominated some of its bitterest opponents, European or native. There is no official block, but a large proportion even of the elected members are classed as officials. Officials, however, are quite free to speak and vote against Government measures, and are often the keenest and, naturally, the best-informed critics; the only limitation on their freedom is an understanding that they shall not disclose matters which are officially 'confidential'.

The Provincial Councils comprise elected and nominated members of all three sections of the community, with the Provincial Governor as chairman. The electorate, as for the Volksraad, consists of the members of the regency and urban councils, and is predominantly official and largely nominated. The full council does little more than consider the budget, and routine work is conducted by a College of Deputies. One function of this college is to pass the budgets for the regency and urban councils, which is a step in the direction of organic local government such as obtains in the Netherlands. The revenues are largely derived from public services, and the functions are such as might be allotted to a local board in British India assisting a Divisional Commissioner in the administration of a divisional fund. Thus the Provincial Council has little resemblance to the Provincial Legislatures of British India.

The Regency Council comprises all three sections of the community, with elected and nominated native members, and nominated members of the other two communities; the figures are given above. In 1932 out of 1583 members, 813 elected and 770 nominated, no less than 651 elected and 186 nominated native members were officials. Only 54 of the members were classed as cultivators, but the 'officials' apparently included village headmen, who are agriculturalists and sometimes large landholders. The system of election has already been explained. The Regency Council meets once a year for the budget, and at other times when necessary, usually three or four times in all. The routine work may be allotted to a College of Commissioners. The council and the college have a say on the village budgets. The activities of the Regency Council seem to depend largely on the attitude of the Regent; a prominent Regent has stated that he found it of great assistance in the administration of his regency.

The Urban Council, as noticed above, is predominantly Dutch in its constitution and character. The revenue comes mainly from a cess on Government taxes, mostly paid by Europeans, and from municipal services, such as housing, the supply of electricity, water, trams and buses. The varied range of municipal activities is very striking; even in a small town one may find a

theatre and a swimming bath. It is hardly too much to say that the towns are run by Europeans for Europeans, though of course the other communities benefit by the amenities.

Notes

- 1 Rengers, cited *Netherlands India*, p. 223.
- 2 Hart, p. 40.
- 3 Boeke cited *Netherlands India*, p. 403.
- 4 de Wilde, Dr A. Nietzel, *Asiatic Review*, 1934, p. 232.
- 5 Adam, cited *Netherlands India*, p. 404.
- 6 It is important not to confuse the district officer of Java with the high official, often known as the District Officer, in British tropical administration. In Java the district is merely a subdivision of the Regency, and the Regency itself is a subdivision of the Residency, which corresponds more closely with a British District.
- 7 The right of interpellation did not carry the right to a written answer, leading up to a debate, and a vote of confidence. Visman, I, 98, 106.

THE BRITISH IN BURMA

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ANGLO-BURMESE CONFLICTS IN THE 19TH CENTURY: A REASSESSMENT OF THEIR CAUSES

D. G. E. Hall

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It is a delicate matter for an Englishman to discuss before an American audience wars of imperial expansion once engaged in by his country. Two powerful factors influence the American view of British expansion. The first, which I call the 1776 complex, is as subtle and pervasive as the other - British relations with the Irish, which is more obvious but equally pervasive. Both are emotional rather than rational. In an examination of British relations with Burma, one must further guard against a tendency to see them in a vacuum. Too often they were powerfully influenced, even determined, by situations in India and frequently in other areas. At the beginning of the period under survey, for instance, Napoleon Bonaparte's threat to India, the Mysore situation and the activities of the Marathas gave the British little time to deal with King Bodawpaya on the urgent question of the Arakanese refugees. I can only allude to such external factors but to understand properly what Britain did, or failed to do in Burma, one must see the whole picture of British commitments in Asia and, on occasion, elsewhere too.

The records of the English East India Company during the last century of its existence clearly indicate that for most of that period neither its London authorities nor those in India wanted political relations with Burma. The Company was mainly concerned with safe-guarding Britain's position in India and, late in the 18th century, with fostering the rapidly developing trade with China. The idea of territorial expansion east of India was repugnant. Even had the authorities wished to pursue such adventures, they lacked the resources. During the administration of Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India (1773-1785), for instance, Britain's position in India was in jeopardy. The British Government in London was so strongly

opposed to expansion that Pitt's India Act of 1784 included the doctrine of non-intervention to prevent actions likely to increase British responsibilities even in India. The Company's paramountcy in India did not become a reality until many years later.

In the 1750's the Company indeed intervened in Burmese affairs. Its doughty opponent, Josef Dupleix, Governor of French Pondicherry, was assisting the Mon rebel government in Pegu in its efforts to maintain its independence of the Burmans. Dupleix's plan was to gain control over the rebel regime. As a countermove to safeguard its naval position in the Bay of Bengal, the Company established an unauthorized settlement on the island of Negrais. But Alaungpaya, the founder of the Konbaung Dynasty, destroyed the Mon Kingdom, liquidated its French supporters and in 1759, wiped out the Negrais settlement.¹ Neither the French nor the British could retaliate for they were engaged in fighting the Seven Years' War. The Company defeated the French in India and gained control over Bengal. But many years passed before its attention was again drawn to Burma. A solid wedge of independent states stretching from Arakan in the south to the Ahom Kingdom of Assam in the north separated the Company's territories from those of Konbaung Burma. Although French raiders used Burmese ports against British shipping during the American War of Independence, at the end of the war British attention was focused upon the sea route to China and the commercial possibilities in the vast Malay area. Burma had completely faded from the picture.

What changed this situation? The simple answer is the Konbaung Dynasty's desire for expansion. As soon as its leaders had gained control over Burma proper, they revived the belligerent policy of Bayinnaung, the 16th-century conqueror. The Laos kingdoms were overrun; Siam's old capital Ayuthia was captured and destroyed in 1767. Chinese expeditions, sent to punish the Burmese for these disturbances near the Yunnan frontier, were defeated. Then Manipur was overrun and ravaged. Siam, however, recovered but Burma was busy with the Chinese invasions and all Burma's efforts to regain the upper hand were repulsed. So she turned against faction-torn Arakan, conquered it, deported its royal family and placed the country under a Burmese governor. In 1786, gathering all the strength he could muster, King Bodawpaya launched an invasion of Siam. He failed and for some time Burma made no further extensive efforts to invade Siam.

Inevitably the isolation of British Bengal from Burma broke down; British authorities in Chittagong were embarrassed by the thousands of Arakanese refugees who crossed the River Naaf to escape the Burmese terror. To worsen matters, in 1794 during a nation-wide Arakanese rebellion against the Burmese, armed bands from British territory joined the rebels. When the revolt collapsed and refugees by the thousands crossed into Chittagong territory, a large force of Burmese pursued them and refused to leave until three of the Arakanese rebel leaders were delivered to them. It was a disturbing

incident. The British had no effective frontier guards. The mountainous tracts covered by dense jungle, into which the refugees disappeared, were literally unadministered. But the Government of Calcutta had to face the unpalatable fact that the Arakan frontier constituted a serious potential danger. With the Government's attention concentrated on Indian affairs and with the situation created in the Eastern seas by the French Revolution, it was most anxious to avoid trouble with Burma.

In 1795 the diplomatic impasse was relieved. Michael Symes was sent to Burma to establish relations with the Court of Ava.² Moreover, aware of its ignorance of Burma and its people, the Calcutta Government instructed its envoy to report as fully as possible on the religion, government, social system, geography, economy and language of the country. Symes published the main sections of his report in London in 1800 in a volume which contained the first comprehensive account ever published about Burma. His successors also submitted voluminous reports. In fact, the East India Company's records on Burma from 1795 to John Canning's third mission in 1811 are a mine of information. The missions themselves achieved only a limited success: they staved off the war that threatened to break out over frontier incidents, but they failed in their main objective of establishing continuous contact between Ava and Calcutta. In British eyes, without such contact war was inevitable. The British twice tried the experiment of maintaining a resident agent in Rangoon. The first, Captain Hiram Cox, attempted to assume powers and a status beyond his instructions and was withdrawn.³ (His published journal makes no reference to the reason for his recall.) The second British agent was John Canning who was sent to Rangoon in 1803. His behavior was impeccable but because the Rangoon authorities insisted upon opening all his correspondence, he resigned.⁴

The practice of sending envoys to Burma was then abandoned. Quite obviously the Court of Ava not only disapproved but was equally unwilling to appoint a Burmese agent to Calcutta, not only then but later when committed to do so by treaty. The Court strongly suspected that any such step would result in loss of independence. It was particularly mistrustful when the Marquis of Wellesley was using the subsidiary alliance system to develop British power in India. Its suspicions were not unfounded; when Symes went to Burma on his second mission in 1802 his secret instructions empowered him to offer a treaty of subsidiary alliance to the Court of Ava if the situation warranted such a move. He made no attempt to do so - he understood better than his master the Burmese outlook. When he returned to Calcutta he reported: "A paramount influence in the government and administration of Ava, obtain it how we may, is now become indispensably necessary to the interest and security of the British possessions in the East."⁵ Burma had become a potential source of danger to the new British empire that was growing in India. Strategically Burma was in the same position with British India that Ireland then occupied with the British Government in London.

It was Burma's tragedy that her government would not meet Calcutta halfway. It rebuffed attempts to establish a permanent liaison. It made no effort to break down the barrier of ignorance separating it from the Western world whose expansion was becoming so momentous a portent in Asia. Burmese pride was hurt by having to deal with an underling, the Bangala Myosa, instead of the King above him. King Alaungpaya and his son who succeeded him made this abundantly clear to the envoys of the Governor of Madras in the 1750s. But even more important, I believe, was the isolationism which had begun to dominate the Court's attitude after its transfer to Ava in 1635. It wanted no contacts with foreign powers except as a conqueror.

The Arakanese refugees in Chittagong forced the issue. They produced a leader, Chin Byan, who was able for a time to threaten the Burmese hold on Arakan. Between 1811 and 1815 he led expedition after expedition across the frontier in efforts to liberate his country. When he was repulsed, he and his followers disappeared into the jungles of Chittagong. The British failed to stop him; the Burmese failed to catch him. When his death in 1815 brought the struggle to an end, the Burmese became not only angry with the British but also contemptuous of their power.⁶ The Burmese failed to grasp the problem of Britain's involvement in her great struggles with Napoleon in Europe, the fact that the Indian Government had been forced to undertake the conquest and occupation of Java as well as Britain's complicated state of affairs with the Gurkhas and the Pindaris, and its uneasy preparation for a final reckoning with the Marathas. So little respect had the Burmese authorities for British power that in correspondence with Calcutta which by then had taken the place of personal contacts, they began to claim Chittagong, Dacca, Moorshedabad and Kasimbazar, former possessions of the old Kingdom of Arakan, and threatened destruction unless the British surrendered at least the revenues of those countries.

Calcutta's policy of conciliation was successful during King Bodawpaya's lifetime. But in 1819, when he died, a new frontier problem offered the Burmese a tempting opportunity to assert power. The Ahom monarchy, which had ruled Assam since the 13th century, had lost control. Conditions had become so chaotic years earlier that the ministers had invited British intervention, but Governor-General Lord Cornwallis advised against anything short of annexation and turned down the invitation. In 1798, on his return from Burma, Captain Hiram Cox reported that King Bodawpaya was eagerly studying maps of the area and contemplating intervention. Cox had therefore warned the Heir Apparent that any such action would be viewed with disfavor in Calcutta and because Burma's attention was devoted completely to the Arakanese situation at the time, the matter was dropped.

In 1814 a young boy, Chandrakanta Singh, came to the throne and a faction fight at Jorhat, the capital, led to another appeal for British assistance. It was again refused. A similar appeal was then sent to the Court of

Ava and in March 1817, Burmese forces were sent to Jorhat and restored authority to the legitimate ruler. The situation, however, worsened. At the death of Bodawpaya in 1819 his successor, Bagyidaw – under the influence of the brilliant military commander Maha Bandula – assumed full control over the kingdom. There developed a situation strikingly similar to that of the Arakanese problem in the period 1811–1815; Assamese leaders fled to British territory to recruit forces to rid their country of its Burmese invaders. Bandula's policy was to challenge British power in Bengal. In 1822 he sent an envoy to Calcutta demanding the surrender of the exiles and at the same time, he seized an island in the Brahmaputra inside British territory. Simultaneously Burmese forces were so effectively devastating Manipur that its king and thousands of his people fled to neighboring Cachar which they in turn plundered and forced Cachar's rajah to flee to British territory for help. Cachar was threatened by the Burmese; Calcutta, painfully aware that through its passes an attack could be launched on eastern Bengal, at last took a firm stand. The Governor-General declared the state to be under British protection and warned the Burmese to keep out. They disregarded his warning and early in 1824, a small British force stationed there put up the best resistance it could against the advance of the Burmese.

Farther south the Arakan-Chittagong frontier once again became a center of disturbance. A series of Burmese offensives in 1823 resulted in the seizure from a British outpost of an island in the River Naaf. All attempts to settle a number of frontier claims failed. War became inevitable when, in January 1824, Maha Bandula appeared and began preparations to move into Chittagong.

The first Anglo-Burmese war of 1824–1826 was fought by the British to defend India's northeastern frontier. When the war ended, Calcutta was determined that Burma should never again be in a position to threaten that frontier. By the Treaty of Yandabo Burma was forced to give Arakan and Tenasserim to the East India Company and promise to abstain from interference in Assam and the other frontier states she had invaded earlier. In addition it was stipulated that a British Resident be received by the Court of Ava and a Burmese Resident Minister be appointed to the Government of British India. The British were convinced that without continuous contact through such an exchange, war again would follow. Strategic considerations dominated their policy and explain, for instance, the addition of Tenasserim to the territories annexed. It was seen as a safeguard against a possible Siamese attack on Burma. Its possession also would strengthen British naval control over the Bay of Bengal.

The court of Ava, on the other hand, accepted the treaty under duress; a British army was only three days' march from the capital. As the British forces marched away and the Court began to recover from its initial shock, its greatest concern was to find ways to avoid implementation of the hated treaty. Thus while it agreed to send to Calcutta an envoy for some special

task he would be withdrawn when that task was completed. The British Resident at Ava was to be a constant reminder of Burma's humiliation. Also the Resident would be nothing more than a spy and in any case, there was the perennial objection to the maintenance of diplomatic relations with a mere viceroy. This was perhaps the crux of the problem. It is fruitless, however, to speculate whether the establishment of direct relations with the Court of St. James would have improved the situation but Calcutta would never have agreed to such an arrangement. The Court of Ava was aware of the significance of the clauses in the treaty dealing with its diplomatic relationship with Calcutta. It could never for a moment accept such a version of its status. Hence when the Court did receive a British Resident it was with the sole object of using him as a means for negotiating modifications to the treaty designed to render it invalid.

As a result of his experience as British representative in Ava in 1826-1827, John Crawfurd warned the Government of India that a Resident's position there would be intolerable. But frontier friction, in particular over the Kabaw Valley which the Government of India had awarded to the Rajah of Manipur, and other matters in dispute, made it urgent in 1830 for a British representative to go to Ava. Henry Burney was appointed as British Resident and the Court of Ava, thoroughly upset by the Kabaw Valley award, decided that direct negotiations were more advantageous than negotiating with distant Calcutta. Burney earned the favor of the King and the Wungyis by his successful championship of Burma's case. The Government of India reversed its previous decision. But when it became clear that Calcutta would make no further concessions, the situation changed radically. The revolution of 1837 settled matters. From the start Tharrawaddy, the new king, was determined to rid Burma of the Residency, a symbol of its humiliation. King Tharrawaddy told Burney he would receive him as Colonel Burney, not as British Resident, and one of his earliest public acts was to announce his repudiation of the Treaty of Yandabo.⁷

The Residency was withdrawn in 1840 and with this loss of contact a potentially dangerous situation again developed. Burney warned the Government of India that an official at the Court of Ava was advocating by force the recovery of the lost provinces. He urged a showdown with Tharrawaddy but the Governor-General's attention was concentrated on the Afghan situation. He chose to think that Burney had mishandled relations with Tharrawaddy and he sternly rejected his advice. Throughout his reign, Tharrawaddy played a skillful game of brinkmanship and caused the British authorities considerable uneasiness until his death in 1846. But the Afghan war, then Sind and the Sikhs, in succession, absorbed Calcutta's attention and it deliberately neglected the Burma question.

It is against this background that the outbreak of the Anglo-Burmese war of 1852 must be seen. There were constant frontier dacoities and it was believed that they were instigated by the Court of Ava. But it was the

Burmese treatment of two British sea captains that brought matters to a head. Trumped-up charges of murder and embezzlement were brought against them for the purpose of extortion. When the captains sent official complaints to Calcutta, Governor-General Lord Dalhousie, who had just won the second Sikh war and had no further Indian complications to tie his hands, welcomed the opportunity for what he considered a long overdue showdown with Burma. He demanded compensation for the exact sum the two men had paid in fines and requested the removal from office of the Burmese officer responsible. It was a small amount (under 1,000 pounds), but to present his demands he sent a commodore of the Royal Navy with a squadron of three ships. He assumed that the Burmese would reject the demand if made by an ordinary diplomatic envoy and that this would be extremely damaging to British prestige in Asia. As he expressed it in his official minute, "The Government of India could never, consistently with its own safety, permit itself to stand for a single day in an attitude of inferiority towards a native power, and least of all towards the Court of Ava."

But he misjudged the Burmese, as had Lord Wellesley on a previous occasion when, in 1802, he had sent Michael Symes to Burma with a military escort that was much too large and far too splendid for the occasion. It challenged Burma's dignity and the Burmese were past-masters in the arts of diplomatic rudeness. Thus occurred the incidents at Rangoon which led Commodore Lambert to lose his temper and commit the wanton acts of reprisal which led to war. This story was first told from official records at the India Office and the Dalhousie private papers by Sir William Lee-Warner in his *Life of the Marquis of Dalhousie* (London, 1904). His book has been my main source on the subject. However, in *The Making of Burma* (London, 1962), Miss Dorothy Woodman has added further details to the story. She made an intensive search of India Office manuscript records for omissions from the Blue Books, the documents presented to Parliament regarding the Government of India's relations with the Court of Ava. They show how strongly Lord Dalhousie and his colleagues censured the "combustible commodore." I dislike the tone of Miss Woodman's treatment of the subject - she is not the judge but the counsel for the prosecution in a case against Britain. I deplore the war just as much as she does. It was rightly castigated also as totally unjustified by Richard Cobden in his pamphlet, "How Wars Are Got Up in India: The Origin of the Burmese War." Dalhousie himself had written before the war, "Conquest in Burma would be a calamity second only to the calamity of war."⁸ One of Dalhousie's private letters, written after the war contains the key to much that happened. He wrote: "There is no doubt that Lambert was the immediate cause of the war by seizing the King's ship in direct disobedience of his orders from me. I accepted the responsibility for his act, but disapproved and censured it. He replied officially that he had written home, and he was sure [Lord] Palmerston would have approved." Later in the same letter Dalhousie added, "It is easy to be wise after the fact.

If I had had the gift of prophecy I would not have employed Lambert to negotiate.⁹ Under the circumstances of the time, with senior officers of the forces able to "write home," as Lambert put it, behind a Governor-General's back, Dalhousie was in a very difficult position. Only one year earlier Lord Palmerston had been responsible for an equally high-handed act (in Greece), and had overcome the outcry it aroused in England by his famous "*Civis Romanus Sum*" speech.

But, in my opinion, even this was not the decisive factor. Dalhousie's correspondence provides abundant evidence of his firm belief that a war with Burma had long been inevitable. This explains why he rejected the offers made by the Court of Ava and the Governor of Rangoon for a resumption of negotiations after the breakdown caused by Lambert's action. Dalhousie feared that the Government of India would be "decoyed into a feeble and false position."¹⁰ He was wrong. He thought that by seizing the three ports of Bassein, Rangoon and Martaban he could force the Court of Ava to back down and pay an indemnity one hundred times as large as the original demand. But no sign came from the Golden Fleet. "I can't get a result," he wrote in despair. "They give and take no terms." To his friend Sir George Couper, Dalhousie wrote privately, "Daily I am more mortified and disheartened by the political necessity which I see before me." The "political necessity," as he saw it, was the annexation of the province of Pegu. Thus, unlike the first war, this was one of imperialist aggression. Yet such was not the Government of India's original intention. Its mistake lay in failing to understand the dominant features of the Burmese outlook at the time. For us today it provides a striking example, if one were needed, of what has come to be called "escalation."

The developments in Anglo-Burmese relations which ultimately led to the deposition of King Thibaw and the loss of his country's independence are far more complicated and difficult to assess than those which produced the first and second wars. Unlike Miss Woodman, I do not see the gradual achievement of a Machiavellian annexationist policy. Certain British mercantile interests pestered Calcutta and London with annexationist demands - particularly those interests infected with that extraordinary enthusiasm for trade with western China which afflicted chambers of commerce not only in Britain but also in Europe and in France especially in the second half of the 19th century. Its English devotees saw the Irrawaddy River as the back door to China. France in the same way was smitten by "*la monomanie du Mékong*," but the De Lagrèe-Garnier explorations of the course of the Irrawaddy during 1866-1868 demonstrated its uselessness as a commercial seaway. The British found the Panthay Rebellion in Yunnan between 1855 and 1873 a more potent deterrent than Burmese opposition. When the investigation into the murder of Augustus Margary in 1876 showed that the route via Brahmo was quite unsuitable for railway construction, the project was dropped for many years. It remained, however, a big bee buzzing in the bonnets of certain

mercantile pressure groups especially when the French, recovering from their defeat by Bismarck, decided that the Red River of Tongking was the real key to western China and they went forward to insure possession of it before being repulsed by the imaginary Englishman who haunted their dreams of an empire. It was the French conquest of Tongking in the early 1880s more than anything else, except the folly of Thibaw's Government, that sealed the fate of the Upper Burma Kingdom. Apart from the pressure groups having any real influence on British policy and before the question of Thibaw's relations with France became acute, the Burmese courted only rebuffs from the British Government, especially after Gladstone's election in 1880. When, for instance, Thibaw's Government in 1881 deliberately broke the commercial treaty of 1867 and the Rangoon commercial community demanded strong measures, Sir Charles Bernard, the High Commissioner, summarily rejected their demands. And when in December of that year the Viceroy went to Rangoon to examine the question, he told a deputation of important merchants that he had no belief in a war to extend trade. To the Secretary of State in London he wrote that if the Burmese had broken faith over monopolies, so had the British over arms.

The arms question was one of many which upset Anglo-Burmese relations during Mindon's reign. It is essential to study the background if we are to put in perspective the events of Thibaw's reign. Mindon was placed on the throne by a court faction that was discouraged with Pagan Min's handling of the situation which led to the war of 1852. Mindon, a patriot with a sense of public duty, was chosen in the hope that he could persuade the British invaders to halt their advance and evacuate the territory they had occupied. He failed in this but managed to establish better relations with the British than had ever before existed. Arthur Phayre, the British Commissioner in Rangoon, became his close friend and they maintained a successful system of communication through Thomas Spears, a Scottish merchant residing at the Burmese capital. Spears, paid by the British to act as a newswriter without any official standing, served both sides well. Mindon approved of the arrangement because both parties could keep in close touch without the humiliation – as the Burmese saw it – of an official British Residence at the Burmese capital.¹¹ But in 1862 Spears returned to Scotland and in the same year the British territories in Burma were united to form the province of British Burma.

Faced with this new situation, Mindon was persuaded, rather hesitatingly, to agree to a commercial treaty which allowed trade between Lower and Upper Burma and agreed to receive a British representative in Mandalay. Thus the informality of the earlier period which had worked admirably was abandoned and the officials who succeeded Spears were more anxious to promote British commercial interests than real understanding. Then in 1866 Mindon was badly shaken by an attempted palace revolution in which his brother, the Heir Apparent, was murdered and he himself barely escaped the

same fate. He needed help, principally steamers and arms, to guard against further trouble. This entailed another treaty with the British and indeed this time he personally took the initiative in opening negotiations. It was agreed that trade would be encouraged and that most of the royal monopolies considered so irksome by Calcutta and Rangoon merchants would be abolished. The British Indian Government was to be "privileged" to establish a "Resident" or "Political Agent" at Mandalay. Reciprocally the Burmese Government reserved the same right in British territory whenever it so chose. The Burmese Government was also granted the right to purchase arms, ammunition and war materials in British territory, subject to the consent of the Chief Commissioner of British Burma.

Under this treaty commerce between the two Burmas advanced rapidly but the business community of Lower Burma became annoyed by the King's hesitation in carrying out his side of the economic arrangements. The Mandalay Court was equally exasperated at the difficulties raised by British authorities in its freedom to purchase arms. The situation was not improved by Mindon's attempts to assert his rights as an independent sovereign. The Kinwun Mingyi's mission to Queen Victoria in 1872 brought what the Burmese saw as a diplomatic rebuff. To his chagrin Kinwun Mingyi was introduced to the Queen by the Secretary of State for India and not by the Foreign Secretary. It was a deliberate surrender to the views of Calcutta regarding Burma's status but its significance becomes even clearer when it was learned that the Mingyi, on his way to England, had negotiated commercial treaties with Italy and France. The French treaty, however, was not ratified. The French official, sent to Mandalay for that purpose, found that Mindon's Government really wanted a political alliance with provision for the purchase of arms and he wisely withdrew. Mindon was playing with fire but it seems probable that his overriding desire was simply to demonstrate his independence. He failed to consider how deeply concerned Britain was becoming about French designs in Indochina, so much so in fact that Britain certainly would not tolerate anything calculated to promote French influence in Mandalay. On the other hand, one must not forget that Mindon's need of arms was real and that Albert Fytche, who succeeded Phayre as Resident, in negotiating the treaty of 1867, had given a written undertaking that consent to purchase them, when asked, would not be refused.

What ruined relations, as is known, was the "shoe" question. Sir Douglas Forsyth's official protest at having to remove his shoes at a royal audience in 1875 led the Government of India to order the British Resident at Mandalay not to take off his shoes when in the King's presence nor to sit on the floor. It was disastrous to Anglo-Burmese relations for it meant the end of personal contact with the King. Mindon dared not relax such a point of palace etiquette. Moreover, everything possible had been done during his reign to reduce the discomfort of British officers on such occasions. There was no excuse for the Government of India's action. Even the bellicose Lord Lytton,

who succeeded Lord Northbrook as Viceroy in 1876, expressed his disagreement with what had been done. His successor, Lord Ripon, recommended that a compromise acceptable to both parties be sought and the Secretary of State in London replied that he would gladly act on this advice. But by then it was too late – Mindon was dead and in a fit of panic in October 1879, the Residency was withdrawn from Mandalay.

When Thibaw succeeded his father in 1878, Lord Lytton instructed the Resident to suggest indirectly to the ministers that British recognition and support of the new king would depend upon the extent to which he adopted a new policy toward Britain. This was to involve free access to the king by the Resident and a greater influence over Burmese policy. Thibaw sent letters to the Queen and Lord Salisbury, the Foreign Minister, not to the Secretary of State for India. Lytton advised that no reply be sent. When news came of the palace massacre of February 1879, Lytton urged the British Government to send an ultimatum to Mandalay. My impression is that Lytton was seeking to create a situation which would afford him an excuse for a program of annexation. But the British Government flatly rejected his advice. Lord Salisbury told Lytton that the utmost consideration must be shown the new king. To his call for strong action after the massacre, London replied with an order to pursue a policy of "extreme forbearance." Lord Cranbrook, the Secretary of State for India, told Lytton he did not want a Burmese war on his hands. This is understandable for Britain at the time was fighting the Afghans and the Zulus and faced a threatening situation in South Africa. But the real reason, as Lord Cranbrook later wrote Lytton, was that Britain was seeking more friendly relations with the Court of Mandalay. When in June of that year the British Resident at Mandalay died, Lord Cranbrook deplored his loss for, as he saw it at the time, both Thibaw and the British Chief Commissioner in Rangoon seemed to be losing their heads.¹²

Thus the withdrawal of the Residency from Mandalay a few months later was not a Machiavellian move aimed at bringing down Thibaw's Government. It was a panic measure occasioned by the massacre of the British Resident at Kabul and all his staff in September 1879. It did, however, force the Court of Mandalay to realize the seriousness of the situation. So we have the sad story of the dispatch of the Burmese envoy to appeal to the Viceroy for the resumption of friendly relations and of his being held by British authorities for six months at the frontier because he lacked power to negotiate a settlement providing for the return of the British Resident to Mandalay. Again one's impression is that Lord Lytton still hoped to provoke a showdown. Once more London disapproved of his action and criticized his Government sharply for prejudging the issue.

In April 1880 Gladstone's Liberal Party came to power but unfortunately too late to save the situation. For the next few years, however, administrators in London, in Calcutta and in Rangoon were genuinely anxious to improve Anglo-Burmese relations. All were resolutely opposed to annexation. Their

hopes reached a high point when, at the end of April 1882, a Burmese embassy headed by the Panjit Wun arrived in Simla with a draft treaty for negotiation. The Secretary of State, Lord Hartington, believed this to be an indication of a change in Burmese policy. The India Office wanted a compromise on the "shoe" question and furthermore agreed with Lord Ripon's suggestion that King Thibaw be allowed to have all the arms he might need. The atmosphere at Simla was extremely friendly. The British were most anxious to meet the demands of the Burmese. Why then was the delegation suddenly recalled to Mandalay at the end of August with no reason given? One can only guess. The Burmese had introduced into the discussions a demand for the recognition of their right to maintain direct relations with the British Government in London and to carry on communications with European powers. As an alternative they had been offered two treaties, one in the Queen's name and the other a business treaty with Calcutta. After their return to Burma, members of the Court of Mandalay sent two draft treaties (one with the Queen and the second with the Government of India) to the Chief Commissioner in Rangoon for transmission to the Viceroy. Lord Ripon regarded both as unsatisfactory and intimated to the Government of Mandalay that he could not accept them. The Secretary of State fully concurred with his action. That was the end of Anglo-Burmese negotiations for an amicable settlement of relations. Burmese pride had been stung by the Government of India's unwillingness to accord them a really independent status. Hence they deliberately withdrew from negotiations which promised so much; it could mean only that a drastic change in policy was being considered.

Mandalay's next step was to make a desperate bid for international recognition. In May 1883 a Burmese mission went to Europe, ostensibly to gather information about industrial arts and sciences, but in reality to seek alliances. The aim was to play off France against Britain. But since France was engaged in the conquest of Tongking and was suspected of cherishing even wider territorial ambitions in the Indochinese peninsula, it was a disastrous move. At the outset, Britain warned France that although Burma was an independent country, it came within the British sphere of influence and no interference from any European power would be tolerated.

From that time to the period marking the end of the Burmese monarchy, the story is too detailed for any more but a few brief comments. It has been told by a number of writers with varying emphasis according to their individual attitude or knowledge. One still awaits a definitive study of the subject. Late in 1884, when the situation in Upper Burma was unstable, Sir Charles Bernard, the British Chief Commissioner in Rangoon, was literally besieged by complaints from the mercantile community which was demanding annexation. But he reported to Calcutta that the accounts of Thibaw's misrule were exaggerated and that British merchants had no reason to complain. Burma, he added, had not transgressed her frontiers or invaded her

allies, had not maltreated British subjects, broken treaties, continued massacres, rejected British protests or refused redress. There was no justification for annexation.

But a few months later the French agent Haas arrived in Mandalay as a result of the Franco-Burmese commercial treaty. Rumors began to circulate regarding important commercial concessions likely to give France a dominating position in the economy of Upper Burma. Bernard was skeptical about them in his reports. "But," he wrote, "I believe this much, namely, that French agents are trying to establish themselves strongly at Mandalay with a view to joining hands at some future time with the French possessions on the upper reaches of the Red River." As time went on more rumors were reported. They were unconfirmed but nevertheless disturbing. So in August 1885 the Government of India resolved that "the establishment by France of exclusive or dominant influence in Upper Burma would involve such serious consequences to their Burmese possessions and to India that it should be prevented even at the risk of hostilities." The French Government was asked to clarify the situation. It denied all knowledge of any concessions. That was at the end of September but a new Burmese envoy had appeared in Paris and soon the French and English newspapers published the text of an alleged secret treaty between France and Burma. When challenged, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs denied its existence. In October the French agent was significantly withdrawn from Mandalay. France had backed down and Thibaw was badly disappointed. He had failed to realize that France would not risk a showdown with Britain. But there was worse to follow for France hedged when Britain asked for a clear assurance of her recognition that Burma came within the British sphere of influence. To Britain a showdown with Thibaw therefore became necessary and his Government's handling of the Bombay Burma Trading Corporation case presented the opportunity. Whether it was true or false matters little; the fines imposed by the Hlutdaw (Burma's highest governing body) were clearly excessive and the demand for a review of the case was reasonable. The flat refusal of the Court of Mandalay to reopen it meant that the only alternative to war would be for a great power, before the eyes of the whole world, meekly to accept a blatantly provocative slap in the face from a small state whose military strength was feeble.

The tragedy of the situation, as Thibaw's reply to the British ultimatum clearly shows, was that the dictates of strategy as understood in Calcutta, imposed upon Burma a position in relation to British India that was fundamentally abhorrent to its leaders. To them the Treaty of Yandabo was the symbol of national degradation and they never ceased their quest for a declaration nullifying it. This was one of the demands rejected by Lord Ripon when negotiations had broken down in 1882. It is unrealistic to suggest that had Burma been willing to maintain good relations with British India she would never have lost either territory or finally her independence. Unlike her

neighbor Siam, her leaders were unable – or unwilling – to comprehend the political realities of the 19th century.

Notes

- 1 For a detailed account of this episode, see D. G. E. Hall, "The Tragedy of Negrais" in the *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol. XXI (1931), pp. 59–133.
- 2 The documents relating to this mission are in the "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations."
- 3 These documents are in the "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations." See especially those dated March 2, 1798 and September 10, 1798.
- 4 "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations," June 20, 1805.
- 5 "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations," May 17, 1804.
- 6 The full story is told (from the "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations") by B. R. Pearn in "King-Bering," *Journal of the Burma Research Society*, Vol. XXIII (1933), pp. 55–85.
- 7 W. S. Desai, *The History of the British Residency in Burma, 1826–40* (Rangoon, 1939), from the "Bengal Secret and Political Consultations."
- 8 D. G. E. Hall, ed., *The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence, 1852–56* (Oxford University Press, London, 1932), p. xxv.
- 9 J. G. A. Baird, ed., *The Private Letters of the Marquess of Dalhousie* (London, 1910), pp. 260–1.
- 10 "Parliamentary Papers relating to hostilities with Burma 1852," p. 64, quoted by Dorothy Woodman in *The Making of Burma* (London, 1962), p. 139.
- 11 *The Dalhousie-Phayre Correspondence, 1852–56* contains sixty-two letters written by Spears from the Burmese capital.
- 12 For the study of British relations with Thibaw, the author has made special use of two recent works based upon the documentary resources of the India Office and certain private collections as well as Dorothy Woodman's *The Making of Burma* and D. P. Singhal's *The Annexation of Upper Burma* (Singapore, 1960).

THE ADMINISTRATION OF BURMA

Charles Crosthwaite

Source: Charles Crosthwaite, *The Pacification of Burma*. London: Edward Arnold/New York: Longman, Green Company (1912): pp. 1-18, 337-41.

On the 20th of December, 1852, Lord Dalhousie issued a proclamation annexing the province of Pegu to the British Dominions. "The Governor-General in Council," he said, "having exacted the reparation he deems sufficient, desires no further conquest in Burma and is willing that hostilities should cease.

"But if the King of Ava shall fail to renew his former relations with the British Government, and if he shall recklessly seek to dispute its quiet possession of the province it has now declared to be its own, the Governor-General in Council will again put forth the power he holds and will visit with full retribution aggressions, which, if they be persisted in, must of necessity lead to the total subversion of the Burman State and to the ruin and exile of the King and his race."

In 1885 the fulfilment of this menace – prophecy it might be called – was brought about by the contumacy of the Government of Ava. The Burman State was "totally subverted." Its territories were added to the British Empire. The King and his race were "ruined and exiled."

At the end of November, 1885, the British commander was in full possession of Mandalay, the capital. Our forces had made a procession up the great river, which is the main artery of the country, almost unopposed. Such opposition as there had been was childish in its feebleness and want of skill and purpose. Fortunately for us the King and his ministers prided themselves on their voluntary army system. King Thebaw was not going to compel his subjects to defend their country. They were told to go about their daily tasks without fear or carefulness. They might sleep in their beds. He would see to it that the foreign barbarians were driven into the sea whence they had come. Unfortunately the soldiers to whom he trusted were insufficiently trained, badly armed and equipped. He had intended, perhaps, to remedy all this and to train his troops for six months before the fighting began.

His enemy, however, was unreasonably hasty and had an abundance of fast steamers for transporting the invading force. Before the training could begin or the arms be provided or the officers instructed, the invaders were before Ava, where the bulk of the defending army had been collected, and a few miles from the capital. The King's government was as helpless as it had been arrogant and pretentious. Ministers of State were sent down in hot haste with messages of submission and surrender.

The army, however, took a different view of the case. They refused to obey the order to surrender which had come from Mandalay. Before General Prendergast could land his men they dispersed over the country in every direction with their arms, and as the British force had no cavalry to pursue them, they got away to a man. At first under various leaders, few of whom showed any military talent, they waged a guerrilla warfare against the invaders; and afterwards, when their larger divisions had been defeated and broken up, they succeeded in creating a state of anarchy and brigandage ruinous to the peasantry and infinitely harassing to the British.

On the 29th of November Mandalay was occupied and the King a prisoner on his way down the river to Rangoon. The waterway from Mandalay to the sea was under our control. A few of the principal places on the banks of the river had been held by small garrisons as the expedition came up, and the ultimate subjugation of the Burman people was assured. The trouble, however, was to come.

To a loosely organized nation like the Burmese, the occupation of the capital and the removal of the King meant nothing. They were still free to resist and fight. It was to be five years before the last of the large gangs was dispersed, the leaders captured, and peace and security established.

Burma will be, in all likelihood, the last important province to be added to the Indian Empire. Eastward that Empire has been extended as far as our arms can well reach. Its boundaries march with Siam, with the French dominion of Tongking, and on the East and North for a vast distance with China. Our convention with France for the preservation of the territory which remains to Siam and our long friendship with the latter country bars any extension of our borders in that direction. It is improbable that we shall be driven to encroach on Chinese territory; and so far as the French possessions are concerned, a line has been drawn by agreement which neither side will wish to cross.

In all likelihood, therefore, the experience gained in Burma will not be repeated in Asia. Nevertheless it may be worth while to put on record a connected account of the methods by which a country of wide extent, destitute of roads and covered with dense jungle and forest, in which the only rule had become the misrule of brigands and the only order systematic disorder, was transformed in a few years into a quiet and prosperous State.

I cannot hope that the story will be of interest to many, but it may be of some interest and perhaps of use to those who worked with me and to their successors.

From 1852 to 1878 King Mindôn ruled Upper Burma fairly well. He had seized the throne from the hands of his brother Pagan Min, whose life he spared with more humanity than was usual on such occasions. He was, to quote from the Upper Burma Administration Report of 1886, "an enlightened Prince who, while professing no love for the British, recognized the power of the British Government, was always careful to keep on friendly terms with them, and was anxious to introduce into his kingdom, as far as was compatible with the maintenance of his own autocratic power, Western ideas and Western civilization." He was tolerant in religious matters even for a Burmese Buddhist. He protected and even encouraged the Christian missions in Upper Burma, and for Dr. Marks, the representative of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Mandalay he built a handsome teak church and a good clergy-house, giving a tinge of contempt to his generosity by putting them down by the Burmese burial-ground. The contempt was not for the religion but for the foreign barbarians who professed it.

His measures for encouraging trade and increasing and ordering the revenues were good, and the country prospered under him. In Burma there are no hereditary leaders of the people. There is no hereditary aristocracy outside the royal family, and their descendants rapidly merge into the people. There was no law or binding custom determining the descent of the crown within the family. Every one with royal blood, however little, in his veins was a potential pretender. Whenever the crown demised the succession was settled by intrigue or violence, and possible aspirants were removed by the prince who had obtained the prize. There was no other way of securing its peaceful enjoyment.

Under the King was the Hlutdaw, or great Council of State, composed of the Chief Ministers, who were appointed by the King from the courtiers who had the good fortune to be known to him or had helped him to the throne. To each of these was assigned a province of the empire, which he governed through a deputy.

The immediate power was vested in the deputy, who resided in the province and remitted to the Minister as much as he could collect over and above the amount due to the crown and, it need hardly be said, necessary for his own needs. The provinces were divided into townships, which were ruled by officials appointed by the governors, no doubt with regard to local influence and claims, and with a general inclination to keep the office in a family.

The really stable part of the administration on which everything rested was the village, the headship of which was by custom hereditary, but not necessarily in the direct line.

As there was little central control, it may be supposed that under a system of this kind the people were pillaged, and doubtless they were to some extent. But the deputy-governor on the spot had no organized police or militia to support him. If he wanted to use force he had to pay for it, and if he drove his province to the point of rebellion he was unlikely to profit by it.

The amount of revenue was fixed at Mandalay with reference to a rough estimate of what the province could pay, and that was divided amongst the townships and again amongst the villages. The headman of each village, assisted by a committee or Punchayet, as it would be called in India, settled the sum due from each householder, and this was as a rule honestly and fairly done. It was not a bad system on the whole, and it was in its incidence probably as just as local taxation in Great Britain, which I admit is somewhat faint praise.

As to the administration of justice between man and man and the security of life and property, there was no doubt little refinement of law and not always impartiality in the judges. The majority of civil cases in a society like Burma, where there are few rich men and no great landowners, must be trivial, and in Burma disputes were settled by arbitration or by the village headmen, who could rarely set at nought the opinion of their fellow-villagers.

In a country which is under-populated and contains vast areas of land fit for cultivation unoccupied and free to all, migration is a great check on oppression. Life is simple in Burma. The climate for the most of the year makes a roof unnecessary; flitting is easy. Every man is his own carpenter. He has put together his house of bamboo and planks cut by his own hands. He knows how to take it down. He has not to send for contractors or furniture vans. There are the carts and the plough cattle in his sheds. He has talked things over with his wife, who is a capable and sensible woman.

One morning they get up, and instead of going to his fields or his fishing or whatever it may be, he takes his tools, and before sunset, his wife helping, the house is down and, with the simple household goods, is in the cart. The children find a place in it, or if they are old enough they run along with the mother. If the local magistrate is so blind to his own interests as to oppress his people, there is another wiser man a few score leagues away who is ready to welcome them. For what is the good of land without men to live on it? Is not the King's revenue assessed at so much to the house? But suppose the worst comes to the worst and the man in power is a fiend, and neither property nor life nor honour is safe from him, even then there is the great forest, in which life, though hard, is a real pleasure to a man; and, given a good leader, the oppressed may soon change places with his oppressor.

We are too ready to imagine that life under such a King as Mindôn or even as Thebaw must be unbearable. We fancy them armed with all the organization of the Inland Revenue Department and supported by a force like our constabulary. Fortunately they were not. No system of extortion yet devised by the most ruthless and greedy tyrant is at all comparable in its efficacy to the scientific methods of a modern revenue officer. The world will see to what a perfection of completeness the arts of oppression and squeezing can be carried when the power of modern European organization is in the hands of a socialist government.

It need not be supposed, therefore, that under King Mindôn life in Upper Burma was bad, and it must be remembered that since 1852 escape to British Burma, although forbidden, was not impossible.

Under Thebaw things were different. Mindôn was on the whole well-intentioned, and had kept the power in his own hands. Thebaw was weak and incompetent, and the Ministers who had most influence with him were the worst men. With his barbarities, old-fashioned rather than unexampled, and perhaps not much worse than the measures of precaution usually taken in Burma after the succession of a new king, or with the causes of the war which led to his deposition, the present narrative is not concerned. It is desired to give as clear an idea as possible of the state of Upper Burma when we were called upon to administer the country.

The rapacity and greed of the Court, where the Queen Supayalat was the ruling spirit, set the example to the whole hierarchy of officials. The result was a state of extreme disorder throughout the whole kingdom. The demands made on the people for money became excessive and intolerable. Men left their villages and took to the jungle. Bands of armed brigands, some of considerable strength under active leaders, sprang up everywhere. Formed in the first instance as a protest and defence against extortion, they soon began to live on the country and to terrorize the peasantry. After a time, brigands and Ministers, finding themselves working for a common object, formed an unholy alliance for loot. The leaders of the bands came to an understanding with the more powerful officials, who in turn leant upon them for support.

Under such conditions it was not wonderful that the sudden seizure of the capital and the summary removal of the King should have completed the dissolution of society, already far advanced. The British Government, if it had decided to annex Upper Burma, might by a more leisurely occupation, not only with a larger military force, but with a complete staff of civil administrators, have saved the people from some years of anarchy and great suffering. But that is not our way, and under modern political conditions in England is impossible.

The country was taken and its government destroyed before we had decided what we should do with it, or considered the effect on the people.

The King's rule ended on the 29th of November, 1885. On the 1st of January, 1886, the Viceroy's proclamation included Upper Burma in Her Majesty's dominions. The administration of the country was temporarily provided for by allowing the Hlutdaw, or great Council of State, to continue in power, discharging all its functions as usual, but under the guidance of Colonel (afterwards Sir E. B.) Sladen, who was attached as Political officer to General Prendergast's staff. All Civil officers, British and Burmese, were placed under the Hlutdaw's orders, and the King's Burmese officials throughout the country were instructed to go on with the regular performance of their duties as if nothing had occurred. Some arrangement had to be made, and probably this was the best possible. The best was bad.

On the 15th of December the Chief Commissioner, Sir Charles Bernard, arrived at Mandalay from Rangoon. On his way up the river he had visited Minhla, Pagan and Myingyan, where Civil officers, supported by small garrisons, had been placed by General Prendergast. He decided that these three districts should be removed from the jurisdiction of the Hlutdaw and controlled directly by himself. Mandalay town and district were similarly treated. A British officer was appointed to govern them, under the immediate orders of Colonel Sladen, who was responsible to the Chief Commissioner.

All this must have confused the minds of the people and prevented those who were ready to submit to the British power from coming forward. Fortunately this period of hesitation was short. From the 26th of February, 1886, Upper Burma became a province of British India.

When the Chief Commissioner, who had gone down to Rangoon with the Viceroy, returned to Mandalay, the Hlutdaw was finally dissolved and Sir Charles Bernard took the government into his own hands. A few of the Burmese Ministers were retained as advisers. At first they were of some use as knowing the facts and the ways of the King's administration. Very soon they became superfluous.

It must not be supposed that no steps had been taken towards the construction of an administration during the first two months of the year. Anticipating the decision of Her Majesty's Government, Sir Charles Bernard had applied his signal energy to this work, and before the end of February the Viceroy had laid his rough proposals before the Secretary of State. As soon as Upper Burma was incorporated with British India the scheme of government already drafted came into force.

The country was mapped out into fourteen districts, corresponding as closely as possible to the existing provinces under the King, namely:

Mandalay	Minbu	Pagan
Katha	Bhamo	Ningyan, afterwards
Ava	Shwebo	called Pyinmana
Chindwin	Kyaukse	Ye-w
Myingyan	Sagaing	Yamethin

and after a time three more were added: Taungdwingyi, Meiktila, and the Ruby Mines. The boundaries were necessarily left vague at first until more accurate knowledge of the country enabled them to be defined. At first there were no maps whatever. The greater part of the country had not been occupied nor even visited by us.

To each district was appointed an officer of the Burma Commission under the style of Deputy Commissioner, with a British police officer to assist him and such armed force of police as could be assigned to him. His first duty was to get in touch with the local officials and to induce those capable and willing to serve us to retain or take office under our Government.

Having firmly established his authority at headquarters, he was to work outwards in a widening circle, placing police posts and introducing settled administration as opportunity offered. He was, however, to consider it his primary object to attack and destroy the robber bands and to protect the loyal villages from their violence. There were few districts in which the guerrilla leaders were not active. Their vengeance on every Burman who attempted to assist the British was swift and unmerciful. As it was impossible at first and for some time to afford adequate protection, villages which aided and sheltered the enemy were treated with consideration. The despatch of flying columns moving through a part of the country and returning quickly to headquarters was discouraged. There was a tendency in the beginning of the business to follow this practice, which was mischievous. If the people were friendly and helped the troops, they were certain to suffer when the column retired. If they were hostile, a hasty visit had little effect on them. They looked on the retirement as a retreat and became more bitter than before.

Upper Burma was incorporated with British India on the 26th of February. Thereupon the elaborate Statute law of India, including the Civil and Criminal Codes, came into force, a body of law which implies the existence of a hierarchy of educated and trained officials, with police and goals and all the machinery of organized administration. But there were none of these things in Upper Burma, which was, in fact, an enemy's country, still frankly hostile to us. This difficulty had been foreseen, and the proper remedy suggested in Lord Dufferin's minute (dated at Mandalay on the 17th of February, 1886) in which he proposed to annex the country.

The Acts for the Government of India give to the Secretary of State the power of constituting any province or part of a province an excepted or scheduled district, and thereupon the Governor of the province may draw up regulations for the peace and good government of the district, which, when approved by the Governor-General in Council, have the full force of law.¹

This machinery is put in force by a resolution of the Secretary of State in Council, and at the Viceroy's instance a resolution for this purpose was made, with effect from and after the 1st of March, 1886. It applied to all Upper Burma except the Shan States.

Sir Charles Bernard was ready to take advantage of the powers given to him. Early in March he published an admirable rough code of instructions, sufficiently elastic to meet the varying conditions, and at the same time sufficiently definite to prevent anything like injustice or oppression. The summary given in Section 10 of the Upper Burma Administration Report for 1886 shows their nature.

"By these instructions each district was placed in charge of a Civil officer, who was invested with the full powers of a Deputy Commissioner, and in criminal matters with power to try as a magistrate any case and to pass any sentence. The Deputy Commissioner was also invested with full power to revise the proceedings of any subordinate magistrate or official and to pass

any order except an order enhancing a sentence. In criminal matters the courts were to be guided as far as possible by the provisions of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Penal Code, and the Evidence Act (*i.e.*, the Indian Codes). But dacoity or robbery was made punishable with death, though magistrates were instructed to pass capital sentences only in very heinous cases. In order to provide a safeguard against undue severity in the infliction of punishments, it was ordered that no capital sentence should be carried out except after confirmation by the Chief Commissioner. No regular appeals were allowed from any decision; but it was open for any one who felt aggrieved by the decision of a subordinate officer to move the Deputy Commissioner to revise the order, and for any one who demurred to an order passed by a Deputy Commissioner to bring the matter to the notice of the Chief Commissioner.

"In revenue matters the customs of the country were as far as possible to be observed, save that no monopolies (except that of precious stones) were allowed and no customs or transport duties were levied. As regards excise administration, in accordance with the custom of the country the sale of opium and of intoxicating liquors to Burmans was prohibited. But a limited number of licences were issued for the sale of liquors to persons not of Burmese race, and the Chinese were specially exempted from the restrictions imposed on the traffic in opium."

Thus in four months after annexation the country had been parcelled into seventeen districts, each under the charge of a Deputy Commissioner, who was guided by the provisional instructions and worked at first directly under the Chief Commissioner. It was thought (*vide* Lord Dufferin's minute of February 17, 1886) that the province could be worked, in the beginning, without any authority such as Divisional Commissioners or Sessions Judges interposed between the Chief Commissioner and the district officers. "I would adopt, as I have already said," wrote Lord Dufferin, "the simplest and cheapest system of administration open to us. There will be in each district or circle one British Civil officer and one police officer. The Civil officer will work through the indigenous agency of the country, Myo-ōks (governors of towns), Thugyis (headmen of villages) and others, confining his efforts in the first instance to the restoration of order, the protection of life and property, and the assessment and collection of the ordinary revenue . . . But most of the unimportant criminal work and nearly all the civil suits must be disposed of by the native officials, subject to the check and control of the district officer."

The area of the province, excluding the Shan States, which were left to the care of their own chiefs, was nearly one hundred thousand square miles. It was divided into seventeen districts. There were no roads in the interior, much of which was difficult country. The Irrawaddy, it is true, formed a splendid line of communication from north to south. But the river was not connected with the districts east or west of it by anything better than an ordinary village cart-track, with numerous streams and rivers, most of them

unbridged. The Eastern districts between the Sittang and the Irrawaddy were especially inaccessible. Under such circumstances it was impossible for any man to discharge the duties imposed on the Chief Commissioner, even if all his subordinates had been endowed with ripe wisdom and experience. Only a man of the heroic energy and devotion of Sir Charles Bernard could have conceived it possible. Moreover, the Chief Commissioner was to be responsible for all death sentences, and was to be the final Court of Revision for the province; while the lower province also remained in his charge, and although he was relieved of the routine work of Lower Burma, the responsibility still rested on him, and was by no means nominal. It was not business.

The difficulty soon began to be felt. In June a Commissioner was appointed for the Eastern Division, Mr. St. G. Tucker, from the Punjab. In August and September three more commissionerships were constituted, to one of which, the Northern, was appointed Mr. Burgess (the late Mr. G. D. Burgess), of the Burma Commission; to the Central Division, Mr. F. W. Fryer (now Sir Frederick Fryer), from the Punjab; and Mr. J. D. La Touche (now Sir James La Touche) from the North-Western Provinces to the Southern Division. The Chief Commissioner delegated to them, in their respective divisions, the general control of the district officers and the revision of their judicial proceedings, including the duty of confirming sentences of death.

The administrative divisions of the province, excluding the Shan States, then stood as follows:

1. The Northern Division . . . Bhamo
Katha
Shwebo
Ruby Mines
Mandalay
2. The Central Division . . . Sagaing
Kyaukse
Yeu
Chindwin
Ava
3. The Eastern Division . . . Meiktila
Yamethin
Ningyan (afterwards called
Pyinmana)
4. The Southern Division . . . Myingyan
Pagan
Minbu
Taungdwingyi

This organization enabled the Chief Commissioner to attend to his own work and brought the task of governing the whole of Burma within the

powers of an energetic man. It enabled him to give sufficient time to the organization of the revenue and of the police and to the exercise of that control without which there could be no united action. The attempt to govern without an authority intervening between the executive officers in the districts and the head of the province was due to a desire for economy, and to the belief that in this way there would be closer connection and easier communication between the Chief Commissioner and the executive officers. In fact, the contrary was the result, and in all such cases must be.

The framework of a civil administration had now been formed. It remained to give the district officers such armed support as would enable them to govern their charges.

In the autumn of 1886 the country generally was far from being under our control. It had been supposed that our coming was welcome to the people and that "the prospects of the substitution of a strong and orderly government for the incompetent and cruel tyranny of their former ruler" was by the people generally regarded with pleasure. (See Lord Dufferin's minute of February 17, 1886.) But by July it had become evident that a considerable minority of the population, to say the least, did not want us, and that until we proved our strength it was idle to expect active help even from our friends.

The total military force hitherto employed in Upper Burma had been about fourteen thousand men. There was not anywhere in the whole country a well-armed or organized body of the enemy. A few hundred British troops could have marched from north to south or from east to west without meeting with very serious opposition or suffering much loss. Small flying columns could be moved through the country and might find no enemy, and might even gather from the demeanour of the people that they were welcome. When the soldiers passed on, the power of the British Government went with them, and the villagers fell back under the rule of the guerrilla leaders and their gangs. At first there may have been some faint tinge of patriotism in the motives which drove the leaders and members of these bands to take the field. Very soon they became mere brigands, living on the villagers and taking whatever they wanted, including their women.

"These bands are freebooters," wrote Sir George White² (to the Quartermaster-General in India, July 17, 1886), "pillaging wherever they go, but usually reserving the refinement of their cruelty for those who have taken office under us or part with us. Flying columns arrive too late to save the village. The villagers, having cause to recognize that we are too far off to protect them, lose confidence in our power and throw in their lot with the insurgents. They make terms with the leaders and baffle pursuit of those leaders by roundabout guidance or systematic silence. In a country itself one vast military obstacle, the seizure of the leaders of the rebellion, though of paramount importance, thus becomes a source of greatest difficulty."

The experience of the first half of 1886 had brought home to the Government of India as well as to the military officers in the field that the resistance

was more widespread and more obstinate than any one had foreseen. Sir George White considered that "the most effective plan of establishing our rule, and at the same time protecting and gaining touch of the villages, is a close occupation of the disturbed districts by military posts" (*ibid.*). Under the circumstances, this was the best course to adopt, provided that the posts were strong enough to patrol the country and to crush every attempt at rising. The people might be held down in this way, but not governed. Something more was necessary. The difficulties were to be overcome rather by the vigorous administration of civil government than by the employment of military detachments scattered over the country. A sufficient force of armed police at the disposal of the civil officers was therefore a necessity.

It had been foreseen from the first by Sir Charles Bernard and the Government of India, although the strength of the force necessary to achieve success was much under-estimated. In February, 1886, two military police levies, each of five hundred and sixty-one men, were raised from the Indian army. Of these one was sent to the Chindwin district and one to Mandalay. At the same time the recruitment of two thousand two hundred men in Northern India for a military police force was ordered. These men were untrained and came over in batches as they were raised. They were trained and disciplined at Mandalay and other convenient places, and were distributed to the districts when they were sufficiently formed. Thus besides the soldiers the Chief Commissioner had about 3,300 men at his disposal.

