

ruffian, Pagan Min. Pagan Min's ministers carried out a systematic expropriation of his richer subjects by putting them to death on trumped-up charges and confiscating their belongings. During the two years of his power, six thousand persons perished in this way. But it was the breakdown of central control which eventually brought renewed war with the East India Company.

Matters came to a head again in 1851 over heavy fines imposed on two British sea-captains for alleged murder and embezzlement (charges that proved to be unfounded). This was only the latest of a long series of provocations, but it proved to be the last straw so far as Lord Dalhousie, the Governor-General of India, was concerned. Having recently defeated the Sikhs, and in any case not being the type of man to suffer indefinitely injuries inflicted on his countrymen, he despatched warships to Rangoon to demand redress. When the shore batteries opened fire on the ships, and the somewhat impetuous British Commodore retorted by destroying all Burmese war-boats within reach, Dalhousie followed this up by stepping up the compensation demanded to ten lakhs of rupees. In April 1852, when the ultimatum expired, Rangoon and Martaban were occupied and the Second Burma War had begun.

As it happened, Dalhousie's masterly conduct of the war was in striking contrast to that of the war of 1824 which (as we have seen) had been grossly mismanaged by the British. The British forces occupied Prome, Pegu was annexed, and King Pagan was deposed and succeeded by his half-brother, Mindon—a very different character, who was a sincere Buddhist and hated bloodshed. Pagan was allowed to retire, however, into honourable captivity in which he died many years later in 1881.

#### THE 'DUTCH EAST INDIES' (INDONESIA) 1818-69

While the British were, almost in spite of themselves, extending their Indian empire into Burma, the Dutch were creating an 'empire' of a different sort in the Archipelago far to the South.

The Dutch were in quite a different position from the British. It was all very well for Raffles to wax lyrical over the universal benefits conferred on humanity by trade, for Britain not only had

command of the sea but was now largely industrialized and flourished in proportion to the growth of its export trade. Holland, on the other hand, was behind Britain industrially, and had, for example, no piece-goods to offer to prospective customers of the quality that England could produce. So when Holland recovered its colonies after the Napoleonic Wars, it was scarcely surprising that it fell back on the system of its old East India Company, monopolizing as far as possible the primary products and raw materials of Indonesia.

The trading company (Nederlandsche Handelsmaatschappij) formed by Van der Capellen in 1825, with the King of the Netherlands as the principal shareholder, and intended to deal a blow at British competition, was a failure in its first years of existence, and when the new Governor-General, Van den Bosch, landed in Java in 1830 he proceeded at once to carry into effect a project which became known as the 'Culture System'. In many ways it was only the old Dutch East India Company's system of forced delivery of export crops in a new guise. The Javanese peasant was held to be too ignorant to make the best of his land and he was therefore to be compelled to devote a portion of it to the cultivation of export crops as directed by the government, and the latter would take the produce in lieu of land-rent in cash. The supplies thus raised were to be handled by Dutch merchants, shipped in Dutch vessels, and sold in the Netherlands, which would in consequence once more become a world market for tropical produce. At the same time, Dutch home industry was to be stimulated by being given a closed market in the colonies. Indigo and sugar were the first export crops selected.

Financially, the Culture System was a success from the start. The full application of the system lasted from 1830 to 1860 and from beginning to end the Dutch exchequer benefited to the extent of some 900 million guilders (say £43 million), and the treasury at Batavia also shared in the proceeds. The system was condemned later on by the Dutch Liberals as being altogether bad for the Javanese native in its results, but then the Liberals were voicing the claims of private enterprise as much as those of humanitarianism, and the fact is that the system had both good and bad effects. In some cases, notably in East Java, where the officials paid as much

attention to rice as to sugar, there was prosperity; in others, where they attended only to the cultivation of export crops and neglected rice, there was famine. One other bad result during the period that the Culture System was in full force was that the Dutch concentrated their attention more than ever on Java, an island with a natural land-drainage system and a rich volcanic soil, neglecting the Outer Islands (Sumatra, Borneo, etc.), and as a result did not pay due attention to the problem of the piracy which was rife there. The Culture System was never officially abolished, but from the 1870s onwards gradually gave way to private capitalist enterprise which undertook not only the development of the resources of Java but also those of the Outer Islands.