As the year went on and the magnitude of the undertaking began to be understood, the need of a much larger force was admitted. Two more levies were sanctioned. One from Northern India was raised without difficulty, and was posted to the railway line from Toungoo to Mandalay, which had been tardily sanctioned by the Secretary of State in November, 1886, and was at once put in hand. The other, a Gurkha battalion for use in the Northern frontier subdivision of Mogaung, was more difficult to recruit. At the end of the year two companies had arrived, and after being trained at Mandalay had gone on to Bhamo. By this time forty-six posts were held by the military police. The hunger for men, however, so far from being satisfied, continued to grow. After reviewing the position in November (1886) Sir Charles Bernard decided to ask the Government of India for sixteen thousand men, including those already sanctioned, nine thousand to be recruited in India and seven thousand in Burma.

It was proposed that ultimately half of this force should be Indians and half local men. They were all to be engaged for three years, and were to be drilled and disciplined, and divided into battalions, one for each district. Each battalion was to contain fixed proportions of Indians and local men, "under the command of a military officer for the purpose of training and discipline and under the orders of the local police officers for ordinary police work." At this time it was believed that Burmans, Shans, Karens and Kachins could by training and discipline become a valuable element in a military

police force, and the experiment was made at Mandalay. This was the beginning of the Burma military police force, which contributed so preeminently to the subjugation and pacification of the province. The attempt to raise any part of it locally was, however, very quickly abandoned, and it was recruited, with the exception of a few companies of Karens, entirely from Indians.

But to return to the middle of 1886. Sir George White, in writing to Army Headquarters, urged the necessity of reinforcements. The fighting had, it is true, been trivial and deaths in action or by wounds had amounted to six officers and fifty-six men only. Disease, however, had been busy. Exposure and fatigue in a semi-tropical climate, the want of fresh food in a country which gave little but rice and salt fish, was gradually reducing the strength and numbers of the force. One officer and two hundred and sixty-nine men had died of disease and thirty-nine officers and nine hundred and twenty men had been invalided between November, 1885, and July, 1886.

There were few large bodies of the enemy in the field – few at any rate who would wait to meet an attack. It was only by a close occupation of the disturbed districts by military posts that progress could be made. The Major-General Commanding did not shrink from this measure, although it used up his army. Fourteen thousand men looks on paper a formidable force, but more men, more mounted infantry, and especially more cavalry were necessary.

It had been a tradition at Army Headquarters, handed down probably from the first and second Burmese Wars, that cavalry was useless in Burma. The experience of 1885-6 proved it to be the most effective arm. It was essential to catch the "Bos," or captains of the guerrilla bands, who gave life and spirit to the whole movement. Short compact men, nearly always well mounted, with a modern jockey seat, they were the first as a rule to run away. The mounted infantry man, British or Indian, a stone or two heavier, and weighted with rifle, ammunition, and accoutrements, on an underbred twelve-hand pony, had no chance of riding down a "Bo." But the trooper inspired the enemy with terror.

"In a land where only ponies are bred the cavalry horses seem monsters to the people, and the long reach and short shrift of the lance paralyse them with fear," wrote Sir George White, and asked that as soon as the rains had ceased "three more regiments of cavalry, complete in establishments," should be added to the Upper Burma Field Force.

The proposal was accepted by the Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Frederick Roberts, and approved by the Government of India. It may be said here once for all that the Government of India throughout the whole of this business were ready to give the local authorities, civil and military, everything that was found necessary for the speedy completion of the work in hand, the difficulties of which they appreciated, as far as any one not on the spot could.

"It is proposed," they wrote to Lord Cross (August 13, 1886), "to reinforce the Upper Burma Field Force by three regiments of native cavalry and to

relieve all or nearly all the corps and batteries which were despatched to Burma in October last. The troops to be relieved will be kept four or five months longer, so that, including those sent in relief, the force will be very considerable and should suffice to complete rapidly and finally the pacification and settlement of the whole country."

In consequence of the increased strength of the field force the Government of India directed Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Macpherson, Commander-in-Chief of the Madras Army, to transfer his headquarters to Burma and remain there until the conclusion of the operations. Unfortunately, Sir Herbert died shortly after reaching Burma. The Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Frederick Roberts, then took charge of the business and landed in Rangoon in November.

It was evident that Sir George White had not exaggerated the difficulties of the work. After taking stock of the position, Roberts asked for five more regiments to be sent from India. During the cold or, as it should be called in Burma, the dry season following, much was done to gain control of the country, under the personal supervision of the Commander-in-Chief. Especially in the Eastern Division, where large bands of men under various pretenders had been most troublesome, the stern energy of General Lockhart produced a rapid and wholesome change. When Sir Frederick returned to India in February, 1887, the subjugation of Upper Burma had been accomplished and the way was cleared for the civil administration. But four years of constant patient work were needed before the country was pacified and the peasant who wished to live a life of honest industry could accomplish his desire.

Internal administration of Burma

Of the many other parts which go to make up the working machinery of a great province nothing has been said, as the object of this account is to show how peace and order were restored, or rather given, to Burma. Along and step by step with this rough work, however, every part of an advanced administration began to take shape. There was none which was not, at the very least, called into existence.

The revenue of Upper Burma increased from £222,000 in 1886-7 to £1,120,000 in the year 1889-90. No new taxes were imposed. The revenue grew by careful administration. From the year 1888 I had the assistance of Mr. Fryer as Financial Commissioner in dealing with this branch of the work, and the subject of the land revenue of the Upper Province was examined more minutely than had been possible before. In 1889 a regulation declaring the law relating to rights of land and formulating a complete system of revenue law for Upper Burma was framed in Burma, and passed by the Governor-General in Council. In it provision was made for the gradual survey and assessment of the land; and before the end of 1890 the cadastral survey had broken ground in two districts in which the cultivated area was largest.

The Forest Department had been busy from the first, and progress had been made in ascertaining the condition and resources of the great teak forests of Upper Burma.

The Government of India had treated Burma with generosity in the matter of money for public works. The extent of our undertakings was limited by the difficulty of obtaining a competent staff, rather than by a deficiency of funds. The expenditure on barracks and other accommodation for troops at stations where garrisons were to be permanently kept was necessarily large. At district headquarters in civil stations, court-houses, and (where necessary) jails had been built, and court-houses had also been provided in many subdivisions. The irrigation works in Kyaukse were not neglected, and the Mu Canal scheme in the Shwebo district had been taken in hand. The railway to Mandalay was opened in March, 1889, and the surveys for the Mu Valley line, which was to take the rails up the right bank of the river and through all the difficult country traversed by Major Adamson's expedition in 1887-8, had been completed and construction had begun.

Great attention had been paid to the improvement of communications, including several difficult hill-roads. A good cart-road had been made from the river to the ruby mines. Another from Mandalay to Maymyo was being taken on to Lashio; and, from Meiktila to Kalaw on the Shan plateau, seventy-six miles, a road was well advanced. The land-locked Yaw country had been opened up, and a mule-track from Kalewa on the Chindwin to Fort White in the Chin Hills had been finished. Roads over the Yomas, which had sheltered the Magwè dacoits, had been completed.

The money, poured into the country for roads and buildings, apart from the railway expenditure, was nearly all spent on native labour and on material produced in the country. In the aggregate it was more than the sums received as revenue. That it, along with the railway expenditure on labour, helped largely in settling the country directly and indirectly, is certain. If Indian and Chinese Shan coolies were employed, it was because Burman labour was not forthcoming.

Nor had some of the refinements of administration been neglected. In the larger towns a simple system of municipal government was introduced, care being taken not to hurry a somewhat primitive people accustomed to corrupt methods and with little sense of responsibility along the slippery paths of local self-government.

In the middle of 1890 a Judicial Commissioner was appointed for Upper Burma. I accepted this refinement more reluctantly than I would have welcomed a reduction of the garrison. But the character of the man appointed to the post (the late Mr. Hodgkinson) was an assurance that there would be no display of judicial pyrotechnics, such as lawyers sometimes indulge in, and that some regard would be paid to the conditions under which our officers were working.

The provision of medical aid for the people was taken in hand energetically, under the guidance of Dr. Sinclair, who administered the medical department of the whole of Burma. It was not possible to provide substantial public hospitals, and at first only temporary buildings were erected. Excellent permanent hospitals had been built for the military police, and on their withdrawal it was intended that these buildings should be converted into civil hospitals.

Vaccination was introduced also, and every district was furnished with the means of protection against smallpox. The people came readily to be vaccinated, and no Burman, so far as I know, expressed an objection, conscientious or other, to being protected from the ravages of a loathsome disease. But they are comparatively a backward race and still have much to learn.

In the matter of education, it was not the time to do much, and I was inclined to walk very warily in Upper Burma. The Director of Public Instruction was sent round the province in 1889 to examine the condition of the existing schools; and on his report a beginning was made by appointing an inspector and some assistant inspectors, more to ascertain and collate facts than with a view to active interference. Later on the grant-in-aid rules in force in the lower province were introduced. The author of the *Burma Gazetteer* (vol. i., p. 132) writes: "Missionary schools are now plentiful, and lay schools, both public and private, abound; but the bed-rock of vernacular education in Burma is still monastery teaching, and with it is intimately bound up the educational welfare of the people."

I am inclined to agree with this statement. The system of monastic schools has, I think, been an immense boon to the people of Burma, and if only the monks could be roused to educate themselves more and to cast off some of their old ideas I should like to see it maintained.

The danger is that the contact with Western knowledge and ascertained fact may destroy the belief of the young Burmans in the monastic teaching, and this danger is increased, if it is not caused, by the superstitious ignorance of the monks and their inability to disentangle the moral teaching of their great founder from the cobwebs of fairy tales, about the form and nature of the earth and the like. With this in mind, a beginning was made towards inducing the Pongyis to employ certificated assistant teachers in the monastic schools.

Western teaching may, however, have less effect on Eastern faiths than we think. I was visiting a lay school in Burma one day, I forget where, but I was talking to one of the pupils, a very intelligent boy. I asked him about the shape of the earth, and so on. He had it all pat, the conventional proofs included. I said: "Now, you know what the Pongyis teach, which do you believe – what you have learnt here, or in the monastery?" He replied unhesitatingly, "What the Pongyis tell me, of course." "Why then," I asked, "did you say the earth was round and went round the sun?" "Oh," he said, "I must say that or I should not pass the examinations; but I believe the other." There may be more intelligent students, even at a riper age, of the same mind as this boy. Sometimes, perhaps, in the West, it is the other way about.

On the 10th of December, 1890, I surrendered my charge to Sir Alexander Mackenzie,³ one of the ablest men of his time in India.

In his summary of the Administration Report of Burma, for the year 1890-1, dated December 21, 1891, is written: "Upper Burma being now perfectly tranquil, it is not necessary to describe separately the progress made in the pacification of each district. The fact that there were fewer crimes in Upper than in Lower Burma during the year is sufficient proof that except in certain frontier tracts the work is complete."

It is pleasant to most of us to know that our work is appreciated by others. It pleased me the other day, and it may please those for whom I have put together this rough account of the pacification of Burma to read this passage from the "Shans at Home," by Mrs. Leslie Milne and the Rev. Wilbur Willis Cochrane (p. 29):

"At the time of the annexation, every part of the Shan highlands west of the Salween was ravaged with war, Shans against Shans and Burmans against them all. To bring peace and an era of prosperity, put an end to feuds, settle the disputes of princes, re-establish the people in their homes, and organize out of chaos a helpful and strong government was no easy task. That it was accomplished with so small a force, so quickly and with so little opposition, was due to the energy, ability, and tact of the British officials upon whom the Government had placed responsibility.

"Immediately after the annexation, began the era of improvement. Twenty-four years have passed since then. The British peace officers have retired, or are retiring, but they leave behind them a prosperous and peaceful people. The towns are growing towards their former dimensions; wealth and trade are increasing beyond all expectations. Population is rapidly increasing. A mother with her little child can travel alone from Mogaung to the border of Siam, and from Kengtung to Rangoon, with comfort and perfect safety."

Notes

- 1 "The Government of India," by Sir Courtenay Ilbert, chap. i. p. 105. Second edition.
- 2 Major-General, commanding the Burma Field Force, now Field-Marshal Sir George White, V. C., G. C. B., &c.
- 3 The late Sir Alexander Mackenzie, K. C. S. I., afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal.

THE BRITISH IN THE
MALAY PENINSULA

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EARLY PENANG AND THE RISE OF SINGAPORE, 1805-1832

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Introduction

Penang was occupied by Captain Light, acting as the agent of the East India Company, in 1786, and named by him Prince of Wales Island. The motives which prompted the Company to sanction this step were almost entirely political. The successful defence of the English possessions on the East coast of India demanded that a harbour of some kind should be permanently available to the English fleet, where it could refit and take in fresh provisions and water during the North East monsoon, and yet be within striking distance of the Coromandel coast. Penang was not the only place which fulfilled these requirements. Achin Roads, Junk Ceylon (Ujong Salang), the Nicobars and the Andamans were all investigated and recommended as alternatives in the period following 1763, when the Court of Directors first gave orders to search for a suitable base to the Eastwards. Penang seems to have been chosen because in addition to being suitable it had the merit of an owner who was willing to make it over to the Company, in return for the security which he hoped the Company would give him against the threats of his suzerain, Siam, and because Light pressed this fact upon the Company at a time when they were ready to act.

There were other considerations advanced by the protagonists of Penang which probably influenced the decision of the Supreme Government in India and the Directors in London. The possession of the Island would provide a refitting station for East Indiamen on the voyage to China, and make them independent of the Dutch-held ports to the Eastwards. It would put a stop to the growing Dutch power in the Malayan Peninsula, which if unchecked would place them in control of the sea routes to China and of the commerce

of the area. Through Penang the Company might obtain a supply of the spices of the Archipelago, which were in theory a Dutch monopoly, except for a brief period after 1784. The Island would eventually become a trading centre which would pay its own way, and might even contribute to the revenues of the Company.

Whilst it was certainly not deaf to these arguments, especially that which affected the safety of the China trade, the Company was primarily concerned during this period with securing its Indian possessions from the danger of French irruption into the Indian Ocean, and with isolating and destroying French influence in India. To keep Penang permanently available as a base it was willing to pay, although of course it would not be averse to possessing a new commercial centre which might cover part of the expenses. The indecision of the Indian and home authorities between 1786 and the turn of the Century, as to whether or not Penang was worth keeping, arose, not from doubts as to the commercial or financial benefits which would ensue, but from a conflict of professional opinion with regard to the Island's strategic superiority over the alternative sites. Only when the rival settlement in the Andamans had been abandoned in 1796 because of the climate, and the use of Penang as a rendezvous for the Manila expedition of 1797 had proved its strategic importance, was the retention of the Island certain.

The same factors may be said to have held good in 1805, when Penang was raised to the status of a Presidency. The eulogies of Popham, Macalister and Leith all contended that Penang was an ideal naval base, and *could be* a very prosperous trading centre. It was hoped that by developing its own resources, especially the growth of pepper and spices, and attracting to itself much of the trade of the area, Penang would cease to be a drain on the finances of the government of India, and become self-supporting. This however could have been achieved without a great increase in its administrative establishment. The vital motive was the creation at Penang of a naval base which should act as a centre of operations against a French or Dutch force based on Ile de France and Bourbon (Mauritius and Reunion in modern nomenclature), and on the Dutch bases at the Cape, Trincomali and Java. This was before the victory of Trafalgar broke French sea-power and freed British ships for service outside European waters; it was a period when privateers from the French colonies in the Indian Ocean were inflicting heavy losses on British shipping, and when French influence in Holland was on the increase. Operations to the Eastward of the Straits of Malacca, against which the China trade must be secured, were becoming more probable.

The role which it was intended Penang should play was made clear by the division of the Eastern Fleet into two parts, one to be based on Bombay, the other on Penang, and by the choice of Philip Dundas as the first Governor of the new Presidency; his last post had been on the naval establishment at Bombay, and his family connections linked him with the Government in England.

"In 1805 the Court of Directors having taken into their consideration the position of the island, its fertility, its harbour, its produce of large timber, its contiguity to Pegu, which contains the most abundant teak forests in Asia, and which had long pointed it out as an acquisition of very great importance in a commercial and political view, being placed in a most favourable situation for an emporium of commerce in the Eastern Seas, and for becoming a commanding station for the rendezvous, refitting and supply of that portion of His Majesty's Navy required for the protection of the Company's possessions and affairs in the Eastern parts of Asia, had resolved to new model the Government, and to place the island under the same form of government as the Company's other settlements in India enjoyed; when the Board of Admiralty laid before them a plan for the building and repairing His Majesty's ships, which gave a new and high degree of importance to the subject, and rendered the projected reform of government absolutely indispensable. Accordingly the Island was formed into a regular government . . ."

That Government, Philip Dundas, his Council, and subordinate officials, arrived at Penang to organise the new naval arsenal and trade centre on the 24th September 1805.

In the period from 1805 to 1810 the main theme in the history of Penang was the attempt of the government of the island to implement the scheme to make Penang a naval arsenal and a centre of shipbuilding, until the final decision of the Admiralty to abandon all idea of building ships at the island, and to transfer the naval stores there to Trincomali, led to the first retrenchment in the government establishment.

Great trouble was experienced in obtaining supplies of suitable timber, most of which was finally imported from Rangoon, so that the frigate which was eventually completed in 1809 was very expensive compared with building costs in India. The Penang government did not possess an engineer capable of constructing docks and large slipways, skilled artisans were unobtainable, funds were short, and the execution of the project appears to have been regarded with indifference in London. The reasons for this fiasco seem to have sprung largely from home policy, and not local obstacles. The victory of Trafalgar removed any real danger of a large enemy fleet appearing in Eastern waters, and made any building programme outside English dockyards seem unnecessary. The Directors, faced with a large deficit in their Indian budget resulting from Wellesley's administration, and under pressure from the East India shipping interest at home, were not in a position to continue the scheme without Admiralty backing. Any hope there might have been of financing the project from the revenues of Penang itself had disappeared before 1810.

The trade of the island increased steadily during this period, and several private fortunes were made, but the pepper and spice cultivation, which was to have provided the profits for the Company, and paid for the shipbuilding and docks, met with as bad fortune as they did, and again not for local reasons. The Decrees of Berlin (1806) and of Milan (1807) had the effect of shutting the Company off from its Continental markets, and stocks of pepper, spices and coffee piled up in the London warehouses. The prices of these commodities fell so far that they no longer covered the freight from the East, and the pepper planters of Penang, unable to dispose of their crops at a price which covered their costs, were faced with ruin.

The prime purpose of the settlement at Penang, its naval base, had disappeared. The cost of its upkeep was no longer the necessary price for the security of India's East coast, but an outlay which provided private merchants with the facilities for their trade, but brought the Company no visible return. The Directors therefore began to think of cutting down their commitments there. The establishment was reduced from a Governor and three Councillors to a Governor and two Councillors, salaries were cut, and retrenchments ordered in the administrative departments.

From 1810 to 1816 the Dutch possessions in the East were in British hands, and from 1812 Britain was at war with America as well as Napoleon. The general features which run through this period as far as Penang is concerned were largely the consequences of this; firstly the end of the steady increase in the general trade of the island, and secondly a series of mercantilist experiments in the growth of an export staple. Pepper having failed, coffee, cotton and hemp were tried, one after the other, in response to directions from London which fluctuated with the changing face of European politics. None brought great success.

Another factor, which was to become more serious after the foundation of Singapore, appeared at this time; the want of ships to take the export crops not wanted on the London market, pepper, cotton, and also tin, to China, where there was a market for them. The Company's ships carried goods to China as the captains' personal speculation, in his privilege tonnage, that is to say, the portion of the cargo space which the Company allowed him for his own use. But these ships were insufficient for the trade, both in point of numbers and in cargo space available. The Company's ships stationed to the Bay and China were fully laden with pepper or raw cotton. The Portuguese ships, which carried many of the exports of the local Chinese traders to Macao were few, and as foreign bottoms were charged double export duties. There were country ships, but not enough of them. Mostly they found it more profitable to dispose of their opium and specie in the Dutch Islands to the Eastwards, or to load to capacity direct for Canton. The pepper of Penang, therefore, except when there was a year of exceptional demand, continued on the unwanted list, the planters remained depressed, and not unnaturally the revenue of the island did not increase.

The recession in the trade of the island (imports and exports sank from £1,106,924 in 1810/11 to their lowest point, £759,643 in 1814) seems to have been the direct result of the British occupation of Java, and the disturbed state of Achin, in the North of Sumatra. As soon as the administration of Java and the other Dutch Islands passed into British hands the merchants of Penang were placed at a disadvantage in their trade with these places. Trade which used to go to Penang to escape the high duties of the Dutch authorities was now drawn back to Batavia. The merchants of Calcutta and Madras could supply the Batavian market with much more profit than those of Penang. They paid the Company's duties in India, and at Batavia. The Penang merchants paid three times; in India, at Penang, and at Batavia. The customs regulations were modified in favour of Penang in 1812, but her position on the fringe of the Archipelago, which was the real trouble, told against her trade when duties at other ports were not unreasonable. With the spices of Amboina in British hands there was little demand for those from Penang. The British market was in any case over stocked. The tin trade of the island also suffered a severe setback after the British took over Banka. What had been a Dutch monopoly became a British monopoly, and there was now no incentive to smuggle contraband tin to Penang. All went to the government in Java.

From the coast of Achin came the bulk of Penang's pepper and betel-nut imports, and it offered a market for large quantities of opium and Indian piece goods. It occupied an important position in the Straits of Malacca. The Sultans had long been weak and dominated by the territorial chiefs, but the reigning monarch, Johor Allum Shah¹ failed to maintain his hold even of the usual revenues. Contemporary opinion held that he was a waster and a drunkard, and his policy was notoriously controlled by his European advisers, time-servers out for their own ends. Failing to exact the usual contributions from the chiefs in control of the coastal areas he banned foreign trade to ports not under his control, and enforced the ban by a system of piracy, or blockade, depending from which viewpoint the situation was regarded. The trade suffered severely; not only were the native craft scared off, but country ship under British colours were also attacked, which, as in the case of the *Annapoorney*, illustrated by extracts from the documents, brought the government of Penang on the scene. The legal problem involved was solved by the King being driven from Achin altogether in 1815. It is not certain how far the government of Penang supported and encouraged his rival, Saif Allum,¹ in his bid for the throne. Their official attitude was one of neutrality. The old King, Johor Allum, returned to the Achinese coast in 1816, and the civil war which followed further depressed trade. Official relations with Achin were not settled until 1819, and the unsettled state of the country continued long afterwards.

In 1816 came the first great retrenchment, far more severe than that of 1809/10. In a review of the situation the Directors noted that since the

pepper and spices which were to have paid for the administration of the island had failed, the naval arsenal been given up, and the yearly deficit averaged £81,448, there was no alternative but for a large-scale pruning of the establishment lists. In many cases, however, their orders seem to have been treated merely as recommendations or statements of policy, and did not produce an appreciable reduction in expenditure.

The government of Java was handed back to the Dutch in August 1816, and from then until the foundation of Singapore in 1819 Penang passed through what in retrospect seems to have been the most critical period in its history. The government of the island was faced with a multiplicity of serious problems. There was an urgent need to increase the revenues and cut down expenditure in order to avoid further unpleasant reductions in the establishment. The Achinese civil war threatened, if it continued, to put a complete stop to trade with that coast, whilst the return of the Dutch to power in the Eastern Islands and in Malacca, threatened to cut off the trade from the Eastward and even from the Southern states of the Peninsula, which had been, nominally at least, dependencies of Malacca. In the Northern states the aggressive behaviour of the Siamese threatened to plunge the whole of the Western coast into chaos, and to put a stop to trade, especially the important tin trade.

A reduction of the gap between income and expenditure never seems to have meant more to the officials at Penang than the practicability of increasing the taxes on trade and on land and property. Real economy was impossible where all thought in terms of retaining their posts and privileges intact. Although Bannerman, the Governor during this period, did put up several suggestions for increasing the receipts as well as for effecting reductions in expenditure, the main development was an attempt to introduce the Directors and the Supreme Government in India to a new view of the value of the island. Whilst admitting that revenue was not in proportion to expenditure, it was pointed out that this was chiefly because the duties on trade were so light. The importance of the settlement should be judged, not by the size of the local revenues, but by the additional wealth and revenues its trade brought to the other Presidencies of India. All this was quite apart from its great political importance as a safeguard against Dutch attempts to gain control of the route to China.

Bannerman's policy, although he had been specially sent out from a seat on the Court of Directors to implement drastic economies, was based on the principle that Penang could be made so important both as a trading centre and a political outpost, that the advantages it brought to India would more than compensate for the Indian subsidies necessary to maintain its existing system of government. This argument Bannerman had more difficulty carrying in Penang than in India. The Penang officials did not want to lose what revenues they had, and Phillips, the Collector, and Bannerman's eventual successor, was frightened that whilst the Indian revenues might be augmented

Penang would get no credit for the increase, and the subsidies would still be given grudgingly. 1816 had been a good year for trade, largely owing to the demand for pepper in China and the effect of the transition period in Java, where the return of the Dutch scared many native traders to Penang. But the improvement was not maintained. There continued to be no demand for pepper in London, and the cotton plants failed. Moreover trade was severely retarded by the state of affairs in Achin. There were now two claimants for the throne in that country, each in control of separate portions of the coast. Both were attempting to prevent each other from collecting revenue by banning trade with the other's ports, and enforcing the ban by a system of licensed piracy. The government of Penang favoured intervention in favour of the stronger candidate, Saif Allum, whose father was under their control, and who appeared to command the support of most of the important chiefs. Raffles from Bencoolen supported recognition of Johor Allum, the former King, the man with the best legal claim but the least chance of enforcing it. Penang hoped that a British Resident, backed by an armed force and a docile King, would result in security for trade under the provisions of a formal treaty. What Raffles hoped would be the outcome of his policy is not clear. The Treaty of 1819, made after Raffles had carried his point with the Governor-General and the Agent of the Penang Government, Major Coombs, committed the Company to the recognition of Johor Allum, and obtained a promise from that individual to exclude the Dutch from residence though not from trade, and to admit a British Resident. But it made no provisions for armed intervention on behalf of the King beyond calling upon the Penang government to exert its influence to secure the withdrawal of Saiful Allum, and seems to have had no ameliorating effect on conditions in the country.

The return to the Dutch of their former possessions in the Archipelago, including Malacca, which despite protest from Penang was handed over in 1818, left Bannerman in Penang in a very awkward position. The restored Dutch government in the East was characterised by an energetic attempt to regain commercial and political domination throughout the Archipelago and the Malayan Peninsula. It was the policy of the British government, voiced by the Board of Control, to keep Holland as strong as possible, and on no account to risk war by coming into collision with the Dutch in the East. The Directors of the Company on the other hand, were acutely conscious of the danger that Dutch control in the Straits of Malacca and surrounding waters would constitute to their lucrative China trade. It was essential both to the interests of the Company and their private patronage that this trade should be maintained intact. Bannerman was afraid that unless Dutch influence was restricted any chance there might be of recovering the position in Penang by extending its commercial importance would be lost.

His policy therefore consisted of an attempt to forestall the Dutch both by concluding Commercial Treaties with those Native States over which Dutch control had not yet been reasserted, and by securing as much of the trade of

those states as was possible before the Dutch appeared on the scene. This was one of the ideas behind his Achinese policy, and behind the Penang government's decision to take over the tin trade of the Peninsula. He hoped to establish such a strong position that the Dutch would hesitate to challenge it. If they did challenge it, however, he saw from the first that he would have no alternative but to retreat, unless the home government changed its policy, or some sort of Anglo-Dutch demarcation line in the East was negotiated in Europe.

Unfortunately both the speed with which the Dutch acted, and the delays resulting from frequent references to the Supreme Government in India, meant that too little time was available for success. He was forestalled in Pontianak, and though treaties were actually signed with Rhio, Selangor and Perak, the Company's position there had not been consolidated enough to deter the Dutch from action. This action Bannerman lacked the force to challenge, even if he had been willing to risk a collision or defy his instructions. The postscript to this failure was the foundation of Singapore by Raffles, who was not hampered by any scruples over the danger of a collision with the Dutch, and who possessed a knowledge of the private opinions of the Governor-General to which Bannerman had not had access. The occupation of Singapore precipitated the general settlement of Anglo-Dutch interests in the treaty of 1824, which Bannerman had urged earlier.

This period was also decisive in that the nature of Penang's commercial relations with the Peninsula states for the next fifty years was determined by developments between 1818 and 1821. The Island's Malayan trade was hindered by the chronic state of unrest prevailing in the Peninsula. Kedah was engaged in a war with Perak, instigated by Siam, whose attempts to assert her influence over the Malay States made it impossible for the Penang merchants to risk their capital in any large scale attempt to develop the trade of the states to the North, and greatly curtailed their value as a market. Bannerman attempted to arbitrate in the Kedah-Perak conflict and tried to smooth the way for private capital, and to restore confidence by undertaking a trade in tin on behalf of the Company. This he hoped would eventually make Penang the centre of the tin trade, and offset the Dutch monopoly of the Banka mines. At the same time he tried to persuade the Supreme Government to send a diplomatic mission to Bangkok to come to some understanding on the subject of Siamese ambitions in the Peninsula, and to create conditions for opening up a direct trade with Siam. The arbitration failed; the Siamese had overrun all the Northern states by the time Crawford's mission was sent to Bangkok in 1822, so that these states relapsed into anarchy; the difficulties in the way of the tin trade proved almost insurmountable, so that after Bannerman's death in August 1819 it was abandoned.

The future of Penang at the end of 1819 was not bright. The annual deficit remained as high as ever. Trade, whilst a slight improvement was noticeable, was not good. Achin was as unsettled as it had been for the last ten years.

and there seemed no prospect of improvement. The Dutch had secured a hold in Selangor and the Islands in the East, and even if the threat which their presence in Malacca constituted did not prove as serious as it seemed, the trade of that quarter would probably be engrossed by the new settlement of Singapore. By 1821 the Siamese were in control of the Malay states as far South as Perak, and their bellicose attitude made large-scale trade with that quarter impossible. There was still no demand for pepper on the London market.

The story of the foundation of Singapore is too well known to need comment here. The events of the period between 1820 and 1826, when Singapore was brought under the Government of Penang, are dominated by the phenomenal rise of Singapore as a commercial entrepot, and the reactions of this on the trade of Penang. Already by November 1819 Singapore was trading with all the important native ports East of the Straits. Nos. 89-91 in the text illustrate the nature and extent of this trade during 1820 and 1821. The fact that Singapore was for legal purposes an Indian port gave it a great importance for the China trade. It was possible, by transshipping exports from China at Singapore for private merchants to evade the Company's monopoly of the direct trade between Europe and China, for the Indian trade had been open since 1813. Thus by 1822 the value of the trade of Singapore exceeded that of Penang, and it went on increasing at the same unprecedented rate, with occasional small recessions usually, it appears, due to the conditions of the China trade, which made up more than a third of the total trade of the port.

The development of Singapore did not at first result in the decline in the trade of Penang which contemporaries had expected. The trade with the native ports to the Eastward seems to have been lost almost at once. In this the geographical advantages of Singapore were reinforced by the piracy notoriously prevalent in the Straits. The native trade of Penang had always suffered from this scourge, and so did that of Singapore, but whereas the Bugis prows had been willing to run the gauntlet of the pirate infested Straits in order to reach the one free (or almost free) market in the Archipelago, they had now no need. Free-trade Singapore was available at the Southern entrance of the Straits. Whilst trade with the Eastward was lost, however, trade with Achin took a turn for the better. The unsuccessful claimant to the throne left the country and became a British pensioner, and although (or perhaps because) Johor Allum, who had been recognised by Raffles' Treaty, did not succeed in reasserting his control over the country, trade improved. In effect, especially after the death of Johor Allum in 1823, the control of the country was in the hands of the Sagis, and the King had not the power to prevent the chiefs in control of the ports trading with whom they wished. The years of difficulty in the trade of Achin, from which the major part of Penang's imported pepper had always come, had also had the effect of stimulating the pepper trade with the ports on the East coast of Sumatra, which

reached larger proportions than ever before between 1821 and 1823. The demand for pepper in these years resulted in the revival of the pepper cultivation of Penang, and exports of pepper to China seem to have been limited only by the shipping tonnage available.

What was taking place was a division of the trade of the area between Singapore and Penang. Singapore seems to have engrossed the import trade of the native ports to the Eastward, most of the import trade from Siam, the import trade from, and a large part of the export of local products to China, and the distribution trade of European and Indian goods to these markets. Penang held the trade of the Sumatran coast, Burma, the West coast of the Peninsula, and part of the Siam trade, a large import and distribution trade in Indian piece goods of very old standing, and an important local export trade to China, of pepper, tin and Straits produce. This trade the Penang government sought to consolidate by their tariff policy. Maintaining that it was primarily the location of Singapore, and not her free trade which secured her the Eastern trade, they refused to abolish the duties on trade altogether, but sought to remove those which bore on the trade of Siam, Sumatra, and Burma, so as to hold these markets, in which they held the geographical advantage. They also removed the double duties and pilotage fees on foreign ships, to encourage them to call at Penang, rather than as many American ships did, go direct to the native producer for their supplies of pepper and betelnut; this measure was also designed to ease the way for Portuguese ships from Macao which carried most of the local Chinese merchants' consignments to China.

The instructions given to the two missions sent to the East coast of Sumatra during this period, and to Crawford prior to his mission to Siam in 1822, were designed to retain and increase these trades, to keep the Dutch from capturing the Sumatran trade, and to increase the trade with Southern Siam and the Peninsula states.

At the same time there were several developments in the political field the significance of which, as far as Penang was concerned, could not at once be assessed. The Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824, by which the Dutch gave up Malacca and resigned their ambitions in the Peninsula, removed any claim they might have to control the trade of Selangor and the hinterland of Malacca. The monopoly of the spice trade of the Moluccas which it secured to Holland raised hopes that the spice production of Singapore and Penang would be encouraged so as to free the British spice market from dependence on the Dutch. At the same time it was feared that the recognition of Sumatra as an area in which political predominance was reserved to Holland might have an adverse effect on the trade with Achin and the East coast of Sumatra.

Siamese activities in the Peninsula continued to curtail trade with the Malay states there. The Rajah of Ligor, Siam's agent in Malaya, kept Penang in a state of apprehension by collecting forces based on Kedah for an

expedition against Selangor, which it was feared might be used against Penang. There was an almost constant state of unofficial warfare between the Siamese and the adherents of the ex-Rajah or Sultan of Kedah, who in his exile at Penang never gave up hope of reconquering his country. At the same time the naval forces collected by the Sultan of Selangor to repel the expected Siamese attack from Kedah and Perak engaged in desultory piracy to keep their spirits up. The result was that for long periods the coast-line from Junk Ceylon to Selangor was too dangerous for unarmed prows and junks to venture abroad, and the native trade of the region came to a standstill. Crawford's mission to Siam in 1822 achieved nothing except a Siamese acknowledgement of the Company's right to Penang, but the events of the Anglo-Burmese war (1823-6) and the British capture of the Tenasserim provinces seems to have installed some respect for the Company in the minds of the Siamese Ministers, and it was hoped that the terms of Burney's Siamese treaty of 1826 would result in a more settled state of affairs on the West coast of the Peninsula, although the Penang officials did not place much reliance on Siamese good faith.

The annual deficit at Penang continued to increase. Revenue from customs duties made up almost 45% of what annual assets there were, so that the Government were very loth to concede to the merchants equality with Singapore in the matter of free trade. When they spoke of equalizing the duties at the two ports they thought of bringing Singapore in line with Penang, and hoped that the Directors, by the same language meant the same thing. On this assumption they actually re-imposed certain duties at Penang in February 1826. In August Singapore, which, although her revenues covered the cost of administration, the Bengal government found it inconvenient to control from Calcutta, was formally placed under the Government of Penang; and in November, much to the chagrin of the local government, they were forced to notify the suspension of customs duties at Penang. The transition to free trade reduced the revenues of Penang by five Lacs of Rupees at a time when the Court of Directors was becoming acutely conscious of the need for retrenchment in India, and when the Indian government itself was less able than ever before to subsidise the governments of the settlements in the Straits.

In the early twenties, while the trade of Singapore grew from virtually nothing in 1819 to a flourishing commerce worth £2,772,943 in 1824/5, that of Penang did not seem to have suffered. It had totalled £949,109 in 1818/19 and by 1824/5 was up to £1,182,370. Penang was overshadowed, but by no means ruined. After 1825 however, a decline, which soon became a disastrous depression, began. By 1830/31 the trade of the Island had dropped to £708,559, the lowest point reached.

In some measure the great recession of these years was only temporary. There was a serious fall in the price of pepper, and a heavy import tax on gambier in Java killed one of the few trades with the Eastwards which had

survived the establishment of Singapore. Trade with the West coast of the Peninsula remained in a state of uncertainty owing to the difficulties created by the Siamese in Kedah, although Fullerton's determined action, taken in defiance of his orders, to maintain the independence of Perak seems to have done something to set trade with that state going again. On the East coast of Sumatra the hinterland of Siak was ravaged by the tribes of the interior, so that trade with that part of the coast was restricted.

From the records of the Penang government which have survived in Malaya, however, it appears that two of the most important branches of Penang's trade began to decline at this time because of changes in the pattern of trade. These were the distribution trade of Indian articles, chiefly piece goods, and European manufactures, and the export trade to China. It appears from the Penang records that the China trade to Canton, as far as the exports from Penang were concerned, was almost entirely carried on by the Company's ships, either as a speculation by their captains, or shipped by private merchants who hired the captains' privilege tonnage. It further appears that there was never adequate tonnage for the trade, since no ships were stationed specially to "Prince of Wales Island and China", and most of those stationed to the "the Bay and China" completed their cargoes in India before they reached Penang. Moreover the Directors began more and more to frown on what they considered excessive delay in the length of time their China bound ships spent at Penang. After 1817 the Company's ships, owing to American competition in the trade from which the Company's monopoly did not protect them, were more intent on making a fast passage to Canton, and less ships called at Penang, or if they did stayed for shorter periods. The foundation of Singapore offered them a more convenient stopping place on the route. There are frequent references in the documents to the shortage of shipping, and pleas to the Directors to station a ship specially for Penang and China for the purposes of this trade (see for instance No. 160 in the text): in 1823 the Penang government made a very strong protest against the threat that China bound ships might be stopped from calling at Penang, a prohibition, they said, which would strike a death-blow to the prosperity of the place (See No. 108). Whether the threat was carried out does not appear; probably not, but shipping space certainly became scarcer.

This is reflected in the value of goods exported to China during these years. In 1821/22 pepper to the value of 459,723 Sicca Rupees was exported to China. In the following year the figure rose to about 600,000 Sicca Rupees. By the season 1828/29 it was down to 111,432 Rupees. It is possible that this was mainly due to fluctuations of the market, but the figures for tin and betelnut show the same trend. In 1821/22 exports of tin totalled 167,129 Rupees. In 1828/29 they were down to 86,321 Rupees. Betelnut in 1820/21 totalled 303,336 Rupees, and by 1828/29 was down to 205,411 Rupees. It is significant that the only commodity which could not conveniently be obtained elsewhere, Straits produce (birds' feathers, birds' nests, sea

slugs, dammer etc.) held its own, the value exported remaining about the same.

Though there was this falling off of the tonnage available so far as the company's ships were concerned, it seems strange that the Indian country ships did not play a more prominent part in the trade. That exports to China were nearly all carried in the Company's ship appears again and again in the records, so that one is forced to the conclusion that the country ships, for one reason or another found no attraction in the trade. Either they sailed from India fully laden with opium (which is not a bulk cargo), raw cotton or pepper and trade goods, or they found it more profitable to complete their lading with the products of the Archipelago, smuggled tin from Banka, or contraband spices from the Moluccas. There is of course the possibility that the Penang officials were partners in the ventures made by the captains of Indiamen, and deliberately overstated the case. The decline of the China trade during the period, however, cannot be explained by a similar hypothesis.

The import and distribution trade in Indian articles was one of the oldest branches of Penang's trade, founded on Penang's position between India and the Archipelago. Trade from India formed a far greater proportion of the total trade of Penang than it did of the trade of Singapore. After the first decade of the century, however, the Indian piece goods, the greater part of this trade, were steadily crowded out of the market by the cheaper products of the British cotton industry. Thus not only did the trade in Indian goods become less profitable and more difficult to push, but shipments of British and European piece goods and other manufactured articles tended, because of the changing conditions in the shipping routes, to be shipped direct to Singapore rather than to Penang. We find contemporaries noting by 1825 a flood of British piece goods into Singapore and Batavia which threatened to drive the Indian articles out of the market. The Indian trade was thus, as far as Penang was concerned, a wasting asset.

The report on the trade of the settlements for 1828/29 (No. 15) shows the distribution of trade two years before the trade of Penang began to recover slightly. Penang's imports from India are less than those going to Singapore, and the total amount received in Penang from India is now less by value than it was in 1805. The import of Indian piece goods is about the same as it was in 1805. The import of English piece goods into Penang, on the other hand, is shown as only 77,500 Rupees, compared with an import worth 1,648,859 Rupees into Singapore. Penang's biggest export trade, that to China, is dwarfed by the same trade from Singapore. It is interesting to note that whilst by 1828/29 Indian piece goods had lost ground to European piece goods, the quantity imported into Penang and Singapore was still larger than the amount of the European article, and similarly the amount re-exported from these ports to Java and the Archipelago generally retained its pre-dominance. Whilst direct trade between Europe and Batavia is not of course

accounted for, it does not appear that the large quantities of cheap English cottons usually held to have ruined the Indian industry and to have captured the Javanese market in the period before the reign of Van den Bosch, had in fact yet ousted the Indian article.

The chief concern of the Governor, Fullerton, after the union of Singapore, Malacca and Penang, was to do something towards closing the gap between income and expenditure. He was spurred on by the attitude of the Indian Government, who mainly owing to the expenses of the Burmese War, were faced with a large increase in the Indian debt, whilst the charges of the Indian establishment produced an annual deficit which was never much below £3,000,000. The position of the Governor General, Lord Amherst, was extremely insecure, and he was unwilling to allow the drain on the Indian Treasury which the support of Penang entailed, to continue. To the contention that the worth of the Settlements should be judged, not by the revenue which they produced, but by the amount of revenue and wealth which their commerce brought to India, the answer was returned that they could continue to do so with a more modest administration.

Fullerton was faced with the problem of devising new methods of raising revenue which would not interfere with the commercial prosperity of the settlements. In this respect the union of the three governments under Penang was not of much help. The revenue of Singapore had been steadily rising with her increasing population, and since 1821 had covered the cost of administration. There was not however, a large enough surplus to be of much use to Penang, whose annual deficit was larger than the entire annual revenue at Singapore. Moreover, the cost of the garrisons at the three settlements was borne by the Indian governments, so that Singapore's revenue for 1826/7, \$77,316, whilst it covered the costs of administration, would not also stretch to take in the military charges, about \$30,000. The military charges at Penang were of course much higher.

The scheme for retrenchment and raising the revenues which Fullerton eventually produced, with the approval of Amherst's successor, Lord Bentinck, in 1829, involved new taxes on Land and Houses, on the accumulated wealth of Chinese and Indians returning to their homeland, new fines and fees in the Law Courts, and on the Government farms. More important, it involved a reimposition of duties on trade, designed however as far as possible to leave the native trade free and to fall on European imports. It is interesting to note that the first attack on the freedom of trade in the Straits came not from the Indian or Home authorities, but from the officials on the spot.

The decision of the Directors in London had however already been taken. In a despatch dated 7th April 1829 they directed that the Settlements of the fourth Presidency of India be reduced to the status of Residencies under the Supreme Government in Bengal. They hoped that the existing revenues would then pay for the administration, and leave a surplus to cover the

maintenance of the Indian convicts in the settlements, and for part of the military charges. The benefits which the Company and the Indian Governments secured from the settlements would not, they thought, be in the least reduced by these retrenchments.

It is doubtful whether any scheme of reform adopted in the Straits would have persuaded the Directors to hold their hand. The Company's Charter was due to come up for renewal in 1833, and their Indian administration was already the target for considerable adverse criticism at home. Lord Ellenborough, the President of the Board of Control, warned the Directors at the end of 1828 that the government would not renew the Company's privileges unless their expenses were considerably reduced. He wrote to Bentinck "telling the Governor General practically that if he should not be economical one will be found who is". Retrenchment was an urgent political necessity, and the establishment at Penang was an obvious opportunity for the Directors and the Governor General to show their willingness to reform.

The Directors' orders took effect in February 1831. Fullerton had recommended Malacca as the seat of Government because of its central situation, but the Governor General chose Singapore, because of its increasing importance and its proximity to Java and the Archipelago. He had already decided that a centralised administration was preferable to three separate Residencies. In 1832, because of purely technical difficulties arising out of the fact that the Charter of Justice, framed for the Presidency of Penang, had not had its terms amended, it was decided that the Chief Resident at Singapore should in future be known as the Governor of the Straits Settlements, and that the Assistant Residents at Malacca and Penang should be styled Resident Councillors, their powers remaining unincreased.

Note

- 1 This transliteration has been used because it occurs most frequently in the documents, although it is probably further from the original than most of the alternative renderings.

MALAYSIA: THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Mary Turnbull

Source: Wang Gungwu (ed.), *Malaysia: A Survey*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger (1964), pp. 128-37.

In the course of the nineteenth century all the present Malaysian territories, with the exception of the unfederated Malay states, were brought under some form of official British recognition. In the year when Singapore was founded prospects of British expansion in South East Asia were far from promising. Raffles' plans for retaining Java as a British colony had failed, and his subsidiary scheme for establishing British influence in Borneo lay in ruins. In the peninsula, Malacca had been returned to the Dutch. The East India Company still owned Penang, but all hopes of establishing a naval base there had vanished, and there were constant attempts at retrenchment and rumours that the station was to be abandoned altogether. The infant settlement of Singapore appeared to have no brighter future than any of Raffles' other brain-children. The Dutch authorities in Batavia were irritated, but confident that once again the Company would repudiate this embarrassing venture. It would have been foolhardy to predict at that time that by the end of the century British authority would be so extensive in South East Asia. The dogged efforts of individuals like Raffles and Brooke, and the gradual accumulation of unofficial economic interests in the Malay hinterland that cried out for protection, created a situation in which the British government was dragged at first reluctantly to intervene, and from which it could rapidly extend its power in the Malay world later in the century.

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars, the British government was prepared to sacrifice its interests in the East in order to build up the Netherlands in Europe. Had the Dutch pressed home their objections to Singapore immediately, it is more than likely that the settlement would have been abandoned, but by the time negotiations came to fruition, the port was a proven economic success, and the British were anxious to retain it to protect the China

route.¹ Under the terms of the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824, Singapore remained a British possession. In an attempt to settle territorial and commercial differences, the treaty arranged for Britain to cede Bencoolen to the Dutch in exchange for Malacca, thus cutting the British off from future political interference in Sumatra, and putting an end to Dutch political connections with the Malay peninsula. The status of the rest of the archipelago remained ambiguous. One clause which prohibited the British from interfering in the islands south of Singapore, undoubtedly referred at the time to the islands of the Riau-Lingga archipelago, but in later years the Dutch tried to extend the term to embrace every island in the Malay archipelago which extended southwards beyond the latitude of Singapore, and this included Borneo. By the middle of the century even the British Foreign Office was confused over the interpretation of this provision of the treaty.²

It was a long time before the issue became important, for the East India Company was not interested in the treaty as a means for extending its own power in the peninsula or the archipelago.³ It had no intention of treating Sultan Hussein of Johore as its vassal. Hussein was recognised by Raffles for the sole purpose of establishing some form of legal claim to Singapore, and once this was secured, the Company would willingly have washed their hands of him. Each governor in turn whittled down the claims of Hussein and his successors until the title became extinct.

The Company was equally anxious to come to some arrangement which would keep it out of trouble in the northern Malay states, but at the same time check Siamese aggression. In the second decade of the nineteenth century, the Siamese revived former ambitions with intrigue in Perak, followed in 1821 by the overrunning of Kedah. The merchants of Penang feared for the safety of the settlement and wanted more favourable trading conditions with neighbouring states, an ambition which was shared by the energetic Robert Fullerton, who was appointed governor in 1824. Fullerton bluffed the Siamese into withdrawing an attack on Selangor and Perak, and tried to use the mission of Henry Burney, whom the East India Company despatched to Bangkok in 1825 to negotiate a treaty, to extend British influence in the northern Malay states. Burney had to leave Kedah in the hands of the Siamese, but he gained Siamese recognition of the independence of Perak and Selangor. Fullerton thwarted attempts made by the Siamese in 1826 to get round the terms of the treaty, and his agent made agreements with Perak and Selangor guaranteeing British support for their independence. This was contrary to the non-intervention policy of the East India Company, which angrily repudiated the treaties in private, but did not do so publicly. Although never ratified, the treaties of 1826 remained the basis of the Company's relations with Perak and Selangor and the guarantee of their independence. The position of Kelantan and Trengganu was left vague by the Burney treaty and throughout the nineteenth century the Siamese exerted

a strong influence in those states, but they were in any event of minor importance to the trade of the Straits Settlements.

The East India Company was interested in the Straits Settlements solely as a protection to its valuable China trade and as collecting centres for Straits produce to help pay for that trade. In 1826, the three stations of Penang, Malacca and Singapore were grouped together to form the Straits Settlements Presidency, in the vain hope that their administration would be more economical, but the Presidency fell victim to the sweeping retrenchment by which the governor-general succeeded in restoring the Company's solvency after the financial blow suffered through the Anglo-Burmese War. In 1830 the Presidency was abolished and the Settlements reduced to a Residency subsidiary to the Presidency of Bengal. Three years later the Company lost its monopoly of the China trade and with it all interest in the Settlements. For the next three decades they were administered with the minimum of effort and cost. The Company grudged the funds needed for military defence, for naval protection, for the suppression of piracy, and for the provision of a strong police force to control the cosmopolitan and unruly immigrant population. The Company's only use for the Settlements in fact was as a convict station, and Calcutta was rigid in its determination not to be drawn into time- and money-consuming adventures in the Malay hinterland.

Certainly Calcutta had no intention of becoming involved further afield in the archipelago, and the foundation of British influence in Borneo was the work of private individuals, notably of Sir James Brooke.⁴ It was quest for adventure that brought Brooke, a former military officer of the East India Company, to the East. In the prospectus of his intentions that he published shortly before his departure from England, he praised Raffles' policy, which had since been abandoned in the archipelago. Originally Brooke hoped to found a colony in north-east Borneo to promote trade and missionary work. When he reached Singapore, he decided to divert his attention to Sarawak. This province was part of the sultanate of Brunei, then ruled by Omar Ali Saifuddin, a weak, middle-aged man, very much the puppet of other royal intriguers. More forceful was his uncle, Hashim, *rajah muda* [Crown Prince] and regent, who had been trying since 1837 to suppress a revolt in Sarawak which had broken out among the Dayaks as a result of oppression by the Brunei nobles. Finding it impossible to quell the rebels, Hashim appealed to the British for help, and a group of Singapore merchants, who were tempted to take advantage of this situation, persuaded Brooke to visit the country. After some hesitation, Brooke agreed to help suppress the revolt in return for the right of trade and government in Sarawak and the title of *rajah*. Despite the reluctance on the part of the Brunei officials to carry out their part of the bargain, Brooke obtained his document and became ruler of Sarawak in 1841. The Dutch authorities at Batavia were angry, but no official complaint was made by The Hague to London, and the British government paid no attention to Brooke's venture.

It was to be the major weakness of Brooke's position that he had no official recognition or backing from Britain or any other European power. His relationship with the sultan of Brunei was uncertain, and in his early years he was at the mercy of Brunei politics. In 1846 the massacre of Hashim and all his party in Brunei was followed by an attempt on Brooke's life. He was saved by the Royal Navy, which blockaded Brunei, put down the new ruling clique and forced the sultan to confirm Brooke's title to Sarawak and to cede Labuan to Britain. But the support was on an *ad hoc* basis. When Brooke visited London in 1847, he was lionised as a national hero and appointed governor of Labuan, but he failed to obtain any concrete advantage for Sarawak. The British government would not recognise him as an independent rajah nor take Sarawak over as a protectorate, and Brooke was left in the same precarious position.

His administration was marked by sound common sense. He fixed taxes, laid down freedom of trade, abolished river dues and did away with forced labour. He administered justice personally and informally, using a set of simple legal rules. But simplicity of administration does not always lead to efficiency, nor conscientious humanitarianism to economic prosperity. Brooke was no financier, and throughout his rule he was dogged by heavy debt. While he had extravagant hopes of developing Sarawak's supposed rich resources, Brooke was unwilling to allow the existing way of life to be disrupted by the introduction of foreign capital. Consequently the Eastern Archipelago Company, which was designed to attract commercial support in Britain, was doomed from the start, even had Brooke not chosen an agent as malicious as Henry Wise. The attack upon the rajah which Wise fostered revealed the weakness of Brooke's position, unprotected by the British government and yet open to attack in Parliament. At first Rajah James encouraged Chinese immigration, but in 1857 the Chinese rose, destroyed much of Kuching and murdered several of Brooke's officials. With the help of the Dayaks, the rising was quickly suppressed. It was a local affair, sparked off by interference with Chinese interests in Sarawak. But Brooke regarded it as part of a general rising among the Chinese in British territories in South East Asia, and afterwards the Chinese were never encouraged to settle in Sarawak again.

Late in 1857 Brooke went to England. With intrigues among the Malays and a commercial slump following the withdrawal of the Chinese, the plight of the Sarawak government seemed desperate. Brooke toured the country, appealing for protection for Sarawak and urging its union with the Straits Settlements to form one Crown colony. A petition in support of Brooke's plan was drawn up and signed by the mayor of Manchester and many leading merchants and industrialists, but found no hearing with the British government.⁵ Failing in his bid for British protection, Brooke approached the Netherlands and France with no greater success, and he toyed with the idea of appealing to Belgium. In 1863 Britain acknowledged Sarawak as a state

independent of Brunei, but would not accept it as a British protectorate. James Brooke continued to try to induce Britain to take over Sarawak and in 1868 in the last months of his life was also negotiating with Italy for protection.

Meanwhile the neglect by Calcutta in many ways favoured the development of the Straits Settlements, and particularly Singapore, which soon came to justify Raffles' dream as being the hub of trade in the Far East, a free port without duties or even port charges.⁶ The revenue of Singapore, which had only amounted to \$M 620 a month in 1820, increased by 1843 to over \$M 15,000 a month, and the population, which in 1823 totalled less than 11,000, rose in twenty years to 57,000. Thousands of Chinese migrated to the Settlements each year, and gradually trade was built up with the interior. As early as the mid-1830s Chinese pepper and gambier planters began to move to the river valleys of Johore, and Chinese miners were already leading a precarious existence in the tin mines of Sungei Ujong in Negri Sembilan. From the middle of the century, with the opening of the tin fields of Larut and Selangor, Chinese miners flocked in thousands to the interior. More than half of them died of disease within a year, and the others were at the mercy of Malay chieftains and of their own rival clans, but the rewards for the fortunate few were substantial. The trade was dominated from the Straits Settlements by rich Chinese traders, often backed by capital from the European merchants,⁷ and by 1863 the Singapore government estimated the trade between the Straits Settlements and the Malay states to be worth nearly one million pounds sterling a year.⁸ This highly profitable but risky private trade sometimes involved the authorities in trouble. On occasion disputes between rival Chinese factions in the tin mines spread to the Straits ports and threatened the peace, particularly in Penang, where the secret society leaders could muster forces hundreds strong. Sometimes the miners clashed with Malay chiefs.

The settlements which had been made with the Dutch and the Siamese in the 1820s were intended as final arrangements to keep the Company out of trouble in the Malay peninsula. In fact they created a situation which was bound eventually to lead to intervention. The northern states, where Siamese influence was strong, remained fairly peaceful. For many years the ex-sultan of Kedah was a worry to the authorities in Penang, where he hatched several plots to regain his throne, some of them involving merchants in the settlement. The failure of armed insurrection induced the ex-sultan to change his tactics. In 1841 he sued for pardon, and in the following year Bangkok reinstated him as sultan of Kedah, but under strict control from Siam. The rulers of Kedah made no further attempts to throw off Siamese tutelage, and throughout the rest of the nineteenth century the country enjoyed peace and growing prosperity. The north-east states of Kelantan and Trengganu took many years to recover from the exactions made by the Siamese early in the nineteenth century. Their relationship with Siam continued to be

ambiguous. In 1862, the suspicion that Bangkok intended to dethrone the sultan of Trengganu and substitute its own nominee led the Straits government to bombard Trengganu, in order to force the withdrawal of this Siamese puppet. If the Siamese had indeed any intentions of reviving their ambitions in the Malay states, this action discouraged their schemes. There was no further interference in the internal affairs of the states either by the Siamese or the British until the last years of the century. But peace did not bring good government nor justice of administration. Trengganu remained a poor, backward state, and trade between Kelantan and Singapore continued to be subject to hazards.

By the 1850s the political situation in those states which were not left under Siamese influence had produced a problem which the British authorities in Singapore could not continue to ignore. In the south, Sultan Hussein of Johore had no authority among the other Malay rulers, although one section of the European merchants of Singapore saw in him a useful tool for intrigue. The sultan in Rhio was forbidden by the Dutch to interfere in the peninsula, and this political vacuum encouraged the bid for independence by the subordinate chiefs, the temenggong of Johore and the bendahara of Pahang.

The temenggong by the middle of the century was a wealthy and powerful figure. The holders of the office were all men of ability and they gained the confidence of most of the British governors and of an influential section of the European mercantile community. The governors in turn built them up as rulers of Johore, since they saw in them the most effective means of developing a Malay state without the need for British political intervention. Eventually in 1885 the temenggong was recognised as sultan of Johore, and it was only the expansion of British influence in the Malay hinterland in the last quarter of the century which thwarted his schemes for bringing more of the peninsula under the control of Johore.

In Pahang, Bendahara Ali, who ruled for more than fifty years, brought peace to the country, and under his rule the state developed a profitable trade with Singapore. Civil war broke out after Ali's death in 1857, when one of his younger sons, Wan Ahmed, revolted against the new bendahara.⁹ Singapore merchants became involved, and one European firm lent large sums to the bendahara, in return for valuable concessions in the Kuantan tin mines. By that time the bendahara had alienated all his powerful chiefs, and in 1863 Wan Ahmed gained control of Pahang, became the new bendahara, was eventually recognised by the Singapore government and adopted the title of sultan. He repudiated the arrangement made by his predecessor over the tin mines, and the episode led to unrest and a renewed pressure in Singapore to establish some control over the chiefs of the hinterland.

In the independent states of western Malaya, the situation was even more tense, for the states were left in anarchy, while the rich tin deposits in Perak, Selangor and Sungei Ujong encouraged the influx of Chinese miners.

Chinese immigration and the development of tin mining, in which subordinate chiefs often proved more competent than the sultans, finally undermined the tottering administration of the states. In all three states by the 1860s there was civil strife, in the midst of which the Chinese miners risked dispossession and slaughter, and their backers in the Straits Settlements faced financial ruin.

For many years the trade of the Straits Settlements flourished, but owing to the closely guarded policy of free trade, the government gained almost no share in this rising prosperity. In an attempt to prune expenses, administration was lax and inefficient. This was a positive advantage to the progress of the Settlements in the early decades, but by the middle of the century sections of the European mercantile community were growing restive under Indian rule. While fears of international war grew, the Company's parsimony had left the Settlements defenceless. There were fears of internal unrest, for the immigrant Chinese were organised by their secret societies, and the police force and judicial system were inadequate to control them. There were growing fear of convicts and resentment at being used as a penal settlement. Above all there was concern that the policy of uniformity which the government of India favoured from 1854 onwards would force the use of the rupee currency and introduce trade dues. The outcry among the European merchants in Calcutta following the Indian Mutiny for abolition of the Company was echoed in the Straits, and in 1858 a petition for transfer to the direct rule of the Crown was presented in the British Parliament.¹⁰

This apparently simple request was to lead to years of debate. The British government was not keen to take over a settlement that could not pay its own way, particularly at that time when the policy was to cut down commitments for military defence in overseas colonies. The issue was kept alive by an enthusiastic minority of the merchants, who thought that a colonial governor with a local legislative council would encourage and protect the expansion of trade in the neighbouring territories. Eventually the British government agreed grudgingly to the transfer, provided the Settlements paid their own expenses, but there was no intention of reversing official policy. The change did not bring immediately the advantages which the agitators for transfer had wanted. The Legislative Council was a disappointment because it was dominated by the official majority. The governor was rigidly controlled from the Colonial Office, which at first was as adamant as the Indian government in steering clear of commitments in the Malay peninsula.¹¹ By that time, however, the policy of non-intervention was dangerously out of date. Selangor was plunged into civil war in the 1860s, when the influx of Chinese tin miners added to the chaos which had already been caused by the breakdown of the sultan's authority and wars between rival chiefs over tin and trade dues. Merchants from the Straits Settlements took advantage of the strife to supply and arm the contestants, and the collapse of government and consequent increase of piracy threatened the trade of the Straits Settlements.

In 1861 the *yamtuan besar*¹² of *Negri Sembilan* died, and the local federation disintegrated when no unanimity could be obtained on appointing a successor. In *Perak* the authority of the sultan had broken down completely by the 1860s, and various petty chiefs who had risen to power and wealth through the tin trade had virtually established their independence. In 1871, when the sultan died, the normal heir was passed over, and civil turmoil was intensified.

By 1873 the Chinese merchants in the Straits Settlements were petitioning the British government for protection for their interests in the interior. Fearing intervention by Germany if the peninsula were left a political vacuum, the Colonial Office took advantage of the appointment of a new and well-trusted governor, Sir Andrew Clarke, to modify its policy. Clarke was authorised to investigate and report on the advisability of appointing British residents in some of the Malay states. Finding the situation on the spot serious, and under pressure from the Singapore merchants, the new governor exceeded his instructions. At a meeting which he called of the conflicting Malay chieftains and the secret society leaders at *Pangkor* early in 1874, an agreement was signed, whereby they agreed to keep the peace in *Perak*. The British nominee was confirmed as sultan and agreed to accept a British resident at his court. The next month a particularly daring case of piracy led Clarke to insist on the sultan of *Selangor*'s taking a British resident, and later that same year the *dato klan* of *Sungei Ujong* asked for one to be appointed in his state.

These moves were designed in theory to end trouble without committing the British to any expensive intervention. In practice they meant that in future the British had the alternative of advancing to establish control over the whole country or of withdrawing altogether. Further intervention came more quickly than was anticipated, for the first British resident of *Perak*, J. W. W. Birch, aggravated the anti-British resentment, which was already strong among the *Perak* leaders as a result of the treaty that had been thrust upon them. Birch launched a full-scale attack upon the financial privileges of the chiefs and on the practice of slavery, and in 1875 he was murdered as a result of an intrigue against him in which all the major chiefs of *Perak*, including the sultan, were involved. In the retribution that followed nearly all the *Perak* leaders were removed, and the opportunity was created for a clean sweep to be made in administration. The new resident, Hugh Low, had spent nearly thirty years in *Sarawak* and *Labuan*, when he was appointed to *Perak* in 1877.¹³ He brought with him the integrity, the concern for the welfare of the local population and reliance on simplicity of administration, which were the stamp of the Brooke regime in Borneo. Sir James's attempt to unite *Sarawak* with the British settlements in *Malaya* twenty years before had failed, but indirectly he left his imprint on the British administration of *Malaya*, for Low's work was to set the pattern for development in *Selangor*, in *Sungei Ujong* and in the other states of *Negri Sembilan* which gradually

came under British protection. In Pahang an attempt to put down lawlessness and cruelty by establishing a British agent to draw up more humane law codes broke down, and in 1888 the sultan reluctantly agreed under great pressure to accept a British resident.¹⁴

On the whole, the early residents worked with enthusiasm, integrity and energy in introducing a rudimentary administration, reforming revenue collection, providing judicial tribunals and abolishing slavery. They were supposed to submit a diary of their activities each month to Singapore, and to send annual reports. But it was impossible to secure uniformity, and in 1895 the British government agreed to a federation of the four states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang. They were to have a common civil service, an advisory council of sultans, and a resident-general to supervise the residents. In effect the rulers kept merely the trappings of authority, the residents lost their powers of initiative to the resident-general, and although the federation remained on paper a government by advice and agreement, in practice the foundations were laid for uniform government on the usual colonial lines.¹⁵

Meanwhile the expansion of British influence in Borneo followed an independent course. When the first white rajah died, he left Sarawak in a weak position, independent but unprotected, and with a substantial financial deficit. But the country was at peace, and the oppression and cruelty which Brooke found there a quarter of a century before had vanished. It was during the long rule of his successor that administration in Sarawak was organised on an orderly basis. The country was divided into three divisions, each under a European resident, with his own divisional council attended by the local chiefs, while a Council Negri, consisting of the chiefs and the leading European and local officials, met regularly in Kuching.

The Brooke family aspired to take over the whole of Brunei, which covered the coastal areas of much of modern north-eastern Borneo, but the British government opposed this encroachment. Since many of the tribes were in open revolt against the sultan of Brunei, Charles Brooke suggested that Britain might take over Brunei as a protectorate if she would not allow Sarawak to absorb her territory. But the British government's hostility to Sarawak's ambitions intensified from the 1870s, with the appointment of Treacher as governor of Labuan and the growth of rival interests in Sabah.¹⁶

An American company had made the first unsuccessful attempt to develop Sabah in the 1860s. Its leases were bought up by the Austrian consul in Hong Kong, who proposed, with the help of two London merchants, to develop the territory and then to sell it to any interested European power. Treacher insisted that they should not dispose of the territory without British approval, and it was with this proviso that he negotiated a new agreement for them with the sultan of Brunei.

The United States, Spain and Holland objected to this venture as infringing their prior rights, while Charles Brooke travelled along the coast

with a warship, advising the inhabitants to resist. He was reproved by Treacher and by the British Foreign Office. Meanwhile the sponsors of the scheme for 'North Borneo' (Sabah), deciding it would be impossible to sell their rights to a foreign power, applied for a royal charter. This was granted in 1881, on the understanding that the British government would not be involved in any expense. The British North Borneo Chartered Company was to remain British, it could not transfer its rights and territory without permission from London, it was to suppress slavery but otherwise was not to interfere with the religion or customs of the local population, and it was to accept the decision of the British government in the event of any disagreement with the people of Borneo or with powers outside the country. The chief representative of the Company in Borneo was to be appointed subject to approval of the British government, and Treacher became the first governor.

Both the rajah of Sarawak and the North Borneo Company in Sabah looked longingly at the territory remaining to the sultan of Brunei, and eventually in 1888 Sarawak, Brunei and Sabah all became British protectorates. The governor of Singapore was made high commissioner for the Borneo Protectorate, and soon the relationship between Sarawak and the British North Borneo Company changed to one of friendly rivalry. Labuan, a decaying Crown colony, was handed over to the Company in 1890 and continued to be an expensive liability.

The relationship of Britain with its various dependencies in the Malay peninsula and Borneo was in different forms and the paths by which the connection was established lay in different grooves. There was at the close of the century no common purpose and no definite end in view, but a link had been established between the disparate territories that were to form the future Malaysia.

Notes

- 1 A detailed account of the diplomatic background to the negotiation of the treaty is given in Marks, Harry J., *The First Contest for Singapore, 1819-24* (The Hague, 1959).
- 2 The best study of European diplomatic rivalry in Borneo in the nineteenth century is Irwin, Graham, *Nineteenth Century Borneo* (The Hague and Singapore, 1955).
- 3 Tarling, Nicholas, 'British Policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago, 1824-71', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic* (1957), *Society* xxx, pt. 3, gives a comprehensive account of the East India Company's relations with the Malay states.
- 4 The development of Sarawak under the Brooke family provides the theme for two recent books: Runciman, Sir Steven. *The White Rajahs* (Cambridge and New York, 1960), and Payne, Robert, *The White Rajahs of Sarawak* (London, 1960).
- 5 This project was reported and discussed with interest in the Singapore newspapers, notably in *Singapore Free Press*, June 3, 1858, and *Straits Times*, June 12, 1858.
- 6 Wong Lin Ken in 'A Study of Singapore's Trade, 1819-69', *Journal of the Malayan*

- Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* (1960), xxxiii, pt. 4, provides an excellent analysis of the growth of Singapore's trade during the first half century of the port's history.
- 7 The structure of the early tin trade is examined by Wong Lin Ken in a PhD dissertation on the Malayan tin trade prior to 1914, with special reference to Perak and Selangor (to be published).
 - 8 Governor to Calcutta, October 31, 1863, *Straits Settlements Records* (National Library, Singapore), xii, p. 183.
 - 9 A detailed account of this struggle is given by Linehan, W., 'A History of Pahang', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* (1936), xiv, pt. 2.
 - 10 The background and a brief outline of this movement are given in Mills, I. A., in 'British Malaya, 1824-67', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* (1925), iii, pt. 2 (reprinted *ibid.*, 1960, xxxiii, pt. 3).
 - 11 Two recent books provide complementary studies of the background to British intervention in the Malay states during the first ten years of colonial rule in the Straits Settlements: Parkinson, C. N., *British Intervention in Malaya, 1867-77* (Singapore and New York, 1960), and Cowan, C. D., *Nineteenth Century Malaya: the Origins of British Political Control* (London and New York, 1961).
 - 12 Paramount ruler: Negri Sembilan was a federation of nine small states, of which Sungei Ujong was the largest.
 - 13 Sadka, Emily (ed.), 'The Journal of Sir Hugh Low, Perak, 1877', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* (1954), xxvii, pt. 4.
 - 14 Thio, Eunice, 'The extension of British control to Pahang', *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society* (1957), xxx, pt. 1.
 - 15 The best and most concise account of the development of administration in the Malay states after British intervention is Emerson, Rupert, *Malaysia: a study in Direct and Indirect Rule* (New York, 1937). Emerson's term 'Malaysia' referred not to the present-day political entity of Malaysia, but to British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies.
 - 16 Tregonning, Kennedy G., *Under Chartered Company Rule* (Singapore, 1958), covers the origins and development of the British North Borneo Company's rule.

THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Richard Allen

Source: Richard Allen, *Malaysia: Prospect and Retrospect: The Impact and Aftermath of Colonial Rule*, London: Oxford University Press (1968), pp. 42-63.

The first Governor appointed to Singapore by the Colonial Office was a soldier named Ord. He did not endear himself to the local communities. He was determined to mark the separate status of the new Colony by building an imposing Government House and ensuring that the dignity of the Queen's representative was properly respected.

He was bound by his instructions to include members of the local community in his Legislative Council, but some refused to serve. The local British, for their part, promoted the formation of a Straits Association in London. This took advantage of the new opportunities offered by separation from India. It included representatives of the powerful principals of the firms operating in South East Asia and was able to exercise considerable pressure on the London Government. It raised objections to increases in expenditure in Singapore and proposals to meet them by taxation which implied an infringement of the free port status of the Settlement.

In spite of his unpopularity, Ord did useful work in reorganizing the Civil Service. A system based on regular selection of cadets with adequate pay was designed to attract educated and responsible young men. One such cadet, who arrived in 1871, was Frank Swettenham.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the drastic shortening of voyages from Europe brought a striking expansion of trade to the Far East with marked benefit to Singapore. Economic expansion was accompanied by increased colonial activity on the part of the European continental powers. The Dutch aimed at completing their domination of Sumatra. In 1873 they started a long war with the northern Sultanate of Aceh, having freed themselves by concessions to Britain under the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1871 from treaty obligations to respect its independence. A disquieting

feature of this war was the attempt of the Achinese to invoke the help of European powers or of the United States. At the same period the Spaniards were seeking to extend their control over the Muslim areas of the Philippines. The French, even after their defeat by the Germans in 1870-71, were moving into a position of gradually expanding strength in Indo-China; and German interest in the area was the more disturbing by reason of the emergence of Germany as a powerful united Empire which could well be tempted to seek a place in the Asian sun. The British Government in London had no particular interest in the Malay states as such. Their dominant goal was to ensure the defence of India and the security of the trade routes to the east and especially to China. It was for these purposes that the Straits Settlements had been established. For the same reasons the London Government 'wished to prevent any other power from becoming established in Malaya or North Borneo, not to become involved in these areas themselves'.¹

British commercial interests in the Settlements, however, and many local merchants envisaged new fields of profitable trade and investment in the Malay states, if the British Government, at its own expense, brought order out of chaos. 'The idea . . . was that the Colonial Office should authorize . . . military and naval expense. The profit would go to Straits investors (who paid practically nothing in taxation) and the cost would fall on the British taxpayer.'² The British Government, however, long persisted in refusing to countenance intervention. Piecemeal efforts were made to reduce local disorders but a systematic, centrally directed, plan of imperialist expansion was not part of the British scheme of things.

In a letter to the Malacca Chamber of Commerce of 21 August 1872, the Colonial Secretary, James Birch, re-defined Britain's policy of non-intervention. He admitted that the Straits Government's peace-making efforts to settle the dynastic squabbles of Selangor had failed. This had caused loss to British trade and persons, but it was

the policy of Her Majesty's Government not to interfere in the affairs of these countries unless it becomes necessary for the suppression of piracy or the punishment of aggression on our people or territories . . . if traders, prompted by the prospect of large gains, choose to run the risk of placing their persons and property in the jeopardy which they are aware attends them in these countries . . . it is impossible for Government to be answerable for their protection or that of their property.

Dynastic conflict was no less rife in Perak than in Selangor. The Perak Sultan having died in 1871, there were three pretenders to the throne, each seeking to justify his claim under the state's complex rules of succession. To complicate matters further, the ruler or Mantri of Larut, the richest tin

mining area, aspired to autonomy. He had hopes of securing this from the old, weak candidate who had actually been installed as Sultan.

Finally, the Chinese tin miners in Larut were organized into two violently hostile Secret Societies, supported by the Malay chiefs in varying degrees according to their success or failure. There had been clashes between them in 1861 and 1865 and these recurred in 1872, with considerable loss of life. The Colonial Government had a natural fear that these disturbances might spread to Penang and Singapore, which had suffered from Chinese riots in the past.

In September 1873, Governor Ord decided to recognize the pretensions to independence of the Mantri of Larut, who supported the Chinese faction in actual possession of the tin mines, and he raised no objection to the recruitment of an eccentric Englishman called Speedy into the Mantri's service. This policy in effect discountenanced the claim of Abdulla, the former Crown Prince or Raja Muda to be Sultan of the whole of Perak. A few months later, Ord's term of office came to an end.

Meanwhile, in the course of 1873 there had been in British Government circles a change of opinion to the view that some sort of action was necessary in Malaya, while pressure of opinion in the Straits Settlements in favour of intervention had increased. Local merchants pleaded that this rich area would be impoverished unless the British Government interfered to restore order and peace. The new Governor, Andrew Clarke, a Colonel of the Royal Engineers, had the advantage of personal contacts with politicians in London of both parties and the reputation of being cautious as well as able. But as Professor Cowan has pointed out³ he had strong imperialist views and a detestation of bureaucratic routine which seem to have been little known to official circles at home. Some months before his departure, British Government circles appear to have been definitely stimulated to a change of course contemplating some measure of intervention by remonstrances to the Colonial Office from a representative of British tin-mining interests in Selangor. These suggested as likely 'that the smaller states of the Peninsula would put themselves under the protectorate of some European power'. Failing England Germany was mentioned as the most likely.⁴ However specious this argument, on the day of his departure for Singapore Sir Andrew Clarke received instructions containing the following equivocal but significant passage:

Her Majesty's Government have no desire to interfere in the internal affairs of the Malay States. But looking to the long and intimate connection between them and the British Government and to the well-being of the British settlements themselves, H. M. Government find it incumbent upon them to employ such influence as they possess with the native princes to rescue, if possible, these fertile and productive countries from the ruin which must befall them if the present disorders continue unchecked.

I have to request . . . that you will report . . . whether there are . . . any steps which can properly be taken by the Colonial Government to promote the restoration of peace and order, and to secure protection to trade and commerce with the native territories. I should wish you especially to consider whether it would be advisable to appoint a British officer to reside in any of the States. Such an appointment could . . . only be made with the full consent of the Native Government, and the expenses . . . would have to be defrayed by the Government of the Straits Settlements.

Sir Andrew Clarke decided after arriving in Malaya that his instructions were too cautious. Ord's policies had not restored order in Perak and Selangor. The situation seemed to demand urgent action. It was easier for him than for Ord to take an independent line, as he was not by training and experience a Colonial official. He promptly questioned the wisdom of Ord's support for the Mantri of Larut and his implied rejection of Abdulla's claim to the throne.

Abdulla reached an understanding with the Chinese faction opposed to the Mantri, the leader of which demanded a share of Perak's prospective revenue for his part in promoting the pretender's claim. He also informed the Governor – under prompting from the merchants in Singapore – that he and the Perak leaders wished to settle under the protection of the British flag. He asked that an able man should be sent to show them a good system of government so that the country might be profitably opened up.

The Governor decided that there was a case for reviewing Abdulla's claim. Was he or Ismail, the prince actually installed as Sultan, the rightful ruler? The claims of the third pretender, Raja Yusuf, were not considered at all. The strongest character of the three, he had antagonized many of the chieftains by the severity with which he had dealt with them at the behest of a former Sultan of whom he was the eldest son. The Governor also aimed at pacifying Larut by mediating between the two hostile groups of Chinese.

Clarke succeeded in bringing together the leaders of the opposing Chinese at a meeting on his yacht at Pangkor Island off the Perak coast, to which some, but not all, of the Perak princes and chieftains were invited, including Ismail, Abdulla, and the Mantri, but not Yusuf. Ismail did not appear, claiming that he had received his invitation too late. The meeting was briskly conducted by the Governor. Frank Swettenham acted as interpreter for the Malays and one W. A. Pickering for the Chinese, the latter afterwards becoming the first British Protector of Chinese in Malaya.

Agreement was achieved with, and between, the Chinese. The Malay chiefs present went through a form of election. The upshot was unanimous, if in part reluctant, consent to Abdulla becoming Sultan. An Engagement was signed on 20 January 1874 (sometimes loosely called the Treaty of Pangkor). This recognized Abdulla as Sultan and Ismail as ex-Sultan. The Sultan was

to receive a British officer as Resident whose advice must be asked and acted upon on all questions other than those touching Malay religion and custom. There was also to be an Assistant Resident to control the Mantri at Larut. The cost of the Residents was to be a first charge on Perak funds. The collection and control of revenue, and the general administration of the country was to be regulated under the advice of the Residents. On the re-establishment of peace among the contending factions the previous status was to be restored at the tin mines.

Clarke and the business community leaders in the Settlements were delighted with this achievement. The Governor reported that he had exceeded his instructions but felt confident that the government would consider him justified! Very cautiously, the London authorities expressed the hope that the Governor's proceedings 'may have the effect of allaying disorders and promoting peaceful trade'.

Most of the Malays seem to have been frankly bewildered by the speed and bluntness of the Governor's approach. To express agreement was a traditional reaction on their part to anything put to them forcibly by someone in a stronger position than themselves. There was thus scope for painful misunderstanding when they realized the full implications of the document to which they had set their seal. Anglo-Saxon pragmatism had cut sharply across a situation to which they were accustomed – full of confusion and discord. The British had sought a clear-cut, practical, solution without strict regard for all the relevant factors which would have made it scrupulously just. The capital test would be how the new, enforced relationship between modern European and traditional Asian concepts could be humanly applied.

After returning to Singapore the Governor aimed at tackling in similar fashion the affairs of Selangor and Sungei Ujong, one of the states of Negri Sembilan adjacent to Malacca.

In Selangor the British authorities had for some years supported the Sultan's son-in-law, Tunku Dia Udin, who was supposed to be in charge of the state as Viceroy. But there had been civil war, as the Viceroy's position was contested by other leading chieftains and members of the Sultan's family. Supported by the Royal Navy the Governor visited the Sultan, demonstrated his approval of the Viceroy and lectured the Ruler on the importance of achieving order. A number of alleged pirates were executed. He also sought to force an agreement on the rival chiefs in Sungei Ujong, one of them being selected for British approval and support. At this stage, however, the plans of the Singapore Government for the further extension of British influence in the Peninsula still received little encouragement from the Colonial Office in London.

Meanwhile the Colonial Secretary in Singapore, James Birch, applied for and was eventually given the post of British Resident in Perak with Speedy as Assistant Resident in Larut. His appointment followed a preliminary and

frustrating mission to Perak with Swettenham, the Assistant Resident in Selangor, in which he vainly attempted to secure the Sultan's regalia from Ismail so that Abdulla could be properly installed. Shortly afterwards Clarke was succeeded as Governor by another senior officer of the Royal Engineers, Sir William Jervois.

Birch was judged not to be well versed in Malay affairs. As the Governor's deputy, he does not seem to have enjoyed his chief's confidence. The post in Perak was an opportunity to justify himself. But he brought to the task an impatient, missionary zeal for reform typical of the Victorians. His courage vastly exceeded his judgement. He sought to introduce modern revenue methods before the local chieftains had been assured of allowances to compensate them for the loss of their traditional perquisites. He also aimed at overthrowing in short order practices glaringly at variance with Christian ethics. One of these was debt slavery. 'His attitude . . . was coloured by a Victorian disapproval of its immoral (as opposed to its merely oppressive) aspect. It was the slave *girls* he wanted to emancipate, allowing the Malays to draw the sort of conclusion that a modern psychologist might partly endorse.'⁵ Finding his efforts at reform by persuasion inadequate, he persuaded the Governor to authorize him to govern the state directly in the Sultan's name.

Soon Birch was on the worst of terms with Sultan Abdulla, ex-Sultan Ismail, and most of the Perak chiefs, who closed their ranks, merged their differences, and eventually determined to remove the Resident by murder. By sending to one of the State Officers, the Maharaja Lela, a kris – the Malay dagger – Abdulla implicitly authorized the murder.

Birch was speared through the walls of a bath house on the Perak river on 2 November 1875. He and his staff had been posting proclamations which Abdulla had been persuaded to sign. These, which were promptly torn down, announced that the British would administer Perak in the name of the Sultan.

Birch had clearly realized the danger he ran but remained convinced that he was right in persisting in his headlong and uncompromising policy of change. It is almost as if he had foreseen that his murder would be the decisive factor leading to Britain's eventual assumption of control step by step over virtually the whole of the Malay Peninsula.

After receiving confirmation of the murder, Swettenham, who had been dispatched up-river, managed to return downstream to the British Residency in spite of the preparations to kill him too. The Residency was eventually relieved by a force from Penang. Believing that a general rising in Perak and elsewhere was likely to take place, the Singapore authorities summoned troops from Hongkong and India.

There was no general rising; and the British troops made an impressive incursion into Perak and other parts of Western Malaya. Selangor remained quiet. There was some fighting in Sungei Ujong. But by the end of 1875

effective resistance had largely ceased. In Perak, those closely identified with Birch's murder were hunted down and tried. Some were hanged, including the Maharaja Lela in spite of his exalted rank. Ismail handed over the Regalia. Abdulla was exiled with the Mantri and other chieftains. Raja Yusuf became Regent and eventually Sultan. After a short interregnum during which Davidson, the Resident from Selangor, took charge, a new British Resident was appointed. This was Hugh Low, who had been magistrate of the island of Labuan off Borneo. There would be no drawing back. Apart from imposing order, Britain had next to attempt to rescue the state from the bankruptcy produced by all its troubles. Low eventually achieved by his personal qualities the success which had totally eluded Birch. What had happened in Perak proved to be decisive for the evolution of the whole country.

The transition to British control in other regions was a smoother and less dramatic process than it had been in Perak. Selangor and Sungei Ujong had accepted British Residents by the end of 1874. To the south, Johore was already virtually under British control in view of the close links preserved by its rulers with adjacent Singapore. To the north, Kedah and Perlis owed allegiance to Thailand but had come under British influence through their proximity to Penang. In the eastern Peninsula, the ruler of Pahang was descended from one of the great chiefs – the Bendahara – of the former Johore dominions. He eventually assumed the title of Sultan as did the ruler of Johore, descended from the Temenggong. Only Kelantan and Trengganu, also under Thai suzerainty, were still broadly outside the sphere of British influence.

There could, however, be no further extension of British control until the London Government knew what it wanted. It had been gravely disturbed by the turn of events in Perak. The Governor had acted with ability and determination. But he had taken decisions far beyond the scope of his instructions. He was sharply rebuked and his mission terminated early in 1877. London, not Singapore, was to decide policy in future. If there was to be no withdrawal, what course should be pursued short of outright annexation?

In June 1876, London cautiously defined official intentions in very general terms. There was no proof, it was stated, that the system of Residents had failed. It had broken down in one area, but had had fair success in others. It was unnecessary to withdraw them. They could give valuable help with the administration, but they would need an armed guard. For this, 150 to 200 police should be sufficient and all troops should be withdrawn.

There should be state councils of mixed Malay chiefs and British officers (as the Governor had suggested). Thus the chiefs could themselves take a useful part in administration and the Residents should train those of sufficient capacity for this purpose. The councils would also give the Residents a chance to gauge local feeling about their proposed reforms. British officers

should not interfere more than necessary in minor details. They should aim at maintaining peace and law and instituting a sound system of taxation so as to develop the country's resources.

The Governor was subsequently informed that no extension of the Resident system could be sanctioned until there had been more experience of its working. Britain's responsibilities must not be enlarged. There would be quite enough to do bringing peace and order to the states with which Britain was already connected.

Sungei Ujong was the only state of Negri Sembilan placed specifically under British protection. From 1876, however, the British Resident system was gradually extended to other parts of the area helped by the coalescence of various of its smaller units into larger groups. By 1895 the process was complete; as an organized confederacy all the groups and units in Negri Sembilan had agreed to accept the British method of control.

Such was the trend of events and opinion which led to Britain assuming a new and important imperial role. It all seems strangely casual, and would hardly have been comprehensible without going into some detail. For the next seventy years, however – until the Japanese occupation of 1942 – the story can be told in broader outline. It is less dramatic, less complex, and far more down to earth.

The evolution and consolidation of British rule

The British Government intended that henceforth Residents should be advisers only. They were not to aim at being the effective rulers of their states. In practice, however, this is what they gradually became.

Davidson, the Resident in Selangor, with Swettenham as his assistant, had little trouble in organizing a modern system of finance and a police force. Under the control of its Chinese headman, the mining centre of Kuala Lumpur gradually took shape as a small settlement which eventually became the capital of the modern federation of Malaysia. Slavery was abolished as were many ancient dues which had restricted trade. Stable and clearly regulated conditions were the source of a new prosperity.

In Perak a legacy of resentment had to be overcome. The basis of Low's success was that he managed to make friends – as always, the key to achievement in Asia. He compensated the chiefs promptly, out of revenue and by giving them government jobs, for the loss of their feudal dues. Yet even for Low the evolution of the Resident system bristled with problems.

The British Government – not for the first time in its history – issued instructions which ignored logic and reality in the tacit expectation that a workable system would be evolved by the men on the spot in spite of these. It was inevitable that the instructions would be exceeded, but their advantage

was that the local officials could be called to account if their unauthorized initiatives led to trouble.

Thus the Colonial Secretary laid it down in June 1876, that Residents were 'not to interfere more frequently . . . than is necessary with the minor details of government; but their special objects should be the maintenance of peace and law, the initiation of a sound system of taxation, with the consequent development of the resources of the country, and the supervision of the collection of the revenue, so as to ensure the receipt of the funds necessary to carry out the principal engagements of the government.'

As Sir Frank Swettenham has pointed out,⁶ 'nothing with any pretensions to a system had ever been formulated. That was all to come, and to be worked out by the Residents themselves.' On the face of things it was an impossible task '... for one white man to maintain the law - something unwritten and unknown - and preserve the peace in a foreign state of which he knew very little, initiate a sound system of taxation and get it observed, develop the resources of the country et cetera' under the rule of minimum interference laid down in these instructions.

This logically insoluble dilemma was solved in practice by Low's tact and patience. He remained twelve years, paid off the state deficit in six, and transformed it into a flourishing credit balance. He initiated the State Council system which handled all important matters of government. The Council included Chinese business men and Malay chiefs. As a member of the Council with the Sultan in the chair the Resident could only persuade. If he failed to secure agreement to a particular proposal, he had no recourse but to try again when he judged his chances to be more favourable. If he succeeded, he ceased to play any visible part. The Council took the policy decision and issued its own orders. 'The Sultan retained prestige and had an important political role as President of the State Council. As the State prospered both he and the leading Malay chiefs were aware that the new régime was not without advantages for them.'⁷ In spite of the difficulties, through the State Council the Resident was able to gain local co-operation in applying the new essential measures.

In twelve years the population of Perak rose more than two and a half times. The Perak Council became a model for other parts of Malaya. The legal and judicial system of the Straits Settlements (which largely followed that established by the British in India) was introduced into this and the other Malay states. Unlike the legal régime in the Dutch and French colonies, the British codes were no respecters of race or person. Equality of Europeans and Asians before the law was introduced for the first time. Yet the fact that the Chinese and other non-Malay settlers continued to be regarded as aliens to some extent impaired the practical application of these principles of legal equality where the local Asians were concerned. Each state was divided into districts with British and Malay District Officers and magistrates. The villages were run by Malay headmen with police duties.

Tin was the capital factor in the revenue of the Malay states under British protection and the Chinese who mined it, and handled much of the retail trade, long dominated almost exclusively the economic life of the country. The Chinese miners in the Larut area prospered in peace. The first railway in Malaya, built in 1884, gave Larut access to the sea. In Selangor the second Malayan railway gave the Kuala Lumpur mines similar access to the sea through Klang. Other forms of transport became progressively more vital. Streams were cleared and roads were built.

In 1888 the state of Pahang came under British protection; and, as we have seen, in 1895 the whole confederation of Negri Sembilan, the small states of which elected one Supreme Ruler or Yang di Pertuan Besar. Pahang was the least developed area in Malaya and had been one of the least well governed. In 1887 Governor Weld persuaded the Sultan to accept a British Consular Agent and in 1888 (after the murder of a Chinese British subject) a British Resident. Here the transition was clouded by a rebellion and British military action to suppress it. The affairs of Pahang first gave prominence to Hugh Clifford, another of Britain's outstanding pioneers in the modernization of Malaya.

Immigration and foreign investment followed Britain's assumption of control. By the 1880s withdrawal had ceased to be a practical issue. On the other hand, outright annexation of the kind practised in Burma was judged to be quite unsuited to the circumstances of the Malay States. Yet the Residential system, a pragmatic compromise, developed with a minimum of control and co-ordination. It demanded review and this was undertaken between 1880 and 1895.

With money available for modern facilities, the scope of a Resident's duties had inevitably expanded. Roads, railways, schools, disease, had high priority. A Resident was constantly travelling around seeing what should or could be done within his state. He sent the Governor an annual report and financial estimates and some information on current events in the course of the year. But before 1896 each of the Residents was very much of a free agent. There were few in Singapore who could have checked what he told them from their local knowledge.

In 1893 Frank Swettenham, then Resident of Perak, submitted to the Governor a scheme for the federation of the four protected states. The Sultans were assured by Swettenham that their powers, privileges, and autonomy would be undiminished. The scheme was accepted and introduced on 1 July 1896. Much was changed with its adoption.

The Federated Malay States evolved a common civil service, with a central bureaucracy in Kuala Lumpur. At the head of this, Swettenham, as Resident-General, supervised the administration of the states through the individual Residents. He was officially subordinate to the Governor, who was also High Commissioner for the Federated Malay States. Yet in practice he retained considerable autonomy and local power and prestige. From being a

regional power in his own right the Resident became a civil servant under central control.

As government departments multiplied the Resident-General came to exercise effective legislative as well as executive power. In key positions in the central administration he had, amongst others, a Legal Adviser, a Secretary for Chinese Affairs, a Financial Commissioner, a Judicial Commissioner, a Commissioner of Police, and Directors of Public Works, Railways, Forests, etc. 'Kuala Lumpur became the legislative as well as the administrative centre, and the position of the State Councils which had been so vital a feature of the old Residency system, necessarily deteriorated before the inevitable growth of centralization.'⁸

The structure of this first Federation illustrated Britain's practical sense and lack of preoccupation with theoretical symmetry or logic. It worked effectively, yet it emasculated the State Councils which the British had created and the Sultan's prestige and authority which they had been concerned to uphold. There was, it is true, provision for consultation of the Sultans and for discussion of proposed measures in a Conference of Malay Rulers inaugurated in 1897. Yet, in practice, decisions were taken by the central administration and passed on to the State Councils for legislative action.

The Federation was not in fact a federation in the accepted sense of the word. It did not guarantee a measure of local autonomy like the federal constitution of the United States. It largely abolished state autonomy in favour of administrative co-ordination. This had admirable results in streamlining and speeding up the process of modernization. There were massive increases in population and revenue and impressive development of communications and public health measures. Yet in these earlier years little administrative responsibility was assigned to the Malays and they resented it. The achievements hardly seemed to them to justify a situation in which the supposedly indirect system of British rule had become almost indistinguishable from direct administration. 'An unsanctioned system of direct government by Residents [had] developed which, however successful . . . was completely at variance with the *de jure* position. The gulf between practice and theory was only widened by the so-called Federation Agreement.'⁹

It was not only the Malays who complained of their lack of participation in government. By the early twentieth century such participation was also sought by the rapidly growing commercial, mining, and planting communities. The Sultans, moreover, became comprehensibly restive as centralization increased. They resented in particular the extent of the Resident-General's influence on policy.

The upshot of all these grievances was the establishment in 1909 of a Federal Council, which, however, still disappointed Malay hopes. The Governor, as High Commissioner for the Malay States, presided. The four Sultans were members in addition to the Resident-General, the four Residents and four unofficial members nominated by the High Commissioner. Heads

of departments could be added if they were matched by an equal number of unofficial members. The latter (mostly British with a few Chinese and Malays) were intended to represent the chief economic interests of the country: trade, industry, and agriculture. The Council met once a year and considered the financial estimates of each state. It was supposed to legislate for the Federation as a whole and in practice it made all important decisions of policy. Laws passed by the State Councils (exclusively competent in Islamic matters and Malay custom) continued in force unless in conflict with those passed by the Federal Council. The authority of the Rulers and State Councils was again diminished and this further belied Swettenham's assurance to the Sultans at the time of federation. A change in the Resident-General's title to the more modest one of Chief Secretary seems to have done little to reduce his independence or the overriding authority of the central administration.

The principles underlying this Council were even less logical than the original structure of the Federation. According to Kennedy

The Federal Council was a curious piece of constitutional machinery. Its President was the Governor of a neighbouring Colony and its unofficial members required the approval of the British Government . . . the four Sultans sat . . . as ordinary members with no powers of veto, and its business went on whether they attended or not. Its legislation was signed by the High Commissioner. The Sultans either sat silent or ceased to attend . . . the main voices were those of the Chief Secretary and of the unofficial members.¹⁰

In the year 1909 which saw the establishment of the Federal Council, the sphere of British responsibilities expanded. Thailand was persuaded to transfer to British protection the four northern Malay States over which she had exercised a more or less nominal suzerainty. The inducements were the abandonment by Britain of her jurisdiction over British subjects in Thailand and a loan to build a railway-line linking Bangkok with the Malayan railway system. After their transfer to Britain, however, Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, and Trengganu firmly declined to join the Federated Malay States. Supported by Johore they evaded the drastic centralization imposed by Kuala Lumpur. They insisted on preserving those elements of autonomy compatible with gradual modernization.

There was a long way to go. In 1909 much was still mediaeval in the two eastern states. Kelantan and Trengganu were hardly more advanced than Perak had been forty years earlier. They had preserved much that was traditional in Malay life. Kedah and Perlis, on the other hand, in close touch with the British settlement of Penang, had absorbed more Western influence. In any event, the greater independence of these Unfederated Malay States (as they came to be known) had certain advantages for the future. Each state

maintained a civil service of its own with a minimum of Europeans. Malays occupied a substantial number of responsible posts – a tradition which contributed to the successful assumption by Malays of wider responsibilities when partial self-government and eventually independence came.

After the transfer of Thai rights Britain concluded separate treaties with each Ruler. Some, e.g. Kelantan, already had British advisers and other officials appointed from Bangkok. Perlis promptly accepted a British adviser. Kedah and Trengganu agreed in 1910 to more or less limited British advice and supervision. Trengganu did not formally accept a British Adviser till 1919 and Kedah till 1923. The title of Adviser was a genuine definition of the functions he exercised, functions which had been exceeded in the Federation as a result of the Resident system.

There had been only limited British contacts with Kelantan and Trengganu. These east coast states had not come under the influence of Penang as had Kedah and Perlis. Consequently little English was spoken or understood there at the time of the cession. Even in the twentieth century, in these strongly traditionalist Muslim states, English education was for some time regarded as being in conflict with their religion. The headmaster of the first English school to be established in Kelantan was threatened with serious consequences if he did not get out. The Unfederated States were essentially governed by their own Malays with a certain amount of British guidance. As we have seen, the strength and effectiveness of their State Councils was the envy of the Federated States where the administration was essentially British though with some regard for Malay privileges. One detail which persists to this day in independent Malaysia symbolizes this difference. The former Federated States observe the Christian holiday of Sunday and work on Friday, the Muslim holy day. The others insist on observing Friday as their day of rest and work on Sunday.

After the cession of the four northern states Britain had gathered under her protection most of the Malay regions of the Peninsula. Only the state of Patani and the areas of Satun, Yala, and Narathiwat remained under Thailand. Despite the religious differences – the Thais were predominantly Buddhist and the Malays predominantly Muslim – as the twentieth century progressed these Malay regions were destined to be increasingly absorbed into the Thai cultural, social, and governmental system.

Johore was the last state formally to accept British protection. This was not from any antipathy to the Colonial Power. The state had had intimate relations with Singapore since this had become one of the Straits Settlements, and had been strongly influenced by the British system. But it was not until 1914 that the Sultan formally accepted a British General Adviser.

The greater autonomy retained by the Unfederated States prompted the rulers of the Federated Malay States to seek to revitalize their own State Councils. The British authorities for their part hoped that the Unfederated States could be induced to reconsider their objections to joining the

federation if the federal system were rendered more attractive. The eventual consequence was a reorganization of the Federal Council in 1927. The Sultans thenceforward formed no part of it but held separate annual meetings with the High Commissioner and Chief Secretary and were usually consulted by the Residents before Council meetings. The number of Council members was increased to thirteen official and eleven unofficial. In the second category Malay participation was strengthened.

Later still, in the 1930s, the Residents in the four Federated States were freed from the supervision of the Chief Secretary and this formerly key figure was given the even less resounding title of Federal Secretary. The states recovered control of agriculture, health, and public works. From this time the State Council put forward its own budget proposals for consideration by the Federal Council and again became responsible for legislation. Federal officers for finance and legislation were made members of all the State Councils.

The system of British rule, first in the Straits Settlements then in the Federated Malay States and finally in the Unfederated States, had evolved in a haphazard and not very tidy fashion. In the political field the general pattern which this chapter has described continued until the Japanese invasion of December 1941.

In the economic field Malaya exploited in the twentieth century a source of wealth more profitable even than tin. This was rubber. Seeds of the wild rubber tree were smuggled out of Brazil in 1877. They were planted first in the Botanical Gardens at Kew near London and then in those at Singapore. For long, Malayan planters (chiefly of coffee) took little interest. By 1910, however, the motor industry had stimulated a boom. Ten years later, Malaya exported more than half the world's production of natural rubber and the generally high level of prosperity of the country masked such resentment as existed towards British rule. The expanding demand for labour on the rubber estates was met by the recruitment of Indian labourers, mostly Tamils from the south. This introduced fresh human problems into what was already a multi-racial society. By this time Malaya had become part of the modern world.

Before the advent of the British, the states of Malaya had little in common save religion, some racial customs and characteristics, and slightly varying forms of the same language. There were obvious differences of pace and approach between the Federated and Unfederated States when confronted with modern evolution. There was a sharp divergence even inside each group. Trengganu lived in pious seclusion without a coastal road to link its towns even after the First World War. On the other hand Johore, on the threshold of Singapore, had a ruler who entertained British Royalty with dashing sophistication. Among the Federated States, Pahang with its huge areas of jungle was in complete contrast to Perak with its dynamic Chinese entrepreneurs who eventually constituted half the population.

In spite of the divergences, under British rule all the states gradually acquired a sense of common destiny. This owed little to any set plan or purpose of a colonial power which prided itself on distrust of theory and logic. British administrators judged that they were there essentially to bring public order, and reliable, clean-handed administration, fair justice, decent treatment for the under-privileged, balanced budgets, and cautious exploitation of resources, preferably by free enterprise. This might – and did – produce prosperity beneficial to British trade. Yet Britain's advantage was never regarded as the sole and paramount objective. In this economic expansion the Chinese played an important, often a leading role. Their immigration attained massive proportions under British rule. The Indians were also quick to seize the profitable opportunities offered. Most had been brought in originally as estate labourers but many played an increasingly significant part as dealers, shopkeepers, clerks, teachers, trade-unionists, doctors, lawyers, and eventually politicians.

The Malays formed the bulk of the rural population. They grew the rice and most of the basic foods on which the towns depended. For the British Colonial officer, one of his principal tasks was to ensure that the Malays, whose land it was, had a proper share in the country's economic growth. But the Malay *kampong* was a traditional world, offering a quiet resistance to the exertions and changes of modern life. Secure against arbitrary oppression and unchecked disease the rural Malays multiplied and their human standards rose. But the pace of advance was inevitably slower and more hesitant than that of the other communities. The Malay villager was largely indifferent to the secular education so eagerly sought by the Chinese and Indians. Qualification in English as a key to success had little appeal for him. He was content with his Malay vernacular schools and with the local religious leaders (the *Kathis* and *Imams*) to teach him the Qur'ān. He distrusted hospitals and Western medicine. As there was little demand for these things in the rural areas, the British did less about them there than might have been desirable. They had little of the strict paternalism with which the Dutch applied their admirably careful Ethical System in Indonesia.

The British fully realized that the new order could only be effectively implemented with Malay approval and participation since some form of self-government would have to be granted to the country eventually. They sought to bring educated Malays into gradually more responsible government jobs; and eventually succeeded. Yet the Malay rulers and their families, the aristocracy and upper classes, only gradually accepted the modernization of their country. They long felt that to send their sons overseas for modern education was a betrayal of their traditions and religion.

The liberal and humanitarian elements in Britain were influential in her policies in the nineteenth century. In the early years they had led her campaign against slavery and the slave trade. Such people were reluctant to accept the comfortable assumption (propounded on occasions by their

Continental rivals) that colonies were essentially for the benefit of the mother country. Britain's mercantilist creed of the eighteenth century had in any event been dispelled by the salutary shock of the American Revolution and the subsequent discovery that a far more profitable relationship could be developed with a flourishing independent people than with recalcitrant subordinates. American independence had also implanted the conviction that in all British overseas territories government by consent – and possibly separation – would come one day. By the nineteenth century Britain saw no merit in restrictive systems such as those which had kept Spain supplied with precious metals from her colonies in the New World, or the Dutch (before the adoption of more liberal policies in the later nineteenth century) with cheap cash crops cultivated by forced labour under the Culture System in Java.

It is often alleged by critics of colonialism that colonies were acquired specifically to contribute to the wealth of the colonial power. This is hardly borne out by Britain's imperial history. Many of her colonies were eventually a source not of profit but expense. For most of the colonial period, Britain sold her manufactures to Malaya, and Malaya exported her raw materials at world prices in a general pattern of free trade. The normal commercial returns from these transactions were on the whole advantageous to the business communities in both countries. Yet no special or exclusive economic links were imposed for the benefit of the mother country, save to the marginal extent of the imperial preferential tariff introduced in 1932. There was no direct financial gain to the British Government, though in the recent years of Britain's currency restrictions Malaya was a valuable source of U.S. dollars for the sterling area.

Such was the level-headed and not always very imaginative pattern of Britain's domination in Malaya. By such methods and without really intending to do so she effectively laid the foundations of a nation where there had been none before. National consciousness was slow in emerging. It was largely dormant until after the Second World War. Yet eventually the demands it presented were punctually met. In the final analysis, Britain's part in the creation of what eventually emerged as one of the most hopeful independent forces in mid-twentieth century Asia, would be held by many in Malaya to extenuate, and by some to justify, the rule which she had imposed upon them.

Notes

- 1 C. D. Cowan, *Nineteenth Century Malaya*, p. 269.
- 2 C. Northcote Parkinson, *British Intervention in Malaya 1867-1877*, p. 62.
- 3 Cowan, *op. cit.*, pp. 177, 178.
- 4 *ibid.*, p. 167.
- 5 Parkinson, *British Intervention in Malaya*, p. 220. The accepted Malay interpretation, repeated to the writer in 1966 by the Dato Bendahara of Perak, is that Birch was a 'womanizer'.

THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES

- 6 Sir Frank Swettenham, *British Malaya*, p. 217.
- 7 J. Kennedy, *A History of Malaya 1400-1959*, p. 183.
- 8 D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South-East Asia*, p. 532.
- 9 Cowan, *Nineteenth Century Malay*, p. 270.
- 10 Kennedy, *A History of Malaya*, p. 240.

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THE BRITISH IN BORNEO

SARAWAK

J. B. Archer

Source: Hector Bolitho (ed.), *The British Empire*, London: B. T. Batsford (1947-8), pp. 205-12.

I. James Brooke

The history of Sarawak since it came under the rule of "Rajah Brooke" has always had an attraction for persons interested in new lands overseas, albeit much of the information about this romantic land has been unreliable and at times libellous. Many of us in our childhood were told of "Rajah Brooke", and it generally brought up visions of oriental splendour, waving palm trees, fearsome head-hunters and dreaded pirates.

James Brooke had been seriously wounded in the Burma campaign of 1825. This disability was thought to have put an end to his military career in the Bengal Army, although subsequently his wounds did not appear to have impeded his amazing career in Eastern waters. Having inherited a moderate fortune, he purchased the *Royalist*, a schooner of 142 tons burden, and sailed for the Far East in 1838 in search of adventure. Quite what his plans were it is now difficult to say, but doubtless he was in search of new lands and unknown peoples.

In Singapore he made friends with the Governor, who mentioned the then small area known as Sarawak as a place in which adventure and danger, and perhaps advantages, might be found. The Governor gave Brooke a personal letter to Rajah Muda Hassim, the uncle of the Sultan of Brunei. Sarawak, as the area was then called, was part of the suzerainty of the Sultan, although history shows that this was more or less nominal, as the only interests to its ruler were the annual tributes paid in money and kind and an opportunity of replenishing his harem from the Melanau girls of the coast villages.

As a result of the abominable behaviour of the Brunei Governor, Panggeran Makota, who by his cruelty and exactions had infuriated the people, the state was in open revolt and the Sultan had sent his uncle to put matters right. The result was a desultory warfare between the rival factions.

These facts decided Brooke's future actions, and he landed in Kuching, the capital of Sarawak, on August 15th, 1839. His arrival was welcomed by Muda Hassim, and Brooke cemented the friendship by presenting the old man with rolls of scarlet cloth, silks, velvets, gunpowder and sweetmeats. He even remembered a box of toys for Muda Hassim's children.

Now Muda Hassim was not only frightened of the insurgents under Pangeran Makota, but also of the Dutch, since he feared that they might annex the country under the pretext of restoring order and safeguarding the lives of aliens residing there. It must be remembered that the Dutch were already in possession of nearly two-thirds of Borneo and were suspected of trying to gain the whole island.

James Brooke had then insufficient forces to give much material help; in fact, the *Royalist*, although armed, as most private ships were in those days, was not a warship. The crew numbered under twenty in all.

After a few local visits to places of interest, Brooke left Sarawak in October of the same year. He took away with him gifts from Muda Hassim and urgent pleas not to forget him in his plight. James Brooke, however, had not given up his roving. He visited the Philippines and China and finally landed again in Kuching in August, 1840. Affairs there were worse than ever, and Muda Hassim, a well-meaning but quite incapable man, seemed unable to quell the increasing rebellion of Pangeran Makota and his followers. He appealed to Brooke for help. Brooke writes that the state of Sarawak was "so adverse to every object" he had in view that he intended to leave Muda Hassim to his fate.

From this point accounts differ, but it would seem that in return for Brooke's help Muda Hassim offered him the province, its administration and its revenue. Brooke made one stipulation. He must be allowed entire freedom to prosecute the struggle in his own way. Brooke writes about Muda Hassim (who was, by the way, heir presumptive to the Sultan of Brunei), "he begged, he entreated me to stay, and offered me the country, its Government and its trade, if I would stop and not desert him".

In any case, Brooke did agree to help, and he soon met a number of the rebel chiefs. The chiefs agreed to surrender if Brooke would promise them their lives and protection from the oppression of subsequent rulers. Brooke gave no definite promises, but agreed to use his influence if they surrendered and gave up their arms. They agreed, and Brooke, with considerable difficulty, managed to secure their lives.

Muda Hassim renewed his promises, but with the usual Malay procrastination this promise was not immediately fulfilled. Pangeran Makota incited the Brunei nobles to further violence. The months passed, Brooke left on another cruise, but returning to Kuching in September, 1841, matters were brought to a climax. Brooke had to use threats, insisting to Muda Hassim that the only way to avoid further bloodshed and anarchy was to fulfill his promise and make him ruler of Sarawak. Muda Hassim then made over the Government of Sarawak, with its dependencies and revenues, to be held

under the Sovereignty of Brunei in return for an annual payment of £500 to the Sultan. But, most important of all, Brooke promised not to infringe the customs or religion of the people. It was agreed, too, that no one should interfere with the administration of the country. On September 24th, 1841, the terms of the cession were read out publicly, and the people freely acknowledged James Brooke as their ruler.

Brooke's new country was some 3,000 square miles in extent and comprised what is now called Sarawak Proper. The population was made up of about 8,000 Dayaks (not the race of Dayaks generally associated with head-hunters), 1,500 Malays and 1,000 Chinese. It is a remarkable thing that in histories of Sarawak so little mention is made of the very early immigration of Chinese to those parts. Records are incomplete and frequently inaccurate, but evidence points to a very old Chinese community even in that remote and unknown part of the eastern archipelago.

James Brooke is now seated on his throne, perhaps a precarious one; there is peace in the land; the people are free to settle down for a time to peaceful pursuits; and this has been brought about by one single-minded and adventurous young man. No great force has been used and no great loss of life has taken place.

The rule of the Brooke family has begun. On that date he wrote, "It is a grand experiment which, if it succeeds, will bestow a blessing on these poor people, and their children's children will bless my name."

James Brooke had no inferiority complex!

II. Charles Brooke

This section is headed "Charles Brooke", but the exact period when James Brooke ceased to exercise complete rule and relied on Charles Brooke, his nephew, is nebulous.

It is clear, however, that not more than two years after being proclaimed Rajah, Brooke offered to cede his newly gained country to the British Crown. It is important to remember this in view of the later vilifications of Bright, Cobden and Hume.

Sir Robert Peel, the failure of the New Zealand scheme fresh in his mind, declined; but a treaty of friendship and trade was made between Great Britain and Brunei. James Brooke was appointed H.M. Confidential Agent in Borneo. This, it is true, added to his prestige, but his position was so embarrassing that he managed to secure a deed which acknowledged his absolute sovereignty over Sarawak. Under this deed Sarawak Proper was held until the cession of the State to the British Crown in 1946.

Sir James Brooke (he was later given a K.C.B. and the freedom of the City of London, among other honours) died a comparatively young man in 1868, and it may be truly said that his life was one of considerable hardship and many trials. His country by now had been enlarged to include a great

proportion of what is now an area of over 50,000 square miles. The inclusion of the big areas populated by the so-called Sea Dayaks, with whom head-hunting is always associated, made it necessary to attempt the putting-down of that mode of carrying on tribal feuds. Added to this were the frequent piratical raids of Ilanun and similar tribes, which were always the constant fear of the more peaceable inhabitants and a handicap to peaceful trade and permanent settlement.

Much has been written, and will probably continue to be written, about the methods James and Charles Brooke employed. The Parliamentary attacks of Cobden, Bright and Hume are well known to historians, and James Brooke, like Warren Hastings, was subjected to much criticism and unfair attacks. It is true that efforts to promote security and prosperity in the country by peaceful means often failed and recourse to arms was the result. Bright, writing to Cobden in 1849, says, "the sentimental mania of the British public, which had given Brooke all his powers of evil . . . It shocks me to think what fiendish atrocities may be committed by British arms without rousing any conscientious resistance at home. . . . Sir J. Brooke seized a territory as large as Yorkshire, and drove out the natives, and subsequently sent for our Fleet to massacre them."¹ For the Manchester Radicals saw in the British Rajah a specially provocative symbol of the Empire which they disliked but could never understand.

In the end James Brooke was vindicated, but the trials and disappointments – perhaps coupled with the attitude of Parliament – embittered some of the years of his life.

Charles Brooke, his nephew (born Charles Johnson), became his famous uncle's heir after the latter's squabble with his elder nephew. The rights and wrongs of that matter need not be mentioned here.

For some years before his uncle's death Charles Brooke had worked in Sarawak, originally coming there as a midshipman in the Royal Navy. His energy and peculiarities have become proverbial. It is true to say that whereas James Brooke had prepared the way for the task of administering and organising the country, Charles Brooke was the man who did the actual work. During his long reign of forty-nine years he saw a small, undeveloped, practically bankrupt state become a well-organised country of 50,000 square miles, over half a million inhabitants, without any public debt and recognised by H.M. Government and other governments as an independent State under limited British protection.

For in 1888 a Treaty was signed whereby H.M. Government recognised the independence of Sarawak on the condition that all external relations should be in the hands of H.M. Government, and various minor stipulations, including the matter of the succession. It was laid down that domestic and internal matters were to remain in the Rajah's hands. This autocratic rule has been described as "mild despotism" and "absolute powers"; and on the face of it this description is right. Actually, on the advice of Lord Salisbury, the

Rajah ruled with a supreme council composed of two European and three Malay members. Furthermore, a system of indirect rule by native chiefs and headmen existed. The Rajah certainly possessed absolute powers, but he seldom exercised them without previous consultation with his European and Native staff.

The treaty held good until 1941, when in commemoration of the centenary of Brooke rule the third Rajah, Vyner Brooke, proclaimed publicly the termination of the era of absolute rule of the Rajahs of Sarawak and instituted measures designed to divest himself of the absolute legislative power. The Rajah maintained that it had never been the intention of James Brooke to establish a line of absolute rulers. Rather it was his design to protect "the real but backward owners of the land".

Charles Brooke died in 1917 at the age of eighty-three. No one could have worked harder for his country; no one had a keener insight into the joys, the miseries, the troubles and the foibles of his people. He died during a great war. But Sarawak was safe; Sarawak was free and out of debt. Honours had come to him, but he was prouder of his title of Rajah than of his G.C.M.G. He was not always *persona grata* with the Foreign Office, nor with the Colonial Office. Like his uncle, he was sometimes accused of ruthlessness in punitive expeditions against rebel Dayaks. The acid test, however, was the state of the country when he died. From a few hundred thousands the revenue had increased to several million dollars. The Rajah's privy purse was kept down to an amazingly low figure and the development of the country went ahead slowly but steadily. It was much too slow for some people, but Charles Brooke resolutely set his face against European or other exploitation. The land, he said, is the *daging darah* of the people. This may well be translated as "the life-blood" of the people.

This did not mean that development from outside was not acceptable. At the date of the second Rajah's death the Chinese in the state numbered nearly 100,000 persons. Sarawak was very nearly a Utopia, although the more intelligent saw in this comfortable and untroubled existence a threat of "getting left" when the peoples of the Far Eastern archipelago woke up to their place in the world. Already the writing was on the wall, and perhaps it was as well that Charles Brooke died just at the moment when his building was to be shaken by the after-effects of the 1914-1918 war, and before the clamour of Far Eastern youth was heard demanding that the sleepers should awake and a new kind of civilisation begin.

III. Charles Vyner Brooke

The third Rajah was no newcomer to the State, nor to the methods of his uncle's rule. On coming down from Cambridge he entered the Sarawak Civil Service as a cadet. Naturally his promotion was more rapid than was usual, but he went through the mill of administering districts.

It was not an easy thing to succeed Charles Brooke. The alarming-looking and often obdurate old man had become legendary. Many of the people regarded him as superhuman. Added to this were the shattering effects of post-war troubles. It was not only in Sarawak that people talked of human zoos. It was evident to many that the policy of self-imposed isolation had gone just a little too far. For a time the people were contented; but visits to the Straits Settlements, to China, to the Dutch East Indies brought realisation to some of these travellers that there is a limit to "going slow" and that the policy of gradual development had progressed so tardily that one might almost call it complete stagnation.

In spite of the conservatism of the great majority of his people, Vyner Brooke did make an effort to march more with the times. The one great obstacle was the lack of money. It is true that Sarawak was not only free of debt but had a substantial surplus invested in Europe, but there was always at the back of governments' minds the fear of getting into debt. It seemed as if the vision of debt which for so many years had haunted Charles Brooke still troubled the new ruler. Whilst neighbouring countries began to spend money on education, agriculture, medicine, forestry, immigration and such schemes, Sarawak's disbursements were too small to do anything except nibble at these projects. Nevertheless, a start was made and the people reacted well towards well-meaning but often ill-conceived schemes to benefit them. It was during Vyner Brooke's rule that a policy of keeping in closer touch with the British Government at Singapore was started. The "splendid isolation" policy had broken down.

For some years, it seemed, the policy of the Sarawak Government was an attempt to model itself on the lines of British Malaya, but at the same time doggedly keeping to old ideas that to many had become unworkable and unwieldy. Between the two, development, if not on exactly the right lines, did go on. To Vyner Brooke, therefore, must be accorded the credit of trying to go ahead on a policy which he knew was leading goodness knows where! For some years there had been talk of a "United States of British Borneo" or some such title. To many therefore, the recent cession to the Crown was no new thing.

Later in this chapter I shall mention a few of the events of those closing years of Brooke rule.

Charles Vyner Brooke, the last Rajah, not only had the unenviable task of succeeding his uncle; he had the difficult task of maintaining the Brooke tradition for twenty-nine years. Finally he had the most distasteful task of all - of closing the book on nearly 105 years of Sarawak history.

IV. Sarawak today

The Crown Colony of Sarawak is roughly 50,000 square miles in extent. The population is said to be just over half a million, but no accurate census has

yet been made. It is, therefore, about as big as England and Wales. The country is a network of rivers flowing from the mountains in the interior through vast tracts of jungle, mangrove swamps and plantations to the long, sandy coastline. These rivers take the place of roads.

Kuching (170), the capital, is ill-placed for a capital in these days, but was of course chosen for its strategic position in Sarawak Proper. It is now a town of between 30,000 and 40,000 inhabitants. Metalled roads, cinemas and other amenities have taken the place of the small native town which James Brooke found on his arrival. The only other town of any size is Sibul, on the great Rejang River. Miri, a prosperous and growing town, was demolished when the Allied Forces re-took Sarawak. Generally its climate is warm and humid and, in spite of tales to the contrary, remarkably healthy.

One only has to mention Sarawak to raise a stir about Dayaks. Oddly enough, the head-hunting Dayaks are generally known as Sea Dayaks, and it is difficult to determine why. They seldom live anywhere near the sea and have little or no knowledge of sea work. Another Dayak race, but entirely different, are the Land Dayaks. There appear to be several tribes who have long lived in Sarawak. The Sea Dayaks and the Malays certainly came later.

There can be no doubt that it is mainly owing to the Chinese that trade has developed at all. They have a long history in the country, and in spite of strict immigration regulations during the past thirty years now number a fifth of the total population. The Malays, once the ruling race, seem to be losing place. Conversion to Mohammedanism, after a rush of about fifty years, is now almost stationary. Christianity makes slow progress.

Many people think that Sarawak is rich in minerals, precious stones and gold. This does not seem to be the case, although geological surveys have not been complete. The fact remains that the words of Rajah Charles Brooke seem to be as true today as they were in his time. It is from the soil that the people must look for their living.

Oil has been found in Sarawak in quantity, but the late war has, perhaps for a time only, affected the output.

Rubber, sago, pepper and jungle produce are its chief exports. Gold is elusive, but has paid at times. Quick-silver, antimony, silver – all have been worked at some time or other. The greatest problem at present is that of rice. The natives say that the cost of living, the prices of everything, all depend on the price and abundance of rice. The day will come, and must come, when it will be no longer necessary to import it.

The late war gave an impetus to head-hunting and general roving by Dayaks. This state of affairs will not continue for long. The modern Dayak finds it better to tap rubber. There is at present no inter-racial question, no religious intolerance and very little desire to meddle with civic matters.

Europeans do not have to put on superior airs to command respect. The natives and the Chinese have few illusions left after the war – but their respect for persons of sympathy and vision is profound.

V. The end of the Brookes

The recent publicity given to Sarawak was unfortunate – unfortunate in that a small country that had lived quietly and unobtrusively for so many years, and one which had eschewed politics and party factions, should suddenly be brought into the limelight and subjected to discussion and criticism – some of it just, but much of it unfounded and uninformed.

The suggestion that Sarawak should be ceded to the Crown was made over a hundred years ago – and other schemes, such as incorporating the State with British Borneo and Labuan, and so on, had been discussed for many years.

The Constitution of 1941 did affect the treaty of 1888. Certain stipulations were laid down by the Crown and agreed to by the Rajah. The invasion of Sarawak by the Japanese never gave the new Constitution a chance to get going. It is impossible, therefore, to say definitely what, if any, omissions there were and what matters needed revision. The new additions to the treaty, however, did indicate that the advice and assistance of H.M. Government at Singapore was not only welcome but necessary.

The position of Sarawak *vis-à-vis* H.M. Government was peculiar and probably unique. Perhaps Sarawak was an anachronism.

It was imperative that after the liberation of the state from the Japanese the position of Sarawak and its future must be reviewed. There was not only the question of defence; there was also the important matter of rehabilitation. These were immediate needs; there was the long-term post-war plan to be laid down.

It may be argued that the terms of the Constitution of 1941 prevent any idea of what has been called “capricious rule”; there was, however, the danger of oligarchy.

When there has been time for reflection and when the results of administration as a Crown Colony begin to emerge, it is probable that most of the die-hards will admit that the last Rajah of Sarawak was right.

The question of cession or no cession was put to the Council Negri (that is, the “Council of the Country”) in May, 1946, and passed by a small majority. The Supreme Council of the State confirmed it. It would be no advantage here to discuss the merits or demerits of the decision to let the question go to the Council at that particular time. It may be said, however, that some action had to be taken quickly if Sarawak was to receive the benefits of post-war planning and assistance. It is possible, in fact almost certain, that some of those who voted for non-cession did so in partial ignorance of the true facts and in a mistaken, but quite understandable, frame of mind that made them think that any other action would be an act of personal disloyalty to the Rajah.

The Brookes have relinquished their “absolute rule” and His Majesty has added a romantic and useful Colony to his Empire.

The long and just rule of its three White Rajahs has borne results. The zeal and enthusiasm of generations of British civil servants have not been wasted.

Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, Governor-General, Malaya writes: "there is no doubt there is great sadness at the end of the Brooke rule, which was benevolent and extremely popular"; and later on: "this opposition was rapidly dwindling, as the people were coming to realise that the new administration would respect their customs and institutions and that the British Government, with its greater resources, could provide far better than the Brooke régime the things they needed, especially improved agricultural, medical and educational services". Mr. MacDonald concluded by saying that he had been enormously impressed by the British officers administering Sarawak, and some had lost their lives during the Japanese occupation. Except for those who had reached retiring age, nearly all the members of the Sarawak administration had been absorbed into the Colonial Service.

It is a long day since young James Brooke landed from the *Royalist* in 1839 until that memorable July 1st, 1946, when the Governor-General, Malaya, made his official landing to receive the country on behalf of His Majesty.

The Sarawak Officer Administering the Government took the salute and the bands played the Sarawak Anthem for the last time.

Autres temps, autres mœurs! The last Rajah has laid down his powers amidst the kindly and affectionate remembrances and wishes of his people. Let us hope that a new era of prosperity comes to Sarawak under the beneficial rule of His Majesty.

The motto of Sarawak still stands: *Harap-lah sa'lagi bernapas* [Whilst I breathe, I hope].

Note

1 *Imperial Commonwealth*, p. 356.

THE STATE OF NORTH BORNEO

Owen Rutter

Source: Hector Bolitho (ed.), *The British Empire*, London: B. T. Batsford (1947-8), pp. 213-17.

I

Few British settlements can have had stranger beginnings than North Borneo, which was acquired through the enterprise of a little band of adventurous pioneers, including two English merchants, a Glasgow engineer and an Austrian baron.

In the seventies of the last century the country was under the nominal sway of two Native princes, the Sultan of Brunei and the Sultan of Sulu. Each claimed sovereignty over a portion of the other's territory, but neither troubled much to enforce his claim. Along the coasts were nests of pirates; in the hills lived communities of head-hunters. There was no semblance of organised government. The cheapest thing in Borneo was human life.

Then it attracted to its shores a young Scots engineer named William Clarke Cowie, who had gone out to the Eastern seas in a small iron steamer called the *Argyle*. Mr. Cowie went into partnership with the Sultan of Sulu in a trading enterprise. He made a base at Sandakan, the present capital, saw the economic possibilities of the country and determined that it should become British. The acquisition of a territory the size of his native land was, however, too great an undertaking single-handed. A certain Austrian baron, Overbeck, and two brothers named Dent, merchants of Shanghai, became interested in his schemes, and at last, after many tedious negotiations, Alfred Dent and his friends acquired the cession of North Borneo. These enterprising gentlemen were not even content with obtaining one cession. As both sultans claimed the territory and there was no court of arbitration, Dent and his friends solved the matter by getting a cession from both of them. Thus Alfred Dent became uncrowned king over a vast and little-known land with powers of life and death over a less-known people. It was a bloodless cession and a perfectly legitimate one. The final deed was signed on January 22nd, 1878, in the Sultan of Sulu's palm-leaf palace. His Highness, to mark the

historical event, gave a dinner-party: the plates were mother-of-pearl shells with pearls attached to them; and at the close of the evening the Sultan, a model host, asked each guest to keep his plate in remembrance of the occasion.

Sir Alfred Dent, as he afterwards became, might then have been made White Rajah of North Borneo, as thirty-seven years previously James Brooke had been made White Rajah of Sarawak. Instead, he returned to England and formed a company which, under Royal Charter, administered the territory as a Protected State up to the day of its occupation by the Japanese forces.

When the British pioneers took possession of North Borneo it was a land of disorder, a tropical wilderness in which a man went about with his life in his hands. There was no European enterprise of any kind. The rivers were the only highways. Save for the rice-fields of the Native tribes, the jungle was everywhere. But the pirates have long since been swept away and the head-hunters have ceased to raid. Their descendants are fishermen or farmers and they have learned to live at peace. Government stations sprang up all over the country; little towns grew up; rubber, tobacco and coconut estates were made. Harbour works were constructed. The whole country was opened up by means of bridle paths, and a railway was built from the west coast into the interior. Although the country long suffered from lack of roads, this difficulty was partly remedied in later years.

The men who were mainly responsible for the making of North Borneo were its district officers. They explored the country and opened it up for trade. They travelled on foot through the dense jungles and they paddled up and down the rivers in Native boats. They lived solitary lives in their out-stations, often many days' march from the nearest White Man. They made friends with the Native tribes, induced them to abandon their feuds, gave them the protection of settled government and taught them the benefits of living under a just and benevolent administration. They put up their own offices, barracks and houses; they made bridle paths which link up the out-stations today; they erected telephone lines from the west coast to the east; they dealt out justice; they pursued rebels and outlaws and they fought epidemics of cholera and smallpox. Those who followed them maintained their example.

"We may safely affirm", observed Wallace in *The Malay Archipelago*, "that the better specimens of savages are much superior to the lower examples of civilised people", and it is doubtful whether there exist any more pleasant people than the Natives of North Borneo. Even when they are rogues, even when they are ex-head-hunters, they are very likeable. And in Borneo, as in many another country, the farther you go from civilisation the more likeable are the people you meet.

For general purposes they may be divided into three groups: the people of the coast, the people of the plains, and the people of the hills. Each group

has its own characteristics and mode of life. The coast Natives are mainly Bajaus, Sulus and Illanuns; they are Mohammedans, and descendants of the pirates of old. For the most part they are sea gypsies; their boats, usually equipped with outriggers and a single sail, take the place of caravans, and they make their living from the produce of the sea. In some districts they have abandoned this wandering existence, but even when they live ashore, they build their houses over the water upon the seashore or the river-banks.

The inhabitants of the plains are the Dusuns, who are the backbone of the Native population. They are a race of farmers, law-abiding and industrious, and cultivate rice, which is their staple food.

Some of the Dusuns come into the hill group, and with them are the Muruts, the most primitive and in many ways the most interesting of all. The Muruts live in villages composed of one or perhaps two houses, 200 or 300 feet in length, perched high upon a hill to be out of the way of raiding parties. It is only within recent years that they have abandoned head-hunting, which was the outcome of feuds between villages and a kind of religious war. It was part of the district officers' business to settle these feuds and arrange the peace terms. The terms were sealed by bathing in the blood of buffaloes and planting stones as witnesses of the oaths of peace. It was not always easy to persuade them to come to terms. There was once a recalcitrant chief who sent a message to the Government station that if the district officer came near him he would make hairpins out of his shin-bones and gouge his eyes out, as he had long wanted to know what the eyes of a White Man were really like. But when some time later the district officer visited his village he found the chief to be a mild-mannered person, and his feuds were settled without difficulty.

Under the administration of the Chartered Company the Natives were as well treated as any in the Empire. Their interests were always safeguarded and their customs respected; the taxes they had to pay were not heavy; their affairs were treated with sympathy and understanding. The Chartered Company, which was incorporated on November 1st, 1881, appoints its own governor and civil servants, and is represented in London by a court of directors. The company never engaged in trade, deriving its revenue mainly from land rents, customs and excise.

II

The territory is peculiarly well situated in the Eastern Seas. It lies 800 miles from Singapore, 1,000 from Hong Kong, 600 from Manila and 1,500 from Port Darwin. Steamers from these places call regularly at its ports. It has several excellent harbours, in two of which – Sandakan and Cowie – the whole British Navy could lie without being overcrowded. Jesselton is the port of the west coast, Kudat that of the north. It is a well-watered land.

especially on the east, where the rivers are navigable for many miles, still forming the main highways.

The formation of the country, speaking generally, consists of a belt of plains near the coast, then a zone of low hills, which give way gradually to a region of highlands as the interior is reached, culminating in the superb granite mass of Mount Kinabalu, which rises with beetling peaks nearly 14,000 feet. This is the loftiest mountain of Malaya.

In the early days it was hoped that the territory, 31,106 square miles in extent, would prove as rich in minerals as Sarawak and Dutch Borneo, but although extensive explorations have been carried out, no mineral deposits except coal and manganese have been found in workable quantities. North Borneo has depended for its prosperity upon agriculture and mainly upon plantation rubber. For many years the price of rubber was the country's trade barometer and the increasing demand after the outbreak of war improved the financial situation of the whole territory. In 1940 nearly 18,000 tons were exported, representing an increase in value of £400,000 over the figure for 1939. North Borneo was thus able to give valuable assistance in the national effort, since the majority of the companies were British, although a considerable acreage on the east coast was owned by Japanese companies. The Japanese also showed great interest in the cultivation of manila hemp.

It is strange that coconuts did not attract more attention, since the palm grows as well in certain parts of North Borneo as anywhere in the world. No other tropical product was cultivated commercially to any serious extent, although it has been proved that wrapper-leaf tobacco, coffee, indigo, sugar and the oil-palm will thrive.

The commercial timber in North Borneo is almost inexhaustible, but lack of capital and difficulties of transport prevented it from being worked extensively until the British Borneo Timber Company began operations on a large scale with an up-to-date sawmill at Sandakan, the centre of the lumber trade.

Although North Borneo is mainly an agricultural country, it has always been dependent on imported food, especially rice, the staple diet of the majority of the population. The difficulty of persuading the Natives to plant more than they needed for their own consumption caused the Government grave anxiety in the early stages of the last war. Otherwise, the years before the Japanese occupation touched North Borneo very lightly and the improved rubber position brought prosperity. All sections of the population but one responded generously to wartime appeals and that for funds to buy Spitfires caught the popular imagination. Within six weeks a cheque had been sent to the Ministry of Aircraft Production for two Spitfires. Among the first to contribute were the ex-head-hunters of Pensiangan, the most remote out-station of the territory, who at that day had never set eyes upon an aircraft. It was significant that the only members of the community to remain aloof were the 2,500 Japanese, who were interned without difficulty when their country entered the war.

Beyond this there was little that the Government of North Borneo could do. By the terms of the Royal Charter the company depended on the British Government for protection from external aggression. It was responsible for peace and order within its own territory, and to that end maintained a force of about 550 Armed Constabulary, of whom 100 were British Indians, the remainder being Natives of Borneo. Two companies of local volunteers – Europeans, Chinese and Eurasians – had been formed. Constabulary and volunteers were armed with rifles and Lewis guns. There were no airfields in the territory. Without help, the country was in no position to resist attack, and there was never any intention that the local forces should be used except to repel small raiding parties. On the outbreak of war all ships (except those of local registry) cleared for ports of refuge, and after December 8th, 1941, North Borneo was out of communication other than by telegraph. When Japanese armed forces occupied Sarawak and Brunei, it was evident that North Borneo would shortly be attacked and that no help would be forthcoming. It was therefore decided to disband the volunteers and to offer no resistance to invasion.

On January 6th, 1942, a small force of Japanese troops from Brunei landed at Weston and sent for Mr. R. F. Evans, Resident of the West Coast, and Lieutenant-Colonel W. C. Adams, Commandant of Police. These officers were detained by the Japanese, who advanced on Beaufort and Jesselton (171) without meeting any opposition. They had occupied the west coast by January 9th. On the same day Japanese aircraft machine-gunned the streets of Sandakan and caused 20 casualties. On January 18th the Governor cabled from Sandakan that warships had been sighted; then communication ceased. The occupation was unopposed and the Europeans were interned.

III

The economic structure of North Borneo was naturally disrupted by the war, but if extensive damage is not caused in the process of reoccupation there is no obvious reason why its economic life should not revive rapidly. The prestige of the White Man, abruptly lowered by the Japanese conquest, is being restored since the expulsion of the Japanese. The return of European authority is being welcomed by all races in Borneo. Whether the welcome is sincere or not depends, first, upon how the Japanese have behaved during the occupation, secondly upon the economic changes that are following the occupation. In occupied China the Japanese have not shown any pronounced ability to use authority with tact, and since North Borneo is largely dependent upon the rubber market, it seems that prewar standards of living there cannot have been maintained. Over two-thirds of the population of North Borneo is indigenous and quite incapable of self-government. If Chinese immigration and settlement continue as rapidly as in the past, in another fifty years the Chinese will greatly outnumber the Natives and the political future of

Borneo will belong to them. Meanwhile the only body with both the ability and the moral and legal claim to exercise the authority of government is the Chartered Company which peaceably acquired and developed the territory in the beginning.

[SECTION III was contributed by the Editor after the recent and untimely death of the Author.]

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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THE THIRD REPUBLIC IN INDO-CHINA

Herbert Ingram Priestley

Source: Herbert Ingram Priestley, *France Overseas: A Study of Modern Imperialism*, New York and London: D. Appleton-Century (c. 1938), pp. 216-243.

Even before the end of the Second Empire the interests of Europeans in China had come to paths of separation. Prior to the conclusion of the second treaty of settlement (1860), England and France had worked in alliance; concerted action was accepted by the other Powers, notably Russia and the United States. But with the rise of Germany and Italy, rivalry in China became acute for a decade preceding the last stage of concession hunting, when the breakup of the Celestial Empire was clearly predictable.¹

After the Taiping revolt, the Black Flag troops moved south, plundering the country; the Chinese Marshal Ma, in order to put them down, bought a cargo of arms from Jacques Dupuis, a French trader of Hankow well known from Shanghai to Yunnan, and a keen imperialist. He was a great exemplar of the adventurer type of the swift decade in which the commercial nations were fencing for those allotments of "spheres of influence" which the 'eighties were to see practically completed. French forerunners like Dupuis competed actively with Britain's to preëempt the trade up the Red River.

The hostile government of Annam tried (1872) to prevent delivery of Dupuis' shipment of arms and he demanded an indemnity; the French governor of Cochin China sent Lieutenant François Garnier, famous explorer of the Mekong and Yunnan, to Hanoi where Dupuis was fighting the Annamites for his "rights." Garnier was to arbitrate the question on the spot and at the same time make a customs agreement with Annam.² He set out with two gunboats and about two hundred men in 1873, sending word in advance to Dupuis that he was coming "in the guise of an imperial umpire"; he reached Hanoi in November, after meeting Dupuis on the way.

The latter had been in China since 1855, and had been in Yunnan by way of the Red River and the Laochai in 1871. The English looked on the same

waterway as a route whereby to connect their China, Burma, and India trade in one vast system. Between 1865 and 1889, they sent eleven exploring expeditions into the China-Burma area, planning to draw the West China trade to Rangoon or Calcutta, thus depriving Hanoi of the importance which France wanted for it.³ One is reminded of the later similar conflict in Africa, in which the Cape to Cairo idea clashed with the North African empire of France. His contract with Marshal Ma of Yunnan to deliver war *matériel* in exchange for a large quantity of tin, though a legitimate affair, got him into trouble in spite of his passport for travel in Indo-China and China. Dupuis was asked to use troops provided by Ma on his expedition, but he hoped to obtain 20,000 French troops instead, and make the conquest of the river basin for France. Admiral Dupré was ordered to coöperate with Dupuis, provided he did nothing inimical to French interests.⁴ Without permission from the Annamite government at Hué, Dupuis went upstream through territory infested by Black Flags and Yellow Flags, bandit rivals for profit from extortions from river traffic, and uncontrolled either by Annam or China. Making his way to Mang-Lao, Dupuis returned to Hanoi in May, 1873, with an order to go up again with a cargo of salt. Remembering the French aggressions in Madagascar, the Annamite government sent Marshal Nguyen-tri-phuong to Hanoi to expel Dupuis, suppress the Black and Yellow Flags, and assume control of Tonkin.⁵ After many contretemps, Dupuis was given permission to go upstream provided he carry no salt, as this trade was a government monopoly. Thereupon he slipped away on October 8, 1873, but with his forbidden cargo of salt, defying the court of Annam. It was in this situation that Garnier met him.

Both men were in equivocal positions. Garnier and Dupré wanted a military expedition to take Tonkin for a French granary, and obtain opportunity to exploit the mines of southern China. They felt that Annam should be made a protectorate, Chinese influence expelled, and any rival European intervention forestalled. But they had the hostility of the revanchard duc de Broglie (Jacques Victor) in the ministry of foreign affairs, and later in that of the interior, to overcome. Garnier went to Hanoi ostensibly to force Dupuis out, but really to wrest further concessions to exploit Tonkin.⁶

Nguyen, old foe of all things French, rejected the proposal of a treaty of commerce opening the Red River, and demanded the expulsion of Dupuis. But Garnier insisted on a treaty, and, arguing that Dupuis had a case in the obstruction of a lawful contract, refused to expel him. Next he took it upon himself to open the Red River to French ships, established a customs officer, and asked the Annamites to disarm the post of Hanoi. They had tried to poison his water supply and surprise his garrison. As they refused to submit, he took their citadel by assault, and within two weeks mastered the whole Delta. His work of reorganization and administration was cleverly based on the hatred of the people for the exploiting mandarins, and protection for the many native Christians. He was also disposed to restore the ousted Le family

to the control under protectorate. The emperor Tu-Duc was evidently not popular, and Garnier's intervention was warmly welcomed by the village populations. But the Black Flags, who had dominated Tonkin, could not brook the loss of revenues which the intrusion brought. Unhappily Garnier was killed on December 21, 1873, in a sortie against the pirate forces, who, called by the Annamites, had come to besiege Hanoi.⁷

The anti-colonial French government feared to sanction the aggression. The duc de Broglie sent Philastre to treat with Annam, evacuate Tonkin, and leave in Hanoi only a resident with some troops. Dupuis was expelled and his troops were sequestered. Philastre probably was personally hostile to Garnier; Clifford declares he went out of his way to disparage Garnier's memory.⁸

The Treaty of Saigon made by Philastre (March 15, 1874)⁹ gave Cochin China to France in full sovereignty, and opened all ports of the Red River, Tu-Duc promised to subordinate his foreign policy to French advice, and confirmed the seizure of Cochin China. But the independence of Annam was recognized, and the treaty had no commercial clause. Indeed, the Annamite promises were nullified by the withdrawal of the French troops. Native Catholics who had aided the French in Tonkin were butchered, and Tu-Duc in 1876 sent to China the old triennial tribute by which he recognized the suzerainty of its emperor. The latter sent troops into Tonkin and disavowed the Philastre Treaty. The Red River remained closed to trade, Garnier's work was lost; the next imperialist step was to be taken under the "Tonkinese," Ferry.

Tu-Duc, although Annam had not been Chinese since 1801, persisted in sending another embassy with tribute to China in 1880, and called on her for troops, at the same time asking military aid from France.¹⁰ The Philastre Treaty was ambiguous, as it implied a French protectorate without so designating it or declaring Annam's dependence on China at an end. It had, furthermore, specified that French intervention should await Tu-Duc's request. The Broglie ministry evidently intended to exact no advantages from the treaty, and, due to cabinet changes, nothing was done to clear the situation until 1879, when Freycinet made a half-hearted move to quell the pirates. Ferry, becoming premier in September, 1880, decided on energetic action.¹¹ Annam was declared a protectorate, and the naval forces of Tonkin were about to be increased. But Ferry fell in November, 1881.

In March, 1882, as Tu-Duc continued hostile, Lieutenant Henri Rivière was sent by the second Freycinet ministry to Tonkin with four hundred men to demand the execution of the treaty. His experience paralleled almost exactly that of François Garnier. Instructed to drive out the Black Flags or Hêkis and open the river to trade, he was nevertheless expected to avoid conflict with Chinese imperial troops and use only under necessity any violence "which would only serve to embarrass us." When the Annamite governor of Hanoi declined to surrender the citadel, Rivière took it by

assault in April, 1883. Then, like Garnier, he was besieged by the Black Flags, and in a sortie on May 19, his troops were defeated and when he fell wounded, his head and hands were cut off by the enemy.¹²

China clung to the attitude of interested protection which she had adopted with regard to Annam, and Marquis Tseng in Paris protested against the occupation of Tonkin; the French ambassador in China, Bourrée, suggested a compromise and got a treaty in September sharing the protectorate with China. But France simply went on with the conquest, as she wanted the freighting business on the Red River to offset the British success in the same enterprises on the Yangtse. After the attempt to win from China recognition of the protectorate had failed, Ferry returned to power in February, 1883, and General Bouet was sent from Cochin China in June with an army of 4,000 men to take Hanoi, and Harmand to set up the protectorate. But the Chinese government reinforced the Black Flags with regular troops, and war between France and China was an actuality. On July 17, Tu-Duc died, and his successor, Hiep-hoa, made peace on August 25, 1883, in the Treaty of Hué, by which Annam was officially taken under a French control, China being definitely excluded. France received extra-territorial jurisdiction over all foreigners resident in three "treaty ports" with a guarantee of commercial navigation of the Red River.¹³

"It is not a question of the future of tomorrow," said Ferry, asking support on October 30, 1883, "but of the future of fifty or one hundred years, of that which will be the inheritance of our children, the bread of our workers. It is not a question of conquering China, but it is necessary to be at the portal of this rich region in order to undertake the pacific conquest of it."¹⁴

The French troops had occupied all of Tonkin up to the foothills and the Chinese border by 1884, whereupon Li Hung Chang signed with Lieutenant Fournier the Treaty of Tientsin on May 11, 1884, recognizing the French protectorate over Annam, promising to withdraw the Chinese troops, and granting freedom of trade across the frontier. Annam also signed at Hué, on June 6, 1884, a new treaty with France accepting the direct protectorate for Annam and a more rigid one over Tonkin, with the right of French intervention; three new provinces were annexed to Tonkin, and one to Cochin China; the annexation clauses were dropped by Ferry under fire from Clemenceau.¹⁵

But the Chinese delayed as long as possible the evacuation of Tonkin, because the Treaty by Li Hung Chang had not been authorized. As the French commanders insisted on prompt withdrawal of Chinese forces, which had received no order to that effect, a clash occurred at Lang-Son on June 23-24, 1884, in which the French force sent to take over the fort was obliged to desist, having sustained a few casualties.

This episode, miscalled in French the "Ambush of Bac-Lé," created a furor among the deputies. France demanded an indemnity of 250,000,000 francs; Ferry, while deceiving the deputies as to his real purposes, determined to force China's hand by making extravagant demands; the naval officers in

Chinese waters urged action, and made strategic moves with their vessels. The Chinese appealed to the Powers, but in vain; they would pay no indemnity, as the May treaty, they insisted, was merely provisional. In reprisal, the French occupied part of Formosa, destroyed a number of Chinese ships and the arsenal at Foochow, and finally began blockade of the Gulf of Pechili. In Tonkin six hundred French were besieged in Tuyen-Quan until an army of 7,000 relieved them, captured Lang-Son, and prepared to march into China.¹⁶

The Chinese government appealed to the American State Department, and Frelinghuysen proposed that the President of the United States arbitrate the indemnity problem; but Ferry tartly declined. Germany was likewise snubbed, while mediation by Great Britain and the two Powers mentioned was also declined. All the Powers felt that France had been unreasonable, and Great Britain in January, 1885, closed her Oriental ports to French warships. His own anti-expansionist parlement Ferry managed adroitly by asking only small sums, "for reprisals," not war. But unceasing demands for more money brought a bitter four-day debate in the Chamber; Ferry's opponents of both wings dubbed him scornfully "the Tonkinese," "the Tunisien," and "the Malagasy," while Clemenceau and the papers criticized him scathingly. Finally through James Duncan Campbell, of the Chinese Customs Service and Chinese secret agent at Paris, and his superior Sir Robert Hart at Peking, Ferry secretly negotiated a settlement based on the Chinese terms. Bound to absolute secrecy until the official decision should be agreed upon, Ferry could give no details, even to save himself.¹⁷

Paris went wild with *meetings d'indignation* that soon became a panic, and Ferry's carriage was attacked by the mob. But he went boldly before the deputies to ask a new credit of 200,000,000 francs. Under Clemenceau's rapier tongue the credit was refused on the famous March 30, 1885, and the cabinet went out on a colonial issue. Though deposed, Ferry went on with the peace protocol, which was signed on April 4. It contained China's promise to ratify the Treaty of Tientsin of May 11, 1884; a detailed treaty was to be made, and all troops were then to be withdrawn. On June 9, 1885, the final treaty was signed, minus any indemnity but with some new trade possibilities. China renounced all sovereignty over Annam, promised to respect all Franco-Annamite agreements, and opened two cities of Yunnan to French commerce. France escaped from a bad situation better than she deserved, as she had held on to Tonkin.¹⁸

The costly episode made the colonies unpopular for more than a decade. The years 1881 to 1885 in Indo-China had cost France 344,000,000 francs; in 1879 the colonial trade entire was only about 350,000,000. The Chamber voted to stay in Tonkin by the narrow majority of six votes, whereas the officials in the Orient continued to press for complete annexation of Annam. General De Courcy, chief agent of this policy, forced from the young king an agreement of July 30, 1885, placing control in French hands; he deposed the

monarch and set up one of his own choosing. This high-handed procedure raised a revolt in which native Christians were massacred by thousands, and troops from Cochin China had to be sent up to restore order.

In Tonkin, bands of Black Flags, Chinese troops, and Annamite rebels, kept the country in disorder for a dozen years. It was necessary to pursue the marauders to their mountain fastnesses by difficult operations in which Gallièni and Lyautey first used the famous "drop of oil" method of advance into enemy country by enlisting the help of recently conquered foes. General pacification did not come until 1894. After 1897 Tonkin was kept quiet by small forces and militia.

In Laos, nominally a dependency of Annam, France began to extend her influence over the mountain tribes of the upper Mekong, occupying Louang-Prabang in 1893 for that purpose, whereupon Siam attacked her on the left bank of the Mekong. Since the middle of the nineteenth century French interest in Siam had been based on her rice export, teak forests, and her route to southern China. Great Britain had obtained most-favored-nation treatment in 1833, and in 1855 most-favored-nation treatment and extra-territorial rights. A treaty of August 15, 1856, gave to France these same privileges and added the right of navigation to her warships up the Menam River as far as Paknam, and thence upon notification to Siam, as far as Bangkok.¹⁹

Notwithstanding these French successes, the British influence grew. After the British began to press advantages in Burma, and France had won suzerainty over Cochin China, Cambodia, Annam, and Tonkin, the two European rivals renewed competition in the faraway Shan states on the upper Mekong.

In fact the French early began encroachment upon Burma itself. The British, who had clashed with that turbulent state in 1837, fought over boundaries with it two wars which they felt were caused by French interference. The natives seemed to hope for French pacific penetration, while a treaty made in 1874 by the French representative at Mandalay was so much resented by England that it was withdrawn. In 1885 the British ambassador at Paris warned France not to go beyond commercial relations with Burma, as the British interest, expanding from India, was "special." Ferry, however, hoped that Burma would throw herself into the arms of France, although her treaties with the latter in 1883 and 1885 were mere commercial conventions. King Thebaw was so anti-British that Lord Dufferin on January 1, 1886, threw aside hope of indemnities and cessions, and annexed him outright to British India.²⁰

Siam's advance into Laos was to hold a portion of the west bank of the Mekong, which France claimed under the vague treaty of 1867; Siam held that the Mekong was a natural boundary. The Laos question was put into the hands of the explorer Auguste Pavie, who went to Louang-Prabang in February, 1887, as vice-consul. In April, 1889, Waddington suggested to

Salisbury that Siam be neutralized as a buffer between French and English holdings in Asia; but England preferred to keep Siam "strong and independent." Pavie's errand failing, he went to Paris to urge force, and returned to Bangkok in 1892 as minister plenipotentiary to press his design. Delcassé, sub-secretary for colonies, in the spring of 1893 advanced a claim to all the east side of the Mekong, as Pavie urged. British support of Siam was evident, though denied by Lord Roseberry, in charge of the Foreign Office. An accord between Siam and England recognized Siam's exclusive jurisdiction over Kyaing Chaing, a Shan state straddling the upper Mekong, but England was to have access to the river through control of another state, Kyaing Tong, while British "rights" in Kiang Hung were to be ceded to China. This province and Kyaing Chaing were to be considered a buffer between British Burma and the French possessions.²¹

France, not having been consulted, protested that Siam had no right to any territory on the left bank of the Mekong, but that it belonged to her protectorate, Annam. Although Siam made an offer to arbitrate, France promptly moved to occupy Stung-Treng, a Siamese town on the Mekong. French battleships in May, 1893, followed by British ones, visited Bangkok.²² The French demanded the left bank of the Mekong and the islands in the river, evacuation of Siamese posts on the left bank, reparations and indemnities, and a deposit of 3,000,000 francs in guarantee of fulfillment of the terms laid down. As the Siamese rejected the terms concerning the islands, Admiral Humann blockaded Bangkok; the French commander was reported to have ordered the British gunboats to leave, and for a moment European war over the incident seemed imminent. But the British limited their stand to insisting that no encroachment on Siam's independence or territory be made. Siam was forced to accept the treaty of October 3, 1893, giving France the left bank of the Mekong and the islands, agreeing to keep war vessels off the river and its tributaries, and armed forces out of the provinces of Battambang and Angkor; she would respect a twenty-five kilometer zone along the right bank, and collect no customs in those areas until a special agreement on tariffs could be reached. By further agreement on October 7, 1902, the French were to have fuel stations on the right bank, consular offices as needed, and rights of travel in specified areas; there was no indemnity or territorial cession.²³ Siam escaped dismemberment only because France and England agreed that neither would wrest from her advantages greater than those possessed by the other. The zone on the right bank was left free to both; it was later organized as the separate French protectorate of Laos. In January, 1896, the two Powers agreed to respect Siamese independence, neutralize the Mekong *thalweg*, and exclude other competitors. At the same time China recognized France's rights in Indo-China. In 1904, during the Entente Cordiale, and again by treaty of March 23, 1907, France obtained more territory from Siam to offset British gains in 1902. France carried on a long struggle for the Shan states, which Britain finally renounced to assure the

independence of Siam. As protector of the latter, she came to enjoy over 90 per cent of the Siamese trade.²⁴

Meantime the policy of France in Annam was undergoing conspicuous modifications.²⁵ In 1886 Paul Bert was made "resident-general," over Cochin China and the three protectorates. He died after a brief six months' service, but his plan was gradually realized, as will be seen later. In 1887 a decree established the "Indo-Chinese Union," grouping the Annamite countries under a governor-general at Saigon; a lieutenant-governor was put at the head of Cochin China, while Cambodia, Annam, and Tonkin each had a resident.

The problem was to control an entirely new people with whom France had had no experience. The dominant Annamites had essentially a Chinese civilization; the Thais in upper Tonkin and Laos, and the Cambodian descendants of the ancient Khmers, made up the other chief groups, besides whom were the Moi in lower Annam, the Khas in Laos, and several tribes of hill people. The Annamites were absorbing all the others when the French stepped in. Their social existence or state organization was centered in the commune or collection of families, for which public officers were chosen by competitive examination on the Chinese model. The villages elected a chief and a council, while delegates of the villages elected a cantonal head who linked villages and central state. The mandarins, at the head of the provinces, prefectures and sub-prefectures, represented the sovereign, while the communes held the local autonomy. Each of these local entities had an immanent share of the sovereignty of the emperor, a fact the French were slow in absorbing. They persisted in direct assimilation, declaring for it roundly at the great Colonial Congress of 1889. But following an explanation of Annamite society by Luro, Ferry espoused the idea of no direct upheaval in local institutions, but subjection of these to a central protector. This was in effect the ideal which Paul Bert, following a survey and a favorable report by De Lanessan, had gone in 1886 to initiate.²⁶

A devoted admirer of Gambetta, Bert felt that great opportunity for increase of French influence lay in Asia. It was his passion to remove the stain of the 1885 reverses in Tonkin. When he arrived the natives were hostile if not in revolt both in Annam and Tonkin, and troops held only the Delta. Military officials and assimilationists in civil positions would not help, only the merchants were with him, while the literate Tonkinese were openly unfriendly. He won over the local native dignitaries at Hué and their native mandarins by leaving them as much liberty in administration as possible. In Tonkin, on the other hand, since the mandarins were Annamite foreigners, he put them out of office. By assuring the Tonkinese that he did not want their lands or their offices he won support which grew as he cut down *corvées*, improved tax collection, and built hospitals and schools. Moreover, he boldly instituted a council of notables, an appeal to the people which roused them to coöperation. The annually elected notables recommended

just the kind of improvements that Bert wanted to install. To teach a practical language to minor officials, he opened one hundred and thirty-two French schools. Rated as revolutionary at the time, the method used by Bert in his brief six months not only opened the way for development indefinitely in Annam and Tonkin, but provided a model later used successfully in Tunisia, Morocco, and Madagascar.²⁷

With the inconstancy which so often amazes students of French imperialism, Bert's successors reverted to the assimilation method; his work was undone, five governors succeeded each other within as many years, while the natives turned in despair to piracy for livelihood. By 1891 the French had to rule or get out. Étienne, subsecretary of colonies, demanded return to the protectorate idea, so Freycinet sent Lanessan to re-begin where Bert had left off. But he reversed Bert's idea of side-tracking the mandarins of Annam, making them instead the corner-stone of his administration by "indirect" rule. Next he restored the emperor's old control over Tonkin and the mandarins. The Tonkin administration was wisely united with that of Annam.

Next Lanessan set about making the protectorate "pay." Economic revival included beginning a railway to Lang-Son, creation of ports, building of roads, making tax collection simpler, and building public works. But fear of financial trouble ahead induced the ministry to recall him in 1894, and a decree of March, 1896, limited public works to the annual resources of Annam, and put these under control of the French ministry of finance, so that the governor-general, Rosseau, could do little. Drought, famine, and unbalanced budgets made a condition well-nigh hopeless. Loans were made in 1895 and 1896 for local administration, to pay off old debts, and carry on railway building; these averted bankruptcy but did nothing towards making the country self-supporting. Fortunately, a new cabinet came to power and sent out as governor Paul Doumer, who served from 1897 to 1902.²⁸

Doumer, president of the republic in 1931, assassinated in May, 1932, was in 1897 an advanced radical, but knew something about Tonkin finances. His objectives were: to restore fiscal stability, pacify Tonkin, organize a central government and reconstitute the protectorate governments, develop natural resources and commerce, and extend French influence in the Far East. Ruthless, but a great organizer, in Cochin China he checked the ravages of a swarm of bureaucrats; in Cambodia he galvanized the governmental machine into efficiency; in Annam and Tonkin he made his own sway direct and effective. Then came the *mise en valeur*. This was his great contribution: he formulated a policy of efficiency and profit, and his successors followed his lead, so that Indo-China began in 1897 to be prosperous and well governed. In the Annamite communes he recognized the "petites républiques," which could be used, under self-chosen councils of notables, to relieve his own government of details of local administration.²⁹

In Cochin China, since it was now too late to revert to native rule, the old assimilation régime was continued, even to keeping in service the two

hundred and ninety French officers who had replaced fifty deposed mandarins. But the colonial council was reorganized to prevent the public funds from being used for French benefit alone.

In indolent Cambodia the policy was to restore the ancient energy of the vanished Khmers by making the government truly indirect. King Norodom and his officers were supported on the model of a protected state of British India, resident Ducos learning to insinuate rather than order. Local residents in the provinces were added, so as to effect abolition of debt-slavery and torture, removal of foreigners (Chinese, as well as French) from the jurisdiction of native courts, and cessation of gambling. An occasional show of gunboats helped the protesting king to accept the insinuations proffered. In 1897 a land law made possible actual settlement by French colonists.

In Annam French rule had not yet been made effective, as the boy-emperor and his mandarins took no orders from the resident at Hué. Hence Doumer in 1897 by ordinance of September 27, increased the number of provincial residents, and a council of ministers under the resident-general replaced the native secret *comat*, the council being still so called, however. The mandarins had to be left in power, although in 1898 Annamite finances were put under French control. The resident at Hué and his subordinate residents in the provinces were left to make their own way in other respects by force of character.

Tonkin had already become a much more directly ruled area although called a protectorate. Doumer did away with the French-imposed native viceroy, and induced the residents to give the mandarins greater scope. The local communes were given dignity by being put in charge of their special affairs more widely than ever. In the central government as resident-general, in June, 1897, he himself was arbiter of policy in all parts of Indo-China. Next, a superior council was chosen by an electorate belonging to chambers of commerce set up in Annam and Cambodia; representation in this economic council was conceded to the chambers of the other provinces. By the end of 1898 this federal system of control was in operation, though opposed by the French in Cochin China.

In the field of finance Doumer brought each of the five parts of the protectorate out of enormous deficits into respectable surpluses, the federal budget he made adequate by using indirect taxation, while the "provincial" budgets were provided for from direct taxes. His monopolies on opium and alcohol were not only anti-social in character, but once established could not be easily replaced. Like the sales tax, they had the disadvantage of general incidence, and so created hostility on a wide scale. Lastly he completed in 1901 a plan for railroad development which would require ten years of construction. Commerce rose from 170,000,000 to 363,000,000 francs, the French share in it growing threefold.

Unfortunately, Doumer's program neglected agriculture and opposed the Hongay coal mines and Haiphong cement works because they competed

with similar French industries. A heavy salt tax imposed in Annam to support reforms ruined the local salt manufacture and cost practically the whole receipts to catch bootleggers. Land regulation brought concession of some 275,000 hectares only, and but little foreign settlement. Some of the grants were as large as 20,000 hectares, which meant simply a superimposed foreign overlordship, with no improvement in crops.³⁰

Governor Paul Beau (1902-1907) recognized a growing need for greater coöperation by the natives in government by reëstablishing the highest order of mandarins in Annam, the Tong-Doc, and later the lesser Tuan-Phu. Each of the residents was given a provincial council, and in Tonkin a native chamber with advisory powers was created. His restoration of the communes in August, 1904, was received in Cochin China with enthusiasm. This "moral conquest" of the native in the tradition of Paul Bert was too much for France, though Clementel, minister of colonies, favored it. Unfortunately, Annamite opinion now began to demand much more than this supposedly liberal policy of association.

Following Paul Beau's recall in 1907, the rift between the French and the natives widened rapidly. For this there were several reasons: from 1907 to 1911 there were six governors-general, only one of whom was not ad interim, and he ruled only fifteen months. Indirect government was a fiction, direct control the actuality. When Japan, victorious over Russia in 1905, showed that "a yellow skin might be good for something," the Asiatic peoples began to plan release from European political intrusion. The French had not trained natives for offices of administration, upper or lower, but used too many Frenchmen, aided by interpreters.

The indirect taxes were unpopular because they were thought high, were levied by foreigners, or were collected under search warrants to discover evasions. Far more genuine unrest was due to a break with the past and loss of respect for their elders shown by the new generation growing up under industrialization, who, lost to their own society, found no place in that of the Occidentals. A "Young Annamite" movement became general in 1908. A plot to burn Hanoi was discovered, and the French were frightened.

To secure active native coöperation and solidarity with the French, and remedy Bert's undue emphasis on *mise en valeur*, recourse was had to the "association" doctrine of Lanessan. This meant to seek the development of the natives and their country within their own culture, not that of France, by actual coöperation of French and Annamites. Governor Klobukowsky (1908-1911), in face of the Asiatic movement, edged away from liberal reforms and tried forceful domination. He proved a dismal failure, and Albert Sarraut was sent out, instructed to return to the Lanessan ideal.³¹

Sarraut (1911-1914, 1916-1919) first of all cleaned out the hordes of French bureaucrats in low grade civil service jobs. Natives were used instead at lower salaries, while French officials were forced to obey the decree of October 8, 1911, and learn the native languages. Next the administration of

justice was reformed in Tonkin by framing a Civil Code (1917) recognizing the customs and usages of the natives. The result was an advance on any combination elsewhere tried by the French; but it unduly hastened the social evolution of the younger generation by lessening family control. That is, to meet the breakup of the family the Code took the French, not the native, mode of control.³²

Sarraut stuck valiantly, in the face of political revolt and the need to execute several rebels who tried to incite rebellion from Japan, and in spite of vehement protest by the French colony, to the program of political liberalization. The Great War for the moment substituted a general for a colonial anxiety. When it was over, from 1919 to 1923, Governor Maurice Long had to cope with a new discontent. The natives wanted three sorts of improvements. To reform the old communes he got rid of their reactionary councils of notables by providing administrative councils elected on a more modern basis and having local budgets. To give the Young Annamites a share in the general government was more difficult. In 1922 they were promised a separate Chamber in the colonial council of Cochin China such as had been used in the *délégations Financières* in Algeria. The French retained majorities in both chambers, but the members were elected on the basis of individual representation instead of by "colleges." The native representation was increased, and 20,000 new electors were enfranchised.³³

The third demand, for national autonomy, was more than France was willing to concede; although the government council of the federation was unsatisfactory, to change it from an official body to an elective one seemed too revolutionary. Long went to France ill, where he died shortly after promising to set up an elective council, and his successor moved not towards a real "responsible" government, but towards dominion status, giving the natives sparing naturalization, and a little more power to the educated class, but with much more to the general government.

The period of unusual prosperity up to 1929 was ended by the world-wide depression; during the decade a swift development in Annamite opinion brought revolutionary troubles at the beginning of 1930. During this unstable decade there were four governors-general: Maurice Long (1920-1922), Martial Merlin (1922-1925), Alexandre Varenne (1925-1928), and Pierre Pasquier (1928-1934), with several *protempore* governors in the interval.

In the years following the War the cash reserve of the general budget grew enormously, because several public works were suspended on account of lack of laborers and material; and second, because of bold financial operations by Long. Silver was then worth eighty-four pence an ounce (in contrast with twenty-five to thirty in 1913); the Indo-Chinese piastre reached sixteen francs (a rise of from two and one-half to three francs), and the demand for this money to pay for rice exported increased in conformity with its rise in value. At that time the notes were issued by the general government

and at its risk, but it received in exchange pounds sterling, gold dollars, or yen, paid by foreign buyers. This rôle of playing "banker to bankers" ended on January 1, 1922, in a profit of 5,800,000 gold dollars.

Budgetary troubles soon came on, however. The general budget of the colony had to make up deficits in the local ones every year, and the total reached 16,000,000 piastres in 1929, which was 19 per cent of the receipts of the general budget. Expenses kept on increasing, especially for personnel, which grew by more than 100 per cent from 1919 to 1925, and later became even larger. To increase budget receipts recourse was had in 1922 and 1926 to loans payable in piastres; Long, Varenne, and Pasquier all used the device, but it was also necessary to take from the reserve, between 1922 and 1926, no less than 26,000,000 piastres to balance the budget. In 1927 there was a slight excess in receipts, but since 1929 the balance has been fictitious.

The general budget, 36,000,000 in 1914, was 50,000,000 in 1920, 87,000,000 in 1927, and 102,000,000 piastres in 1930; it doubled in ten years and tripled in sixteen, whereas that of France only amounted in the same interval to two and one-half times the pre-War figure. Obviously too many enterprises for the wealth of the country had been undertaken, producing "budgetary inflation." As the depression reduced receipts, the colony had to use economy.

For six years after the War, Indo-China came to be thought of as a French El Dorado. "Colonization" on a grand scale began, and old companies like the Société des Distilleries de l'Indochine launched new lines of business. A holding company, the Société Financière et Coloniale (1920), organized and financed twenty agricultural, mining, industrial and banking companies. Others were set up to go into rubber and rice plantations. Between 1924 and 1929 over 2,000,000 francs were invested in cement, textile, coffee, tea, rubber, and other industrial undertakings. Though commerce had fallen between 1916 and 1919, in 1920 it exceeded pre-War figures. In 1928 the special commerce amounted to 5,536,000 francs. Rice exports were worth over 2,000,000.³⁴

But the crisis of 1929 hit Indo-China hard. Rice prices at Saigon fell by the beginning of 1931 from ten and eleven piastres to five and seven; export fell in 1930 to 1,121,000 tons. In July, 1931, the panic-stricken rice planters of Cochin China demanded a moratorium. The mines also reduced production, coal mining falling least. From 1929 to 1930 exports fell 24 per cent and imports 22 per cent.

Two reforms were tried: The piastre was stabilized on May 31, 1930, being made equivalent to ten francs. This checked the fluctuations of Indo-China money (previously based on bullion prices), which were so long a budgetary and commercial trouble. The rice growers joined various other economic groups asking the colonial ministry to restore the silver basis. The second measure was the law of April 13, 1928, which modified the customs regulations applicable to assimilated colonies, the metropole and the colonies being

put on absolutely equal tariff footing. A new tariff, higher in many cases than the preceding one, went into effect on July 10, 1929.

Resident-general Pasquier on November 25, 1931, told the Grand Council of Indo-China that in Tonkin, the food supply of rice was increasing by mathematical progression, but the population grew in geometric progression; government help looked to irrigation works to increase the areas cultivated. In Cochin China rice is raised for export, and prosperity depends upon its price. This, throughout 1931, was no lower than the average prices from 1900 to 1918, those of the years 1918-1928 having been exceptional. Over-production had been due to speculation upon a continuance of large export at high prices. Some of the growers asked that part of their lands be exempted from seizure for debts under judgment, but this was refused as bad public policy. Instead, the cultivators were aided in financing their crops, and the agricultural banks received 15,000,000 advance, which was not actively used.

Import duties were reduced 30 per cent and export duties changed from specific to ad valorem bases to bring them into line with the practice in Burma and Siam. It was difficult to assist credit without encouraging speculation and usury; furthermore, the credits adopted failed to reach small growers, long at the mercy of their big competitors, who charged 100 per cent for six to eight month loans. To stop this a special bank for small growers was set up. The rubber planters received about 70,000,000 francs in subsidies during two years.³⁵

After the Great War the most intelligent of the Indo-Chinese thought that their share in it should bring self-determination in their relations with France, and felt deceived when the hope proved vain. The result was formation of several nationalistic secret societies with one common characteristic, hatred of the French. A few of them were: Parti Révolutionnaire du Nouvel Annam, the Association Nguyen-an-ninh, the Association des Jeunes Révolutionnaires Annamites, and the Parti Nationaliste Annamite. Their rallying point was the young prince Cuong-De. The prince took refuge in Japan and from there sent out propaganda. All of these parties, formed before the Communist party, were nationalist not communist.

Another cause of trouble was Bolshevik propaganda, especially after 1924. In 1925 the Việt Nam Quoc Dan Dong, or Annamite Nationalist Party, coalesced with the more radical Than Nien, revolutionaries, and the Cong San or Communist party, to destroy French control. Annamites took part in a Congress of the Third International, and propaganda spread from Canton, where a military communist school supported by the "League of Oppressed Peoples," had an Annamite section to train Indo-Chinese to serve in Kuomintang armies, or those "of the independence of Annam." This activity was led by Nguyen-ai-quoc, founder of Annamite Communism, who in Paris in 1918 had tried to interest Clemenceau and Lloyd George in the Indo-Chinese problem.³⁶ Hatred of the French, "whose unjust exploitation must be

stopped," affected the university students; part of the native press joined to preach destruction of the established order. They told the Annamites that they were exploited by the mandarins, notables, and chiefly by their foreign masters "who treat them like cattle and that it will be so until they drive the parasites out."

Early in 1925 a revolutionary Annamite at a banquet threw a bomb at the governor-general. Merlin escaped, but there were many French victims. During the same year some students of Hanoi marched with a banner inscribed: "Long live the Socialist Varenne; down with cudgel colonialism." There were student riots in several towns, and great revolutionary activity, though the interior was fairly quiet.

Meantime Nguyen-ai-quoc pushed forward organization of labor syndicates until he was arrested in Hong Kong in 1931 and imprisoned for two years. The élite of Annam voiced its demands boldly. In a *Cahier des vœux Annam* they demanded free right of assembly and association, free movement within and without Indo-China, freedom of the press, native eligibility for public office, and equal representation with the French in the assemblies. This bold program, some of which was later achieved, was sponsored by the better class who, while not advising open revolt, worked nevertheless for ultimate independence. Into the tense situation stepped Pierre Pasquier as governor-general on August 28, 1928, with thirty years of official experience in Indo-China. He had to deal at once with an extremist element who, favoring violence, organized for action in 1928 and 1929. They extorted huge sums from the rich villages by terrorism, and wreaked destruction and assassination until the authorities condemned three hundred of their members.

On the night of February 9-10, 1930, there was a premature uprising at the Yen-bay post, accompanied by violence in Tonkin, disturbances in Cochin China, and revolutionary acts in northern Annam. At Yen-bay the Viêt-nam corrupted the native garrison and attempted to seize the fort; they killed or wounded six French officers, but were routed. At Hanoi on February 10, twenty bombs were thrown, and several attacks were later made on government offices. Robin, resident-superior, acted promptly; the stronghold of the rebels at Co-am was bombarded, native guards combed the province arresting rebels, punishing villages, and cutting down their screens of bamboo groves. The Viêt-nam was broken up and most of its leaders sent to jail.

The rebellion in Tonkin was nationalist and anti-French, led by dissidents who took full advantage of help from Communism. The movement committed no act against any Frenchman, limiting persecution to natives. On May 1, 1930, there were outbursts in Annam, while on the same day a thousand to fifteen hundred villagers of Cochin China began a march on the roads with red flags. These wretched *tadian* (farmers on shares), the real rural proletariat, living in perpetual debt on great Annamite estates, and paying a heavy

personal tax, demanded suppression of their tax, and then went quietly home; but disorder was wide, and the civil guard killed and wounded many.

Trouble in Vinh and Ha-tinh, Annam, spread to Quang-ngai. A fierce outbreak of communistic inspiration in September surprised the French, for the mandarins had not forewarned them. Columns of thousands of people carrying bamboo staves and red flags attacked the native guardposts and stations, pillaging, burning and murdering. Near Vinh on September 12, eight thousand men started for the chief town. Bombs were dropped from airplanes on the head of their column; whereupon they fled leaving one hundred killed and wounded; some who tried to reform ranks were shot down by machine guns.

Quiet was slowly restored, and at the beginning of 1931 the rebel provinces were almost completely pacified. "Annamite society reacted of its own accord against the propaganda of the leaders, condemning not only the nationalist revolution, but also the communistic tendencies that were subversive of its own traditions; the call of the revolutionaries no longer finds an echo from the working classes . . . and for more than two years now nothing has happened to disturb the public peace."³⁷ In March, 1935, the troops of an outpost at Saigon had revolted, killing seven soldiers and wounding several others, among them their commandant.

Meantime there had been some attempt to liberalize institutions, the movement under Varenne following rapidly the policies initiated by Beau and Sarraut. Certain improvements in educational facilities were introduced. The school of medicine at Hanoi became full-fledged, the Indo-Chinese University was given a special staff of professors in 1924, a school of law was established in 1931. Primary schools increased, and instruction was restricted to the native tongues, "a necessary evil, which is in some measure compensated for by sending a good many young men to France for higher education."

In agriculture the *Crédit mutuel agricole* for Cochin China began to lend money to laborers to help them escape the usurers; the same plan in the protectorates was effected by provincial banks. Since 1930 hevea cultivators have been subsidized nearly 100 million francs to enable them to survive until their young rubber plants can begin production. A credit up to 100 million francs guaranteeing loans on rice lands was also authorized, and long term loans at lowered rates of interest. For permanent help to the debtors among land-holders, the *Crédit foncier indochinoise*, fused from several mortgaging organizations, began better loan terms, and long term loans for native agriculturists were provided. In 1927 an inspector of labor was appointed to protect the interests of laborers on the large plantations. Varenne in 1926 gave the natives equal opportunity in the public services except in judicial and political jobs.

Reform in Cambodia included a shift of the rice-paddy tax to the status of an "impost on tilled lands" and through legislation in 1921 and 1925 steps

were taken towards establishing a well-arranged land-tax. In Laos a native consultative assembly was set up in 1923. In Cochin China the colonial council received added native members. In Tonkin the "notables" were superseded by administrative councils, while native justice was reorganized in 1923 by formation of a special staff of mandarin judges.

In Annam an opportunity for reorganization came when the king died in 1925. The crown retained its ritual and religious power, but civil and military expenses were all put on the local budget; the mandarins were named by the protectorate and the council of ministers presided over by the resident-general. There was created a *chambre des représentants du peuple*.

On May 2, 1933, there was installed a system of government largely inspired by the emperor, Bao Dai. He himself took over the functions of the president of the council, abolished the secretariat of war, substituting a ministry of national education. The new organization revised the judicial system and the penal code, the mandarin statute, education, public accounts, and several of the ministries. The essential feature was to strengthen the national government, although France retained the responsibilities of the protecting power. Especially was education put into the hands of native administrators, with the purpose of creating a real Annamite public spirit.

The decentralized system used since 1884 in Tonkin suffered little change: the resident-in-chief of Annam at Hué was obliged to support the emperor in his exercise of supervision, whereas in Hanoi (Tonkin) the resident-in-chief retained direct delegated supervision over the native administrators. In the representative assemblies the substitution of natives for Europeans came to be a feature of cumulative policy, as in the general and judicial administration. The great reform initiated by Pasquier by decree of November 4, 1928, was a reorganization of the representative system, which had features suggesting that of Tunisia. At the base were created communal councils of notables, over which were exclusively native elected provincial councils; the municipal councils of the large towns were given sections for elected natives; native elements in each of these were given consultative functions, working alongside the councils which handle French economic and financial affairs in each of the four protectorates. In Cochin China the council became a deliberative body composed of fourteen Frenchmen and ten elected natives. The highest of these councils, and coördinate with the executive council of the governor-general, was the Grand Council of Economic and Financial Interests of Indo-China, with twenty-eight French and twenty-three native members most of whom are elected. There is indeed a little resentment in Annam over separate and native elected councils, but the division is practical and possibly reduces chance of conflict.³⁸

The appointment of René Robin in 1934 brought into the governor-generalship another man full of experience of the country. His first conspicuous change in administrative organization was removal of the direction of customs and excises from that of finance, so that more effective control

would increase revenues, partly by stopping the smuggling from which the protectorate suffered.

Since 1907, when the boundaries of Indo-China were fixed, the problems of good neighborhood had involved relations with China and Siam. During recent years troubles along the Yunnan railway and on the Chinese frontier of Tonkin, required a strong border police and, since 1926, military reinforcements and modern arms. On the western boundary Siam, modernizing and consolidating her power through the efforts of Robert Sayre, began in 1920 to free herself from foreign customs control and consular jurisdiction. Chassigneux intimated that the United States was the last and most hesitant one to give up extra-territoriality; Sayre on his part showed that France relinquished her old treaty rights very reluctantly.³⁹

With France, Siam signed a treaty on February 14, 1925, followed by a convention between Indo-China and Siam dated August 25, 1926, giving Siam customs and consular autonomy. Under the convention named, the Mekong, until then entirely French, was made an international river, with the boundary fixed in its thalweg; along its banks two parallel zones twenty-five kilometers wide were demilitarized, and a joint commission was set up to enforce the new regulations. Provision was made for coöperation between the French and Siamese administrations and police, and methods were agreed upon for development of communications and exchange.

The effect of the economic depression was to reduce the 1934 budget from the 1931 figure of 180 million piastres to 103 millions; obviously, quality and quantity of the services to the people fell. Salary cuts were 10 to 30 per cent, and the official personnel was much reduced.

There was much development of transportation, including 2,400 kilometers of railways, 14,000 kilometers of roads, and many modern bridges. In Cambodia a railway from Pnom Penh to Battambang and Mongkolborey was put in operation, preparing for linking with the Siam railway system. By 1936 the trans-Indo-Chinese line was to be completed from Tourane to Nhatrang. Irrigation works in Cochin China, Cambodia, Annam, and Tonkin were being pushed. In 1934 public works practically vanished from the budget.

In Yunnan Province, second largest of those of China, economic influence of France was definitely promoted by the railway from Haiphong. In January, 1934, French trade there was some 60 per cent of the total. Finance of the province was much under French influence; the Banque de l'Indochine had a branch in Yunnan-fu.⁴⁰

Agricultural development in Cochin China added more than 2,000,000 hectares to cultivation, giving excess production annually of about 1,500,000 tons of rice.⁴¹ Numerous works, completed by René Robin as resident-in-chief of Tonkin, protect the Red River delta from floods by reorganizing the ancient dikes. The Mekong was made navigable for 1,500 miles by motor boat, and to Vientiane in Laos by small steamers. A good road was built

from Hanoi along the coast south to Saigon and thence to Siam. French colonists themselves developed coffee and tea plantations, hevea and sugar in Cochin China, and pepper in Cambodia. The Hongay hard coal mines in Tonkin and other provinces, soft coal, zinc, and tin, all developed a considerable mineral industry chiefly centering in Tonkin. Unfortunately, the industrial growth brought into existence not only a well-to-do native class, but a new proletariat on plantations and in mines and factories. The foreign trade in 1927 of 440 million piastres dropped to 200 millions in 1933; these figures reflected the losses of the population in foreclosures with nonpayment of taxes, and banks loaded with inoperative properties. In the large towns nearly half the inhabitants vanished during 1934, seeking cheaper subsistence. It was a belated example of the world depression.⁴²

On the side of social development much was done to improve health, lessen infant mortality, and prevent epidemics. The medical corps included one hundred and sixty native and French physicians, with two hundred and seventy assistants trained in the medical school at Hanoi. This showing is the best of all the French colonies. Benevolent societies gathered up half-breed foundlings and educated them for social existence in Indo-China or in France.

The Indo-Chinese labor law of 1927 was improved upon by legislation fixing the status of compulsory and free labor. The former was in 1930 regulated by the International Labor Conference, but France refused to accept its provisions as being out of harmony with her colonial labor problems. She did, however, enact two laws, of February 5 and February 6, 1932, the one on forced labor, the other on government transport. The first prohibits use of forced labor save in the public interest of the natives when voluntary workers cannot be found. On May 11, 1933, all forced labor was prohibited in the whole of Cochin China and Cambodia, and in important parts of Tonkin and Annam. Elsewhere the time limit was made thirty to sixty days per year. Probably the depression assisted these regulations in overcoming the worst of the old evils of recruiting. In 1928 the peak recruiting by planters reached 18,000. In 1930 there were 11,000, but 8,000 of these were sent back to Tonkin, where they were recruited.⁴³ A bad defect was the opportunity left to use on plantations "voluntary" laborers reëngaged after expiry of contracts without the guarantees of the new decrees, which employers found onerous. Nor did the new law apply to native employers, thus giving them advantage over the whites, nor was inspection entirely freed from political influence.

In the field of education the French government has called upon the assistance of the Buddhist church for the adaptation of the school to the needs of the environment. The curriculum of these pagoda schools is of the simplest, and is mainly concerned with the rules of life taught by the Buddhist catechism. The children learn to read and write in their own language, and to do very elementary arithmetic.⁴⁴

In Indo-China the French policy of education follows "the determination . . . to restrict secondary education as long as possible to those who are likely

to make proper use of it." Similarly, higher education is limited to "those who can be absorbed into the public or industrial life of the country." All advanced education is kept in touch with Eastern culture, so that it may enrich and deepen the culture of educated Orientals themselves.⁴⁵

In all their later work the Catholic missions have upheld their tradition. The Société des Missions Étrangères has nine vicariates, the Spanish Dominicans from the Philippines are working in Tonkin. There are 1,300,000 Christians served by four hundred and ten missionaries and 1,350 native preachers. Thirty-six hundred nuns assist the work of the missions, and the church schools serve 66,000 pupils.

The effort to avoid forcing an alien culture upon the people is typified by the careful preservation, not only of Angkor Vat, but of hundreds of less well known Khmer monuments. The Institute of Buddhist Studies at Pnom Penh preserves Sanskrit and Pali books and documents. The Chinese influence in painting, sculpture and architecture spreads from the School of Fine Arts at Hanoi.⁴⁶

The social evolution of the people is slight in Laos, Cambodia, and the mountainous parts, for they are untouched by the French. But in the Annamite regions the old Chinese culture has been much modified. The break-up of the villages has thrown the individual into complex relations unforeseen by law and tradition.⁴⁷ The search for personal rights has produced an individualism accelerated by education, resulting in a moral crisis which challenges the Europeans in the Far East. In a modern individualistic society the substitution of new principles for those which tended to disappear with the enfeeblement of the family and the break-up of the commune has not been as rapid as has the enfranchisement of the individual.

The French hold on the country grows more tenuous because in the division of Annamite society there is a growing group, yet small, whose members speak French well, who demand many modern reforms. Beside these reformers, in Cochin China the masses still look to France for peace and well-being, the preservation of old customs and communal rights. In interior Annam and Tonkin a large element showed itself hostile to tax collection and interference with illicit opium and alcohol sales.⁴⁸

Everywhere except in Cochin China, the French have moved forward prudently in step with the social evolution. Asiatic despotism now yields place to popular expression of views in all the native consultative assemblies. At Hué there is an Assembly of the People "under the shadow of the throne of the once despotic 'Son of Heaven.'" New codes by French lawyers have been set up to fuse French and native legal principles. The penal code of 1917 for Tonkin has served to lessen the power of family authority while westernizing penal practices.

Among the youths educated in European manner there has grown up a definite hostility to France. The well-to-do middle class and the native

officials are too wise to attempt violent action, but they rarely coöperate freely and they maintain a reserved and distant attitude towards their political masters. As Leroy-Beaulieu said: "The nineteenth century was the heroic age of European colonization; perhaps the twentieth will be the critical age."⁴⁹

The decline of communistic activity by no means promised decline of nationalistic activities. Since the Comintern-inspired rebellion of 1931 was quelled, the French authorities have taken precautions against agitation from abroad which have so far proved effective, but it is difficult to prevent smuggling of pamphlets into the country. The Comintern instructions to agents in Indo-China aim to organize the masses to expel the French; rather than insisting on pure Communism, they would organize an intermediate bourgeois democratic revolt, aided by all dissident elements.⁵⁰

Notes

- 1 J. Chailley-Bert, *The Colonisation of Indo-China* (London, 1894), 347.
- 2 Garnier had been in France trying to interest capital there in opening a route to the southwestern Chinese hinterland. He returned to Shanghai late in 1872, and was called to Saigon by Governor Duprè to discuss the move on Tonkin (H. A. Gautier, *Les Français au Tonkin* (Paris, 1884), 62-69).
- 3 S. H. Roberts, *History of French Colonial Policy*, II, 423-424.
- 4 Jean Dupuis, *Les évènements du Tongkin* (Paris, 1879), II, 7; Dupuis, *Les origines de la question du Ton-kin* (Paris, 1896), 106; F. Romanet de Caillaud, *Histoire de l'intervention française au Tongkin* (Paris, 1880), 55-56.
- 5 Gautier, *op. cit.*, 87-88; Dupuis, *Les évènements*, II, 139.
- 6 *Journal officiel*, January 18, 1880, p. 465; Dubois and Terrier, 832.
- 7 J. G. Scott, *France and Tongking* (Lond., 1885), 26; Maspero, *L'Indochine*, I, 150; Gaffarel, *Les colonies françaises*, 362.
- 8 H. Clifford, *Further India*, 307; review of the Tonkin situation to 1875, in P. Bonnetain, *Au Tonkin* (Paris, 2 ed., 1887), *Introd.*, i-xiv, and to 1885, xlvii-cviii.
- 9 De Clercq, XI, 144-150.
- 10 Philastre treaty, De Clercq, XI, 144-150. Piquant account in J. Pene-Siefert, *La question tonkinoise* (Paris, 1885), 3-5.
- 11 Patenôtre, *chargé d'affaires* in Peking, urged unequivocal action to cut the web of involved diplomacy (Dubois and Terrier, *Un siècle d'expansion coloniale*, 845; Debidour, *Histoire diplomatique de l'Europe*, I, 68-69; A. Neton, *L'Indo-Chine et son avenir économique* (Paris, 1904), 41-42).
- 12 *Livres jaunes. Affaires du Tonkin, 1874-1884*, LXVI-LXVII, 153-155. H. Gautier, *Les français au Tonkin*, 343-380; Bouinain and Paulus, *La France en Indo-Chine* (Paris, 1892), 44-50; Debidour, *op. cit.*, I, 72-73, C. Baude de Maurcelay, *Le commandant Rivière* (Paris, 1884), 204-207.
- 13 *Livres jaunes. Aff. du Tonkin, 1874-1884*, LXVI-LXVII, 212-215. Rambaud, *Jules Ferry*, 331; Gautier, *op. cit.*, 398-405; Neton, *op. cit.*, 46-50.
- 14 Rambaud, *Jules Ferry*, 332-333.
- 15 Discussion of this treaty, *Journal officiel*, *Débats parl.* Chambre, 1884, pp. 2495 ff. De Clercq, XIV, 374-379, with history of the negotiations in an "exposé de motives."
- 16 *Livre jaunes. Affaires de Chine et du Tonkin, 1884-1885*, LXX-LXXI, 32-33; Debidour, *op. cit.*, I, 74.

- 17 *Livres jaunes, Affaires de Chine et du Tonkin, 1884-1885*, LXX-LXXI, 1-3, 5, 80-85, 122. Rambaud, *op. cit.*, 356-357. Debidour, *op. cit.*, 1, 78-79.
- 18 De Clercq, XIV, 493-496; *Livres jaunes, Affaires de Chine et du Tonkin, 1884*, p. 275, and LXX-LXXI, 224; *Journal officiel, Débats parl., Chambre, 1885*, pp. 703-705, and 2d trimestre, pp. 1787, 2727-2728; *Débats parl., Chambre*, pp. 1339-1344; De Clercq, XIV, 496-503; Rambaud, *op. cit.*, 341-345, 363-365, 372-378.
- 19 H. Weber, *La compagnie française des Indes* (Paris, 1904), 177-179; Roberts' treaty is in Malloy, *Treaties, Conventions, etc.*, II, 1626-1628; De Clercq, *Recueil des traités*, VII, 138-149.
- 20 Ward and Gooch, eds., *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy*, III, 193-195. De Clercq, XIV, 294-297, 433-439.
- 21 Lord (George N.) Curzon, "The Siamese Boundary Question," in *The Nineteenth Century*, July, 1893, 34-55. In the same volume Curzon voiced fear of Russia whose "Cossacks are patrolling the Pamirs," while the French gunboats were before Bangkok. *Livres jaunes*, LXII-LXV, *Affaires du Haut-Mekong et de Siam, 1893-1902*, pt. I, pp. I ff.; Ward and Gooch, *op. cit.*, III, 197.
- 22 J. G. D. Campbell, *Siam in the XXth Century*, 288-207, 298-310. A map of the disputed boundaries is given in *The Nineteenth Century*, July, 1893, opp. p. 34. The treaty of October 3, 1893, is in R. Millet, *Notre politique extérieure de 1898 à 1905* (Paris, 1905), 333-336; *German Diplomatic Documents*, Dugdale, ed. (1929), vol. II, 236-243.
- 23 De Clercq, XX, 67-70; *Livres jaunes*, LXII-LXV, *Affaires du Haut-Mekong*, pt. I, pp. 6-7, 14-17; *The Times*, September 10, 1934. Text in L. de Reinach, *Recueil des traités*, I, Supplement.
- 24 W. L. Langer, *The Franco-Russian Alliance* (Cambridge, 1929), 325-333; R. K. Douglas, *Europe and the Far East* (N. Y., 1913), 405-408; De Clercq, XX, 360-363; G. Maspero, *L'Indochine 1879-1895* (3v., Paris, 1906), II, 342; L. Salaun, *L'Indochine* (Paris, 1902), 87; Millet, *op. cit.*, 35-73; E. Chassigneux, *L'Indochine*, in Hanotaux and Martineau, II, 515-516.
- 25 It was in 1883 that Bismarck uttered his famous *mor*: "England has colonies and colonists; Germany has colonists but no colonies; France has colonies but no colonists," quoted in A. Neton, *L'Indo-chine et son avenir économique* pref. by E. Étienne.
- 26 Duvergier, LXXXVII, 509. E. Luro, *Le pays d'Annam* (Paris, 1878), 160 ff.; cf. F. Bernard, *L'Indo-Chine; erreurs et dangers - une programme*, 21. A. Neton, *L'Indo-chine et son avenir économique*, 16-17.
- 27 J. Chailley-Bert, *Paul Bert au Tonkin* (Paris, 1887), 1-7, 31, 45.
- 28 Bernard, *op. cit.*, 56; Neton, 62-64. P. Doumer, *Situation de l'Indo-Chine* (Hanoi, 1902), 1-10, 24, 35; A. Maybon, *L'Indochine* (Paris, 1931), 92; Duvergier, XCV, 287-288, XCVI, 37-38.
- 29 Doumer, *op. cit.*, 3-4; Maspero, *op. cit.*, 17; From 1896 to 1900, the total budget for Indo-China rose from 21,358,000 piastres to 34,291,000 (Bernard, *op. cit.*, 77-78); Doumer, *Situation de l'Indo-Chine*, 90.
- 30 Doumer, *op. cit.*, 252-255, 313; Neton, *op. cit.*, 62; Maspero, *op. cit.*, 18; Bernard, *op. cit.*, 44-61, 72-77, 131-142.
- 31 E. Chassigneux, *L'Indochine*, in Hanotaux and Martineau, V, 510-513; Camille Briffaut, *La cité annamite* (2v., Paris, 1909), a useful survey of the organization of the commune.
- 32 Duvergier, new series, XI, 487; M. Rondet-Saint, *Choses de l'Indochine* (Paris, 1916), 277-288, found lighthouse keepers and postage stamp vendors brought from France; "La presence et le rôle ici de ce petit employé française ne sont ils pas

- un non-sens"; *L'Asie française*, December, 1920, p. 404; for the decree of October 8, 1911, see Duvergier, new series, XI, 487; *L'organisation de la justice en Indochine* (Hanoi, 1930); *Exposition coloniale internationale* (Paris, 1930).
- 33 Chassigneux, *L'Indochine*, in Hanotaux and Martineau, V, 529-545. Pasquier died in an airplane accident in the midst of the Stavisky riots on January 15, 1934.
- 34 The deficits in the budget were: for 1931, 11,154,954 piastres; 1932, 13,864,785, and about 5 millions in 1933. Cuts of ten per cent in salaries reduced the 1931 estimate of 108,046,530 piastres to 86,756,210 for 1932; to 72,164,190 for 1933, and to 60,953,940 for 1934 (Fidel, in *The Asiatic Review*, April, 1934, pp. 378-379).
- 35 *L'Asie française*, January, 1932.
- 36 Jean Dorsenne, "Le péril rouge en Indochine," *Revue des deux mondes*, ser. 8, vol. 8, pp. 519-536.
- 37 Camille Fidel, "Indo-Chine under Governor Pierre Pasquier," in translation by Oldham, in *The Asiatic Review*, April, 1934, p. 373.
- 38 Bao Dai spent ten years in France as a student; he was married in March, 1934, to Marie Ngu-yen Hue-hao, an Annamite princess converted to the Catholic faith. Camille Fidel, *op. cit.*, 374-375; *The Times*, September 4, 1934. M. René Robin became governor-general in the summer of 1934.
- 39 *The Asiatic Review*, October, 1934, p. 725. F. B. Sayre, "Siam" *Atlantic Monthly*, CXXXVII, 841-851, especially pp. 847-850.
- 40 *The Times*, September 4, 1934; Burton, in *Current History*, January, 1934, p. 428.
- 41 Rice export in 1931 fell to 959,504 tons, in 1932 rising to 1,213,906, with stocks low and demand good. Prices, however, were half those of 1930, wherefore exports fell from 1,300 million francs in 1930 to 623 in 1931 and 603 in 1932. The distress of the cultivators was the greater because the prosperity prior to 1928 encouraged undue expansion by borrowing (Fidel, 376).
- 42 *The Times*, Saigon correspondent, September 4, 1934; *Ibid.*, September 10, 1934.
- 43 Jean Goudal, "Labor Legislation in Indochina," *The Asiatic Review*, January, 1934, pp. 136-145. Labor history to 1930 is included in E. Teston and M. Percheron, *L'Indochine moderne* (Paris, Lib. de France, [1930?], 169-174).
- 44 Sir Hesketh Bell, *Foreign Colonial Administration in the Far East* (1928) 94. *Bibliothèque coloniale internationale*, 9^e série, L'enseignement aux indigènes, I-II; and E. Tavernier, *La famille annamite* (Saigon, 1927), 88.
- 45 A.D.A. Kat Angelino, *Colonial Policy* (Hague, 1931, 2 v.), I, 387-397.
- 46 *The Times*, September 10, 1934.
- 47 Kat, I, 423. See Bell, *op. cit.*, 191. "There must be a continuation of the system of indirect administration which is gradually being adopted in many parts of the colonial world. The French are likewise applying this principle more and more in their African and Asiatic colonies, by trying to strengthen the village organization and by organizing an indigenous administrative body which establishes contact between the village and the European administration." Other autochthonous institutions are, however, considered less useful by the French (Kat, *op. cit.*, I, 510).
- 48 *The Times*, September 10, 1934.
- 49 The population of Tonkin, estimated in 1890 at nine to ten millions (E. Courtois, *Le Tonkin français contemporaine* (Paris, 1891), 104-106), was given in 1932 as 8,012,429, on 40,530 square miles. Indo-China has 21,599,582 inhabitants, with a total area of 277,504 square miles.
- 50 Chassigneux denies the validity of the work written before the Great War by O. Reclus, *Lâchons l'Asie, prenons l'Afrique*. Kat Angelino, *Colonial Policy*, I, 520. *The Times*, Riga correspondent, May 4, 1934.

COLONIAL WARS BEFORE 1914: THE CASE OF FRANCE IN INDOCHINA

C. Fourniau

Source: J. A. de Moor and H. L. Wesseling (eds), *Imperialism and War: Essays on Colonial Wars in Asia and Africa*, Leiden: E. J. Brill and Universitaire pers Leiden (1989), pp. 72-86.

L'affaire du Tonkin, which constituted the most important part of the French seizure of Eastern Indochina, was the biggest colonial undertaking engaged in by France before the First World War. And from every point of view: the size of the subjugated population (three times that of the empire conquered up till then); the size of the expeditionary force sent out, which numbered as many as 40,000 men; the effects on French home politics; not to mention the worldwide importance of the tragedies of the decolonization period. And it was also a most complex affair. For it was for a long time tied up with the much larger field of French relations with China, which were peculiar into themselves, being neither altogether normally diplomatic nor wholly colonial.

It was, actually, the desire to have a base in the China Sea which led the Navy to establish itself in Saigon (1859). In order to secure coal supplies Tonkin and Hongay were coveted (1883), at the same time as it was believed, after the Dupuis adventure, that in the Red River the royal road to inner China had been discovered. From 1887 on, with Rivière, *l'affaire du Tonkin* was to lead to a war with China, of which the final treaty (Treaty of Tien Tsin in 1885) ratified internationally the French seizure of Tonkin and Annam. The whole of Vietnam had now passed under French domination.

Meanwhile, "Tonkin", as this whole affair was called by the press, remained intimately mixed up in the war against China. The situation reached its paroxysm in 1885 when the French were defeated by Chinese troops at Langson - which gave rise to a political crisis in France - with the Treaty of Tien Tsin. From then on problems were less complex. One may

even consider them as settled. The international affair is closed, China and the other powers having accepted the French seizure of the Annamese Empire. The colonial affair seemed settled too, the Hué Court having accepted the Protectorate of France. At that moment there developed in Annam and Tonkin a colonial war, strictly speaking. But can one, indeed, give a strict meaning to the expression? In the case of a war between European countries the dates of outbreak and cessation can be given, and also the places where it was waged and the names of the battles; the question of who the enemy was doesn't even arise, for from the military point of view he is perfectly well defined. Not one of these precisions is possible for colonial wars in general and especially in the case of Annam-Tonkin between 1882 and 1896, to which period this article is limited.

Against whom was the war fought? What were the forces on the side of the colonial power? How was the war conducted? The very extensive literature on the French-colonial implantation in Indochina provides no immediate answer to these nevertheless elementary questions. We must try to outline some answers by asking one further question: why such a situation? Why did contemporaries and historiography have such a blurred view of a set of events which played a considerable role in France and a decisive one in Indochina?

Against whom was the war waged?

The press and contemporary writing on the events, from 1882 to 1895/96, almost always point to three enemies successively or simultaneously: Chinese troops, Black Flags and pirates. The distinction between the three is not clear: pirates and Black Flags are often synonymous and Black Flags being Chinese are said to be manoeuvred by the Celestial Empire authorities. This confusion existed also at the highest level, especially in the reports of the Commanders in Chief.

Thus, by 1885, a set of accepted ideas was rooted in people's minds, especially the myth of the Black Flags. Their ferocity and cunning became the subjects of a whole popular literature which was a mixture of exotism and Grand Guignol. This myth which sold well served two purposes: it justified armed intervention in the perspective of "Gesta Dei per Francos" and it made the Vietnamese people vanish by reducing them to the role of victims of the pirates. The real situation was clearly somewhat different and this did not entirely escape the French authorities. In his instructions to General Millot (18/12/1883) J. Ferry wrote: "You will be confronted with three kinds of opponents: Black Flags, Annamite rebels, who have recently joined the former, and Chinese regular troops."¹ After the Tien Tsin Treaty, the situation was easy: it was noticed by the French that within a few months the Chinese troops withdrew beyond the border followed by Luu Vinh Phuc and his Black Flags. The only remaining forces were the "Annamite rebels" and

the Chinese bands. But in the press, speeches before Parliament, and even official reports, the term "rebels" was to be rarely used. The expression *bandes pirates* (pirate bands) was the most frequently used, or even "Black Flags" which continued to be used.² Behind these terms two completely distinct realities were hidden: Chinese bands and the armed groups of the Vietnamese national resistance.

The Chinese bands were made up of what would today be called refugees who had fled the southern provinces of China which were a prey to the revolts of the 60's and 70's (which was also the case of the Black Flags) – or who later on had been obliged to leave these totally devastated regions. They dominated the Uplands of Tonkin up to about 1895 and constituted a serious obstacle to the establishment of colonial authority in this mountainous area, the more so as they had established complex ties with the indigenous populations of the ethnic minority groups and as they went in more and more for smuggling. Obviously they had no political aims, being ready to be bought if they were offered what suited them or to fight fiercely. The classical term of "pirates", which was applied to them, was not inexact. It was, however, completely wrong when applied to those whom Ferry called *rebelles annamites* (Annamite rebels).

Already in 1883, when the Hué Court capitulated by accepting the protectorate treaties, a part of the mandarins of Tonkin refused to act on the orders received and continued the struggle against French occupation. In July 1885, after the taking of Hué, King Ham Nghi having fled his capital and having launched a call to resistance, the whole of Annam rose up, so that by the end of summer 1885, practically all Annam and Tonkin were opposing French domination. Gosse³ says of Annam in 1886: "the country persists in refusing us obedience and the rebels continue to occupy all positions where we are not ourselves firmly established"; and of Tonkin in 1885: "the country was in uprising against our authority and insurrections reigned in all the provinces, having found new strength in the announcement of the Hué events".

We are here dealing with the *Movement des Lettrés* (Movement of the Learned Ones) or *Cần Vương* (Help the King), which may be defined as a national movement resisting the French occupation led by the Lettered organizing the popular masses and struggling to maintain the traditional society and state of Vietnam.⁴ Under the high authority of King Ham Nghi and his minister Ton That Thuyet up to 1888/89, and the great Lettered such as Tan Thuât, Nguyễn Quang Bích and Phan Đình Phùng, who continued the struggle, armed groups firmly rooted in the peasantry caused the failure of "pacification" till 1895. This national struggle which took on very regionalized forms was highly complex. It had its ups and downs and went through important, evolving stages. But it was almost always a guerrilla war which allowed the French authorities to deny it as a war and to speak of pirates and not of patriotic rebels, so that in essence it went unnoticed by colonial historiography.

The colonial military forces

On the other hand, what were the forces engaged by France: men, leaders, methods? There is no simple answer, for over a dozen of years the evolution was profound. Three main periods can be distinguished: 1882 to 1886; 1886 to early 1891; 1891 to 1896.

The period which goes from Rivière (1882) to Courcy (1886) is what could be called the "flamboyant conquest". It is the one which has been popularly exalted and left memories and names. It is also the one of maximum confusion, for the process of getting installed in Tonkin was closely interwoven with the war against China. It is characterized by a rapid increase in number of troops, rivalries between Ministries, the mediocrity of the overblown Expeditionary Corps and, finally, its importance and failure.

When Rivière arrived in Hanoi on 2nd April 1882, he disposed of about 500 men. In autumn 1883, the Expeditionary Corps under Admiral Courbet already numbered 10,000 men. In early 1884, a number of 15,000 was reached under General Millot. After Langson (March 1885), an enormous sum (200 million francs) was voted and big reinforcements were sent to the Expeditionary Corps placed under command of General de Courcy. He had more than 35,000 men at his disposal (30,000 sent from home and about 5,000 natives). This mass was commanded by an impressive staff: nine generals and 700 officers. More than one witness expresses his astonishment on seeing land in Haiphong "the finest parade cavalry in the world, an artillery capable of besieging a stronghold of first importance and an escort of honour comprising a whole battalion of chasseurs".⁵ Since early 1884 there was even a balloon section.

Between 1882 and 1885, the evolution of numbers and their composition were the result of two successive and opposite mistakes. Underestimating the military difficulties, the Navy Minister, Admiral Jauréguiberry thought, in 1883, that the conquest of Tonkin would require at most 2,000 to 3,000 men. Then a complete expeditionary corps was sent out. For these great numbers arrived *after* the signing of peace with China and their make-up in no way corresponded to the operations to be carried out. The causes of this failure can be considered to be threefold: almost total ignorance of the country; rivalries between corps and between ministries; the mediocrity of the leaders.

When the conquest began, the interior of the Indochinese peninsula was still a *terra incognita*: geographical discovery went hand in hand with political and military penetration but did not precede it. In the meanwhile, neither in the ministerial instructions nor in the reports of those in command does there appear any desire to become acquainted with the physical geography of the country and even less with its human geography. The *other* does not exist. The colonial territory is for the deploying of the energy of men from the home country.

Rivalries between the Ministries of War and of the Navy and *esprit de corps* explain also in part the extravagance of the expeditionary corps. During almost the whole of the 19th century the Navy considered colonial expansion to be its affair and the Marines constituted the colonial corps *par excellence*. The conquest of Cochinchina had been the work of the Admirals. The officers had furnished such prestigious administrators as Aubaret, Luro, Philastre etc . . . to whom France owed a great part of its knowledge about the Empire of Annam. But the Republicans generally considered the Navy as being an aristocratic and conservative caste. A year after the Republicans came into power, in 1880, the Admirals were losing control of Cochinchina. However, it was still the marines who were in charge of the Tonkin operations in 1882, but the development of the Tonkin affair into a war with China required an increase in numbers beyond the capacity of the Navy. The War Ministry then took its place in Tonkin. Twelve years after Sedan it was important not to let the Navy alone have the advantage of retrieving France's military honour. In December 1883, General Millot replaced Admiral Courbet. In January 1885, the entire management of the troops was confided to the War Ministry. In April, army General de Courcy was appointed head of the Expeditionary Corps with full civil and military powers. He was to counterbalance the posthumous glory of Courbet. In fact, within six months the failure of de Courcy was obvious and his recall in January 1886 allowed the establishment of a civilian government, which was the victory of a third ministry, adversary of both the Navy and War, to wit the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, before it too was ousted by the Under-Secretariat of Colonies. But from 1886 on, Tonkin was no longer controlled by the military ministries, which gave rise to complications and conflicts between civilians and military men.

These rivalries of ministries and corps, which seem derisory compared to the Indochinese drama, nevertheless played an undeniable role. They manifest divergencies within the colonial policy, oppositions within French home politics and are found to underlie many decisions and events. It was thus that the command of de Courcy coincided with an absurd situation viz. the establishing of the most enormous expeditionary corps the Third Republic ever sent overseas, at a time when theoretically at least there were no longer any enemies to chop up according to official declarations – but only a few pirate bands to be pacified. This was scant prey for a general whose mission it was to cover the army with glory. It was in part this absurdity which gave rise to perhaps the most tragic rebound of the whole Indochinese affair, the voyage of de Courcy to Hué in July 1885, ostensibly to present his credential letters to the King. He took with him a thousand soldiers with the firm intention of bringing the Court to order. The result was the battle of Hué, the flight of the King and the call to general resistance of Ham Nghi, which within a few weeks was to inflame almost all the provinces.

Such a mistake, which cannot be imputed to General de Courcy alone but in which his responsibility was fully committed, did not testify in favour of

the military command. This was in fact mediocre over the years. A mediocrity which can be read in the reports of those generals, where never any analysis is attempted in order to bring out the nature of the situation, to know who the adversary is or to think out a strategy. This mediocrity of the Command was particularly noticeable in the Langson affair. This defeat gave rise to an eruption of rivalries and hatred within the Command on the subject of Herbinger, the lieutenant-colonel who, replacing the wounded de Négrier, ordered the retreat. Herbinger was accused of drunkenness and sent back to France. Hasty and tendentious reports, organized leakages in the press, nothing was spared to make him the scapegoat of the Langson defeat. Meanwhile, de Courcy having submitted the affair to a court martial, the chief general had to pronounce an annulment because the continuation of the trial would have resulted in evidence embarrassing for the accusers of Herbinger: "some officers caught in the very act of lying, others boasting in public of their more than doubtful military valour".⁶ This too numerous staff tearing itself to pieces showed a veritable mental paralysis. Coming partly from Algeria partly from Mexico (Courcy had commanded the stronghold of Mexico), these officers transposed without a shadow of reflection the traditional methods: heavy columns were launched against the enemy after which the troops were scattered in order to hold the country. The bog of routine, lack of imagination? Certainly, but more deeply there was the refusal of this army to admit that it could have a task other than that of conquest with flags flying and bugles blowing the charge, that it should actually be the instrument of a policy. It could only be sovereign in its mission, which was to gain glory. Neither was colonization conceived by it from an economic point of view, and de Courcy vituperated the *mercantis*. Given the greyness of the European situation, and while awaiting the *Revanche* on Germany, the colonial conquest furnished an occasion for harvesting laurels for France and for more brilliant and speedier careers than in the boredom of home barracks.

As for the troops, their origins were varied. The homeland, as we saw, at first sent out marines. For the reinforcements sent by the War Ministry there was a twofold difficulty. First, avoid the risk of hindering an eventual mobilisation of all forces in the case of a war against Germany: "blue line of the Vosges" versus colonial expansion was the passionately debated dilemma of the years 1884/87. Second, it was desirable that the public should have as little knowledge as possible of the negative consequences of this war and in particular the number killed. All was done to take as few men as possible from regiments in France, so that the forces stationed in Algeria, the Foreign Legion and the *zéphirs* (the disciplinary companies), were called upon, losses in such units having no impact on voters. The Legion consisted of crack troops on which very hard sacrifices were imposed. The *zéphirs*, on the contrary, were despicable soldiers. In both cases, these men who constituted a higher and higher proportion of the Expeditionary Corps were recruited

from disclassed members of society. To give them a mission of pacification was to open the door to the worst excesses. The period 1882-1886 produced, then, a double and contradictory result: France had indeed achieved its seizure of Tonkin and Annam; but so many failures had occurred that the country still remained to be pacified and a change of method was obviously required. That was what was implied by the recall of de Courcy and the establishing of a civilian regime, which was also a reflection of the parliamentary jostling going on in Paris.

A new phase then began in 1886 which was to last till 1891. Conquest was followed by occupation, of which the most attenuated image possible was given, for both Parliament and the French public wanted to hear no more about Tonkin and especially they no longer wanted a lot of money to be swallowed up there. So numbers diminished rapidly. Between 1886 and 1889 they went from more than 30,000 to 8,000, so far as troops from France were concerned. They were essentially marines, but political authority was with the Colonial Office (a more and more independent Sub-Secretariat) and its local officials. This gave rise to very sharp conflicts between civilians and military men, one of the most visible aspects of the local history of the Annam and Tonkin Protectorate during this period.

Meanwhile, the drastic reduction of Metropolitan troops was to be compensated by the constitution of other forces. There is to be observed a progressive "Vietnamisation" of the war, to use a term which was invented only in the 20th century. As early as 1879, a regiment of Annamite infantry had been created in Cochinchina. On the same model, two regiments of Tonkinese infantry were created in 1884 and a third in 1885 commanded by French officers, so that in 1885/86 the Tonkinese infantry constituted between 1/5 and 1/6 of the total troops. The recruiting was deplorable, for it drew on the disinherited members of Vietnamese society, who were often a scourge for the villages near their cantonments. Then other native forces were added which were not part of the army but which formed efficient and often decisive instruments of repression: the *Garde Civile Indigène* (Native Civil Guards), partisans and the *linh co*, a kind of regular police force. A native militia had been created in 1886. Its use depended on the civil authorities. On 19 July 1888 it became the *Garde Civile Indigène du Tonkin*. Recruited from the population and commanded by inspectors drawn from amongst French ex-non-commissioned officers, it was a police force at the disposition of the residents.

About the same time, a certain number of mandarins completely won over by the colonial authorities, initiated the repression in particular areas. They themselves recruited irregular forces of "partisans", generally Catholics who under the supervision of one or two French officials waged a ferocious and effective guerrilla warfare against the patriotic Vietnamese forces. Such was the case of Trần Ba Loc, who came from Cochinchina in 1886/87 and of Hoang Cao Knai, in Bai Say, Tonkin, in 1889.

A triple evolution can thus be seen in the armed forces in Indochina: a very marked decrease in the number of Metropolitan troops; the partial Vietnamisation of the forces employed, which resulted in big budgetary savings; and, finally, the growing importance of the notion of police to the detriment of the idea of war. The official illusion of pacification imposed this evolution quite as much as did the realities in the field. But effective conclusions were but slowly drawn from it. The mentality of the military men and the Command who continued their Algerian careers in Indochina was opposed to these new views. And they also persisted in their defective knowledge of the enemy.

The continuation and intensification of the resistance movement maintained the struggle in the deltas between the French troops and the armed groups of *Cần Vương*, but the definition of the Chinese border (as laid down in the Treaty of Tien Tsin) led to the penetration of the Uplands. Then the French clashed with the Chinese bands, but the military authorities did not clearly distinguish between these two sorts of "pirates". They persisted in perceiving behind these "pirates" either the Court of Huế – which in fact was almost completely tamed – or China, whereas on the contrary, the Peking government was quite resolved not to menace the established peace. The estimation of the situation was biased in the direction of the outlooks of the Missions and the Army: the conquest was still to be accomplished and a clash with China had to be prepared for. There resulted a refusal of all confidence on the Court and the mandarins, that is, in fact, of the protectorate system itself, and the necessity of increasing the number of troops. The civilians for opposite reasons depicted the situation in exaggeratedly optimistic terms which justified a strong decrease in troops.

This had two consequences: on the one hand, the general inability to make a true estimate of the situation and, on the other, the mistaken use of the various elements of the armed forces due to the confusion between war and police actions and the refusal due to the military men to take into account political aspects.

The result was the worsening of the situation in Tonkin from 1887 to 1891 and in Annam from 1891 onwards. In the dry season of 1890/91 the situation seemed practically hopeless. The greater part of the Uplands was in the hands of the Chinese bands and "the Delta is encircled, its provinces are overrun by numerous armed bands",⁷ which caused Monseigneur Puginier to prophesy: "It seems more and more certain to me that one day things will get completely beyond our control and that we will even have difficulty holding most of our posts. Perhaps that day is not as far off as we think".⁸ And the General-in-Chief reached the point of speaking of *panique* (panic).⁹ Again there was failure.

A new period then began with the nomination as Governor-General of J. L. de Lanessan. His governorship (1891–1894) corresponds to a complete reversal of events. Lanessan brought with him a clear view of the situation

and the means to be used, as well as the authority required to apply them. It resulted in a profound reorganization of the military system and of the use of forces. At the same time there came a new generation of officers who were to renovate at least partially the mentality of the Command.

Lanessan had perceived the completely different natures of the fight against the Chinese bands of the Uplands and that against the National Movement in the Red River Delta and its neighbourhood. In consequence he established the Uplands as Military Territories where the army was given the task of fighting against the Chinese bands and also exercised the administrative authority. But the Delta and its neighbourhood were to be pacified by the civil authorities with the use of simple police forces and especially by reversing the policy until then in effect: instead of pointing to the mandarins and the Court as the source of difficulties it was on them that Lanessan decided to rely by giving them a certain prestige and part of the responsibility for pacification.

It was this new political direction which reversed events. The mandarins, of whom the majority had been playing a prudent double game between the invader and the patriotic armed groups, then slipped rapidly towards active collaboration with the colonial authorities. The villages were obliged to submit and the armed groups being thus isolated, had for the most part to abandon the struggle. At the same time vigorous repressive operations were conducted by calling not on the army, which was totally excluded, but on the native police forces, viz. the *Garde Civile* under the authority of European residents and the *linh co*, from then on much more numerous under the authority of the mandarins.

The success was spectacular. In less than a year the situation went from catastrophe to almost total pacification of the Red River Delta and its neighbourhood and of Thanh Hoa. In the Uplands the Home troops and the Tonkin infantry, whose numbers had been reinforced, applied greater pressure on the Chinese bands while at the same time opening large possibilities for submission.

Simultaneously, a policy was practised of using minority populations to whom arms were confided for defending themselves. Begun by Colonel Pennequin and generalized by Lanessan, these methods were applied systematically by Gallieni, who made them known by his writings and those of his second in charge, Lyautey, in a way that let the public believe that the credit was all theirs. Being thus repelled from all sides, the disappearance of the Chinese bands was essentially completed in 1895/96 by a series of large-scale operations conducted notably by Lyautey. At the same time the Sino-Vietnamese border was completely defined and marked out. This fact and the sincere co-operation of the Chinese authorities, especially of Marshal Sou, allowed the completing of the pacification of the Uplands. What still continued for decades was border brigandage connected with smuggling, especially of opium. But the military operations were over.

Thus the pacification of Tonkin finished as it had started, by fighting in the Uplands against the Chinese, whence the error of officers like Lyautey and of the public. Having to fight only against Chinese pirates, they concluded that there was nothing national in all that – which was true. But they forgot what was essential and which held up the colonial drive for ten years, viz. Vietnamese national resistance. Besides, having been crushed in Tonkin, resistance continued in the neighbourhood of the Red River Delta with the *De Tham* who held out till 1913, and in Annam, with Phanh Dinh Phung, who died in December 1895.

How was the war waged?

Interesting studies could be written on the strategy and tactics of both the patriotic Vietnamese and the French forces and on the gap between the two, though both were applied in the same clashes. To keep within the limited framework of the present article, this problem will be left aside, as also that of the operations in the Uplands against the Chinese bands and *a fortiori* against the Chinese army in 1883/85. Our attention will be concentrated on the contact which was established between the French forces on the one hand and the Vietnamese resistance and population on the other.

The first particularity of this war was the quasi-absence of battles in the usual sense of the word. The Badinh affair in 1886/87 was the only true battle: on the side of the Vietnamese Resistance several thousand men entrenched in formidable earthworks in the partially flooded plain of Tanh Hoa; on the French side, more than three thousand men, that is, the biggest concentration of troops in Indochina after 1885. But things were almost always otherwise. Whether the French launched heavy columns or multiplied scouting parties from small outposts, as a rule the Vietnamese troops disappeared and refused to fight. Only the mountain strongholds such as that of Phanh Dinh Phung in Hatinh or in the deep forests as in Yenthé with the *De Tham* were held by systems of small forts, whose remarkable qualities are described by the French officers. The Vietnamese resistance forces engaged in combat only when they were assured of their crushing superiority, whether by ambushes, often numerous and murderous, or by taking a post by surprise (cf. the *Doc Ngu* in Cho Bo in 1891). Most of the time the struggle was limited to run-and-pursue, mostly in vain for the colonial forces. A "band" would be reported in a village. The men of a nearby post or a detachment of the *Garde Civile* would rush to the spot. But the villages, enclosed in its hedge of bamboo in the middle of rice fields were difficult and dangerous to approach. When the troops managed to enter it the population would have evacuated it taking their livestock with them, or, on the contrary, would receive the troops with apparently perfect submission. The "band" would have evaporated, the leaders having gone off and the men having become again peaceful farmers in the midst of others. However, in spite of the small

number of open clashes the struggle was mostly atrocious from all points of view for the French forces and even more so for the Vietnamese people.

The life of the soldiers was extremely hard. The trip of over a month in boats badly fitted for the purpose was very trying and the officers complained of receiving too many anaemic and sick men in Haiphong. When they landed the men were crowded into vast camps, notably in 1885. The frightful conditions of hygiene turned them into epidemic centres. In 1885, cholera claimed over three thousand victims. From 1886 on, the troops were dispersed into small outposts. Lost in the bush with uncertain supplies and surrounded by a hostile countryside, these little garrisons being reduced most of the time to inactivity died in the precise meaning of the word from boredom and tropical diseases.

If losses under fire were infinitesimal, those from sickness were enormous and aggravated by the mediocrity of health services, the indifference of chiefs, especially in the beginning and the frequent incapacity of the men to observe the rules of hygienic living (intemperance etc . . .). Cholera, which broke out several times after 1885, and tropical diseases maintained a high death rate as they also did in all French colonial expeditions of the time. It is impossible to know the precise number of deaths, since nobody has reported the death rate of the sick sent back from Indochina. An estimate of 10,000 deaths from 1885 to 1896 seems reasonable as regards the troops sent from France. But it is difficult to give a figure for the Tonkin Infantry and the Native Guard, and impossible for the partisans and *linh co*. Beyond the figures, for the literature is very discrete on this point, we can only imagine the hell gone through by those soldiers who fell sick in an outpost and were carried on the backs of men for days on end to reach, when they reached them at all, very inadequate field infirmaries, only to be then embarked on troop transports which resembled nothing of modern hospital ships. Such long suffering was inherent to war in tropical countries. It was due to the contempt which held sway in the army, not only in regard to the comfort but also the lives of its men, not to mention the terrible systems of punishment notably in the Foreign Legion. Such living conditions produced a large disparity between the troops on paper and the number really available, and also a few desertions, which always ended lamentably. They explain (also without justifying it) a part of the cruelty shown by these troops during operations.

The war was even harder on the indigenous peoples. As long as the columns method lasted (1882-89) and even later, the levying of masses of coolies as carriers was practised in a country practically without roads. Thousands of farmers were thus torn away from their occupations, parked and commanded *manu militari* and badly fed and lodged. They died in masses and lined the itineraries of the columns with their corpses. General de Négrier, who was not a sensitive soul, said, "it is temporary slavery at its most complete and odious". The farmers then sought to escape this imposition. They fled their villages or, once caught, the columns. If they were

not caught again and shot, they went on to swell the Resistance Forces. So the columns which did not manage to vanquish the enemy supplied them, on the contrary, with farmers chased from their homes.

When a French detachment was in operation, striking off blindly into a hostile country, every individual was suspect. If they entered a village they demanded information on the "band" they were pursuing. When they received no reply (due to patriotic refusal, fear of reprisals, or sheer ignorance) the village authorities were imprisoned and often shot. If the village was empty or had resisted, it was very often burnt. Military reports reel off like litanies the names of villages burnt. What may be said then of what happened when partisan troops headed by bloodthirsty mandarins such as Tram Ba Loc in South Annam or Hoang Cao Khai in Tonkin were concerned?

To bloodshed, sacrilege was mostly added. In this country of straw huts, an officer who wanted to be dryly housed or to establish an infirmary had only the temple built in stone to set up in. The statues were mostly smashed and the soldiers used the gods' tablets as fuel to cook their food. The people were scandalized by these doings as also by the orgies with local girls turned into prostitutes. The peak of horror was reached in July 1885 with the taking and sack of the Imperial Place in Hué. The battle of Hué in the night of 4th to 5th July, caused thousands of deaths on the Vietnamese side, a part of the town and of the Palace were set afire and their riches were plundered. A less well-known parallel of the sack of the Summer Palace of Peking, the sack of Hué deeply marked Vietnamese collective memory.

This war without battles was terrible and its atrociousness had numerous consequences, the most significant of which was perhaps that French colonisation missed contact with peoples of the Protectorate. Everything attests to it. "We are too far from the native", writes the Resident Bonnal in 1890. Much later, in 1911, General Pennequin who was amongst those who knew the country best and had returned there as Commander-in-Chief, used to say before his staff officers, "we have conquered Indochina and we have pacified it, but we have not won their minds and hearts . . . We are still camping in this country; there are still conquerors and conquered". In Laos, Pavie marching almost alone without arms or shoes, had taken a bet to succeed in the conquest of hearts. The military forces engaged in Tonkin sought to take no such bet and won it even less. The consequences were grave and lasting.

Between 1882 and 1896, France spent about five hundred million gold francs to get established in Tonkin, maintained an armed force which numbered as many as 30,000 and never less than 8,000 French troops and lost from 10,000 to 15,000 soldiers. Only a war could require such sacrifices. But it was only between 1883 and 1885 that war in the classical sense of the word was waged with big battles and a formal treaty. From 1885 and until 1896 and even beyond, there was no longer any mention of war in official language – but of

pacification. The word covered in fact the colonial war which France waged in Indochina during more than ten years.

Beginning from a total lack of understanding and a misappreciation of the enemy, little by little an at least partial analysis of their essential characteristics was acquired. On the other hand, there were the repeated failures of the army, and precisely because of that the diminution of its role, which in the end was limited to the Uplands almost devoid of inhabitants. This development took place in three phases.

In the first phase (1885 to early 1886), the army under General de Courcy had full powers. It made brutal thrusts unenlightened by any knowledge of the enemy. The result was a general uprising of the country, which was in its entirety ravaged by fire and sword when the military regime was abolished.

The years 1886 to 1889 were ones of uncertainty and confusion. One started to make a distinction between the Chinese bands and the forces of the Vietnamese national movement, but there followed neither an overall view of the situation nor a precise policy nor a strategy. The division of powers – political power going to civilians while the army retained control of most of the actual operations – was a manifestation and cause of the aggravation of this confusion.

It was only in 1891 that views became clearer. Governor-General de Lanessan understood that in the deltas and their neighbourhood the population was stirred by a national movement. Consequently, he completely excluded the army from this struggle and favoured political means which caused the mandarins to come over to the French side, and he made a general reorganisation of the use and means of repression, which he recruited entirely from the indigenous population. The situation was righted in less than a year in Tonkin and the *Cần Vương* movement was almost totally crushed by the end of 1895. This new distribution of forces limited the deployment of the army to the Uplands to fight the Chinese bands. These, indeed, being in no way inspired by political aims, were rightly fought by military means. It was still necessary, however, to refine the use of these means. This was the work of a new generation of officers who analysed and understood the nature of these bands and their conflictual relationships with the indigenous peoples, and who so deduced various forms of intervention, ranging from submission to military crushing, which was practically completed in 1895–96.

Thus colonial war, as far as it can be defined from the Annam-Tonkin affair of the 19th century, is characterized by the almost general absence of battles, the rarity of large-scale movements and as having mostly the appearance of police actions. It combines the use of force with political means. And this use of force leaves but little room for unregimented units, giving wide scope to means of repression where the employing of natives combines the worst violence with political pressure. But from beginning to end, this "pacification", an ambiguous and hypocritical name for colonial war, expressed

itself in deaths, destroyed villages, arrests and executions. The perfecting of the socio-political analysis of the nature of the enemy, the development of appropriate means to make a part of the society swing towards collaboration and the increasing Vietnamisation of the forces employed, are not these characteristics of the colonial war of 1885 to 1896, finally, those of the evolution of war in Indochina from 1945 to 1954 and from 1960 to 1975?

Notes

- 1 Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre, Vincennes (= S.H.A.T.) 10 H (1) Historique de la conquête, pièce justificative N°2. General Millot replaced Admiral Courbet at the head of the French troops in Indochina.
- 2 The limited nature of this paper doesn't allow the multiplication of justificatory references. They are to be found in my study entitled: *Les contacts franco-vietnamiens au Tonkin et en Annam de 1885 à 1896*. Doctoral Thesis (Doctorat d'État), typed, 2651 pp. (Aix-en-Provence, 1983).
- 3 Gosselin: *L'Empire d'Annam* (Paris 1904) p. 258 et p. 217.
- 4 For the explanation of each of these expressions cf. Thesis cited p. 2510 sq.
- 5 *Le Progrès Militaire*, 24/10/1885.
- 6 Courcy to the War Minister, 23/9/1885 in S.H.A.T. 10421 (carton 6).
- 7 S.H.A.T. 10 H 22 (ex carton 7) Rapport du Général Bichot - 6/11/1890.
- 8 Note of Mgr. Puginier, 4/2/1891, in Section d'Outre-Mer des Archives Nationales. Archives of the ex-Ministry of Colonies, Rue Oudinot, Paris. (303).
- 9 Rapport du Général Bichot - 25/10/1890 in Archives d'Outre-Mer. Deposit of Aix-en-Provence, 22335.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH ADMINISTRATION IN INDOCHINA: FRENCH ADMINISTRATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The administrative picture of the Indochinese Union is not entirely blurred by hostility between natives and whites, taxation evasions, financial disorganization, stubborn legal problems, and rapid growth of the French personnel. There has been many a victory which speaks well for the French as empire-builders.

Several important undertakings were completed during the "rule of the admirals" (1861-79), as the first years of occupancy were called. The native troops were reorganized on a Western basis, the police were equipped with modern weapons, and public works were planned and executed. A central prison, a botanical garden, and a government press were instituted at Saigon, the center of the new administration. The broad policies for the French, however, were laid out during the following nine years, during which time the civil governors held authority (1879-87). This period saw the construction of railroads, schools, and hospitals. The municipality of Saigon was given financial autonomy. Land taxes were placed upon a definite silver basis instead of the irregular sliding scale formerly marking this type of revenue. In April, 1886, Paul Bert, the most progressive of the civilian administrators, initiated the Council of Notables. This institution was the first purely native organization to be introduced into Indochina by the conquerors, whereby representatives from each province were elected to discuss national affairs. Bert, by this innovation, reached out into regions hitherto untouched by the French and brought poor notables and obscure peasants into contact with the administration. Sections of Indochina far distant from the cities were

thus kept informed upon all subjects considered by the Council, such as taxes, police protection, public works, etc. Many of the factions who had been hostile to the French were won over by this move.¹

Bert also insisted that the Residents were not to administer in the place of the native functionaries but should supervise and control the acts of the mandarins. He aimed at administrative autonomy for Annam and Tonkin, with the customs, mines, posts and telegraphs, public services, etc., only to be managed by the French. He desired that in Annam the French should occupy Hué, Thuan-an, and the ports, where the Resident-general was to be a minister of foreign affairs acting with the native ruler. As a result of this guidance, all surplus revenues, flowing to the treasury through the efficiency of foreign agents, were to be retained in the country, and not to be used to swell the coffers of the Republic. In this work, unfortunately cut short by an early death, Paul Bert attempted to counteract the evils of assimilation which were destroying native traditions and native leadership.

When Joseph de Lanessan entered the office of governor-general in April, 1891, he was not only determined to temper the assimilative policy but also eager to make the peninsula economically sound. In order to achieve the latter, new railroads were started, ports were enlarged, French prestige was extended to the borders of Siam,² and encouragement was given to scientific investigations.³ Before De Lanessan's policies could bear fruit, he was recalled, in 1894, by a home government jealous of his ability and alarmed by his plan to open up positions in the administration to qualified natives (i.e., association).

De Lanessan was followed by Rousseau (December, 1894–March, 1895) and Faures (March, 1895–February, 1897), whose terms passed without distinguished enactments. Indochina was reaching a retrogressive state when Paul Doumer was given the post of governor-general (February, 1897–March, 1902). Between the departure of De Lanessan and the arrival of Doumer, the old centralized bureaucracies, weakened by De Lanessan, regained their hold. Saigon was cluttered with "administrative monuments and gold braid." The city of Haiphong was a "village in a swamp; a port merely for anchorage, handicapped by a thousand projects, a thousand contradictions, a thousand noises. Uniforms, triumphal arches, the firing of salutes, and speeches appeared everywhere."⁴ Moreover, bandits, backed by Chinese officials, ravaged the border towns. The civilian and military bodies were unable to cope with the anarchy, owing to the lack of coherent orders from the home government. The situation was made worse by the fact that every country in the peninsula was suffering from budgetary deficits and other ailments.

Cochinchina labored under financial distress and was sucked dry by functionaries who exploited the natives and allied themselves with the Indians of the colony in order to carry on illicit trade. Improvements were at a standstill, except at Saigon, where a beautiful theater, an impressive cathedral, and

dazzling palaces for the officials were surrounded by fever-infested swamps and open sewers along the main highways. Cambodia was in the same state of economic stagnation. The native ruler of this ancient kingdom had become a figurehead, whose trembling mandarins and terrified subjects were controlled by the French Residents. Slavery for debt was sanctioned by many of the avaricious agents who connived with landlords to obtain possession of the prisoners' valuable fields.⁵ Annam, likewise, was chaotic. The Secret Council (*Comat*) had neither wisdom nor efficiency. The irregularly collected taxes were squandered by a corrupt court. Tonkin, however, was in the most abject state, where a protectorate functioned under direct control and mandarins formerly occupying high provincial posts were under the domination of Residents. Every administrative detail was managed by the French, with the exception of justice, which would have passed into alien hands if aliens had been able to master the native language.⁶ In Tonkin, more than in any part of the land with the exception of Cochinchina, the Residents had sapped the only strong element left – the communes. Such was the picture when Doumer was sent to Indochina.

Paul Doumer started an unusually successful career as minister of finance under Bourgeois and ended as president of the French Republic. Like so many officials, his selection for the post of governor-general was suggested by opponents who were anxious to eliminate a capable individual from the metropolitan political stage. By the time of Doumer's residence, the administrative services of Indochina had taken on the form generally maintained at the present time. A brief examination of their main features will aid in the understanding of his important reforms.

At the head of the government is the governor-general, representing the Republic and ruling in its name.⁷ This agent possesses all the authority given in France to the various ministers. Besides the governor-general, there are the organs of government, including the Cabinet, which centralizes all the affairs of the state and considers foreign relations. In this organization, the military is prominent, headed by a general, assisted by three brigadier-generals, the Chief of the Health Service, the colonel of artillery, and the colonel of engineers. The navy is closely allied to the military, consisting of a naval division in Cochinchina, the arsenal of Saigon, and local garrisons in Tonkin and Port Beaumont. One of the most important constituents of the government is the Bureau of Civil Affairs, akin to the Ministry of Interior, which concerns itself with administrative routine. Besides this body, there is a Judicial Service, Administrations of Customs, Public Works, Agriculture and Commerce, Posts and Telegraphs, and the Treasury, composing the general government of Indochina. The local government, however, varies in the different countries.

In Cochinchina there is direct French administration by a lieutenant-governor, representing the governor-general.⁸ He has a Colonial Council, partly elected by the French and natives of the colony and partly by the Privy

Council.⁹ Annam, Tonkin, and Cambodia have Chief Residents, assisted by councils of the protectorates, consisting of heads of the services and delegates from the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture.¹⁰ Each of these organizations gives advice on matters pertaining to the local budgets. The local services in the protectorates include the office for the assessment and collection of the direct taxes, the treasury, the agriculture, education, police, native justice, medical aid, and penitentiary services, and land surveys.¹¹

Under this set-up there was no co-ordinated government until Doumer's reform program was executed. The governor-general merely carried on the work of a Resident and was mainly concerned with administrative routine, instead of actually governing the entire region. In 1897, steps were taken by Doumer to give the governor-general his true status as an overseer and not an administrator. This was accomplished by creating a Chief Resident for Tonkin, where formerly the governor-general personally exercised authority. A High Council also was instituted, composed of the governor-general, the heads of the army and navy, the Residents, the lieutenant-governor, and the presidents of the Chambers of Commerce and Agriculture. This group, representing the general interests of the country, gave new vitality to the government. The administration of Cochinchina, however, received the most radical modifications. Prior to Doumer's appearance, the Colonial Council was dominated by six French members, who managed the region as if it were their private domain. In order to control the government, these politicians easily gained the support of about eight hundred electors, who were usually the pro-French Hindu merchants. Because of this oligarchy, the president of the Council was able to impose his policies upon the lieutenant-governor. The governor-general rarely knew the situation in Cochinchina, preoccupied as he was with the affairs of Tonkin. The power of vested interests reached the point where the Council submitted a law to the Ministry of Colonies, which, if passed, would have made the lieutenant-governor completely independent of the central government. Doumer destroyed the influence of the Cochinchinese organization by subordinating the Council to the aims of the country as a whole, and governed the colony in the same manner as the protectorates.¹²

Besides decreasing administrative discord, Tonkin was cleared of bandits, public works were begun,¹³ the influence of Indochina was extended into adjacent lands, the financial dislocations were remedied by creating a unified fiscal system, and administrative reforms were completed in the protectorates. The last three mentioned are sufficiently important to merit description.

The work undertaken in Indochina aimed not only to improve local conditions but also to increase the prestige of France throughout Asia. In 1899, 1900, and 1901 Indochina spent annually about 2,000,000 francs outside the country in the form of subsidies to legations, consulates, schools, and hospitals which were not being given adequate support by the home government. Interpreters, editors, and experts of all kinds were sent to China and

Siam. Grants were given to scholars for the printing of monographs and books dealing with the activities of France in the Orient. As a result of the encouragement given by Doumer, the government of Indochina has contributed to the publication of Franco-Japanese, Franco-Siamese, and Franco-Cantonese dictionaries.¹⁴

During Doumer's administration, cordiality marked the relations between the mandarins of China and the French agents. On March 22, 1897, he wrote to the minister of colonies that

contacts with China at the present time are excellent. In spite of petty difficulties and the ungracious attitude of many local officials, nothing disturbs our friendly feelings. We should profit by the amicable situation and increase our influence and power. The double action of working both from Indochina and Peking will augment French prestige in South China.¹⁵

By 1895, financial conditions had reached their nadir. Cochinchina, in spite of great potential resources, had a budgetary deficit of more than 1,000,000 piasters. Tonkin was faced with a debt of 2,936,328 francs, and Annam was 1,260,000 piasters in arrears. Much of the distress was due to the fact that there was opposition between the various parts of the Union. In order to remedy a desperate situation, Doumer pushed through a plan for financial reorganization (July, 1898). By this act the country was given fiscal unity. The reform recognized distinctions between services of a general nature which are based upon the local budgets and those depending upon the general budget. The local councils, that is, the Colonial Council of Cochinchina and the councils of the protectorates in Tonkin, Annam, and Cambodia, were left to deliberate upon questions pertaining to their individual budgets. The general budget, however, was submitted only to the Supreme Council of Indochina. The receipts for the maintenance of both the local and general accounts were also fixed. Direct taxes were to be used for local public works; and indirect taxes, because of their impersonal character, were to be distributed throughout the entire Union. This measure resulted in the acquisition by the general budget of 92,000 piastres in 1899 and 103,017 piastres in 1900.¹⁶

Before the end of Doumer's leadership, the Indochinese Union was independent of France financially. The peninsula had reached such a state of economic strength that the High Council in 1901 stated that

at this time Indochina will incorporate in her budget the military expenses hitherto given by the mother-country. Through her markets, she will open to industry and commerce the needed avenues for the prosperity of both the metropolis and the Union. The country will furnish France a solid basis in the Far East for economic and political operations because of the establishment of her own military

and naval forces which will compensate at last for the sacrifices made in the past.¹⁷

Doumer summed up the accomplishments of his administration when he wrote that

Indochina began to serve France in the Orient on that day she was no longer a poverty-stricken colony, reduced to the position of holding out her hands to the mother-country for alms. Her strong organization, her financial and economic structures, and her great power are being used for the benefit of French prestige. In five years commerce was more than doubled. The public projects undertaken have no parallel in all Asia . . . Indochina has developed French influence outside the limits of her boundaries. She has paved the way for a future which should make France a great Asiatic power.¹⁸

From the French viewpoint, the plans of Paul Doumer for the protectorates were excellent. They made possible a further extension of Western influence into every part of the peninsula. In Tonkin the restoration of the native king's authority was rendered untenable because conquest had made him a figurehead, dependent upon white masters for the continuation of his official existence. However, in 1887 the French threw a sop to the recalctrance of the natives by instituting a high official, the *Kinh-Luoc*, or viceroy, who acted as chief of the local administration. Doumer correctly visualized this agent as duplicating the services of the French and in May, 1897, abolished the office, attaching the staff to the Chief Resident and making the *Kinh-Luoc* himself regent of Tonkin. Furthermore, the provincial mandarins were placed more completely under the authority of the central government by freeing them from jurisdiction of the Residents. In order to attain a closer supervision of the influential natives, a Consultative Commission of Notables was instituted in 1898, which is allowed to discuss matters pertaining to provincial budgets, public works, etc.¹⁹ This administrative modification of Tonkin was drastic, but the innovations initiated in Annam were even more thorough.

The Annamite imperial government was allowed to take over nominal power, without changing the character of the protectorate, by abolishing the regency in September, 1897. The *Comat*, or Secret Council, was changed into a Council of Ministers, presided over by the Chief Resident. The decisions of this body, after sanction by the Chief Resident, were put into force through royal decrees. In order to have a link between the general government and the native units, officials were delegated to the ministries in the capacity of advisers, and the Chief Resident was named president of the Council of the Royal Family. In this manner Doumer forged administrative chains which bound every important Annamite institution to French agencies.

The work of Paul Doumer can be summed up by stating that he reinforced the authority of the government by creating services dependent solely upon the governor-general and assured the existence of the general budget. In spite of the fact that he neglected to associate any large number of natives in the various programs by rigid adherence to assimilation, and over-emphasized fiscal problems, his administration resulted in an increase of commerce, the strengthening of the budget, the creation of credit, and the institution of a far-sighted railroad project. He prevented his country from becoming bankrupt in the Orient. The selection of Paul Doumer as governor-general of Indochina during these critical years was felicitous for continued control over the peninsula.

Paul Beau took over the position held by Doumer in October, 1902. During the year of his arrival he outlined the reforms to be undertaken in order to restore the prestige and increase the efficiency of the Tonkinese mandarins. This was to be accomplished by raising salaries and basing advancement upon merit instead of "pull." A "School of Administration" was opened at Nam-dinh, where courses were given for all aspiring to the mandarinate.²⁰ In order to adjust the services to the reasonable demands of the natives, Beau supported a policy of administrative decentralization (i.e., association), realizing that the application of Doumer's extreme assimilative plans were injuring French authority.²¹ In spite of the fact that Beau made slight headway with this policy, he can be considered a successful governor-general because of his furtherance of economic, political, and social projects. He continued the great works started by Doumer, such as the draining of swamps, the construction of railroads, the irrigation of unfertile areas, the erection of docks, the dredging of harbors, the commercial penetration into Laos, the development of medical assistance, and the extension of schools. Beau also went further than Doumer in emancipating the general services from dependence upon the lieutenant-governor and the Chief Residents, making them more efficient under the control of the governor-general.

Beau was followed by Klobukowsky (September, 1908-January, 1910), of whom too much was expected after the substantial gains of Doumer and Beau. He was overshadowed also by his successor, Albert Sarraut, the originator of the first effective indigenous policy for Indochina. Furthermore, he came to the peninsula at an unpropitious time. The budgets were again unstable, tax collections were in arrears, numerous plots of the Cochinchinese alarmed the government, and bandits ravaged northern Tonkin. Over the land hung at this time the dark clouds of the Russian defeat in 1905 at the hands of the Japanese, which intensified the hostility of the Indochinese to the methods and thoughts of their masters.

Klobukowsky's fifteen months in the country were hardly sufficient to give him time to understand the economic and political questions confronting the French. In spite of handicaps he started out to counterbalance some of the overcentralized measures of Doumer. This was accomplished by giving

greater powers of self-government to the provinces, particularly regarding fiscal matters.²² He laid down the principle that no officials coming from France were to be allowed to hold any permanent posts until they had gained a knowledge of the land by being stationed in the interior for at least fifteen months. At the end of this period they were to take comprehensive examinations in the history, literature, language, etc., of the region to which they were to be attached. The governor-general was so antagonistic to the political influence of missionaries that he decreed no professional religionist should interfere in the administration of the Union.²³ His views regarding government were announced on September 25, 1908, through a circular addressed to the chief agents:

Centralization appears to me to be a means to arm governmental action for the greatest profit of the general interests. But if it increases expenses and shackles the normal life of institutions, it becomes dangerous . . . It is a wise rule that one can govern from a distance but can administer only when on the spot. In a region as extensive as Indochina, comprising two different civilizations and four distinct regions, local governments ought not to be merely wheels waiting to be moved by a central motor . . . They are, above all, autonomous organisms . . . Is it admissible that agents of the general services should put into action important policies in opposition to the advice of local officials? The central functionaries frequently are strangers to the plans which they initiate. As a result, the prestige and authority of the governmental representatives is discredited in the eyes of the natives.²⁴

In order to carry out the policies herein outlined, Klobukowsky decided that in the future the agents of the general services from the Customs and Excise Offices should have direct contact with the chiefs of the provinces, informing them of all measures to be taken for the management of their respective centers. Moreover, further decentralization was brought about by substituting "Inspectors" for the "General Director" of Agriculture and the "General Director" of Education (March, 1909).

Albert Sarraut, who succeeded Klobukowsky in November, 1911, sponsored the work of decentralization and completed several important measures.²⁵ The import rates of Kuang-chow-wan were modified, public-land laws were extended, the harbors of Saigon and Haiphong were enlarged, and a General Inspection of Sanitary and Medical Services was created. The most important innovation, however, was the founding of the *Agence générale des colonies* (December, 1916).²⁶ During the second administration of Sarraut (1917-19), the entire Indochinese Union was reorganized. The police, the customs, the mines, law courts, registrations, posts and telegraphs, and the penitentiary services were the objects of new regulations. At the same time,

the judicial service, agriculture, and medical assistance were given special attention. Sarraut rescinded the order calling for cuts in the salaries of French and native functionaries, and decreed pensions for the widows and children of all Indochinese killed during the World War. In order to aid the Union in the economic rivalries which followed the cessation of hostilities, he created the *Contrôle générale du travail et de la colonisation*. This organization is the central economic bureau for Indochina, located at Paris, which keeps France informed of peninsular affairs.²⁷

Sarraut was supplanted by Monguillot (May 22, 1919–February 19, 1920), the secretary-general of Indochina, who held authority until the appearance of Maurice Long. A deputy from Drôme, like Doumer and De Lanessan before him, Long was a radical, "exiled" to the Orient by rivals who hoped to rid themselves of a dangerous opponent. He came to the peninsula with the desire to put into execution the program of Albert Sarraut, at this time minister of colonies. During the two years and two months that Long acted as governor-general, he was able to push through two noteworthy administrative orders. First, he gave the European personnel of the local services a uniform statute for selection, salaries, and advancements. Second, owing to the depreciation of the franc and the consequent high cost of living in Indochina, he put the colonial pay-roll upon the piastre basis (i.e., 10 francs for 1 piastre). During this period industry, commerce, and agriculture prospered. New financial societies were formed, and new agricultural work was undertaken. Indochina swung into the world's "boom." Long was able to obtain large sums for the development of educational and medical centers and for the extensive operation of public projects. Before the end of his administration, he managed a loan for the home government, amounting to 6,000,000 piastres (March, 1922), of which the natives contributed 95 per cent.

Pierre Pasquier, governor-general from August, 1927, to January, 1934,²⁸ was faced by the need to mitigate the widespread attacks against the French. In Cochinchina he distributed pamphlets informing the natives of French aims, and called numerous conferences of provincial leaders, from whom he obtained information regarding the anti-foreign movements.²⁹ In Annam the radical agitations had the effect of forcing the government into changes which otherwise might not have materialized. The most important step taken was the reformation of the Council of Notables, hitherto of slight authority. These organs have been given more power than at any other time in their history. Furthermore, the provincial councils have been reorganized. On August 1, 1930, the electoral college connected with these bodies was extended, with one electorate for each thirty thousand taxpayers. The Chamber of "Representatives of the People" was revised at the same time.³⁰ The authority of the members of this institution having expired in 1930, the electoral college was convoked in July, 1931. The old Chamber was dominated by literati who were products of the conservative Sino-Annamite

education. The new organization, however, contains individuals influenced by the social sciences who are more capable of deliberating upon questions of an economic nature. The administration, consequently, has been able to lay before it matters dealing with budgets, personal and land taxes, forestry policies, determination of funds for public calamities, etc.³¹

In Tonkin the French also have been obliged to accede to popular demand. In 1929 they applied an administrative reform more in keeping with the principles of a protectorate. This was accomplished by allowing a more effective participation of the provincial mandarins in the management of the region, at the same time maintaining closer contacts between them and the chiefs of the country. Furthermore, the general government has increased the material well-being of the native personnel by raising the salaries of the subordinate agents from 7 piastres to 9 piastres a week.³² The fact that Cambodia, Laos, and the territory of Kuang-chow-wan have been outside the regions of unrest made necessary few changes in these countries. Some of the officials, however, have increased their efficiency, owing to the addition of trained natives to the various services, who are expecting the French to "associate" with them in the administration of the land.³³

The manner in which France answers these demands for association will determine, to a great degree, the future power of the administration. It is true that many beneficial achievements have been accomplished in Indochina by the French, such as the building of railroads, hospitals, and the construction of large public projects, the establishment of fixed salaries for local officials, and the creation of representative native Councils. All these are recognized as being progressive steps, but along with the tangible marks of Western superiority has come the inevitable consequences of efficiency – the increase in authority of the governor-general and the constant supervision of native organizations by his subordinates. Many students of colonial problems maintain that a policy of "association" honestly followed will not only counterbalance the concentration of power in the hands of a few white agents but will also bring to the French side the majority of those now in opposition to Western principles. Let us view at this point the development of associative concepts.

The evolution of associative policies

During the "rule of the admirals" (1861–79), subjection was the only path to be followed in view of the fact that the military were obliged to control Cochinchina and Annam. In carrying out their duty, the natives were impressed with the force and persistency of Western imperialism. However, with the diminution of widespread opposition, the French government realized that anti-foreign opinion might be placated by the institution of a non-military régime. Accordingly, in 1879 a civilian administration was created which substituted assimilation for subjection.

The principle of assimilation was not new. It came from the belief that French civilization was the highest and most perfect on earth. Condorcet's dogma was accepted that "a good law is good for all men, just as a sound logical proposition is sound everywhere." Along with this idea appeared Rousseau's vision of savage man, virtuous and eager to become the equal of his white brothers. Furthermore, the French Revolution and the Convention in the Constitution of the Year III decreed that "the colonies are an integral part of the Republic, and are submitted to the same constitutional laws. They are divided into *départements*."³⁴ The Colonial Congress, moreover, as late as 1889, gave expression to assimilation and, with but one dissenting voice,³⁵ declared that French provinces, *arrondissements*, and communes could be suitably duplicated in every colony. These ideals, to which was joined the exalted mysticism of Louis Madelin's "Our race is expansive," thrilled the French when they gazed upon the transformation of dirty Asian and African streets into spotless Parisian boulevards. Reflections of such a character had a strong economic background.

By the end of the nineteenth century, industrial nations were in need of markets, in order to counteract the high protective tariffs of Germany and the United States. No nation, however, could expect to be a world-power without possessions overseas. Colonies were able to absorb the goods manufactured by the mother-countries. They were capable also of supplying merchant vessels, and their allies, warships, with coaling stations. Jules Ferry expressed these sentiments in 1890, when he said that

the colonial policy is the daughter of the industrial policy . . . The European powers of consumption are saturated. New masses of consumers must be made to arise in other parts of the world, else bankruptcy faces modern society and the time will approach for a cataclysmic social liquidation of which we cannot calculate the consequences.³⁶

The assimilative policy was introduced into Algeria about 1830 and did not prove to be disastrous when it shattered tribal customs. Applied, as it was later, to Indochina, anarchy was produced because Indochina is no primitive settlement but a highly developed civilization. Fortunately for the continued progress of Western control, by the end of the nineteenth century imperialism had learned some lessons from Asiatic failures. No longer were universal man and universal laws taken with dogmatic vehemence, attacked as they were by Ratzel, Frobenius, Gobineau, Darwin, Virchow, and Le Bon. The feeling began to grow that peoples must develop along local lines. Instead of the "noble savage," a "back-to-the-native" movement was started. This took the form of association. The most concise statement of this new attitude was enunciated in 1883 by Joseph Harmand, an outstanding colonial expert, in his thoughtprovoking work, *Domination et colonisation*:

As long as a colony is an organism based upon assumptions laid down in the home country, that possession is a land of conquest. It is not possible to conquer without making serious mistakes, due to the fact that all the institutions, customs, etc., of the conquering nation are applied to the conquered region. The European agents, however, should not work for the introduction of their peculiar mores but should see to it that the people have security, justice, equitable taxation, education, and commercial facilities. Under these conditions alone will a suitable government materialize . . . The people of Annam are distinguished by a quality which has determined the policy we must follow . . . This is their homogeneity, a feeling they possess to the highest degree, which I shall call the consciousness of race. One cannot treat such a race according to bureaucratic standards. Our duty as conquerors, if we have any feeling at all for the mission we have undertaken, consists in regarding this Annamite race not only for our own benefit but also for the benefit of every family in Indochina. This must be accomplished without destroying either the chain of their traditions or their future ambitions, written in the two thousand years of their national history. All our plans in Annam should have as a basis the unity of the Annamite race. The Annamite is not an infant whom we must educate. He is not a savage with whom one can experiment as upon a clean state. We have here a race, a nationality, older than ours, which played an important part in the history of Asia . . .

If we understand our task fully, if we feel ourselves worthy of fulfilling it, we should accept these people, with their customs and traditions as our companions and associates. This can be done without evincing that haughty superiority which characterizes other European conquerors. It should consist in associating our ambitions to their ambitions which we are able to assume in the rôle of missionaries of a new civilization, the founders of a new empire . . . If we have shown that it is not possible to divide the Annamite, if we defend them on political and moral grounds, give them a government, and impose this new government upon their old ones, as the English have done in India, where races and religions of the most diverse nature are seen, it is essential that we have a policy that here should be one government only, one administration only, one direction only.³⁷

These opinions were voiced in June, 1901, before Parliament by Waldeck-Rousseau, when he said that "each should develop in his own civilization."³⁸ This policy also was in harmony with the tendencies of economic development. Many leaders of industry now realized that assimilation was incapable of winning the natives to the ways and goods of the white man. They felt

that association, in time, would increase the respect of "backward" peoples for the "progressive whites" and eventually enhance the sale of factory articles, made possible through the judicious application of Western capital in every region suitable for the construction of railroads and factories. Association also was hastened by the growth of labor and socialistic organizations.

The first signs of opposition to the French technique of assimilative imperialism was evident in 1876, when trade-union bodies convened for an international conference in Paris. For the first time since the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, anti-imperialistic and anti-capitalistic movements disturbed the vested interests. Socialistic agitations grew with the return from exile of the old Communards and the release from prison of Blanqui in 1879. National and municipal elections were contested by Socialist candidates, who criticized the government for its colonial methods. Led by the "Tiger," Clemenceau, sentiments were expressed which held up to ridicule the Republic's expensive overseas experiments. Consequently, the French government was obliged to compromise in order to retain power, doing so by modifying imperialism, by rounding its sharp edges, by toning down its garish colors of a Manchester and a Marseilles into the soft ink-brush strokes of a Peiping and a Penang. And so, association of the East and West in the great work of making the world bigger and better became the motif of empire-building.

In keeping with the innovation, Paul Bert, former minister of education, was appointed Resident-general of Annam-Tonkin in January, 1886. Before his death the following November, he proved the effectiveness of the new practice. His first speeches upon taking office were greeted with applause by the natives and many of the Europeans in the country. Upon April 8, 1886, he said to the Tonkinese:

Our two peoples are not made to fight one another, but to work together and to complete the one by the other. . . . Nothing will be changed in your rites and your customs. Your traditions will be respected. You will continue under your own laws and regulations . . . Cantons and villages will be administered as of yore. Your communal system will not be modified. You will select your own notables and they will be charged to arrange the taxes and supervise the administration of their territory in such measures as they deem useful for the maintenance of law and order. In order to clear up questions of a more serious nature, I plan to call to Hanoi a council of delegates elected by you from among the notables in each province. They will transmit to me the views of the people which will clarify my action in regard to your needs.

You well know that France has but one desire, namely, to give to the people prosperity under her moral guidance. You know well also that we do not wish to take over the direct administration, which

events have forced us to do in Lower Cochinchina. The class of scholars, so strongly established because it is not a closed class, will remain in power, as long as it is loyal. It will continue to be the center of authority and the source for the selection of all officials. I have confidence in these races of the Orient to whom we have pointed the way towards a brighter tomorrow. I can foresee only a magnificent future resulting from this meeting of Europeans and Asiatics.³⁹

Bert carried his plans further than pious words. He aimed to create a colony of merchants and industrialists who would bring prosperity to the land. He desired to have the French carry on without the use of force. His employment of civilians in administrative posts naturally brought the military against him, because they were unable to continue without applying the assimilative programs; but he gained more than he lost in obtaining the confidence of the mandarins. He reinstated them at the Hué court, encouraged the age-old rituals and ceremonies of the kingdom, and allowed the local officials to function in their traditional manner. Annam, consequently, was placated.

When Joseph de Lanessan took charge of Indochinese affairs in 1891, he brought about a smooth functioning of the administrative organizations, by allowing the mandarins to manage local government. Furthermore, he introduced cordial relations between the Tonkinese agents and the court of Annam. This work was planned so wisely that the emperor decreed that all officials in his realm should co-operate with the French. As proof of his sincerity, De Lanessan responded by giving natives command over militia units. This trust was not violated; and by the end of 1892, these soldiers, with slight European supervision, cleaned all bandit nests from the central and southern portions of the country.⁴⁰

Associative principles were not considered to be of major importance, owing to the increasing need to settle some of the economic tangles, until 1902, when Paul Beau became governor-general (October 15, 1902–February 5, 1907). Beau had been a French minister to China, where he gained the reputation for being diplomatic in his dealings with Orientals. Two years after his arrival (1904) he gave the communal notables more power and, by so doing, saved these ancient bodies from extinction. He re-established also the native provincial officials and the provincial Councils of the residents.⁴¹ Cochinchina, however, was the region where Beau saw the need for the greatest alterations. Here there was neither adequate justice nor an efficient native personnel, owing to the French determination to transform the colony into a miniature France. Coupled to these disadvantages was the frequent lack of morality displayed by the educated natives, because of the eradication of their traditional Chinese training. These unsatisfactory conditions, in the opinion of Beau, were the results of one cause, namely, the attempt to assimilate the colony. In a speech made in 1906 the governor-general made known

his position. He declared that France should guard against the use of too many white officials and should supplant them by the élite of the peninsula. He stated also that

it is necessary these people who have been directed in the past by the educated class, should recognize the fact that our government offers them a superior education. This is the price which the protector should receive from the protected. It is the respect due him. This respect is not an act of fear forced from a weaker people, in the name of a pretended superiority of race. It is the spontaneous homage and deference which exists in the countries of the Far East. It is imposed as a social obligation – the feeling of student for teacher who instructs him.⁴²

The principal merit of Beau's program consisted in his understanding of the need for co-operation and his sincere attempt to break away from the spirit of conquest by initiating a genuine Franco-Indochinese *rapprochement*. When Beau left the country in September, 1908, he was replaced by Klobukowsky, who was determined to push ahead the associative policies of his predecessor. It was unfortunate, however, that forces beyond control were working to undermine his realistic plans. Chief among these was the Russo-Japanese War. An increasing coolness of the natives towards the administration was noticeable by the end of 1905. Anti-white sentiments were expressed by ballad-singers and story-tellers, who came to distant villages and elaborated upon the defeat of the Russians. The Annamites became fascinated by the idea that the might of Europe, more apparent than real, had been tested and found wanting by their Japanese brothers.⁴³ Nationalistic groups led anti-foreign demonstrations, which reached their height in 1908, a year marked by a rapid growth of secret societies, comparable to the Boxer organizations, propaganda spread among the people by the students, and the publication of tracts calling upon the Indochinese to cast out the French. Klobukowsky correctly analyzed this situation by blaming the French in part for the disorders, because of the administration's refusal to unite with the natives in the management of the Union. He voiced his ideas in a speech before the Council of Government in 1909:

All our policies should center upon giving the natives a reasonable administration. We should be more considerate of their interests, respect their traditions and beliefs, and elevate, as far as possible, their standards. The natives must be associated with us in bringing about progress. In order to attain this, it is indispensable that all our agents, regardless of their position in the administrative hierarchy, evince justice towards the Annamites. They should be accessible at all times, ready to hear what they have to say. They should be

solicitous of their desires and opinions. They must be intelligent and sympathetic teachers . . . I mean by an intimate collaboration between native authorities and our agents a considerate treatment of the mandarins and notables in order that their personal merits may be recognized. Furthermore, by frequent public meetings, by conferences held in each district, where the aims and details of the administration can be explained, the interests of each village canton will be given consideration. Everyone in the administration should go out among the people, converse with them freely, and inquire concerning their needs. It is absolutely essential that we have the support of the natives, which will be given when they understand that their cause is linked closely to ours and that we both are travelling over the same road towards the same goal.⁴⁴

The good intentions of Klobukowsky were of little avail in the face of the widespread anti-foreignism; and the government, desirous of having a strong man of action at the helm, selected Albert Sarraut (November 15, 1911–January 4, 1914). Sarraut was born in 1872, and in 1902, at the age of thirty, entered the Chamber of Deputies. In 1906 and 1908 he was Assistant-Secretary of State. His record as an able administrator induced the authorities to appoint him head of the French possession in Asia.

The thirty-nine-year-old governor-general refused to be led by the military group in Indochina, who attempted to bring him to a harsh assimilative program as an antidote to the disorders. In opposition to their demands he declared that he looked forward to the day when the Indochinese would be admitted into the French family as brothers. By this relationship, the elder would guide the younger into the paths of Western morality and imbue them with a consciousness of liberalism. In keeping with his ideas, Sarraut put into force a series of reforms, dealing with corporal punishment. The penal codes, criminal procedure, and many of the civil statutes were revised, without departing too far from indigenous traditions.⁴⁵

A serious illness necessitated Sarraut's return to France in January, 1914; and it was not until three years later that he returned to the peninsula. At that time, in spite of the preoccupation with administrative routine, he did not forget his pledge given earlier to work for association. On April 27, 1919, he appealed for independence of the Indochinese services. Paternalism was bringing ruin to the Union, he maintained. "There must be co-operation, with the natives duly elected to responsible positions by a larger electoral college," he declared. "A Franco-native association will combine all efforts for the development of this great country. It will assure regular progress for all the spiritual and material elements of the land."⁴⁶

Sarraut was fortunate in having for his successor a devoted disciple of association, Maurice Long, who took over the governor-generalship on February 20, 1920, and held this position until April 14, 1922. Long's most

permanent accomplishment was undertaken in the political field. At the time of his appointment, the demands of the Annamites for greater participation in the affairs of their country were particularly insistent. Few of the progressive groups, headed by the "Young Annamites," were reconciled to the restrictions placed upon the elections to the village and provincial Councils of the Notables. They regarded these bodies as reactionary delegations of natives under the influence of the French. In order to placate the liberals and radicals, Long created "Communal Administrative Councils," upon a broad electoral basis. This move, however, did not mollify the Young Annamites, who desired national recognition. Consequently, on June 3, 1922, the Colonial Council of Cochinchina was charged to increase the native members from six to ten.⁴⁷ In spite of the fact that French representation is still in the majority on this Council, the move was an important step towards native aspirations. It extended their responsibilities and made them feel as if they were aiding to shape the destinies of Indochina.⁴⁸

In November, 1925, Alexandre Varenne, Socialist deputy from Puy-de-Dôme, was appointed governor-general. Varenne, more than any of the officials holding this position, felt that elements of Western civilization should be presented to the Indochinese without destroying their traditions. This sentiment was elaborated in detail on December 21, 1925, before the Council of Government:

In order to view the general aims of the French in Indochina, it is necessary to consider a historic fact regarding the arrival and installation of French authority in the peninsula. The French are in Indochina. This is a fact. They are here by virtue of treaties, most of which were imposed by force. Preceded by an advance-guard of marines, missionaries, and merchants, the French came, harmed the people, and installed themselves in a forceful and violent manner.

The French have, unquestionably, worked for themselves in Indochina . . . We do not pretend that the first French came to Annam for the sole purpose of bettering the peoples. They came, attracted by the richness of the country, urged on by the need for expansion and trade which has led all European powers to enlarge their domains and procure resources and markets.

The French, however, in working for themselves have worked also for the natives. They have brought about peace, security on the frontiers, and domestic tranquillity. Ancient Annam, before the coming of the French, was exposed to periodic incursions of pirates, who robbed the peasantry of their harvests. The peace and order now established is in contrast to the revolutions, strife and eternal bloodshed of the past. Peace having been secured, the French brought to Indochina the benefits of a civilization which, in the technical field, has proved to be supreme. The work accomplished by our engineers

and our industrialists need not be lauded. It is written in flaming letters over the face of the land. Roads, railroads, hospitals, schools have been constructed. Is it necessary to enumerate all that has been done for trade, public health and education? These new undertakings which today cover thousands of acres, are they not the result of the French spirit of initiative? Under the guidance of the French, Indochina will become one of the richest countries on the globe. But is it not necessary to have some regard for these peoples who have aided in making Indochina a progressive country?

France after the war proclaimed to the world the principles of law and democracy upon which her victories were founded. Should she not ask herself if her methods of colonization correspond to her ideals? Should she not ask herself if her colonial policy, particularly in the Far East, ought to be revised? Should she not ask herself if this policy is adapted to the new age?

To these questions we definitely reply, yes. Yes, because the war which covered Europe with blood has proved that nothing durable can be erected upon force alone and that the peoples of the universe have other aspirations than physical well-being. Yes, because the war has awakened in lands far distant from us, in regions remote from our political turmoils, a feeling of independence. This feeling has entered the confines of the ancient world. Yes, because the Orient, for a long time closed to the West, this Orient which European travelers have discovered and crossed the seas to gaze upon, has now crossed these same seas to view us and delve into the secrets of old Europe which clings fiercely to the principles of democracy. These peoples demand that we teach them these concepts in order that they might apply them to their own countries. Yes, because all has changed in the past few years. Both men and ideas, and Asia herself, are being transformed. The Orient today stands upon the path leading to the higher forms of modern civilization.

Indochina cannot escape from this movement for emancipation. Our lessons have been carried to her. Indochina is thinking about them. She questions the future and seeks to determine her destiny.

What will the future hold? If peace is preserved for us, if Indochina is able to develop freely, she ought to aspire to a more independent higher life and become some day a great nation. France is able to aid in this mighty work. France will aid. She will group about her these people. Her mission being achieved, one can think that she will claim no longer a part in the life of the peninsula, neither to direct nor to advise, and that the peoples who have profited by her guidance will have no other links with France than those of gratitude and love.⁴⁹

For the first time in the history of the French in Indochina, an official dared express in concrete manner the desire to help the natives attain their freedom. But these words of Varenne brought forth storms of protest from every quarter. On April 14, 1926, his speech was attacked in the Chamber of Deputies. *Le Temps*, of March 12, accused him of expressing the policies of the Third International. The opposition became so acute that Varenne trimmed his sails. In an address on March 16, before the Chamber of Commerce of Haiphong, he said that French domination was destined to endure, that native and French interests were becoming more intimate every year. "France," he declared, "can realize in Indochina the *chef d'œuvre* of all modern colonial politics."⁵⁰ At the same time he attempted to placate public opinion and retain the governor-generalship by writing an open letter in which he announced that the longer he remained in Indochina, the firmer he believed that the inseparable ties binding the natives to the French "will not be severed."⁵¹

Varenne's public admission of error might have saved the Indochinese post for him, but the Socialist losses in the elections of April, 1928, brought about his recall. The head of the Union's affairs was intrusted to Pierre Pasquier, who held the position until his death in January, 1934.

Unlike his predecessors of the political type, all of whom had been criticized by rival factions in the Senate and Chamber, Pasquier was a career official. He was a graduate of the Colonial School; and for over thirty years served in subordinate bureaus, first as Assistant-Chief and later as Chief Resident of Annam. Soon after his arrival, he outlined his plan, which was acclaimed as a veritable charter for Indochina. This included granting the educated natives a place in the administration where their fullest initiative could be displayed. Steps were to be taken toward association and cooperation between the French and Indochinese officials. No limits were to be recognized to the acquisition of university degrees by the natives, except those based upon ability. Natives were to be admitted to all administrative offices, save those whose duties upheld the sovereignty of France. The wealth of the land was to be increased by having the Indochinese associate with the French as workers and capitalists. Pasquier was, above all, determined to impress upon the administration the fact that "government by the natives must remain the chief aim of our policies."⁵²

In all practical matters Pasquier was insistent that French policies should be based upon the art of knowing and guiding the Indochinese. Because of the increasing number of affairs undertaken by the government, the authority of the French agents has become a routine instrument of administration. The Residents frequently have lost all contacts with the natives, and the telegraph and motor car have produced the paradox of destroying the initiative and taste for responsibility of many of the agents. As a result, they travel less in their administrative areas and remain on the beaten paths. Consequently, the grievances of the inarticulate masses are unknown to them. In order to

remedy this condition of the "indoor mind," Pasquier gave orders that every official should learn the indigenous languages. But this was not all. In 1931 he stated that

some can speak the same language and yet not be understood, if to this tool, produced by education, is not added the keen desire to be sympathetic. It will be an easy task for everyone to contribute to the success of a work deprived of all idealism but which assures to all a "bowl of rice," security for the morrow, and render satisfaction to the reasonable demands of the intelligent natives.⁵³

One of the most significant acts indicative of Pasquier's determination to allow the natives more leeway was the "revolution" occurring in the Annamite court, to which he gave his support. In May, 1932, the young emperor, Bao-Daï, returned from France, where he had been undergoing a period of education along Western lines. His father, at the end of his life, reconciled himself to French control over the kingdom, and intrusted his son to the care of an able "associationist," M. Charles, Resident in Annam. Upon the suggestion of Charles, Bao-Daï willingly spent five years in Paris, where he received a thoroughly "modern" training. In September, 1932, he promulgated a series of reforms which he deemed essential for Annam. These included a modification of the native administrative services for the selection of officials, codification of laws, the creation of courts on the basis of Western procedure, and a new system of education, to link up with scientific subjects.

A large number of the Young Annamites, usually antagonistic to all occidental practices when instituted by the French, now saw opportunities for their employment in positions requiring modern technique; but the court party remained indifferent to the royal pronouncements. To the amazement of the people, accustomed, as they were, to see most of their leaders unconcerned with "advanced" suggestions, Bao-Daï dismissed six of his old advisers who had been named for life, and replaced them by Young Annamites, selected by himself. The act, without precedent in the history of Indochina, was accomplished with the approval of the governor-general.⁵⁴

The logical consequences of an associative policy, however, must be understood. The control over Indochina since the creation of the Union in 1887 is in striking contrast to the "rule of the admirals" and the twenty years following, during which the peninsula was considered a province of the mother-country.⁵⁵ Instead of military force and conversion of the natives into French citizens, the policies of the past four decades have paid lip-service, at least, to the principle of association as seen in respect for local traditions and feelings of the Indochinese.

The French sincerely believe that association in time will eliminate opposition to white control. They reason that even left-wing factions will be

confined to impotent anti-French fulminations and that all their promises of better days will fall unheeded upon the Indochinese, enjoying a "jug of wine and a loaf of bread" under sympathetic masters. It is not from such stuff that revolutions are made. The French think that Indochina will furnish about one-fourth of the armed forces needed in future conflicts, provided the natives are taken as associates in the development of the land.⁵⁶ The acceptance of association by the Republic is felt to be the cure for recalcitrance, in view of the fact that more opportunities are being offered every year for the educated natives.⁵⁷ Furthermore, the French already see signs that point to the region as becoming the most perfect colony on earth, where the nationalistic utterance of "Indochina for the Indochinese" is being diverted into the more reasonable channel of an entente between East and West.⁵⁸ Many an idealist, in fact, views the beginnings of world-unity in Indochina, where the French are pioneers in the work of not Europeanizing Asia but of creating the foundations for a Eurasia.⁵⁹

Leaving all rationalizing aside, it is admitted by realists that one of the greatest problems of the twentieth century is that dealing with control over colonies. The paradoxical feature of the question consists of the fact that the more peoples under the domination of foreigners are encouraged by laws and precept to associate with the masters, the more do they agitate against these selfsame masters.⁶⁰ It is clear, moreover, that whenever overseas expeditions have been undertaken, "backward" peoples have been subdued by the persuasive power of superior weapons in the hands of the invaders. In order to maintain their position, these newcomers have been obliged to concentrate armed forces within the region. Consequently, subjection remains, regardless of how far association may go.⁶¹ Likewise, association can hardly be freed from assimilation, because human beings are eager to impose their *nonpareil* mores upon all with whom they come in contact. Sometimes changes have been for the better. More frequently, regardless of the palpable benefits to be derived from a casting-off of old, outworn traditions and manner of thought, those leaving their "golden past" depart with regret, if not with anger and violence. Man is essentially sentimental and holds to a beautiful faith in the magnificence of the "good old days," whether these days be the French under Francis I, the English under Elizabeth, or the Indochinese under the Chinese Sons of Heaven. With this in mind, the West should remember that colonies cannot be "held" forever within the vicious circle, composed of armed force, large doses of assimilation, and promises of association. The evacuation of the military, under the present system of imperialism, signifies white defeat. The policy of assimilation means native unrest. The acceptance of association spells eventually independence!

Notes

- 1 See J. Chailley-Bert, *Paul Bert au Tonkin* (Paris, 1887), pp. 15 ff, and *La Quinzaine coloniale*, January–June, 1920, pp. 165–66.
- 2 The incursions of Siamese bands into Laos, where the emperor of Annam and the king of Cambodia exercised sovereignty, served as a sufficient excuse for the French to blockade Bangkok and occupy Laos in 1893. The British Foreign Office protested against the invasion of Siam. The French contented themselves with a threat of a naval demonstration at the capital, where, as an English observer writes, after ten days of suspense, "the Siamese exhausted the 'resources of civilization' in their frantic efforts to induce one of the Powers to intervene [i.e. England], in their favor, threw up the sponge. As for us civilians, we had escaped with our lives and property intact. That, for the moment, was all that mattered. Who cared that the *royaume* of Siam had been despoiled?" (See Percy Cross Standing, "French Progress in Indo-China," in *Contemporary Review*, April, 1931, p. 506.)
The intervention of the French resulted in the signing of the treaty of October 3, 1893, by which Siam recognized the suzerainty of France over the left bank of the Mékong River, as well as a protectorate over part of the kingdom of Luanpra-ban, situated upon the right side. This agreement added to France about 80,000 square miles of land, rich in cotton, tobacco, gold, and other ores.
- 3 The explorations of Auguste Pavie were undertaken during the De Lanessan régime. Pavie not only brought about amicable relations with many savage tribes but also published material regarding regions hitherto unknown to the French. (See Auguste Pavie, *Géographie et voyages* [5 vols.; Paris, 1901–6]; *La mission Pavie en Indochine* [10 vols.; Paris, 1879–95]; *Mission à l'Indochine, 1879–1895* [Paris, 1899]; and *Recherches sur l'histoire du Cambodge, du Laos et du Siam* [Paris, 1898].)
- 4 Louis Lyautey, *Letters du Tonkin et de Madagascar, 1894–1899* (Paris, 1902), pp. 59 ff., and "Propositions faites par le général en chef au gouverneur général pour la campagne d'hiver 1895–1896," in *Revue des deux mondes*, March 1, 1900, pp. 241–49.
- 5 See Paul Doumer, *L'Indochine française* (Paris, 1905), pp. 286 ff.
- 6 *Ibid.*, pp. 140 ff.
- 7 The governor-general is named by a *décret* of the Council of Ministers of France. He promulgates in the Union the laws and decrees of the French Republic when they specifically apply to Indochina. He is the head of all the civil services; controls the local administrative chiefs; distributes, according to needs, the personnel to all the French organs; and passes upon financial matters. He also supervises the law courts, being in this capacity comparable to the minister of justice. The governor-general represents France in all relations with oriental powers but has no authority to conclude treaties without the sanction of Paris. He has the exclusive right to correspond with the important diplomatic centres of Eastern Asia, such as: the legation in China; the delegation of foreign affairs at Yünnanfu; the consulate of Yünnanfu; the consulates at Hongkong, Canton, Swatow, and Pakhai; the consulate-general at Shanghai; the consulates at Foochow, Hankow, Tsing-tao, Tientsin, and Chungking; the Japanese consulates at Yokahama and Kobé; the consulates at Seoul, Bangkok, Oûbone, Detroit, Malacca, Singapore, Manila, Batavia, Calcutta, Bombay, Ceylon, and Colombo.
The governor-general is responsible, under the authority of the Ministry of Colonies, for the protection of the Indochinese Union, although he has no direct control over the military. He can create, organize, and decrease the roster of the territorial troops, which he undertakes in co-operation with the chief commandant and the commandant of the navy. (See *Publications du gouvernement général de*

l'Indochine, les administrations et les services publics Indochinois, edited by Joseph de Galembert [Hanoi, 1930]; Arthur Girault, *Principes de colonisation et de législation coloniale* [Paris, 1922]; A. René-Boisneuf, *Manuel du conseiller général des colonies: les assemblées coloniales; conseils généraux; conseils coloniaux* [Paris, 1922]; and *France - ministère des colonies, annuaire*, since 1899.)

- 8 Cochinchina, at the time of the French arrival, was divided into six large, provinces, supervised by an Annamite governor and his staffs. At the present time these native organizations are no longer functioning; and the various smaller political and administrative areas, such as the *phu* and *huyên*, have been eliminated. The provinces have been supplanted by *arrondissements*, twenty in number, under the direction of French officials from the corps of "Administrators of Native Affairs of Cochinchina." Their duties are comparable to those of a French prefect, with slightly more power, in view of the fact that they represent all Annamite legislation within the colony and act as intermediaries between the communes and the head of the colony. The latter bears the title of lieutenant-governor. Until the creation of the general government in 1889, this official corresponded directly with the Ministry of Colonies. (See bibliography of n. 7, *supra*.)
- 9 The Colonial Council is not a representative assembly, because some of the members are elected by restricted suffrage and some are named by the administration. It is essentially a deliberative organ, created in 1880 and modified in 1929. It is composed of: (1) ten titularly councilors and five deputy councilors elected by the native electoral body; (2) two French members from the Chamber of Agriculture of Cochinchina; (3) two French members from the Chamber of Commerce of Saigon; (4) ten titularly councilors and six assistant councilors elected by the French electoral body; (5) these are elected for four years and can be re-elected for an indeterminate period.

The French members are elected by universal, direct suffrage. The electors are French citizens, over twenty-one years of age. Native members are elected by restricted suffrage, through an electoral college composed of native French subjects, over twenty-five years of age, who are inscribed on the personal tax records. In Cochinchina the latter are taken from the following categories: (1) landlords paying a twenty-dollar land tax; (2) merchants and manufacturers who have paid commercial licenses for at least three years; (3) natives holding a diploma from the secondary or high schools; (4) elected members of the Municipal Council of Saigon, the Chamber of Commerce of Saigon, the Chamber of Agriculture of Cochinchina, and members of the provincial councils; (5) officials serving at least five years in the higher services of the administration; (6) pensioned agents of the same category; (7) chiefs, assistant chiefs of the cantons, and notables of the villages in service at least three years; (8) recipients of the Médaille militaire and the Croix de la guerre.

The following are the functions of the Colonial Council of Cochinchina: (1) real estate problems; (2) colonial laws; (3) local transportation; (4) canal expenses; (5) concessions; (6) contributions for the general works within the colony; (7) local budgetary matters; (8) tariffs; and (9) loans.

In 1910 a permanent commission of the Colonial Council was created which is elected annually at the close of the Council's sessions. This body is composed of at least five members, two of whom must be natives, with a French chairman.

There is a Privy Council connected with the government of Cochinchina and the protectorates of the other countries of Indochina. These councils, under the presidencies of the governor and Chief Residents, include: (1) directors of the various offices; (2) commandant of troops stationed in the locality; (3) high military officials designated by the chief commandant; (4) the general procurator; (5)

chief engineer of public works; (6) two French citizens selected by the governor-general; (7) two native notables. The councils consider financial questions arising from the local budgets and the institution of new taxes.

In the administrative field the Privy Councils: (1) convoke the electoral colleges; (2) call special sessions of the Colonial Council or extend the usual sessions; (3) determine the method of creation, revision, and publication of the Annamite electoral lists for the Colonial Council and the municipal assemblies; (4) supervise the administrative councils of the ports of Saigon and Haiphong; (5) classify all routes within Indochina; (6) decide upon all acquisitions of property; (7) consider naturalization requests; and (8) deliberate upon all questions for which a *décret* of the governor-general needs a preliminary consultation of the Privy Council of Cochinchina and the councils of the protectorates. (See bibliography of n. 7, *supra*.)

- 10 The Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture of Cochinchina was formed in 1868. This body sits at Saigon. There are two such institutions in Tonkin, one at Haiphong and one at Hanoi, founded in 1886. There are similar organs managed by the Chinese, but they are not officially recognized by the administration. The number of members directing the Chamber is fixed – being not less than eleven or more than twenty-one. At the present time sixteen French and four natives are elected to membership. These give advice and information concerning commercial and industrial subjects, as well as present the means to increase production, modify taxes, and adjust the customs rates. When authorized by the administration, they can create and manage commercial enterprises, acquire and construct vessels, docks, and borrow money.
- 11 [note omitted]
- 12 Lyautey, *Lettres du Tonkin et de Madagascar*, p. 215, and Doumer, *L'Indochine française*, pp. 95 ff.
- 13 Doumer aimed to have the highways built in such a way that commerce, colonization, and penetration into new regions would be possible. He was opposed to the sentiment, widespread in the Union at the time, that routes were to be extended in order to enable officials to travel with ease! (See Doumer, *L'Indochine française*, pp. 95 ff., and *Rapports au gouvernement général* [Paris, 1905], pp. 44 ff.)
- 14 The most important centers where the French are especially strong are Canton, Pakhai, the Island of Hainan, Yünnanfu, Bangkok, Lanchow, Battambang, and Oúbone.
- 15 Doumer, *L'Indochine française*, pp. 413 ff.
- 16 The benefits derived from fiscal co-ordination can be seen in the support given to France during the World War (see *L'Asie française*, January, 1920, pp. 27–31):

Year	Subscriptions	Amount (France)
1915	6,987	21,000,000
1916	6,735	20,600,000
1917	60,539	47,562,555
1918	138,602	102,177,993

- 17 Doumer, *Rapports*, p. 23.
- 18 Doumer, *L'Indochine française*, pp. 121 ff.
- 19 This organization was transformed in 1913 into the "Chamber of Representatives

- of the People" of Tonkin. (For details consult p. 100 and n. 41. Also see Doumer, *L'Indochine française*, pp. 78 ff.)
- 20 *La Quinzaine coloniale* (1906), p. 76.
- 21 Decentralization methods were discussed at the International Colonial Institute, held in London, May, 1903. This body reached the following conclusions, which were deemed essential for an associative program: (1) unity of authority; (2) regulation of the administration from the colony; (3) domestic legislation to be made by each colony; (4) decentralization of justice; (5) customs regulations and budgets to be drawn up by local officials. (See *Institut colonial international - compte-rendu de la session tenu à Londres* [Paris, 1903].)
- 22 See *Spectator*, September 3, 1904, p. 313, and *Le Temps*, November 22 and December 1, 1908.
- 23 See *Straits Times*, October 15, 1908.
- 24 Quoted by A. Messimy, *Notre œuvre coloniale* (Paris, 1910), pp. 203-4.
- 25 Sarraut's guiding hand was instrumental in bringing about the recruiting of volunteers for war services. By 1917 there were 96,000 workers and about 8,000 soldiers prepared to be utilized overseas. Some battalions were employed in the various colonies to maintain order. The majority of the workers were used in powder factories and arsenals. Between 1914 and 1919, 1,606,206 tons of commodities were shipped to France from the colonies. Africa was first, with 555,961 tons; and Indochina second, with 335,882 tons. (Consult Albert Sarraut, *La mise en valeur des colonies françaises* [Paris, 1923], pp. 48 ff., and Jean Codet, "La participation des colonies aux œuvres de guerre," in *Colonies et marine*, May, 1918, pp. 14-27.)
- 26 Until 1916 France did not possess a central organization for the supervision and management of her empire. A special Ministry of Colonial Administration was decreed in March, 1894; but this body was not satisfactory, and a law of 1911 substituted eight independent services for the thirty offices of this ministry. Out of these evolved the *Agence générale des Colonies*. (See *Journal officiel*, May 13, 1914, and *No. 2333 chambre des députés, onzième législature, annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du juillet 1916 - rapport fait au nom de la commission des affaires extérieures*, pp. 61 ff.)
- 27 The success of this institution has encouraged the French to expand its services into a general intercolonial organization. As a result of the public interest in the Paris Colonial Exposition of 1932, Marshal Lyautey, first director of the enterprise, planned a "French Overseas House" (*Maison de la France d'outre-mer*), which would give publicity to the artistic, scientific, and economic progress of the colonies, and also serve as the basis for a general colonial office. (See Maréchal Lyautey, "Après l'Exposition coloniale," in *Revue des deux mondes*, March 1, 1934, pp. 230 ff.)
- 28 Pasquier was killed in an airplane accident January 16, 1934. He has been succeeded by René Robin, for thirty years in the administrative services of Indochina and governor *ad interim* in 1930. Robin is considered an able official but has the reputation of being severe in his relations with the natives.
- 29 *République française - gouvernement de la Cochinchine - rapport au conseil colonial sur l'état de la Cochinchine pendant la période 1929-1930* (Saigon, 1930), pp. 9 ff., and *Conseil de gouvernement de l'Indochine, discours prononcé par Mon. P. Pasquier, 8 décembre 1931* (Saigon, 1931), p. 10.
- 30 The Chambers now functioning in Annam and Tonkin will be instituted eventually in other regions. Each is composed of representatives, elected on the basis of one for each 40,000 taxpayers. The electoral college selecting the delegates include: (1) chiefs and assistant chiefs of the cantons; (2) pensioned officials and agents of

the native administrative; (3) natives holding diplomas; (4) mandarins; (5) pensioned non-commissioned officers of the army, navy, and militia; (6) village delegates chosen under conditions laid down by the Chief Resident; (7) secretary-interpreters and the civilian groups employed in the administration; (8) licensed merchants (*patentés*), elected in the proportion of 1 for each 500-1,000; 2 for 1,000-2,000, and 3 for over 2,001; (9) officials and notables named by the Chief Resident upon the recommendation of the chiefs of the provinces or the Residents.

The Chambers meet annually upon the call of the Chief resident, for six days or longer, if necessary. It can be dissolved by a decree of the governor-general, upon the recommendation of the Chief Resident. The Chamber must be consulted upon all budgetary matters, but political opinions are prohibited.

- 31 *République française - protectorat de l'Annam - rapport d'ensemble sur la situation du protectorat de l'Annam pendant la période comprise entre le 1^{er} juin 1930 et le 31 mai 1931* (Hué, 1931), pp. 20 ff.
- 32 *République française - gouvernement général de l'Indochine - protectorat du Tonkin - rapport sur la situation administrative, économique et financière du Tonkin durant la période 1930-1931* (Hanoi, 1931), pp. 11 ff.
- 33 *République française - protectorat du Cambodge - rapport sur l'exercice du protectorat pendant la période 1930-1931* (Phnom-Penh, 1931), pp. 1-10; *République française - gouvernement général de l'Indochine-Laos - rapport sur la situation administrative, économique, et financière du Laos durant la période 1930-1931* (Hanoi, 1931), pp. 9-13; and *République française - gouvernement général de l'Indochine - territoire de Kouang-Tcheou-Wan - rapport sur la situation administrative, économique et financière de Kouang-Tcheou-Wan durant la période 1930-1931* (Hanoi, 1931), pp. 10 ff.
- 34 Quoted by Roberts, *History of French Colonial Policy*, I, 102-3.
- 35 Gustave Le Bon stood out against the "stupidity" of assimilation.
- 36 See Jules Ferry, *Le Tonkin et la mère-patrie* (Paris, 1891), Preface, and *Discours et opinions de Jules Ferry*, edited by Paul Robiquet (Paris, 1904), Vols. IV and V.
- 37 Quoted in Henri Mager, *Cahiers coloniaux de 1889* (Paris, 1889), pp. 147 ff. Harmand was commissary-general of Tonkin (1883-85), consul-general at Calcutta (1885-94), and minister plenipotentiary at Tokio (1894-1907).
- 38 *Journal officiel*, June 15, 1901.
- 39 Quoted by Mager, *op. cit.*, pp. 150 ff.
- 40 De Lanessan wished to introduce conscription; but he realized that this procedure of obtaining soldiers would alienate the educated Annamites, who, like the Chinese, are hostile to military service and would not tolerate the presence of their sons in the army. Dr. Arthur W. Hummel, chief of the Chinese Division, Library of Congress, says of this antipathy to militarism that "in the whole range of Chinese literature . . . there is hardly a more persistent note than the note of pacifism and the futility of force in solving the problems of human relationships. The earliest Chinese written records are as insistent on this as the latest. And the emphasis is peculiar to no particular school of thought, for all Chinese thinkers, almost without question, take the non-militaristic point of view. The great number of Chinese proverbs expressing the same attitude show that these principles are not the possession of philosophers only, but of the great inarticulate multitude as well." (*See The Case against Force in Chinese Philosophy*, reprinted from *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, Vol. IX, No. 2 [1926].)
- 41 The latter became the Consultative Native Chamber of Tonkin.

For details regarding the councils consult "Mémoires soumis au Congrès," in *Congrès international de sociologie coloniale. August, 1900* (Paris, 1901), Vol. II:

(1) Mémoire présenté par M. Billiard (Algerie): "The necessity to give the natives a political régime in keeping with their traditional institutions" (pp. 14-53);

(2) Mémoire présenté par M. Appert (Paris): "Measures to be taken to give the natives of the colonies the opportunity to make known their wishes to the local authorities and thus defend their rights." That the colonists should be the natural defenders and protectors of the natives is not a feasible solution, as their interests are too opposed to represent them. Therefore, the government should institute one or more native Councils in each colony, to be composed entirely of natives (pp. 54-58).

When Beau urged the creation of a Consultative Chamber he gave a parliamentary institution to a people whose government was monarchical. Consequently, the influence of this organ never has been great. (See *Straits Times*, November 29, 1907, and January 15, 1908. Also consult *La Quinzaine coloniale*, December, 1905, pp. 475 ff.)

42 *La Quinzaine coloniale*, 1906, p. 76.

43 See *Discours prononcé par M. A. Klobukowsky, gouverneur général de l'Indo-Chine à l'ouverture de la session ordinaire de Conseil supérieur le 27 novembre 1909* (Saigon, 1909), p. 7.

44 *Ibid.*

45 This reform was in line with the opinions of French officialdom. On April 2, 1909, the Chamber of Deputies voted that "this Chamber, convinced that political association is necessary for the well-being of all peoples and for the security of our possession in the Far East, it is essential to modify the economic and judicial régime in Indochina. It is also agreed that the natives must be prepared gradually to enter into the management of public affairs." (*Journal officiel*, April 3, 1909.)

The experts also were anxious to see the dawn of genuine association. One meeting of authorities, that of the International Congress of Colonial Sociology, in session at Paris in 1900, under the chairmanship of Le Myre de Vilers, former governor of Cochinchina, formally voted that "considering the physical development, and intellectual and moral well-being of the natives, the highest aim of all colonial plans ought to be an adoption of a régime to the existing institutions, laws and customs of the natives, at the same time mitigating all injustices." (Quoted from Bertrand Camilli, *La représentation des indigènes en Cochinchine* [Toulouse, 1914], pp. 6 ff.)

46 *L'Asie française*, February-June, 1919, pp. 216-22.

47 *Ibid.*, September-October, 1922, p. 347.

48 See G. Angoulvant, "L'œuvre de M. Long en Indochine," in *Colonies et marine*, August, 1922, pp. 566 ff.

In April, 1922, Maurice Long became ill and returned to France. His work was carried on by Baudoin, Chief Resident of Cambodia. Long died in January, 1923; and Merlin, former governor-general of West Africa, was named for the post. He arrived in August, 1923, and remained until April, 1925. During his last year in office he was put in charge of a special trade mission to Japan. Upon his return from Tokio, while stopping over at Canton, he was attacked by a band of Annamite revolutionists. This act indicated his unpopularity among the Indo-chinese, and the government recalled him.

49 *L'Asie française*, March, 1926, pp. 108-13.

50 *Ibid.*, June-July, 1926, pp. 238-39.

51 *Le Temps*, March 20, 1926.

52 Consult H. Pelletier and R. Rouboud, *Images et réalités coloniales* (Paris, 1931), pp. 300 ff.

- 53 See *Conseil de gouvernement de l'Indochine, discours prononcé par Mon. P. Pasquier, 8 décembre 1931* (Saigon, 1931), p. 10.
- 54 Although the anti-French Annamites and the reactionaries among the people criticized the emperor for "selling out" to the French, the ousting of the six ministers was legally accomplished. A convention of November 6, 1925, signed by the French Resident and the court of Annam, to regulate the affairs of the empire during the minority of the emperor, stipulates that "the nomination and recall of ministers will be made by the ruler in agreement with the Chief Resident of Annam and the sanction of the governor-general." (See *Courrier des Etats Unis*, June 25, 1933. This French journal, published in New York, thus comments upon the move of Bao-Daï: "This act is absolutely legal. In removing his old ministers, the emperor has no desire to break with the past, but tradition does not consist of routine. The emperor of Annam has responded to the sentiments of his people in repudiating the old court, which, involved in red-tape, was unable to adapt itself to the new conditions in the country.")
- Another indication of the emperor's modernity was his marriage in 1935 to the daughter of an Annamite aristocrat who is not of royal blood. Furthermore, the young ruler has ordered that all his officials must study political science and, when they are appointed to the various posts, must attend a governmental school where practical courses are given in administrative services. Through this policy the educated natives and Eurasians are given the opportunity to advance. The French naturally support the new system because it gives them the good will of the bourgeoisie. (For a colorful description of the "modern" ruler see Jean Dorsenne, "Le retour de l'empereur d'Annam," in *Revue des deux mondes*, August 15, 1932, pp. 796-812.)
- 55 In 1887 the only regions over which France possessed authority were Cochinchina, Cambodia, and Annam-Tonkin. The Republic was represented by a governor in Cochinchina, and a Resident-general in Cambodia, dependent upon the Ministry of Colonies. The Resident-general of Annam-Tonkin was attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All these regions were independent of each other. The need was seen to have these areas under the direction of a single authority. This was achieved by the decrees of October 17, 1887, and May 9, 1889. The first decree united Cochinchina, Cambodia, and Annam-Tonkin into one colonial entity. The second abolished the independent office of the Resident-general of Annam-Tonkin and placed the countries under the governor-general. At the present time a lieutenant-governor sits in Cochinchina and Chief Residents in the protectorates of Cambodia and Tonkin. In 1899 and 1900 Laos and the territory of Kuangchow-wan were placed under the same political system as the other portions of Indochina. The entire organization is called the "Indochinese Union."
- 56 See *L'Asie française*, April, 1922, pp. 98-102, and *New York Times*, August 11, 1923.
- 57 See speech of President Gaston Doumergue, October, 1930, during a visit to Morocco, in *New York Times*, October 16, 1930.
- 58 "Rapport au Président," *Journal officiel de la Indochine française*, January 22, 1930, p. 287.
- 59 The possibilities of association were expressed in 1931 by Paul Reynaud, Minister of Colonies, who declared that "France is colonial by vocation. It has been neither land-hunger nor religion that has caused the expansion of France. It has been brought about by the love of adventure and sympathetic curiosity for new races. . . . The colonial situation now calls for a collaboration on the part of all Europe. France is ready for this new undertaking. However, another step is necessary - the reduction of misunderstandings between the masses of humanity and a movement

for world organization, of which Europe is but a province." (See "Discours prononcé par M. Paul Reynaud, à l'inauguration de l'Exposition coloniale internationale de Paris," in *Bulletin de l'agence générale des colonies*, August-September, 1931) pp. 90 ff.)

- 60 Raymond Leslie Buell, "Two Lessons in Colonial Rule," in *Foreign Affairs*, April, 1929, pp. 439 ff.
- 61 See M. M. Knight, "French Colonial Policy," in *Journal of Modern History*, June, 1933, pp. 208 ff.

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THE AMERICANS IN THE
PHILIPPINES

THE HISTORY OF THE

REPUBLIC OF THE UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

BY

W. W. HUNT

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THE PACIFICATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey

Source: Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press (1951), pp. 51-67.

*Damn, damn, damn the Filipino
Pock-marked Khakiac ladrone;
Underneath the starry flag
Civilize him with a Krag
And return us to our own beloved home!*

So ran the refrain of one of the most popular songs sung by the American soldier stationed in the Philippines. Imbued with military fervor and impatient with continued Filipino resistance, this soldier was anxious to finish his job and return to the States. He was unsympathetic with McKinley's uplift-and-Christianization mission; the Krag was good enough for him.

Government of alien territory is never simple; but proximity in geography and similarity in race, religion, and culture usually make the task easier. The United States was aided by neither of these ameliorating factors in her relations with the Philippines. Long casualty lists and a staggering expenditure of money were included in the slow and painful process of bringing order to the Islands.

The absence of any official agency which had experience in governing peoples and territory such as those with which we were confronted was a major handicap. Knowledge gained in the control of Indian affairs or in the supervision of territorial governments in the United States proved of little value for this new task in administration nearly halfway around the world. Lack of familiarity with the customs and characteristics of the Filipinos added to our difficulties; and the confusion and uncertainty arising from the linguistic barrier were often serious since many conversations, at least in the beginning, required one or two interpreters.

Inadequate military forces for the early conquest of the Philippines seriously complicated our subsequent relations. As we have seen, it was sixty days after the Spanish fleet was sunk on May 1 before General Anderson arrived with the first troops. It was another six weeks before a sufficient force was on hand to ensure the capture of Manila without sharing its occupation with Filipinos. This unfavorable military situation not only caused Dewey to co-operate with Aguinaldo but also permitted the insurgent general to build up his strength. Many military and political problems might have been simplified if an American force capable of capturing territory had been landed by June 1.

Uncertainty about American political intentions also brought confusion. It was six months after Dewey's victory before McKinley decided that the acquisition of the Philippines was necessary. After an additional five and one-half months, on April 11, 1899, the exchange of ratifications gave us for the first time full legal rights over the Islands. During this period, the Philippine Republic under Aguinaldo was established and the revolt, started by the Filipinos against Spain, inherited by us.

The peace protocol of August 12 and the capture of Manila by General Merritt and Admiral Dewey a few hours afterward actually gave the United States no legal rights beyond the city. Hence, from the armistice until the exchange of ratifications, Spain had legal responsibility in all other parts of the Philippines, and since the control of the insurgents was being widely established, she requested the right to send men and equipment to restore her authority. Naturally the United States refused this request. Our Philippine policy had not been decided, but we had no desire to reinforce the Spanish in case war was renewed nor to antagonize the Filipinos (which most certainly would have resulted had the Spanish request been granted). In the absence of either Spanish or American power, the insurgents rapidly consolidated their position.

Only gradually did the United States appreciate that the revolt of the Filipinos against Spain in 1898 was truly a revolt for independence and not one for reform. The Filipinos looked to the United States for aid in this struggle, basing their hope upon the Teller resolution, our statement of future policy towards Cuba; but the administration was opposed to acknowledging any responsibility to the insurgents. Our officials in Manila followed the Washington directive that the Filipinos were not allies. They and we had merely "cooperated against a common enemy," a foe who had disappeared from the immediate picture with the capture of the Spanish forces in Manila.

The refusal to let the besieging insurgent troops enter Manila and share in the glory and the military government provoked grave resentment. When American troops replaced Spanish troops in the city defenses, the Filipinos for the moment continued as passive besiegers. This situation was fraught with danger; at any time armed patrols might clash and precipitate hostilities.

It was this condition of affairs that caused Dewey, as we have seen, to cable Secretary Long in October, 1898, and urge an immediate decision on the Philippines.

The period before the armistice was one of misunderstandings and indecisive policy combined with opportunistic maneuvering by some of our consuls; the period after the armistice and prior to signing the treaty at Paris was one of indecision in Washington, which left administrators in the Philippines without any definite policy. Consequently, Philippine distrust of American intentions grew apace, distrust which our officials could do nothing to dispel for they did not know what our plans were.

Agreement on Philippine terms at Paris came in late November, and McKinley, within less than a month, instructed General Elwell S. Otis, who had succeeded Merritt in command of the American forces in Manila, to extend with all possible dispatch our military control over the complete archipelago. Otis was to assure the natives that their property rights and individual liberties would be respected and was to endeavor to prove to them "that the mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation." Nevertheless, the "strong arm of authority" was to be maintained in order "to overcome all obstacles to the bestowal of the blessings of good and stable government."¹

More familiar than McKinley with the sentiments of the Filipinos, Otis considered this message of December 21 so inflammatory that he published only an edited version of it, with all references to sovereignty and extension of control by the United States eliminated. The original proclamation, however, was sent to the United States commander at Iloilo, who inadvertently published it. The edited version was unfavorably received and when the disparity between the Otis text and the original document was discovered, suspicion, resentment, and bitterness rapidly increased.

Aguinaldo, in a counter proclamation early in January, accused the United States of betrayal of promises, recounted the assistance which his troops had rendered in the siege of Manila, and rejected forthright the American claim of sovereignty. In light of McKinley's declaration of American intentions and this clear-cut statement by the dictator of the Philippine Republic, war was certain unless one party or the other should yield.²

This explosive condition of affairs prompted Dewey, on January 7, 1899, to cable that a small "civilian commission composed of men skilled in diplomacy and statesmanship should be sent to adjust differences."³ McKinley, on learning that Otis was in agreement with Dewey's proposal, immediately appointed a commission.

Jacob Gould Schurman, then president of Cornell University, was summoned to Washington for a conference. After discussing with him the names of a large number of possible members, McKinley offered the Cornell educator the presidency of the commission. Schurman was hesitant and gave a number of reasons for not accepting before finally stating his own views on the Philippine problem. At last, he frankly said:

"Mr. President, . . . I am opposed to your Philippine policy. I never wanted the Philippine Islands." "Oh," replied the President, "that

need not trouble you; I didn't want the Philippine Islands either; and in the protocol to the treaty I left myself free not to take them; but – in the end there was no alternative."⁴

In addition to Schurman, McKinley appointed Admiral George Dewey, Major General Elwell S. Otis, Charles Denby, who had served as minister to China for about fifteen years, and Dean C. Worcester of the zoology department of the University of Michigan. The latter had twice been in the Islands on scientific expeditions.

The instructions to the commissioners, drafted by Elihu Root, secretary of war, stated that the temporary government of the Islands was entrusted to the military authorities, but that the commissioners should study "the existing social and political state of the various populations" with special reference to such matters as the forms of local government, administration of justice, and tax policies. The commission was also urged to study "the legislative needs of the various groups of inhabitants" and report "the measures which should be instituted for the maintenance of order, peace, and the public welfare, either as temporary steps to be taken immediately . . . or as suggestions for future legislation."⁵

One month before the arrival of this Schurman commission, fighting had broken out between Philippine and American soldiers. On the night of February 4, 1899, an American sentry challenged a Filipino, ordering him to halt, which he failed to do. Perhaps the Filipino did not understand the meaning of the order, or it may have been part of a plan worked out by a local commander, without orders from his superior officers, to force the American lines back into the city. There had been a number of minor clashes in the six months since the capture of Manila. This time the shot fired by the American soldier resulted shortly in general shooting all along the line. Thus started, the fighting was to continue for two years on a large scale and with intermittent skirmishes until 1904. In the suppression of this insurrection, the United States lost nearly as many lives as she had in the war with Spain and expended in money more than eight times the original purchase price of the Islands.

The developments of February, 1899, completely shattered whatever chance the civilian members of McKinley's commission might have had of averting armed conflict. At best, the odds were greatly against the commission. The purely investigative nature of its assignment disappointed those Filipinos who thought they would now discover American plans for governing the Islands. Furthermore, dissension between Dewey and Otis over military affairs, between Schurman and his two civilian colleagues, and between Otis and the three civilians were distressing factors which restricted the activities and militated against any wide success of the commission. Otis said the civilians, as peace commissioners, had "no status" now that war had broken out. These men, however, believed that they should investigate and report,

and subject to the military authority of Otis, negotiate with those Filipinos who came to see them.

While the Schurman commission carried on its study, General Otis continued military activities. Although operating under difficult conditions, the Philippine campaigns were poorly handled.⁶ Otis had twenty-one thousand American soldiers under his command, although on February 4 probably not over half that number were available for combat duty around Manila. Some were sick, others were employed at Cavite and Iloilo, while still others were policing Manila or engaged in civil duties. Most of these troops were state volunteers whose terms of enlistment presumably would expire with the exchange of treaty ratifications. Otis continually underestimated, however, the difficulty of the task with which he was confronted and the number of soldiers necessary to bring the insurrection to a speedy conclusion; instead of the thirty-five thousand men originally requested, he eventually had over double that number. Furthermore, General Otis was a cautious commander who never took any chances and always insisted on the most minute supervision of his field commanders.

Otis assumed the revolt would collapse after the Tagalog provinces were occupied and even as late as November, after the capture of Tarlac some seventy miles north of Manila, sent optimistic messages to that effect to Washington. When the Ilokans, Pangasanese, Visayans, and others resisted the American troops as vigorously as the Tagalogs, he was astonished. The development of guerrilla warfare following the cessation of organized resistance also came as a surprise to Otis.

On April 4, one month after its arrival in Manila and two months after the beginning of hostilities, the commission issued a proclamation announcing that since Spain and the United States had ratified the Treaty of Paris, the United States was now sovereign in the Philippines. The commission stated that President McKinley hoped that peace, prosperity, and liberty might be quickly established in the Islands, and that they as his representatives were willing and anxious to establish "an enlightened system of government" under which the Filipinos might "enjoy the largest measure of home rule and the amplest liberty consonant with the supreme ends of government and compatible with those obligations which the United States has assumed towards the civilized nations of the world." Under these circumstances, the proclamation declared, there could be no real conflict between American sovereignty and the rights and liberties of the Filipinos. Though the United States proposed to "maintain and support its rightful supremacy" over the Islands, it was "even more solicitous to spread peace and happiness" among the inhabitants. The United States would protect the Filipinos "in their just privileges and immunities," "accustom them to free self-government in an ever-increasing measure," and "encourage them in those democratic aspirations, sentiments, and ideals which are the promise and potency of a fruitful national development."

Schurman, in a letter to the Secretary of State four days later, expressed the belief that the proclamation had clarified the picture for both natives and foreigners. On the one hand, American assumption of sovereignty had been unmistakably asserted; on the other hand, ground for confidence had been laid in the affirmation that the United States planned to inaugurate needed reform, grant liberties, and establish an honest government in which the natives would soon participate.⁷ Schurman quickly learned that he had been too optimistic. The Filipinos wanted a more definite statement on the form of future government; and this the American government was not prepared to offer.

Four days before this proclamation, the insurgent capital at Malolos had been captured by forces under Major General Arthur MacArthur. In the wake of military reverses, some sentiment for cessation of hostilities developed among a group of Philippine leaders. Peace negotiations were begun, but since they took place in the midst of grave struggles within the Philippine government, no completely satisfactory explanation of some of the events is available.

Apolinario Mabini, the irreconcilable advocate of Philippine independence and at this time head of the cabinet, was forced by this peace sentiment to assume the initiative in seeking an armistice in preparation for peace talks. Late in April he sent a Colonel Arguelles to seek an armistice and also to talk over peace and governmental plans with the Schurman commission and with Otis as supreme army commander. The reason asserted for seeking the armistice was the wish to consult the people about peace terms. However, certain Americans thought this a subterfuge since the armistice period sought would suspend military operations until the rainy season had started, during which period Filipinos thought the United States could not or would not campaign. In any case, Otis refused to consider the armistice.

Arguelles conveyed Otis' refusal to his superiors. On his next mission to Manila, the commission told the Philippine emissary that after consideration and study they had decided the Filipinos were not capable of independent self-government. Arguelles admitted this was true and declared that they were not fighting for the sovereignty of the Islands but for the honor of the army. When asked if Aguinaldo accepted the sovereignty of the United States, Arguelles replied, "Yes, we do." He added that he was authorized to make that statement. Arguelles then asked for a clearer statement about the form of government designed for the Islands, and tentative plans were discussed which he could report to his superiors.

The commission meanwhile communicated with Secretary of State John Hay and President McKinley concerning a plan. On May 5 the former authorized, subject to Congressional action, the proposal of a government consisting of a governor-general appointed by the president of the United States, a cabinet chosen by the governor-general, a general advisory council elected by a carefully chosen group of voters, and a strong, independent

judiciary, with the president appointing the principal judges from among either natives or Americans. The governor-general would have an absolute veto.

The failure of Arguelles to secure an armistice brought pressure from the Philippine assembly for a cabinet reorganization. On March 6 a "rump meeting" of the assembly unanimously voted to come to an agreement with Otis on the basis of the proclamation of the Schurman commission, and the new cabinet shortly chose a delegation of seven men generally sympathetic with this viewpoint. However, Antonio Luna, general-in-chief of operations around Manila, now moved in and interrupted these activities. Like Mabini, General Luna was a staunch advocate of independence and was opposed to all peace talk. Owing to his influence, at least in part, the committee that returned to Manila on May 19 was more sympathetic to continued resistance than to cessation of hostilities.

Nevertheless, the commission carefully went over with new emissaries the Schurman proclamation and the cablegram from Hay. The Filipinos asked if their troops could be incorporated into the United States forces. They were told that some regiments might be, but certainly not the whole army. The commission expressed a desire to talk things over with Aguinaldo. The insurgents promised to consider these matters and to return in three weeks. They never came back.⁵ Pedro Paterno, the new cabinet head, may really never have intended to obtain peace on unconditional surrender terms, or it may be that he did not dare such action for fear of army opposition. At any rate, there were never any further negotiations.

Meanwhile, the American military forces advanced northward, capturing the temporary capital at San Isidro in Nueva Ecija province on May 16. Because of the approaching rainy season and of the necessity of returning the state volunteers to the United States, Otis decided against any further advances. This enabled Aguinaldo to regroup and reinvigorate his forces and also eliminate all opposition to his policy of guerrilla warfare upon which he had now decided to embark.

In October, when the northward advance under Generals Henry W. Lawton and Arthur MacArthur was resumed, Americans became aware that the insurgents had adopted this new strategy. Organized resistance in North Luzon practically ended within ten months of the outbreak of the insurrection and resistance in other parts of the Islands within a year.

The new guerrilla warfare proved most difficult to combat. For one thing, it was hard to tell a guerrilla from a civilian laborer. Furthermore, even though the American troops occupied the towns and villages and moved about the country without opposition, the guerrilla leaders continued to obtain food, clothing, and money from the residents of the area.

By fall of 1899, the Schurman commission was ready to submit a preliminary report. Though recognizing the mental gifts and domestic virtues of the Filipinos, the commission believed that illiteracy, lack of political

experience, and linguistic differences were obstacles to immediate self-government. There were many educated Filipinos, however, whose services in both central and provincial affairs should be sought and, as education and experience increased, these natives could be entrusted with increasing responsibilities. Self-government should be the ultimate goal. At present, however, the commission thought that if the United States withdrew, "the government of the Philippines would speedily lapse into anarchy, which would excuse, if it did not necessitate, the intervention of other powers and the eventual division of the islands among them." This conclusion of the commission was not far from that which McKinley had earlier reached.

Concerning the economic value of the Islands, the comment of the commission is both important and enlightening. It throws light on the hopeful and expanding economic imperialism of that day. The report stated:

Rich in agricultural and forest products, as well as in mineral wealth, commanding in geographical position, the Philippine Islands should soon become one of the great trade centers of the East . . . It cannot be doubted that under an efficient administration of domestic affairs, commerce will greatly increase, and the United States will reap a large share of this increment.

This imperialism was gilded over with the pale cast of good will and paternalism. In the words of the report:

Our control means to the inhabitants of the Philippines internal peace and order, a guaranty against foreign aggression and against the dismemberment of their country, commercial and industrial prosperity, and as large a share in the affairs of government as they shall prove fit to take. When peace and prosperity shall have been established throughout the archipelago, when education shall have become general, then, in the language of a leading Filipino, his people will, under our guidance, "Become more American than the Americans themselves."⁹

A month later, in his annual message to Congress on December 5, President McKinley predicted that with the speedy suppression of the Tagalog rebellion, life in the Philippines would resume its ordinary course, with the inhabitants enjoying a prosperity and freedom they had never known before. "The earnest and unremitting endeavors" of the government to assure the Filipinos of our benevolent intentions had aided greatly in convincing them "that peace and safety and prosperity and stable government can only be found in a loyal acceptance of the authority of the United States." A great opportunity and responsibility had come with the Philippines. He warned that if we deserted them, anarchy and barbarism would follow and the

Islands would quickly be a "golden apple of discord" among the rival powers. The President rejected the proposal of a protectorate because it would make us responsible but give us no power of control.

Since the army would remain supreme until the insurrection was suppressed, McKinley further told Congress he did not think it desirable as yet to recommend a detailed and permanent form of government. Local governments in the pacified areas could be immediately established and, to aid in this objective, he was considering the return of the commission to the Islands. He concluded:

No effort will be spared to build up the waste places desolated by war and by long years of misgovernment. We shall not wait for the end of strife to begin this beneficent work. We shall continue, as we have begun, to open the schools and the churches, to set the courts in operation, to foster industry and trade and agriculture, and in every way in our power to make these people whom Providence has brought within our jurisdiction feel that it is their liberty and not our power, their welfare and not our gain, we are seeking to enhance.¹⁰

The final report of the Schurman commission was dated January 31, 1900. The sections relating to the government of the Islands were written by the chairman. The extent to which the detailed recommendations of this commission have been followed by later administrators is astonishing. Commenting on the governmental reforms desired by the Filipinos, the report said that "only by understanding the character and circumstances of the people and realizing sympathetically their aspirations and ideals" could the United States govern the Philippines well. The commissioners reported that the Filipinos did not want immediate independence, but added that those "who today so strenuously oppose the suggestion of independence at the present time" did hope for ultimate independence. Native suspicion of white men, selfish ambitions of Tagalog leaders, and persistent misrepresentation of American purposes were basic reasons for the continuation of the revolt. After prolonged study and thought, the conviction grew among the commissioners that the Filipinos desired above all "a guaranty of those fundamental human rights which Americans hold to be the natural and inalienable birthright of the individual," but which Spain had ruthlessly set aside.¹¹

In light of the disparity in the economic and social developments of the two countries, the commission suggested that the Philippine customs duties should not be combined with, but kept separate from, those of the United States. The successful administration of the finances of a dependent territory required that they be managed "not for the advantage of the sovereign power, but for the benefit of the people and the development of the country" under control. The construction of public improvements and the development

of the natural resources were necessarily called for, yet the program pursued should be self-supporting. The commission also advised that Philippine finances be kept separate from United States finances and urged that all duties and taxes collected in the Philippines be deposited in the Philippine treasury, with that treasury bearing the cost of the entire administration of the archipelago.

The commission recommended further that civil authority be extended immediately to the pacified regions of the Islands as a way of encouraging pacification of additional areas.

There were many hopeful prospects for the government of the Philippines. Educated Filipinos who had studied constitutional government favored American governmental forms and institutions. "The Filipinos themselves are of unusually promising material," the commission reported. "They possess admirable domestic and personal virtues." While educated Filipinos constituted a minority, they were numerous and well distributed over all the Islands and the commission desired "to bear the strongest testimony to the high range of their intelligence." Although most of the population was uneducated, they evinced "a strong desire to be instructed." In the opinion of the commission, the most important factor for success was the belief that the American territorial system of government would satisfy "the views and aspirations of educated Filipinos."¹²

President McKinley was so pleased with the work and so sanguine about the proposals of the commission that he decided it should return to the Islands. However, it became necessary to select new members, since of the first commission only Dean C. Worcester showed a willingness to serve longer in the Philippines.

Late in January, 1900, McKinley called Federal Judge William Howard Taft to the White House, told him Schurman could not continue with the commission, and asked Taft his views on the Philippine problem. Taft's own account of his reply follows:

I told him I was very much opposed to taking them, that I did not favor expansion but that now that we were there we were under the most sacred duty to give them a good form of government, that I did not agree with Senator Hoar and his followers, that the Philippines were capable of self-government or that we were violating any principles of our government or the Declaration of Independence so far as they were concerned, that I thought we were doing them great good, but that I deprecated our taking the Philippines because of the assumption of a burden by us contrary to our traditions and that at a time when we had quite enough to do at home; but being there we must exert ourselves to construct a government which should be adapted to the needs of the people so that they might be developed into a self-governing people.

McKinley wanted Taft on the commission and intimated he might be its president. Taft was reluctant but accepted. He saw it as a duty and was persuaded, since the appointment would be brief, that in the long run his judicial career would be advanced rather than harmed.¹³

The other commissioners selected were Dean C. Worcester; Luke E. Wright, a Tennessee judge; Hency C. Ide, a lawyer from Vermont; and Bernard Moses, professor of Latin American history at the University of California.

The instructions to the commission, drafted by Elihu Root with the help of Taft, embody constructive statesmanship of a high order. After some minor changes by the President, they were issued on April 7, 1900. These instructions authorized the transfer, on September 1, 1900, of all legislative power in the Philippines from the military governor to the commission, which was to establish municipal and provincial governments and prepare the central government for complete transfer to the authority of civilian officers.

Root's instructions contained safeguards against the establishment of a centralized and foreign bureaucracy. The commission was advised to follow the American example of the distribution of powers and grant a large share of political power to the smaller units of government. The selection of local or municipal officers in all cases must rest with the people. In filling the offices of more extended jurisdictions, natives were to receive "preferences to any other" if they could be found "competent and willing to perform the duties" involved.

The instructions specifically urged the commission always to remember that the government they were creating was designed "not for our satisfaction or for the expression of our theoretical views, but for the happiness, peace, and prosperity of the people of the Philippine Islands." The measures adopted should conform to the fullest extent possible to the customs, habits, and even prejudices of the Filipinos consistent with creating a "just and effective government." Fundamental to "the rule of law and the maintenance of individual freedom" were certain principles of government that must be established and maintained in the Islands even though they conflicted with laws of procedure and customs with which the Filipinos were acquainted. Every branch of the Philippine government should conform to certain constitutional guarantees: no person should be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law; private property could not be taken for public use without just compensation; and an accused person should enjoy the right of a speedy and public trial in criminal prosecutions. Generally, however, the main body of Philippine laws should be maintained with as little interference as possible.

The commission was urged to promote, extend, and improve the educational system already inaugurated by military authorities. Civil and military officers and employees of the United States were to observe the personal

and social, as well as the material, rights of the Filipinos and treat them "with the same courtesy and respect for their personal dignity" that Americans are accustomed to from each other.¹⁴

A first step in extending some small measure of control to the Filipinos, as well as relieving the army of unwanted work, had already been taken by Otis. On March 29, 1900, he provided that in pacified regions democratically elected officials would manage the affairs of the towns, replacing officers formerly appointed by American military authority. To be able to vote, the Filipino must have been either an officeholder under the Spanish regime or able to pass a literacy test, and also must have taken on oath of allegiance to the United States.¹⁵

When news of the appointment of the Taft commission reached Manila, General Otis expressed his desire to be relieved from Philippine duty by May 2, Taft's expected arrival date. Otis was replaced by General Arthur MacArthur.

Taft and his fellow commissioners, all civilians, arrived in Manila the morning of June 3, 1900. Neither MacArthur nor others of rank came to the harbor to greet them, and the landing on the following day was made without elaborate ceremonies. Taft later said, "The populace that we expected to welcome us was not there and I cannot describe the coldness of the army officers and the army men who received us any better than by saying that it somewhat exceeded the coldness of the populace."

When the commissioners arrived at MacArthur's office, he pointedly informed them that the civilian commission was "an injection into an otherwise normal situation." The Filipinos would need bayonet treatment, he asserted, for at least a decade. When Taft replied that MacArthur would still be in supreme command of the military and would have great power, the latter answered, "That would be all right if I had not been exercising so much more power before you came."

Taft was to fight MacArthur long and stubbornly. He continually complained about MacArthur's attitude and policies and eventually took away from him most of his governmental power. Taft later said that "the respect for the commission on the part of the army and the head of the army grew as it dawned upon most of them that we held the purse-string. Afterwards we got on better . . ."¹⁶

The Taft commission soon announced to the public their purpose to do justice to the Philippine people and to secure for them the best government possible, including "such a measure of popular control as will be consistent with stability and the security of law, order and property." At first, the work of the commission would be confined to pacified regions, but when the insurgents laid down their arms, the commission would give them as full a hearing upon the policy to be pursued and the reforms to be inaugurated as to any.¹⁷

Two days after the arrival of the commission, MacArthur suggested to the War Department an offer of "complete immunity for past and liberty for

future" to all Filipinos who had not violated laws of war and who would renounce insurrection and accept sovereignty of the United States. McKinley agreed after amplifying the proposal by providing a ninety-day period for acceptance of these terms and authorizing payment of thirty pesos to each Filipino who presented to the military authorities a rifle in good condition.¹⁸

The immediate results of this proclamation were not, however, as great as had been expected. Several prominent leaders in the insurrection did take the oath of allegiance, but the majority of Filipinos did not. Some rifles were brought in and American soldiers were led to others by Filipinos, but when the ninety-day period was over everyone seemed to be satisfied to let the proclamation expire without renewal.

Until September 1, the revenue of the Philippine government was collected and spent by the army, primarily for military purposes. The revenue laws enforced were those made by Spain. In the midst of the insurrection, American officials in the areas under American control collected more revenue from customs duties alone than had Spanish officials in peacetime from customs duties and business and property taxes combined. This money was spent by the American military government chiefly to buy those things for the army for which Congress had not appropriated money. Little of it was expended on education or public works.

When the Taft commission took over legislative powers on September 1, this spending policy was gradually changed. In the three months following their arrival in the Philippines, the commission had been familiarizing themselves with the situation by traveling in the pacified regions and by holding public and private hearings. Among the first acts passed were bills authorizing expenditure of Philippine funds for highway and bridge construction and for establishment of schools.

Such indications of the future intentions of American administrators had a most beneficial effect in forwarding pacification of the Philippines. Other activities also helped. The guerrilla armies were constantly kept on the move by our army. Many Filipinos decided that the ways of peace, in view of the reform program already launched, were to be preferred to the ways of war. Under Taft's encouragement and with his blessing, a political party, the Federal party, urging allegiance to the United States was launched in November, 1900. With members residing in most parts of the Philippines, its influence and activities were widespread and valuable. Some remnants of resistance which had drawn their main strength from the expectation of a Bryan victory in the United States presidential election saw this last hope disappear with his defeat. The knowledge that peace brought participation in the choice of municipal officers, with control by civilian rather than by military authorities, also aided. And finally, when Aguinaldo, chief symbol of opposition to the United States, was captured on March 23, 1901, and took the oath of allegiance on April 19, the morale of the remaining insurgent leaders was greatly weakened.

By January 1901, almost two years after the outbreak of hostilities, Taft felt much encouraged about the situation. He believed that American troops were not suited to the final pacification of the Islands because they were too conspicuous; Filipino forces, he felt, acting as police rather than as an army, would antagonize the populace less and would be more effective in obtaining information. The success of the constabulary established by him proved his point. In order to train the constabulary, the higher officers were originally Americans, but gradually the percentage of native officers increased.

The insurrection had moved from the stage of active resistance through that of guerrilla warfare and brigandage into that of ladronism. Organized bands of thieves, living in the mountains and usually posing as patriots preyed on other Filipinos. Their suppression was a matter for the civil government. The time for the establishment of such a government had arrived.

On June 21, 1901, President McKinley issued an order for the inauguration on July 4 of William Howard Taft as civil governor of the Islands. The pledge made by the commission that civil government would replace military control was thus fulfilled one year after Taft's arrival in the Islands.¹⁹ On September 1, 1901, on the first anniversary of the assumption of legislative power by the commission, three Filipinos were added to its membership. Though the military continued to have limited authority in certain unpacified provinces until July 4, 1902, Taft's appointment as civil governor one year earlier may be considered as really ending the era of military government in the Islands.

Notes

- 1 *Correspondence relating to the War with Spain*, II, 858-59. Also in *Senate Doc. 331* (part 1), 57 Cong., 1 sess., 776-77; and in *Senate Doc. 208*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 82-83.
- 2 *Senate Doc. 208*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 102-104.
- 3 Dewey, *Autobiography*, 285; also *Correspondence relating to the War with Spain*, II, 873.
- 4 Jacob Gould Schurman, *Philippine Affairs, Retrospect and Outlook*, 2.
- 5 *Senate Doc. 208*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 149-50.
- 6 See LeRoy, *The Americans in the Philippines*, II; and *Correspondence relating to the War with Spain*, II.
- 7 *Senate Doc. 138*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 3-4 (Schurman commission report); *Senate Doc. 208*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 154 (Schurman to Hay).
- 8 LeRoy, *The Americans in the Philippines*, II, 89-90; and Fernandez, *The Philippine Republic*, 156-59. Also *Senate Doc. 208*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 155-56; or *Senate Doc. 138*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 6-10.
- 9 *Senate Doc. 138*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 183-84.
- 10 *House Doc. 1*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., I-ii.
- 11 *Senate Doc. 138*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 82-84.
- 12 *Ibid.*, 116-21.
- 13 Henry F. Pringle, *The Life and Times of William Howard Taft*, I, 159-62.

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- 14 *House Doc. 1*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., xxxv-xxxix.
- 15 *House Doc. 659*, 56 Cong., 1 sess., 1-16 Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root*, I, chapters 16-17, gives a good account of Root's relationship with the Philippines.
- 16 *Cablenews-American*, February 23, 1911, quoted in Pringle, *Taft*, I, 169-70; see also Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, I, 125n.
- 17 *Senate Doc. 112*, 56 Cong., 2 sess., 119 (Taft commission report).
- 18 *Correspondence relating to the War with Spain*, II, 1175-79.
- 19 *Senate Doc. 112*, 56 Cong., 2 sess., 5, 36-37; Pringle, *Taft*, I, 185, 198, and 200; *House Doc. 2*, I (part 1), 57 Cong., 1 sess., 62-63 (report of the secretary of war, 1901); and *House Doc. 2*, 57 Cong., 1 sess., 281 (report of Philippine commission, 1901, part 2).

THE AMERICAN MOOD AND THE PHILIPPINES, 1898–1899

Peter G. Gowing

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*O Dewey at Manila
That fateful first of May
When you sank the Spanish squadron
In almost bloodless fray,
And gave your name to deathless fame,
O, glorious Dewey, say,
Why didn't you weigh anchor
And softly sail away?*

– From the Boston Transcript, (ca. 1900)

That is a good question. It is not difficult to explain why Commodore Dewey happened to be at Hong Kong when the Spanish-American War began. For months prior to April, 1898, war with Spain over the liberation of Cuba had been anticipated, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, on February 25 of that year, had ordered Dewey and his Asiatic squadron to Hong Kong. A strong advocate of sea power, Roosevelt urged naval preparedness in the Pacific to an unresponsive President William McKinley and his Secretary of the Navy, John D. Long. One afternoon when the Secretary had left his Washington office in charge of young Roosevelt, the latter seized the chance to redistribute the fleet, purchase ammunition, send Dewey to Hong Kong and perform all sorts of other unauthorized tasks which dumbfounded Secretary Long the next morning.¹ Roosevelt ordered Dewey to “keep full of coal” and, in the event of war with Spain, “see that the Spanish squadron does not leave the Asiatic coast, and then [undertake] offensive operations in the Philippine Islands.”²

War was declared on April 25 and on May 1 Dewey's five cruisers and one gunboat found and destroyed Admiral Montojo's seven decrepit warships

off the Cavite navy yard in Manila Bay. In one stroke Dewey prevented the possibility of Spanish naval raids on the west coast of the United States and/or the transfer of the enemy's Pacific squadron to Cuban waters. Later on, after American troops became heavily involved in fighting Filipino "insurgents," President McKinley remarked to a journalist friend, "If old Dewey had just sailed away when he smashed the Spanish fleet, what a lot of trouble he would have saved us."³

American designs on the Philippines prior to May 1, 1898

Garel Grunder and William Livezey believe that the most plausible explanation why Dewey did not "softly sail away" from Manila Bay is that "certain administrative forces" (not named) were resolved to lay hold of at least a portion of the Philippine archipelago.⁴ While this is not substantiated by any available records, it was believed in 1898, especially in foreign circles, that the executive heads of a growing and ambitious navy would surely have planned for the acquisition of a needed coaling and naval station in the Orient when war brought the opportunity of obtaining one.⁵ In short, it is difficult to believe that Capt. Alfred Thayer Mahan, Sen. Henry Cabot Lodge and Theodore Roosevelt – chief among those who labored for the building up of American sea-power – would not have thought of the possibility of acquiring such a base in the Philippines in the event of a victorious war with Spain.⁶ But this is conjecture. What is not conjecture is that Dewey had orders to undertake "offensive operations" in the Islands and he set about obeying them, moving his squadron closer to the city of Manila. On May 4, orders were given by the War Department for the assembling of volunteers at San Francisco to form an army of occupation for the Philippines. The first contingents of these volunteers finally sailed on May 24 and arrived in Manila Bay on June 30. The available records support the most widely held view that America's aim in the Philippines on May 1, 1898, was simply to neutralize the Spanish forces, an aim purely strategic in nature and limited to the purpose of defeating the Spaniards.

Whatever the advocates of sea-power may (or may not) have had in mind, it seems that the United States government had no line of conduct mapped out with respect to the archipelago on May 1 other than that which President McKinley stated later:

When Dewey sank the ships at Manila, as he was ordered to do, it was not to capture the Philippines – it was to destroy the Spanish fleet, the fleet of the nation against which we were waging war, and we thought that the soonest way to end that war was to destroy the power of Spain to make war, and so we sent Dewey.⁷

Doubtless it was thought that following up the sea victory by pressing the advantage on land, and temporarily occupying the Manila region, would also contribute to the destruction of "the power of Spain to make war."

To be sure, the leaders of the Philippine Revolution sought to draw America's attention to their struggle against Spain and to enlist her aid if possible. An appeal by a committee of Filipinos for the intervention and protection of the United States is reported to have been presented to the U.S. consul-general in Hong Kong as early as January of 1897. There is no indication that the document ever reached Washington. In November of the same year an offer of an "offensive and defensive alliance" in case America went to war with Spain was made, again through the U.S. consul-general in Hong Kong, by a group of Filipino propagandists. This offer reached the State Department where it was promptly denied. The consul-general was instructed to refuse to be the medium for any more such offers.⁸

These matters rested until late April of 1898 when, acting on his own responsibility, the U.S. consul in Singapore, W. Spencer Pratt, sought to help out Commodore Dewey by putting him in touch with General Emilio Aguinaldo, the youthful leader of the Philippine Revolution. An exile newly arrived in Singapore, Aguinaldo was purchasing arms (with Spanish money given him to keep the Peace of Biak-na-Bato) to continue his fight against the Spaniards. He jumped at Pratt's suggestion of a joint American-Filipino attack on the Spanish forces in the Philippines. Pratt cabled Dewey in Hong Kong, and the latter, in turn, asked that Aguinaldo come to Hong Kong for a conference. Pratt's action was disapproved by the State Department, and he was told "to avoid unauthorized negotiations with Philippine insurgents."⁹ Meanwhile, Aguinaldo proceeded to Hong Kong, full of hope that the United States would not only help the Filipinos to overthrow Spanish rule but would protect them while they established, with American assistance and advice, their own government. When he arrived at Hong Kong, Dewey had already left for Manila Bay.

Prior to May, 1898, few Americans were aware of the existence of the Philippines. The American press had roundly denounced Spain's unfitness for colonial rule long before the war, but the focus of "yellow journalism" had been on Cuba and Puerto Rico off the southern coast, rather than on the Philippines half-a-world away. When the Philippine Revolution broke out in 1896, press reports of it appeared in the United States. The *Literary Digest* and the *North American Review* carried articles about it. The State Department in Washington had the benefit of frequent dispatches from the U.S. consul in Manila, who, as recently as February 22, 1898, had reported:

Conditions here and in Cuba are practically alike. War exists; and battles are of almost daily occurrence. . . . Insurgents are being armed and drilled, are rapidly increasing in number and efficiency.¹⁰

But, on the whole, conditions in the Philippines had failed to attract the attention of the American news media to the extent that those of Cuba had. Thus, no massive public sympathy was aroused on behalf of the Philippines. Instead there was almost total ignorance concerning the archipelago and nearly total apathy among those few who were aware of its existence. President McKinley, when he heard of Commodore Dewey's victory, reportedly scurried for his map: "He said he could not have located the Islands within two thousand miles." A satirical columnist of the day commented that the American people did not know whether the Philippines were an island or something to eat.¹¹

With the news of Dewey's victory in Manila Bay, Americans became aware of the Philippines, of the Revolution in progress there against the hated Spaniards and, incidentally, of the truth that the United States had become a Pacific power. American policy with respect to the Philippines began to take shape – disjointedly at first – but quickly. On May 19, President McKinley stated that the Filipinos were "entitled to security in their persons and property and in all their private rights and relations" and should be "acquainted with the purpose of the United States to discharge to the fullest extent its obligations in this regard." We were there, he said, "not to make war upon the people of the Philippines nor upon any party or faction among them, but to protect them in their homes, in their employments, and in their personal and religious rights." The President ordered that the occupation by U.S. troops should be as free from severity as possible.¹²

The decision to stay in the Philippines

General Aguinaldo finally caught up with Admiral Dewey (newly promoted) on May 19. Brought from Hong Kong to Manila Bay in the Admiral's dispatch boat, the Filipino leader conferred with Dewey on the flagship *Olympia* about possible cooperation against the common foe. An agreement was reached concerning such cooperation, though nothing was said (according to Dewey) about the future relationships of the United States and the Filipino revolutionaries. Put ashore at Cavite, Aguinaldo soon announced his resumption of the command of Filipino troops and the establishment of a Revolutionary Government headed by himself as dictator. The independence of the Philippines was declared on June 12, and a system of municipal government, for the territory held by the Filipinos, was adopted within a week. It was at this time that Admiral Dewey expressed his opinion, in a cable sent to the Secretary of the Navy, that the Filipinos were "far superior in their intelligence and more capable of self-government than the natives of Cuba and I am familiar with both races."¹³

Temptations of imperialism

By the end of May, the United States was beginning to be tantalized by the prospects of acquiring control over the remnants of Spain's once great empire. Before May 1, 1898, most Americans would have been indignant at the suggestion that their nation could be tempted by imperialist ambitions as a result of the unequal war with Spain. The Teller amendment to the War Resolution specifically disclaimed "any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island [i.e., Cuba], except for the pacification thereof, and [the U.S.] asserts its determination when that is accomplished to leave the government and control of the island to its people."¹⁴ But in the glow of national jubilation over the victory in Manila Bay many Americans came to feel that while the United States had pledged its word not to annex Cuba, no such self-denial had been expressed relative to the Philippines. Even the President began to change his mind. In December of 1897 he had addressed Congress and the world concerning conditions in Cuba and the possibility of American intervention, adding "I speak not of forcible annexation for that cannot be thought of. That by our code of morality, would be criminal aggression."¹⁵ But the end of May, 1898, found him writing confidential memoranda to the effect that "while we are conducting war and until its conclusion we must keep all we get; when the war is over we must keep what we want."¹⁶

One wonders what this last piece of candor suggests. It may well point to a latent "urge to empire" on the part of the President and the American people which lurked unrecognized beneath "our code of morality."

The dawning suspicion that the United States might wish to retain the Islands after the war was what prompted the State Department to be firm in its instruction to Consul-General Pratt to halt his unauthorized negotiations with the Filipino insurgents. It also prompted Secretary of the Navy Long to cable Admiral Dewey on May 26 warning him to avoid "political alliances with the insurgents or any faction in the Islands that would incur liability to maintain their cause in the future."¹⁷

The Filipinos were fully aware of the drift but their reaction was one of disbelief. They could not imagine that the great United States, which had won its own independence from tyrannical rule by revolution, would seriously contemplate doing anything less than support the Filipinos now in their struggle for independence. Aguinaldo's troops seized one town after another on Luzon and by the middle of June, 1898, the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Bulacan and Pampanga were in the hands of the revolutionaries. By the end of June, just before the first American troops arrived, the Filipino army had laid siege to Manila. Admiral Dewey congratulated Aguinaldo on these successes and permitted the arms which had been purchased by the Filipinos in Hong Kong to pass through his blockade of Manila Bay.¹⁸

With American warships blockading the bay and Filipino troops besieging the city, the Spanish authorities in Manila realized the futility of further resistance. Through the Belgian consul arrangements were made with the American commanders (a fact which irritated the Filipinos) for the surrender of the city after a ceremonial show of defense. On August 14, American forces marched through Filipino siege lines to occupy Manila. Aguinaldo had reluctantly consented to keep his troops out of the city (the Spaniards had implored the Americans to that effect) and the feelings of frustration and resentment which that action generated at the time marked the beginning of serious Filipino-American disagreement.¹⁹ The Filipinos were starting to believe that the Americans really had abandoned their former policy of cooperation.²⁰

Yielding to the temptation

Hostilities between the United States and Spain ended with the signing of a Protocol on August 12, 1898 (the news did not reach Manila until August 16 because the Hong Kong-Manila cable had been cut). President McKinley and the American Government had not yet come to a firm decision about the Philippines; but to forestall any premature commitments, a proviso was inserted into the Protocol (Article III) that the United States would retain control over the city, bay and harbor of Manila until "the conclusion of a treaty of peace which shall determine the control, disposition and government of the Philippines."²¹ On August 13, the Secretary of the Navy cabled Dewey saying that the President wished to have a report on "the desirability of the several Islands; the character of their population; the coal and other mineral deposits; their harbor and commercial advantages, and in a naval and commercial sense which would be the most advantageous." In reply Dewey expressed his opinion that in all respects Luzon was the most desirable to retain and he spoke of the friendly character of its people, the commercial value of Manila, the volume of tobacco production and the possibility of rich mineral deposits.²²

Meanwhile, the President and his administration watched closely the debate which was already raging in the press and on the political scene in the United States. Opposed to annexation of the Philippines were a number of metropolitan papers such as the *New York Evening Post*, the *Springfield Republican* and the *Washington Post*. Early in June the Anti-Imperialist League was organized in Boston. As it became more apparent that the Government was tempted by an expansionist policy, the League became correspondingly active in holding mass meetings, circulating petitions and distributing literature. Some of the ablest citizens in America, from both political parties and from many professions, came out as strong anti-imperialists. The list could not have failed to impress McKinley for it included such powerful Republicans as Sen. George Hoar of Massachusetts

and Speaker of the House Thomas B. Reed. Lawyer-publicist Moorfield Storey, well-known liberal Charles Francis Adams and steel magnate Andrew Carnegie were also on the list. Likewise included were Democrats Grover Cleveland and William Jennings Bryan, humanitarian Jane Addams, labor leader Samuel Gompers, educator David Starr Jordan, writer Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) and preacher Henry Van Dyke.²³

But the anti-imperialists, distinguished and eloquent as some of them were, constituted only a minority. The burden of public and political opinion seemed to favor retention of the Philippines for patriotic, commercial, diplomatic, military, humanitarian and religious reasons. Businessmen began to view the Philippines as the door to Asian markets which had been jeopardized by recent European policies towards China. Predictions that Manila would become the chief commercial city of the Orient began to be heard. Senator Lodge saw Manila as "the great prize, and the thing which will give us the Eastern trade."²⁴

The Literary Digest published the results of a newspaper poll in its September 10 issue, reporting that of the 192 replies received, 84 favored American retention of the whole Philippine archipelago, 63 favored a naval base only, and 14 voted for Philippine independence under American protection. Just 6 advocated total American withdrawal and no one favored the return of the Islands to Spain.²⁵ Even the religious sector, except for the Friends (Quakers) and the Unitarians, favored American control of the Philippines. Alexander Blackburn, writing in the August 6 issue of the **Standard**, a Baptist publication, said: "The magnificent fleets of Spain have gone down as marvelously, I had almost said, as miraculously, as the walls of Jericho went down," and he maintained that the nation had then a duty "to throw its strong protecting arms around . . . the Philippine Islands" and to practice an "imperialism of righteousness."²⁶

Many Americans, and eventually the President himself, came to see the retention of the Philippines as a further operation of "Manifest Destiny." The concept of Manifest Destiny had its origins in the thinking of some of the nation's founding fathers such as Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson. It involved the notion that the United States had a mission, assigned by Divine Providence, to extend the blessings of American freedom to neighboring peoples. It was rooted in sentiments about Anglo-Saxon racial superiority, ideas about America as the center of civilization in the westward course of empire; and it embraced convictions about the primacy of American political institutions, the purity of American Protestant Christianity, and the suitability of English as the language for all mankind. Needless to say, this sort of ethnocentrism was not unique to Americans or Anglo-Saxons. It has been found among many peoples of the world, including the Chinese, the French and the Russians.

Up to the 1890's, the doctrine of Manifest Destiny was thought of mostly in terms of continental expansion – the absorption of North America. But by the 1890's the United States had reached her continental limits (though some dreamed of incorporating Canada) and her economy had pretty much

matured.²⁷ It was then that agitation arose for expansion beyond the North American continent. Specifically, attention focused on Hawaii where American residents had toppled the monarchy of Queen Liliuokalani and had established a provisional government over the islands, which they were anxious to have annexed to the United States. A treaty of annexation was nearly ratified, but five days after his inauguration in 1893 President Grover Cleveland, who believed that the manifest destiny of American expansion had been fulfilled, withdrew the treaty from consideration by the Senate.²⁸ Still, the notion persisted. Expansion was needed, it was said, to foster continued growth in the nation's economy, to provide outposts of national defense, and to allow the benevolent spread of American civilization to those less fortunate. Many Americans fully embraced the view of novelist Herman Melville who had written in an earlier day: "We Americans are a peculiar, chosen people, the Israel of our times; we bear the ark of the liberties of the world."²⁹ Congregational churchman Josiah Strong summarized the sentiments of many when in 1893 he declared: "Surely, to be a Christian and an Anglo-Saxon and an American in this generation is to stand on the very mountain-top of privilege."³⁰ In that mood, America was ready to take up the "white man's burden."

President McKinley was nothing if not a good party man. While he doubtless agonized over the discrepancy between his earlier public statements and the growing idea that at least some portion of the Philippines should be annexed, he was not inclined to act contrary to the convictions which seemed dominant in public opinion and in the councils of the Republican Party. Having assured himself that a substantial portion of the Party was in favor of grasping this opportunity for the United States to gain possession of a commercial base at the doorstep of China, he made up his mind to annex a portion of the Philippines.³¹

Seeking to narrow the gap between his previous statements of principle and this obvious departure from them, the President seized on Dewey's suggestion of retaining only the island of Luzon. Thus, his initial instructions (given on September 16) to the American commissioners leaving for the Paris Peace Conference affirmed that the United States could not "accept less than the cession in full right and sovereignty of the island of Luzon." The President resorted to feeble rationalizations, reminding the commissioners that America had resorted to arms only "in obedience to the dictates of humanity and in the fulfillment of high public and moral obligations." "There had been no design of aggrandizement," he said, "and no ambition of conquest." The President expressed his "wish that the United States in making peace should follow the same high rule of conduct which guided it in facing war." Nevertheless, events had intervened.

Without any original thought of complete or even partial annexation, the presence and success of our arms at Manila impose upon

us obligations which we cannot disregard. The march of events rules and overrules human action . . . Incidental to our tenure in the Philippines is the commercial opportunity to which American statesmanship cannot be indifferent.¹²

The President did not choose to elaborate on how or why the sinking of one Spanish squadron and the occupation of one city imposed obligations on the United States. A cynic might be inclined to say that the real burden of his argument was in the last sentence quoted. In any case, the President and those who supported the policy to retain the Philippines under United States rule, tended to rationalize this policy in terms of the benevolent purpose of extending "American liberty" to the Filipino people. They hardly realized in 1898 that such a purpose would actually involve them in the suppression of Filipino liberty.

The Treaty of Paris

The Filipinos, who, as we have seen, had already organized a revolutionary government headed by General Aguinaldo, were naturally quite upset at the turn of events. The fate of their country was being decided elsewhere than in the Philippines and by others than Filipinos. Their claim to independence was actively represented first in Washington and then in Paris by Felipe Agoncillo and Sixto Lopez who were dispatched as diplomatic agents. Other such agents were sent to England, France, Australia and Japan and worked hard to arouse world sympathy for their cause and to win recognition for the Philippine Republic which was by then taking constitutional shape under a Revolutionary Congress sitting at the town of Malolos in Bulacan. Mr. Agoncillo, with credentials as minister plenipotentiary, asked to be heard at the Paris Peace Conference so that he might bring the wishes of his people and government before the commissioners. The door of the Conference was closed to him.¹³

Spain was displeased that the United States sought to divest her of the Philippines, but there is some evidence that by August she had resigned herself to the loss of the Pacific remnant of her once vast colonial empire. Still, the Spanish commissioners at the Peace Conference argued that there should be free negotiation to determine the control, disposition and government of the Philippines. They felt that the United States should relinquish any claim to the islands in view of the fact that American troops had not occupied any portion of them at the time of cessation of hostilities.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the American commissioners sought to clarify just how much of the Philippines the United States should insist on taking. The President's original instructions left the matter somewhat vague - not **less than** Luzon. The question as to "not more than" remained to be answered. The commissioners themselves were divided on the matter. Three of them felt it

would be a mistake to divide the islands and favored annexation of the whole archipelago. The Chairman, William P. Day, believed that it would be better to take only Luzon, Mindoro and Palawan, then secure from Spain a non-alienation agreement concerning the rest of the archipelago. The fifth member, Sen. George Gray (D-Delaware) was opposed to any annexation and he warned the President against exchanging "the moral grandeur and strength to be gained by keeping our word . . . for doubtful material advantages and shameful stepping down from high moral position boastfully assumed."³⁵

President McKinley finally settled the question in favor of annexing the whole archipelago. Having made a trip to the midwestern part of the United States, he came to feel that the "well-considered opinion of the majority" of the American people favored taking the whole Philippines because of the "interdependency of the several islands, their close relations with Luzon, (and) the very great problem of what will become of the part we do not take."³⁶ This decision was strengthened by reports from American military, naval, consular and diplomatic officers in the Philippines, Europe and the Far East which added greatly to the public's knowledge of the natural resources of the islands. Moreover, the reports enhanced the belief that the Filipinos were not capable of self-government, and confirmed fears that certain European and Asiatic powers (notably Germany and Japan) might move to take over the islands if the United States did not. Accordingly, the commissioners in Paris were instructed to press for the cession of the entire archipelago.³⁷

This was not too difficult to do, of course, since the United States was at the Peace Conference as a conqueror and was in a position to impose her will. The Spanish commissioners pleaded that the loss of the entire archipelago without any *quid pro quo* might be politically disastrous to the present regime in Spain. Three of the five American commissioners were sympathetic, and after much negotiation it was finally agreed that the United States would pay \$20 million in return for the cession of the whole island group. The treaty was signed on December 10, 1898.³⁸

Included in the boundaries specified in Article III of the treaty were the island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago - Moroland. By virtue of the ratification of the treaty, accomplished in February of 1899, the United States of America assumed sovereignty over the Philippines, including the Moro sultanates. But that sovereignty was simply on paper. It was not a sovereignty in fact. Years of agony and bloodshed had yet to be lived through before what was written in a treaty became a fact of life.

Ratification and reaction

Barred from the Paris Peace Conference, Felipe Agoncillo rushed back to Washington and, with the help of Sixto Lopez, worked to persuade the Senate not to ratify the treaty. They found a lot of sympathy among Americans. Sen. George G. Vest (D-Missouri) had introduced a resolution

four days before the peace treaty was signed in Paris declaring "that under the Constitution of the United States no power is given to the Federal Government to acquire territory to be held and governed permanently as colonies."³⁹ The debate over ratification turned on the constitutionality, morality and general expediency of annexing the Philippines. The opposition said that there was no place for imperialism in the American system, that it was contrary to the Declaration of Independence, and that governing an alien people eight thousand miles away against their will would be expensive and dangerous – it would involve us in political entanglements in the Far East. Senator Hoar of Massachusetts pleaded: "You have no right at the cannon's mouth to impose on an unwilling people your Declaration of Independence and your Constitution and your notions of freedom and notions of what is good."⁴⁰

But it was no use. The expansionists prevailed. The favorite themes of their arguments were trade, strategy, duty, honor, and destiny. Senator Lodge appealed to the vanity and honor of Americans by stating that opposition to the treaty could be summed up in one sentence: "The American people and the American Congress are not to be trusted" in their dealings with the Filipinos. And he continued:

To the Americans and their government I am ready to intrust my life, my liberty, my honor and, what is far dearer to me than anything personal to myself, the life and liberty of my children and my children's children. If I am ready thus to trust my children to the government which the American public create and sustain, am I to shrink from intrusting to that same people the fate and fortune of the Philippine Islands?⁴¹

The Senator seemed not to have understood the extent to which such an argument violated the principles embodied in the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. He was apparently unaware of the fact that he was denying to the Filipinos the right of a people to determine their own government and destiny – a right for which the American Revolution was fought.

There was very little understanding in the United States as to the depth and breadth of Filipino feeling concerning their own independence. The Malolos Constitution and the government that was established under it in January of 1899 were regarded as the product of a few power-hungry, self-serving leaders. The expansionists made much of the moral issue they thought was involved. The United States, it was asserted, had released the Filipinos from Spanish bondage and to fail to annex the islands now would blast all hopes the natives had for freedom.

The supporters of this position interpreted "freedom" in their own (American) terms. The decision to keep the Philippines was well served by

rationalizing that the United States was carrying "freedom" and the benefits of American civilization to a people who would otherwise remain deprived of them. In short, America had a mission to the Filipinos which she must fulfill even if it meant depriving them of their independence. "What shall history say of us?" asked Sen. Albert Beveridge:

Shall it say that we renounced this holy trust, left the savage to his base condition, the wilderness to the reign of waste, deserted duty, abandoned glory, forgot our sordid profit even, because we feared our strength and read the charter of our powers with the doubter's eye and the quibbler's mind? Shall it say that called by events to captain and command the proudest, ablest, purest race of history in history's noblest work, we declined the great commission? Our fathers would not have had it so . . . they unfurled no retreating flag.⁴²

The leaders of the Philippine Revolution were not impressed by such oratory. They refused to believe that a change of foreign rulers would bring them the freedom for which so many lives had been offered. Tension between Filipino and American troops mounted daily, and particularly in the weeks following the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The American attitude was that the Filipinos were of such limited intelligence they could not grasp what a blessing it was for them that the United States had chosen to stay and govern. Like children, they did not know what was good for them. "Did we need their consent to perform a great act for humanity?" President McKinley asked. "We had it in every aspiration of their minds, in every hope of their hearts."⁴³

Finally, on February 4, 1899, an American soldier opened fire on a Filipino soldier and the Philippine-American War was on. Two days later the Paris Peace Treaty was ratified in the Senate by a margin of one vote. The "insurrection," as the fighting in the Philippines came to be called, was seen as a challenge. It was charged that "Old Glory" had been fired upon by the Filipino "insurgents." The expansionist-imperialist-annexationist majority felt confirmed in its conviction that the United States did the right thing in refusing to turn the islands over to their ungrateful inhabitants.⁴⁴

Looking for a moment at the larger context of South East Asia, it is interesting to note that the last quarter of the nineteenth century found three European powers at work fulfilling their own self-imposed "civilizing missions" in the region, employing force of arms for the purpose. The Netherlands was locked in a long war with the Achehnese. France fought to reduce Annam and Tonkin to her rule. And Great Britain "pacified" the Burmese. Before the century closed, the United States took her place beside the other Western powers and fought the Filipinos - for the privilege of picking up "the white man's burden," or so she told herself.

The American mood

On December 3, 1899, President McKinley sent his Annual Message to the Congress. For ten months fighting had raged between Filipino and American troops. Vigorous protests continued to be registered in the halls of Congress, in the press and on the public platform against the Philippine policy and the bloodshed which was resulting from it. Mark Twain suggested a new American flag, "with the white stripes painted black and the stars replaced by a skull and crossbones."⁴⁵ But the President's message probably reflected the mood of the larger body of Americans. It served as a kind of barometer of public and political feeling in the United States and, at the same time, it effectively summarized the American government's rationalizations, apprehensions, misconceptions, ambitions and policies respecting the islands. It reflected current notions of America's destiny as a great civilizing force in the world, appointed to that role by Divine Providence. The following excerpts fairly represent the whole tenor of the message as it pertained to the Philippines:

The islands lie under the shelter of our flag. They are ours by every title of law and equity. They can not be abandoned. If we desert them we leave them at once to anarchy and finally to barbarism. We fling them, a golden apple of discord, among the rival powers, no one of which could permit another to seize them unquestioned. Their rich plains and valleys would be the scene of endless strife and bloodshed. The advent of Dewey's fleet in Manila Bay instead of being, as we hope, the dawn of a new day of freedom and progress, will have been the beginning of an era of misery and violence worse than any which has darkened their unhappy past. The suggestion has been made that we could renounce our authority over the islands and giving them independence, could retain, a protectorate over them. This proposition will not be found, I am sure, worthy of your serious attention. Such an arrangement would involve at the outset a cruel breach of faith. It would place the peaceable and loyal majority, who ask nothing better than to accept our authority, at the mercy of the minority of armed insurgents . . .

We shall continue, as we have begun, to open the schools and the churches, to set the courts in operation, to foster industry and trade and agriculture, and in every way in our power to make these people whom Providence has brought within our jurisdiction feel that it is their liberty not our power, their welfare and not our gain, we are seeking to enhance. Our flag has never waved over any community but in blessing. I believe the Filipinos will soon recognize the fact that it has not lost its gift of benediction in its world-wide journey to their shores.⁴⁶

Notes

- 1 G. A. Grunder and W. E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951), pp. 18-19.
- 2 Quoted in James A. LeRoy, *The Americans in the Philippines*, Vol. I (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1914), p. 149.
- 3 H. H. Kohlsaar, *From McKinley to Harding* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923), p. 68 - quoted in Grunder and Livezey, p. 38.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 20.
- 5 Cf. A. Viallate, "Les preliminaires de la guerre hispano-americaine et l'annexion des Philippines par les Etats-Unis," *Revue Historique* (Juillet-Aout, 1903) pp. 281-283. See also LeRoy, I, pp. 173-174.
- 6 Cf. Grayson L. Kirk, *Philippine Independence: Motives, Problems and Prospects* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1936), pp. 4-5, 8-9.
- 7 Excerpted from his speech at Youngstown, Ohio, October 18, 1899 - quoted in, LeRoy, I, p. 173. Doubtless in employing the phrase "we sent Dewey" the President was making use of the old principle of command responsibility.
- 8 *Ibid.*, pp. 147-148.
- 9 Grunder and Livezey, p. 19.
- 10 *Ibid.*, p. 17.
- 11 *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.
- 12 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 20-21.
- 13 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 20.
- 14 *The Congressional Record* (55th Congress, 2nd session), p. 3954.
- 15 Annual Message to Congress, December 7, 1897, in *ibid.*, p. 2.
- 16 Quoted in Kirk, p. 9 from Charles S. Olcott, *Life of William McKinley*, Vol. II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916), p. 165.
- 17 Quoted in Kirk, p. 10.
- 18 Conrado Benitez, *History of the Philippines* (1954), pp. 287-288.
- 19 *Ibid.*, pp. 289-290; LeRoy, I, Chapter VI.
- 20 This calls to mind a remark made by young General Chiang Kai-shek in 1926: "Thinking men in China hate America more than they hate Japan. Japan talks to us in ultimatum . . . We understand that and we know how to meet it. The Americans come to us with smiling faces and friendly talk, but in the end your government acts just like the Japanese. And we, disarmed by your fair words, do not know how to meet such insincerity." Quoted in Harold R. Isaac, "Old Myths and New Realities", *Diplomat Magazine*, 17/196 (September, 1966), 45.
- 21 The text of the "Protocol of Agreement Between the United States and Spain" is printed in Appendix II of W. C. Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, Vol. II (1928), pp. 425-426.
- 22 *The Congressional Record* (56th Congress, 1st session), p. 895.
- 23 Grunder and Livezey, p. 29.
- 24 Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 28.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 Quoted in Gerald H. Anderson, "Piety and Politics Behind Protestant Missionary Beginnings in the Philippines", p. 6 of typescript. Dr. Anderson vividly describes the general spirit pervading the American public - and the religious sector - at the time fateful decisions regarding the Philippines were being made. The paper is to appear in 1969 in a symposium of essays Dr. Anderson is editing for publication by Cornell University Press entitled *Studies in Philippine Church History*.
- 27 *Ibid.*, p. 2. Cf. Frederick Merk, *Manifest Destiny and Mission in American History: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Vintage Books, Random House, 1966).

- 28 Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Oxford History of the American People* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 797.
- 29 Quoted in Anderson, p. 3.
- 30 Josiah Strong, *The New Era: Or, The Coming Kingdom* (New York: Baker & Taylor Co., 1893), p. 354—cited in *ibid.*, p. 4.
- 31 Kirk, p. 12.
- 32 *United States Foreign Relations, 1898*, pp. 904–908, cited in *ibid.*, p. 13.
- 33 Gregorio F. Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, Vol. II (1957), pp. 209–210.
- 34 Grunder and Livezey, p. 34; Kirk, p. 14.
- 35 Quoted in *ibid.*
- 36 Olcott, II, pp. 107–108 – cited in Grunder and Livezey, p. 32.
- 37 *Ibid.*, pp. 31–33. Even Admiral Dewey, alarmed at what he felt to be growing anarchy in the islands, felt obliged to reverse his earlier opinion – and in a cable to Washington in October, 1898, he stated: “The natives appear unable to govern.”
- 38 Kirk, p. 18. The text of the Treaty of Paris is printed as Appendix V in W. C. Forbes, II, pp. 431–436.
- 39 *The Congressional Record* (55th Congress, 3rd session), p. 20.
- 40 Quoted in Grunder and Livezey, p. 40.
- 41 Quoted in *ibid.*, pp. 42–43.
- 42 *The Congressional Record* (56th Congress, 1st session), pp. 704–705.
- 43 Quoted in Kirk, p. 21.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 21; Grunder and Livezey, p. 44.
- 45 Quoted in James R. Shirley, “War Protest in Wartime”, *The New Republic*, 156 (May 6, 1967), p. 15. This article is a provocative description of the public protest against America’s Philippine policy at the turn of the century, doubtless intended to evoke an apt comparison with the nation’s present Vietnam policy.
- 46 *The Congressional Record* (56th Congress, 1st session), pp. 34–35.

PHILIPPINE SOCIETY AND AMERICAN COLONIALISM

Norman Owen

Source: Norman Owen, *Compadre Colonialism: Studies on the Philippines under American Rule*, Ann Arbor: Michichan Papers on South and South East Asia, no. 3 (1971), pp. 1-12.

By the time of American intervention in 1898, there was in the Philippines a wealthy, politically astute, consciously "Filipino" elite. It is difficult, perhaps futile, to define the precise origins or boundaries of this group. It may have included direct linear descendents of pre-Spanish *datus* as well as Chinese mestizos who had risen along with the rising export economy in the nineteenth century. Clearly it included such Manila-based *ilustrados* as Rizal and Pardo de Tavera, but it shaded off into *hacenderos*, *caciques*, and *principalia* with only local followings.² In the late Spanish period, this Filipino elite had increasingly begun to agitate for colonial reform, as it saw its political ambitions thwarted by Spanish civil, military,³ and religious bureaucracies. The *ilustrados* themselves did not lead the early revolutionary movement; while they were urging reform, the active revolt was begun by urban clerks and provincial gentry.⁴ Not until after Admiral Dewey and General Aguinaldo had effectively destroyed Spanish power did most *ilustrados* align themselves with the emerging Philippine Republic; yet by the time of the Malolos Constitution (January, 1899) they were clearly on their way to dominating it.⁵ At the same time, some *ilustrados* were already collaborating with the Americans, an arrangement which culminated in the appointment of three Filipinos to the Philippine Commission in 1901.

The career of the brilliant jurist Cayetano Arellano illustrates this natural gravitation of the *ilustrados* toward the sources of power, or vice-versa. He had served in the Spanish bureaucracy since 1887 and did not join Aguinaldo until after the battle of Manila Bay; on September 26, 1898, he was named Secretario de Negocios Extranjeros for the Philippine Republic; on May 29, 1899, he was appointed the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines by President McKinley. Similar examples could be

drawn from the careers of such men as Pedro Paterno and Pardo de Tavera at the national level and a host of provincial and municipal officials at the local level.⁶ Whether their motives were patriotic or opportunistic is not germane to this study; the fact remains that wherever there was potential influence in the Philippines, there were the *ilustrados*.

There were three basic interlocking components of *ilustrado* power – education, a personal clientele, and wealth. Education, in Manila or Europe, was the overt sign of *ilustrado* status; it led to the professions, to contact with other members of the elite, to political sophistication, and ultimately to ideological leadership of Philippine nationalism, based upon the ability to articulate national aspirations and to command respect. A constituency of followers and friends bound by ties of personal loyalty gave the elite a local base of power which Manila – whether Spanish, American, or Filipino – has never been able to challenge effectively. The dyadic patron-client relationship was given a particularly Filipino flavor and intensity through such concepts as *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) and such institutions as *compadrazgo* (ritual co-parenthood). Wealth, usually landed, sometimes commercial, was nearly indispensable to the elite – it provided both the funds for their education and the means to reward their followers and to play the role of patron properly.⁷

The indigenous Philippine polity can best be understood as a pyramid of personal relationships, reinforced by economic dependence and socio-intellectual respect. In the nineteenth century this was a truncated pyramid; the *ilustrados* had risen as high as the Spanish would allow them to, and now found their upward path blocked. They were unable to obtain the high positions which could have helped them reward their clients (in the old Spanish bureaucratic tradition, which fit so well with Filipino values), protect their wealth, and enhance their prestige. The educated rhetoric of a Rizal or del Pilar led not to a senatorship but to exile. Although they had too much at stake to risk direct, violent confrontation with the Spanish, when the events of 1898 cleared the way, the *ilustrados* were ready; they stepped forward as the rightful leaders of the country, successfully claiming (though not without initial challenge from the Bonifacios, Aguinaldos, and Aglipays) the right to speak for the Philippines.

If the *ilustrados* had not existed, however, it would have been necessary for the Americans to invent them. From the beginning, the colonialism of the United States was undercut by a strong current of anti-imperialism, and American policy was characterized by a "vacillation in motives and aims . . . almost to the very end of the colonial regime."⁸ By the narrowest of margins the Senate had decided in 1899 to proceed with the annexation of the Philippines, but the nation lacked the will to pay the full cost of complete subjugation of the islands. The possibility of a long, brutal campaign to suppress insurgency, or of extensive commitment of funds and personnel for direct district-by-district American rule of a faraway land did not agree with either the democratic conscience or the budget. So the Schurman Commission was

informed: "The President earnestly desires the cessation of bloodshed, and that the people of the Philippine Islands at an early date shall have the largest measure of self-government consistent with peace and good order."⁹ By 1899, the United States was already looking for Filipino leaders with whom a *modus vivendi* could be arranged, a means of saving not only the costs of repression and local administration, but also what was left of her ideals and self-image.

This approach is reflected in Colonel Charles Denby's articulation of the object of the Schurman Commission, "... to find out the views of all the *respectable and influential* people whom we can get to tell them to us, and when we go over them we will come to some conclusion."¹⁰ The witnesses who testified before the Commission in the summer of 1899 exemplified the class Denby had in mind. Fourteen Philippine-born witnesses were identified by profession; all were (or had been) lawyers, doctors, notaries, merchants, or planters. In their testimony they repeatedly referred to the "rich and intelligent," and to the "most enlightened people," in contrast to "low people, vulgar."¹¹ The Commission responded in kind by repeated references to "eminent Filipinos," "men of property and education," "leading and prominent men," "people of wealth and intelligence," or simply "the better classes."¹² The witnesses were, of course, those who lived in or could get to Manila; by definition they did not include those who would have nothing to do with Americans; they were hardly representative of the whole nation. Nevertheless, the Commission was happy to draw from their testimony the conclusion that "the masses of the Filipino people, including practically all who are educated or who possess property, have no desire for an independent and sovereign Philippine state."¹³ In short, the Americans and the *ilustrados* had discovered each other, and found in each other familiar values; by mid-1899 a symbiotic relationship had begun that was to continue throughout the American period and beyond.

The United States had a practical political motive for dealing with the *ilustrados*, that of implementing the first of the "regulative principles" by which the Philippines was to be governed – enforcing "the supremacy of the United States . . . throughout every part of the Archipelago."¹⁴ It was clearly realized that "educated Filipinos" would play a crucial role in this, and it was anticipated that their "support and services [would] be of incalculable value in inaugurating the new government."¹⁵ Before the end of 1901, civilian municipal and provincial governments had been organized in most of the country. Aguinaldo had been captured, and the Taft Commission was praising the newly formed *Partido Federal*, whose "members were most active and effective in inducing insurgent leaders to surrender."¹⁶

But cooperation with the *ilustrados* was not only a matter of sound tactics for the Commission, it was also a matter of principle. One consistent theme runs through the pronouncements of McKinley, Root, Schurman, and Taft – that the United States ruled the Philippines not only for the ostensible benefit

of the Filipinos,¹⁷ but in accordance with their autonomous desires and cultural values. This was implied in the second of the "regulative principles" of the Schurman Commission, which promised, "The most ample liberty of self-government will be granted to the Philippine people" reconcilable with good government and American rights.¹⁸ It was made more explicit in a famous passage from the instructions to the Taft Commission, which reminded the members that:

... the government which they are establishing is designed, not for our satisfaction or for the expression of our theoretical views, but for the happiness, peace, and prosperity of the people of the Philippine Islands, and the measures adopted should be made to conform to *their customs, their habits, and even their prejudices*, to the fullest extent consistent with the accomplishment of the indispensable requisite of just and effective government.¹⁹

It is clear that a colonial power which proposes to respect even the "prejudices" of the subject people is already thoroughly committed to compromise.

Yet the Americans were equally committed to "just and effective government," and it was not long before they began to suspect that the two purposes might be in conflict. In theory there were "certain great principles of government . . . liberty and law . . . [which] must be . . . maintained . . . however much they may conflict with the customs or laws of procedure" familiar to the Filipinos.²⁰ But it was never easy to define, much less enforce, these principles in a Philippine context; it was always easier to enlist the support of the "enlightened classes" than to attempt to institute sweeping reforms without them, or to implement rigorously the full panoply of programs the United States envisaged for the islands.

As a result, the Americans found from an early date that they were never in complete command of events; by 1902, Taft was already describing the obstacles created by "caciqueism" and "feudal relations of dependence."²¹ Bonifacio S. Salamanca, in his excellent revisionist history of the Taft era, after emphasizing the "limited role played by Filipinos in the provincial government" in this period, and the "almost exclusive power of lawmaking exercised with patent arbitrariness by Americans" up to 1907, still concludes that "if the Filipino elite did not in fact determine American actions, they nevertheless made it impossible for the United States to have a free hand with any important undertaking which did not have their endorsement or, at the very least, their tacit approval."²² It seems as if the United States, in the process of obtaining *ilustrado* support, may have unwittingly sacrificed the efficient implementation of certain other aspects of her policy — education, civil service reform, public health, economic development, and above all, the genuine democratization of the Philippine polity. However mixed the motives of the Americans in annexing the Philippines, however unjust the attempt to

impose on an alien culture their own institutions and values, it would at least have been logically consistent for the United States having intervened, to retain the ability to carry through her dream of making the Philippines a "Showcase of Democracy." Instead, through a combination of political tactics and republican principles, the American administrators, by granting to Filipino leaders as much influence as they did, renounced the necessary means to enforce their own conception of what the Philippines should become. The result was an odd mixture of theory and expediency, a perpetual compromise, a modern variant of indirect rule.

This tension between the American conception of policy and the Filipino education of it continued throughout the period of American rule. When Francis B. Harrison arrived in 1913 as the first Governor-General appointed by the Democrats, many Republicans objected that he would grant effective self-government too soon, and that the irretrievable Filipinization of American rule by Harrison would bring an untimely end to the laudable ambitions of the United States to prepare the Philippines for the modern world. Leonard Wood arrived as Harrison's successor in 1921 and attempted to slow down or reverse this process; the frustrations he encountered in this effort plagued his entire administration.²³ The balance shifted slightly during the time of the later Governors-General and the Commonwealth, but the tension remained; Filipinos were more active in creating policy, but only within the limits established by the Congress and President of the United States. Each Filipino politician, each American administrator had to discover for himself the fine balance between what was desirable and what was possible; the process was a continuous one.

Historians have usually tended to concur with both Democratic claims and Republican accusations in calling 1913 the turning point, for better or worse, within the American period. But a closer look at the Taft era suggests that the crucial decisions may have been made much earlier. In the fall of 1907 Taft, once President of the Philippine Commission, now Secretary of War, visited the Philippines once more. In his report of January 23, 1908,²⁴ he states that "Thus far the policy in the Philippines has worked" — an assertion which is not surprising, inasmuch as Taft himself was largely the creator of that policy. But between the lines of the report there are hints that the American dream was not being realized with the swiftness and efficacy he had once hoped for. Taft notes "the desire of the upper class to maintain the relation of the ruling class to the serving and obedient class," and imputes to this both the "languid sympathy" given by *ilustrados* to the education program and the urgency of Filipino demands for independence. He finds it necessary to warn that the purpose of the United States was not "merely to await the organization of a Philippine oligarchy or aristocracy competent to administer government and then turn the islands over to it." And he concludes that "it will take longer than a generation to complete the . . . education of the common people. Until that is done we ought not to lift

our guiding hand from the helm of the ship of state of the Philippine Islands." Implicit in this report is the awareness that the United States had not really succeeded in altering Philippine society in the short run; from this perspective, the "Filipinization" under Harrison seems less a radical departure from the past than a public recognition of continuing sociopolitical realities.

The implications of this *modus vivendi*, this early tacit agreement between *ilustrados* and Commissioners, are not yet entirely clear. It is somewhat simplistic to conclude that either party to the deal was deliberately betraying principles in favor of expediency. The *ilustrados* were not solely collaborators who abandoned the revolution to seek selfish ends. Once McKinley had made the decision to annex the Philippines, resistance was probably futile, and it is doubtful that the Philippine Republic could have survived long in that era of hungry imperialism even if Dewey had turned around and sailed away. Nor is it wholly fair to blame the *ilustrados* for failing to carry out a radical social revolution; they were clearly sincere (if self-centered) in their belief that what was good for them was good for the country. Perhaps the only valid charge against the *ilustrados* is that they assumed that they were leaders by right and acted on that assumption; this should not qualify them as national heroes, but it hardly makes them traitors.

For that matter, neither had the American administrators betrayed any deeply held radical principles. They were committed to protect property rights not just by the Treaty of Paris, but by American tradition and personal inclination. The members of the Commission had much in common with the *ilustrados* who testified before them, and the two groups seemed to compete with each other in proposals for limiting the franchise and prolonging American "tutelage and protection" of the Philippines, under which the educated Filipinos would join the Commissioners in guiding and instructing the unenlightened masses.²⁵ The United States had, in the long run, only one basic proposal for reshaping Philippine society – education, over generations²⁶ – and to this the *ilustrados*, themselves the product of modern education, had no objection. It may be that what occurred in the Philippines was less a "Co-Optation"²⁷ of the *ilustrados* than a genuine meeting of minds between the "rich and intelligent" of both nations.

Indeed, it is difficult to assess just what difference full American control, a firmer hand at "the helm of the ship of state," would have made to the Philippines. If there was a difference between direct American administration and Filipino semi-autonomy it was probably in the area of implementation of policy rather than in policy itself. American officials repeatedly complained of the decline in efficiency and honesty which seemed to occur along with Filipinization. More recently, historians and social scientists have tended to emphasize the difference in social values between the two

societies, pointing out that what would be considered "corruption" by the high-minded Commissioners might well appear to the Filipinos a proper fulfillment of personal obligations. Yet even in terms of simple honesty, the difference, if it existed, was only one of degree; by 1903 Taft had to admit, "Americans responsible for the government of these islands have suffered a most humiliating experience during the past year in the numerous defalcations of Americans charged with the official duty of collecting and disbursing money."²⁸ Further research into the actual day-to-day administration of the Philippines may shed more light on the difference, if any, between American and Filipino rule – or between rhetoric and reality under any government.

If, finally, the United States never did assume full power in Philippine life, it may imply a need to reassess our periodization of Philippine history, perhaps even to discard the "American period" as a useful frame of reference. Instead of stressing the new institutions brought by the Americans, we might look more closely at the amalgam of Hispanic and Filipino values held by those who worked within these institutions. Do patterns of local government in the Philippines derive primarily from the American town meeting, from the Maura Law, or even from the original *barangay*? We realize that the political maneuvers of the 1970s have much in common with the Quezon-Osmeña rivalry of the 1920s and 30s; we are beginning to see that both owe much to a political style well developed by 1907, a style which must have evolved in the nineteenth century. In economic history, we may yet conclude that 1898 is less significant than 1869, when the Suez Canal was opened. If these papers reach any common conclusion, it may be this emphasis on continuity in Philippine history, this awareness that a change in flags need not imply a change in culture, that there is always a gap between sovereignty and society.

Notes

- 2 The terms applied to the upper class(es) in the Philippines are ill-defined and frequently overlapping. An *ilustrado* was an educated person, which in that society usually implied high social and economic status as well. A *hacendero* (*hacendado*) was the owner of a large estate; thus presumably wealthy. *Principalia* (*principales*) was a term used to describe the leaders within a particular community, e.g., the notable residents of a municipality. *Cacique* is a term imported by the Spanish from the West Indies; originally meaning native chief, by this time it referred to a political boss, and generally carried a derogatory connotation.
- 3 The tension among *peninsular*, *criollo*, and native elements in the military is documented in the research in progress of Theodore Grossman, University of Michigan, on "The Spanish Colonial Army in Philippine Society."
- 4 Cf. the statement of *ilustrado*-landowner Felipe González Calderón to the Schurman Commission in 1899, imputing (correctly?) the continuation of hostilities to "clerks and writers, who have a habit of stirring up the town," distinguishing this

- group from both the "rich and intelligent" and the "poorer element." *Report of the [Schurman] Philippine Commission to the President* (Washington, 1900), II [April-May, 1900], 68. (Hereinafter referred to as *Schurman Report*.)
- 5 Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *Malolos: The Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City, 1960); Bonifacio S. Salamanca, *The Filipino Reaction to American Rule: 1901-1913* ([Hamden, Conn.], 1968), pp. 14-19; David Joel Steinberg, et. al., *In Search of Southeast Asia* (New York, c. 1971), pp. 260-63.
 - 6 Gregorio F. Zaide, *Great Filipinos in History* (Manila, 1970); John A. Larkin, "The Place of Local History in Philippine Historiography," *JSEAH*, VIII-2 (1967), 309-16.
 - 7 On the nature of Philippine political values and social relations, see the works by George M. Guthrie, Mary Hollnsteiner, Carl F. Landé, and Frank Lynch, S. J., cited in the bibliography.
 - 8 Salvador P. Lopez, "The Colonial Relationship," in *The United States and the Philippines*, ed. by Frank H. Golay (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., c.1966), p. 10.
 - 9 Hay to Schurman, May 5, 1899, *Schurman Report*, I [January, 1900], 9.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, II, 66. Italics mine.
 - 11 *Ibid.*, II, 68, 94, 118, 138, et passim. Not all the witnesses are identified by national origin or occupation; there appear to be 23 Filipinos and 25 foreigners (including two Chinese merchants long resident in Manila).
 - 12 *Ibid.*, I, 83, 121, 169, 176; II, 54.
 - 13 *Ibid.*, I, 93.
 - 14 Proclamation "To the people of the Philippine Islands," April 4, 1899, *Ibid.*, I, 5.
 - 15 The Preliminary Report of the Commission [November, 1899], *Ibid.*, I, 183.
 - 16 *Report of the United States Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War for the period from December 1, 1900 to October 15, 1901* (Washington, 1901), I, 7. (Hereinafter these Reports, except for the *Schurman Report*, will be referred to as *RPC*.)
 - 17 "The United States does not desire to make one cent of money out of the Philippine Islands." Jacob Gould Schurman, President of the Philippine Commission, *Schurman Report*, II, 231. (But contrast Henry Cabot Lodge at the 1900 Republican Convention: "We make no hypocritical pretence of being interested in the Philippines solely on account of others. We believe in Trade Expansion.")
 - 18 Proclamation, "To the people . . .," *Schurman Report*, I, 5.
 - 19 *Annual Reports of the War Department . . . 1900*, Vol. I, Part 1, "Report of the Secretary of War," (Appendix B), p. 74. Italics mine. The instructions, or extended excerpts, are also quoted in other government sources, such as *Affairs in the Philippines*, Sen. Doc. 331, 57th Cong., 1st sess., 1902, I, 105-11, and *Reports of various Missions and Commissions*, as well as in the works of Dean C. Worcester, W. Cameron Forbes, and Bonifacio S. Salamanca (see bibliography), who also provide background and commentary.
 - 20 *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75.
 - 21 *RPC 1902*, I, 4.
 - 22 Salamanca, pp. 56, 61, 184.
 - 23 See Michael [P.] Onorato, *A Brief Review of American Interest in Philippine Development and Other Essays* (Berkeley, c.1968).
 - 24 *Special Report of Wm. H. Taft, Secretary of War, to the President on the Philippines*. Sen. Doc. No. 200, 60th Cong., 1st sess., 1908, pp. 7, 24-26, 75.
 - 25 *Schurman Report*, II, 22-27, 51-73, 138-143; see also Salamanca, pp. 55-56, 65-66.
 - 26 See especially *Special Report of . . . Taft*, pp. 24-31, 74-75.

- 27 Onofre D. Corpuz, *The Philippines* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., c.1965), p. 66; see also Onorato, pp. 1-11.
- 28 *RPC 1903*, I, 64. Sixteen Americans were so convicted in 1902/03. Taft points out that he had warned of this possibility in an earlier *Report*.

MUSLIM-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES, 1899–1920

Peter G. Gowing

Source: Peter G. Gowing and Robert D. McAmis (eds), *The Muslim Filipinos*, Manila: Solidaridad Publishing House (1974), pp. 33–41.

Introduction

President William McKinley in a message to the American Congress in 1899 defined the basic policy of the United States towards the Philippines:

The Philippines are not ours to exploit, but to develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government. This is the path we must follow or be recreant to a mighty trust committed to us.

This policy was, as a matter of fact, a kind of self-assumed mandate (though many Americans at the time would have insisted that it was bestowed by Divine Providence) and it came to occupy, for quite different reasons, an important place in the thinking and rhetoric of both Americans and Filipinos. The general "mandate" for the Philippines was also the particular mandate for Moroland. "To develop, to civilize, to educate, to train in the science of self-government" – these words, and the attitude they represented, established the character of Muslim-American relations – at least from the American point of view.¹

This paper focuses on the development of American governmental policy towards Muslim Filipinos between the years 1899 and 1920.² These years are especially important in the general story of Muslim-American relations because they cover the period of direct American administration of Moroland. During this time Moroland (and its inhabitants) became effectively a part of the Philippine nation and national concept, and it became integrated into the Philippine governmental framework as well. An understanding of the policies pursued and problems encountered in this period yields some

important insights with respect to relations between Muslim and Christian Filipinos today.

The American administration of Moroland developed in three successive stages between 1899 and 1920. First, there were the years of initial Muslim-American contact and military occupation of Moroland, beginning in May of 1899 and ending with the inauguration of the Moro Province in July of 1903. Next came the decade (1903-1913) of the existence of the Moro Province which exercised a politico-military control over the region and prepared the Muslims for civil government. And, finally, there followed a six-year period (1914-1920) wherein the process of bringing Mindanao and Sulu into the general governmental framework of the Philippines was accelerated. During this third stage, administrative control over Muslim affairs was rapidly transferred from Americans to Filipinos.

The military occupation, 1899-1903

Military occupation of Moroland was occasioned by American concern to secure Muslim Filipino acknowledgement of United States sovereignty in Mindanao and Sulu. The Americans also sought to keep the Muslims neutral in the Philippine-American War (1899-1901) which raged in the northern provinces.¹ Since U.S. Army authorities in Manila could not spare many troops from operations in the north, they depended on garrisons at a few strategic points in Moroland² and sought by diplomacy to win Muslim friendship and neutrality.

To this end, the Bates Agreement (signed August, 1899) was negotiated with the Sulu Sultanate. Similar, though unwritten, agreements were made with the Muslim chiefs of Mindanao and Basilan. By these agreements the Muslims seemingly acknowledged American sovereignty and agreed to help suppress piracy and apprehend persons charged with crimes against non-Muslims. In return, the United States pledged to respect the dignity and authority of the Sultan of Sulu and the other chiefs. Muslims were to be protected from foreign impositions. The United States agreed not to interfere with the religion of the Muslims and, with respect to Sulu, to pay certain emoluments to the Sultan and his principal chiefs.³

The Muslim Filipinos undoubtedly saw these arrangements from a different point of view than the Americans. The Americans believed that they were keeping the Muslims peaceful and at the same time securing acknowledgement of United States sovereignty. The Muslim leaders seemed to believe that their diplomacy had kept the Americans out of their internal affairs and guaranteed their way of life on terms no worse than those which had been imposed by the Spaniards. At the beginning, the arrangements were satisfactory to both sides as a *modus vivendi*.

During the years of military occupation, the U.S. Army related to the Muslim Filipinos in much the same way it had long dealt with the North

American Indians. The Muslims, like the Indians, were regarded as living in "a state of pupilage" on territory owned by the United States. The Army's main task was to keep them peaceful. The Army was not to antagonize the Muslims by attempting to regulate their affairs except "to prevent barbarous practices." Army activities were limited mainly to suppressing piracy, curtailing the slave trade (though not abolishing slavery) and keeping Muslim internecine conflicts within bounds.⁶

The American mandate in the Philippines was only mildly implemented in Moroland during the period of military occupation. The policy of non-interference in Moro internal affairs precluded any vigorous effort to develop, civilize, educate and train the Muslim Filipinos in the science of democratic self-government. Army authorities were generally unhappy with the non-interference policy because certain features of Muslim Filipino society – judicial procedures, slavery, the "tyrannical" relationship of the chiefs to their followers – offended their Occidental sense of justice and good order. Some officers were eager to take a direct hand in "civilizing" the Muslims.⁷

Within the limitations imposed by the non-interference policy, the Army did what it could to carry out the mandate, especially after the Philippine-American War ended in 1901. The proper authorities took notice of Moro affairs, studied conditions and began to formulate policies for the future administration of Mindanao and Sulu. Modern medical care was made available to the Muslims at Army hospitals and clinics. Public health and sanitation regulations were introduced. A few schools, taught by soldiers as well as civilian teachers, were opened and the Muslims were invited to attend them. Bridges, roads, trails and wharves were constructed which both directly and indirectly benefited the Muslims.

At the same time, other activities were easily misunderstood by the Muslims. Customs regulations were imposed, taxes were levied, land surveys were made and mapping and exploring expeditions became frequent. The 1903 Census was also begun. After July of 1901, more U.S. troops were sent south to occupy ports in Mindanao.

The Muslim Filipinos could not help but speculate as to what this escalation of American activity meant in terms of the security of their religion and way of life. Sometimes their uneasiness and suspicion erupted into violence. Isolated instances of attacks on American soldiers occurred with increasing frequency. In southern Lanao, the freedom of Army troops to move wherever they pleased was openly challenged by the Muslims in March of 1902 and resulted in the first major military action since the American arrival in Moroland almost three years earlier.⁸

The Americans interpreted Muslim hostility as defiance of United States sovereignty. But the problem was certainly much more complex. The growing number of Americans in Moroland after the Philippine-American War and the multiplication of their activities, brought two quite different cultures into more abrasive contact than had been the case earlier in the military

occupation. Moreover, the decision to take a direct hand in the control of Moro affairs was made towards the end of the period of military occupation. When that decision was implemented under the Moro Province, the conflict between Muslim Filipino and American cultures was exacerbated.

The Moro Province, 1903-1913

The Philippine Bill of 1902 formally committed the United States to the ultimate independence of the Philippines. Civil and military authorities then began to take a closer look at the American policy in Moroland. It was decided to abandon the policy of non-interference and to exercise direct rule over the Muslims with a view to preparing them for integration into the body politic of the Philippines. One factor which influenced this decision was the insistence of the Christian Filipino nationalists that Moroland was inseparable from the Philippine nation. Furthermore, both Americans and Filipinos fully realized the importance of the natural resources of Mindanao and Sulu to the economic future of the country.⁹

The decision to exercise direct control of Muslim affairs resulted in the abrogation of the Bates Agreement and assurances of non-interference by Americans. In this respect, the American policy towards the Muslims again resembled the treatment of the Indians: "treaties" made with the "savages" were not considered binding and could be unilaterally set aside as convenience or changes in policy demanded. Naturally, the Americans rationalized their action in terms of the misbehavior of the Muslims and also in terms of the new policy ultimately being in their (the Muslims') best interest.¹⁰

The American authorities recognized that preparation of the Moros for integration into a modern Philippine state required, for the time being, a different form of government from the regularly organized provinces wherein most of the Christian Filipinos enjoyed a large degree of autonomy. Taking their model from the Spanish "politico-military district" system, the Americans organized the Moro Province. The administrative structure of the Province was admirably suited for direct rule of the Muslims: the line of responsibility stretched from the Provincial Governor in Zamboanga to the datu who served as headman of the remotest tribal ward.¹¹

The officials of the government were carefully selected. Those in the higher offices were, at first, mostly army officers. A few American civilians were appointed to such posts as Provincial Attorney and Provincial Superintendent of Schools. The government of the Province was relatively free from "politics" during the ten years of its existence because it was placed under the direct supervision of the Governor-General in Manila and the Philippine Commission (dominated by Americans until 1913).

The successive governors of the Moro Province - Generals Leonard Wood, Tasker Bliss and John J. Pershing - were men of exceptional ability. For this reason they were given considerable latitude in administering

provincial affairs. The power of supervision retained in Manila was used sparingly, giving the governors "the authority of a Roman pro-consul" and holding them responsible for the results.¹²

The Moro Province offered more opportunities to implement the American mandate. Slavery was made illegal. The common people, as far as possible, were protected from the "tyranny" of their traditional leaders, the depredations of lawless persons, and unscrupulous traders. Through the "tribal Ward Court" system, attempts were made to introduce American concepts of justice. Under American supervision selected Moro leaders were given limited political authority as headmen in the tribal wards. The program of public works was expanded and more schools, hospitals and dispensaries were built. Agriculture and commerce were encouraged.¹³

As part of the program to "civilize" the Muslims and at the same time exploit the natural riches of the region, Americans and Christian Filipinos from the northern provinces were encouraged to settle in Moroland. The immigrants' industriousness and agricultural know-how would, it was felt, provide both the example and the incentive for the Muslim Filipinos to become more productive farmers. The organized municipalities, dominated by the non-Muslims, were designed to be models of well-ordered and democratically governed local communities, demonstrating to the Muslims "civilized" community life.¹⁴

The American officials believed that it was essential to get the Muslim Filipinos into the practice of paying taxes in support of the Provincial Government. Accordingly, the *cedula* (head-tax) and, later, the road tax were introduced. Fees were charged for the registration of vessels above a certain size. Export and import duties were imposed on Muslims engaged in foreign trade. Property taxes were levied on Muslims living in organized municipalities.

The Moro Province adopted the policy of respecting the Islamic religion and associated customs of the Muslim Filipinos provided they did not conflict with the basic principles of American law. The American administrators of the Province made some effort to accommodate the special features of Islamic law and *adat*, especially in cases concerning domestic relations and inheritance.¹⁵ During the administration of General Bliss, the Muslim *pandita* schools were encouraged and in some places were given limited governmental assistance.¹⁶

Even so, the American policy of direct rule and attempts to implement the mandate struck at the authority and prestige of the Muslim chiefs and, to some extent unwittingly, at the religion and attitudes of all Muslim Filipinos. The policy of direct rule was *ipso facto* an adverse judgment on the social structure, customs and laws by which the Muslim Filipinos had lived for centuries. From the Muslim standpoint, "to develop" and "to civilize" seemed to mean the imposition of strange laws and infidel customs. Laws against slavery threatened the politico-economic structure of traditional

society. The establishment of provincial and district governments, whose officials issued decrees enforced by troops, undermined the power and status of traditional Muslim leaders. By-passing Muslim courts and refusing to recognize the customary judicial functions of the headmen offended Muslim sensitivities.¹⁷ The collection of the *cedula* and other taxes was disliked because payment was made to a foreign, infidel government.¹⁸ The Muslims resented the parcelling out of lands, which they had occupied (but not tilled) for centuries, to foreigners and Christian Filipinos. They also resented the licensing of foreign vessels to fish the waters of Moroland. The Muslims suspected that the American ambition "to educate" them meant to inculcate Christian teachings and Christian values through the public school system. These teachings would alienate their children from their religion and traditional way of life.¹⁹

The American administrators of the Moro Province were either unaware of, or chose to completely ignore, the fact that Muslim Filipinos saw no separation whatever between the sacred and the secular. Separation of Church and State, religion and politics, etc., was a peculiarity of the West unknown to the Muslims. They saw Islam in everything they did; their land was *dar-al-Islam*, "the household of Islam." They believed that their laws and customs were consistent with the precepts of the Holy Qur'an. Any move to change their society or to enforce obedience to the laws of foreigners was seen as a fundamental challenge to their religion and to their very existence as human beings. The Moro Province and its policy of direct rule, then, constituted a severe threat to the ideology of the Moros. Many of them resisted to the death.

Governor Leonard Wood, the first Governor of the Moro Province, typified American New England Puritanical Calvinist values and Anglo-Saxon ethnocentrism. He found nothing in Muslim Filipino laws and customs worth preserving. He had only contempt for many of the Muslim leaders, including the reigning Sultan of Sulu, Jamalul Kiram II.²⁰ With all the passion of a medieval crusader he fought those Muslims who defied American laws. Thousands of them were killed battling his troops. He called them bandits and outlaws.

Wood's successors, Generals Bliss and Pershing, continued to fight "bandits and outlaws." To be sure, the majority of the Muslim Filipinos acquiesced in the government of the Americans, some because they found it to their personal advantage to co-operate, others because they felt powerless to resist, and the rest because their contact with the foreigners was so infrequent that their life-ways were very little affected.

Yet the Muslim Filipinos who chose the path of resistance had much moral support among the people. J. Ralston Hayden remarked that never during the continental expansion of the United States were armed encounters between the Indians and American troops so frequent and so serious as the conflicts that took place between the Muslim Filipinos and the

American forces from 1904 to 1914.²¹ In the end, the Muslims realized that continued resistance in the face of the modern weaponry of the Americans meant annihilation. They were conquered, and, under General Pershing, they were disarmed. This accomplished, the Moro Province could be safely converted to civilian control.

The Department of Mindanao and Sulu, 1914-1920

The appointment in December, 1913, of Frank W. Carpenter as the first civilian governor of the Moro Province, and the subsequent reorganization of the Province into the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, marked a new development in American policy towards the Muslims. Many Americans at the time felt that preparing the Muslims for integration into Philippine national life would require at least two or three generations. They were convinced that a strong American military presence would be essential for the maintenance of peace and order for a long time to come. And they were certain that if the government of Moroland were turned over to the Christian Filipinos, the result would be Muslim uprisings. Christian Filipino nationalists disagreed, of course, and throughout the ten-year existence of the Moro Province they had agitated for more Filipino involvement in the government of Mindanao and Sulu.²² The Democratic Party in the United States which came to power in 1913 proved more responsive to the demands of Filipino nationalists than the Republican Party had been. President Woodrow Wilson and Governor-General Francis B. Harrison, in accord with the desire of the Democratic Party to accelerate the move towards self-government and independence for the Philippines, virtually put control of the Insular Government into the hands of the Filipinos. A policy of "Filipinization" was vigorously pursued. Frank Carpenter, appointed by Harrison as Governor of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, was assigned the task of implementing this "Filipinization" policy.

Under Carpenter's firm and watchful supervision, Filipino officials (mostly Christians) assumed increasingly greater responsibilities in the government of Moroland.²³ The region (together with Agusan and Bukidnon) was divided into seven provinces, the governments of which were designed for easy transformation into replicas of those in the Visayas and Luzon, chiefly by the eventual substitution of elective for appointive public officials. The unification of the administrative structures of Mindanao and Sulu with those of the Philippine nation was rapidly advanced by extending to Moroland the jurisdiction of the bureaus and agencies of the Insular Government. Thus, direction of education, public works, public health and agricultural development was transferred from Zamboanga to Manila.²⁴

The progressive development of the seven provincial governments and the expansion of centralized administration and control of public services in

Moroland were intended eventually to make the Department Government obsolete as an intermediary between the Insular Government and the provinces of Mindanao and Sulu. In May of 1920, the Department Government in Zamboanga was formally abolished and its powers of supervision and administration were transferred to the Insular Department of the Interior of Manila. Thereafter Moro affairs were controlled by the Insular Government directly through the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in the Department of the Interior.²⁵

Before its abolition, the Department of Mindanao and Sulu went quite far in implementing the American mandate among Muslim Filipinos. This was possible, of course, partly because the power of the Muslims to resist had been broken under the Moro Province. But the American policy-makers, and later the Philippine Legislature, which assumed, legislative control of affairs in Moroland, exhibited genuine humanitarian concern for the condition and progress of the Muslim Filipinos. Under Governor Carpenter's wise and tactful supervision, Filipino officials got down to the hammer and tongs work of educating, civilizing and training in self-government the half-million Muslims in their care. In the process, the old mandate was given a new name: it was called "the policy of attraction."²⁶

Public schools multiplied by the hundreds and attendance was made compulsory. Muslim *pensionados* (Government scholarship awardees) were sent to Manila and America for higher education. Hospitals and field dispensaries were provided in such numbers that medical care came within the reach of nearly all the inhabitants. Public works were greatly expanded; hundreds of kilometers of new roads and trails ended the isolation of thousands of inhabitants and brought them into contact with commercial and governmental centers. The Muslims were given greater participation in local and provincial governments. Later, some were even appointed to the Philippine Legislature.²⁷

Muslim leaders were periodically taken to Manila as guests of the Government so that, on their return, they would be apostles of peace and be even more co-operative with government officials.²⁸ The agricultural activities of the Muslims were given every encouragement. In Cotabato Province, Muslim families together with Christian families successfully participated, at least for a few years, in the "agricultural colonies" established by the Government as experiments in land development and intergroup living.²⁹

These developments under the Department of Mindanao and Sulu were no less threatening to traditional Muslim life-ways than the activities of the Moro Province. But as was said earlier, the Muslims were in no position to resist by force of arms. What evidence there is concerning their general attitude in this period seems to suggest that it might have been a sullen acquiescence to a situation they were powerless to change.³⁰ Perhaps no single event better illustrates and symbolizes this attitude than the abdication (at the insistence of Governor Carpenter) by Sultan Jamalul Kiram II of all his

claims to temporal power in Sulu. The abdication was formalized in an Agreement signed on March 22, 1915.³¹

Of course, some Muslims readily yielded themselves to the program of assimilation enthusiastically pushed by the Government. Many, however, clung tenaciously to the old ways, and a few – far fewer than under the Moro Province – chose to become “outlaws.”

With the abolition of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu and the transfer of Governor Carpenter to other service in the Insular Government, the effective period of American administration in Moroland came to an end. There continued to be American governors in the Provinces of Lanao (until 1930) and Sulu (until 1935), and the American Governor-General continued to have considerable power to interfere in the conduct of government in Mindanao and Sulu.³² But, for the most part, administrative as well as legislative control of Moroland was firmly in Filipino hands where it has remained ever since (except for the years of Japanese occupation).

Concluding reflections

In his final report as the last of the “politico-military” governors of the Moro Province, General Pershing summed up what, in his view, was the total achievement of a decade of government largely by Army officers: “Up to the present we have gone no further than to suppress crime, prevent injustice, establish peaceful conditions, and maintain supervisory control.”³³

Certainly it can be shown that something more than that was achieved by the Moro Province. The fact is that the ground was prepared for civil government. The development of the land and people of Mindanao and Sulu was carried forward. There was a direct connection between what had been accomplished by 1913 and what had been achieved by 1920.

The work of the Moro Province made it possible for the Department of Mindanao and Sulu to pursue its “policy of attraction” towards the inhabitants; to reduce the American military presence; to accelerate the economic, political and social improvement of the people; to induce greater Muslim participation in governmental affairs; to further the integration of the people of Moroland into the body politic of the Philippine nation; and to gain their acceptance of – or at least acquiescence in – the collection of taxes, the operation of schools, the abdication of the Sultan of Sulu and the presence of Christian Filipino officials in positions of authority among them. Under Carpenter’s administration, all these **possibilities** became **realities**.

In the process, the usefulness of the Department Government diminished. The Department accomplished what it was established to do: it **laid the foundations** in Mindanao and Sulu for an enduring edifice of economic, political and even social solidarity with Luzon and the Visayas. Having finished this task – or at least having carried it fairly far along – the Department, like the Moro Province before it, properly and inevitably passed into history.

But it is one thing to lay a foundation and quite another to construct the edifice. A few years of American administration could hardly be expected to solve all the problems standing in the way of the integration of the Muslim Filipinos into Philippine national life. The biggest problem in 1920 was – and still is – the centuries-old animosity between Muslims and Christian Filipinos.³⁴ The American Government did not exacerbate that animosity. It went to considerable trouble to improve relations between the two groups. However, after 1920, the American Government exercised little direct control over the relations between Muslims and Christians in the Philippines. The future was in the hands of the two principals. And because they were left with the greater power, the responsibility rested primarily with the Christian Filipinos.

Notes

*Reprinted from *Asian Studies*, 61 (1968), 372–382.

- 1 Quoted in Francis B. Harrison, *The Corner-Stone of Philippine Independence* (New York: The Century Co., 1922), page 36.
- 2 A detailed, fully documented treatment of this subject is found in my doctoral dissertation for Syracuse University entitled: *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899–1920* (xix, 893 pp. typescript in two volumes). The study has been published in microfilm by University Microfilms, Inc. It is hereinafter cited as *Mandate*.
- 3 General E. S. Otis in *Annual Reports of the War Department . . . 1899*, Volume I, Part 4 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899) pp. 130–133. Henceforth War Department Annual Reports will be cited as *ARWD* followed by the year of preparation in parenthesis.
- 4 Notably, Jolo, Zamboanga and Cotabato.
- 5 General Bates' instructions and the text of the Agreement are found in *Treaty With the Sultan of Sulu*, Senate Document 136, 56th Congress, 1st Session (Washington: 1900). Cf. *ARWD* (1902), IX, p. 482.
- 6 See Elihu Root, *The Military and Colonial Policy of the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1916), pp. 320–321.
- 7 Cf. *ARWD* (1900), I, p. 267; (1902), IX, p. 517.
- 8 See *Mandate*, pp. 338–349 and *ARWD* (1902), IX, pp. 481–494.
- 9 Cf. Charles B. Elliott, *The Philippines to the End of the Commission Government* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1917), pp. 92–94.
- 10 See, for example, letter of Leonard Wood to William H. Taft, December 19, 1903 in *Wood Papers* (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.).
- 11 The text of "An Act Providing for the Organization and Government of the Moro Province" is found in *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province, 1904* (Zamboanga: 1904), pp. 113–131.
- 12 J. Ralston Hayden, "What Next for the Moro?", *Foreign Affairs* 6 (1928), 638.
- 13 See *Mandate*, pp. 414–448.
- 14 Cf. *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province, 1904*, p. 23. Henceforth, these Annual Reports will be cited as *RGMP*, followed by the year of preparation in parenthesis.
- 15 See, for example, *RGMP* (1907), pp. 34–35, 45–46.
- 16 *RGMP* (1908), p. 13.

- 17 See the conversation between the Sulu *datus* and General Wood, quoted at length in *Mandate*, pp. 458-461.
- 18 The battle of Bud Dajo in 1906, which cost the lives of over 600 Muslims, was caused in part by Muslim resistance to the *cedula*. See *Mandate*, pp. 482-486.
- 19 Speaking in praise of an American-run school for Moro girls in Cotabato, General Pershing remarked in 1913: "Although it is well understood that Christianity as a religion is not mentioned in the school, yet it is lived by the teachers and it may, in some measure, influence the lives of these young girls . . ." (RGMP, 1913, p. 32). Many Moro resisted sending their children to the American-run schools precisely for this reason.
- 20 RGMP (1904), p. 9. See letter of Wood to W. H. Taft, September 5, 1903 in *Wood papers*.
- 21 *Foreign Affairs* (1928), 638.
- 22 See letter of C. F. Richmond to General John J. Pershing (no date given, probably sometime in 1912) in *Pershing Papers* (Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.) and also the clipping from *La Democracia* (September 2, 1910) in the same place. See also *Mandate*, pp. 658-668.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 696-698.
- 24 *Ibid.*, pp. 686-688.
- 25 W. C. Forbes, *The Philippine Islands*, Volume II (Boston: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1928), p. 30.
- 26 See Charles E. Russell, *The Outlook for the Philippines* (New York: The Century Co., 1922), pp. 266-268.
- 27 *Mandate*, pp. 701, 754-769.
- 28 Cf. the account of Datu Alamada's Visit to Manila in *ibid.*, p. 709.
- 29 *Ibid.*, pp. 736-741.
- 30 Significantly, serious disorders broke out in Moroland in the 1920s.
- 31 A full account of the Agreement, including a copy of its text and other valuable appendices is given in the Annual Report of Governor Carpenter in *Manuscript Report of the Philippine Commission January 1 to December 31, 1915*, Volume 4 (in National Archives, Washington, D.C.), pp. 3120-3145.
- 32 As, for example, when Governor-General Leonard Wood late in 1921 summarily replaced the first Filipino Governor of Lanao Province (Capt. Paulino Santos of the Constabulary) with an American.
- 33 RGMP (1913), p. 72.
- 34 See the discussion of the "Moro Image" in my *Mosque and Moro: A Study of Muslims in the Philippines* (Manila: Philippine Federation of Christian Churches, 1964), pp. 29-30, 83-86.