In the meantime the conscience of the Dutch people was awakened by the publication (1860) of a novel, *Max Havelaar*, written by E. Douwes Dekker under the pseudonym of 'Muktaruli'. In with the evils of the Culture System. Backed up by pamphlets and other Dutch writers, it stirred up wide support for the Liberal Campaign in Holland against government control over agricultural production. But it was still much too early for the movement to find any response in 'Nationalist' feeling in Java.

#### BRITISH RELATIONS WITH THE MALAY STATES AND SIAM

Since the East India Company regarded Singapore, Penang, and Malacca (combined in 1830 to form the Straits Settlements) purely as ports of call en route to China and as trading stations, it was determined as far as possible to keep clear of involvement in Malay affairs. This policy, however, was complicated by the renewed attempts of the Siamese to absorb the northern states of the Peninsula, and the Company had to make up its mind to what extent, if any, it would resist this attempt. The treaty that was concluded at Bangkok in June 1826 by Captain Burney was an attempt to draw a line between British and Siamese spheres of influence in the Peninsula.

The Burney Treaty became the basis of the British position in the northern states of the Peninsula for the next fifty years. It fixed

the southern boundary of Kedah as the limit of legitimate Siamese control, and secured the independence of Perak and Selangor. It needed, however, the despatch of a military expedition at an early stage to enforce the treaty as regards Perak. In the case of Kedah, the Burney Treaty had committed the British to preventing the Sultan-in-exile from attempting to recover his lost kingdom. In the end, the exiled Sultan made his submission to Siam and was restored to his throne as a vassal of that state in 1842.

Siam was an absolute monarchy which had been ruled by the Chakri dynasty since 1782. The king still occupied the throne and the dynasty to whom Siam owed allegiance were father and son, Rama IV (1817-1820) and Rama V (1820-1868). Rama V (Chulalongkorn) (1868-1910) had been displaced as king by his nephew, who had been named in a Buddhist monastic name. He was a highly educated man, well versed in Pali scriptures, but learned from the scholarly French missionaries. In this, he became an enlightened monarch. He had learned from American missionaries that Siam must come to terms with the West. He was now threatening the independence of the Malay States. He eventually succeeded to the throne in 1868. He was well equipped to negotiate with the foreigners, and he gained some insight into what was in their minds.

But it must not be forgotten that Siam was in an extremely backward condition and the introduction of new methods, even on a limited scale, caused a double conflict—one between the king and the ruling classes and one in the king's own mind. Was it possible to combine absolutism with enlightenment, or to modify absolutism and still retain the throne?

A great and irrevocable step, however, was taken when in 1855 Mongkut concluded a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Britain. One provision of the treaty was to limit the duty payable on goods by British merchants to 3 per cent *ad valorem*, and

Passing southwards to Indonesia, we shall find that the situation of the Chinese in this inter-war period had much in common with that of their brethren elsewhere in the region, but with some important modifications. The Dutch had for over two centuries used the Chinese as middle-men between themselves and the native Indonesians. That is to say that they used them for the purpose of tax-collection. Up to the end of the nineteenth century the Chinese bought the opium 'farms' (the monopoly of the sale of opium) and the right to run the pawnshops, but measures taken by the Dutch in 1900 to restrict the use of opium and to transfer the monopoly of pawning to the Government, as well as establishing agricultural credit-banks to rescue the Indonesian farmers from Chinese and other usurers...

... 'Netherlands' to a great national function... *excellence*, was industry, frugality, which for lacking having an undue The Indonesian population of some wide area, being them a special

only when it is... in the... red thousand... then they... Malaya. For

... 'true Plural Society'. In... also bore a fairly large proportional relationship to the Siamese. But in Indochina and Indonesia they represented only a small fraction of the total population, and since their economic influence was out of all proportion to their numbers, the existence of these minorities with different loyalties and with different ways of life to those of the indigenous peoples was to become more and more of a problem as Southeast Asian Nationalism began to grow.

DUTCH COLONIAL POLICY

Up to the 1890s, the Dutch had deliberately refrained from extending their administration to their vast island empire outside Java, but then the fear of foreign intervention and other factors convinced them that they could no longer delay establishing effective authority throughout the whole archipelago. This undertaking was virtually completed by Governor-General van Heutsz (1904-9). Van Heutsz at last brought to an end the long and bitter war with the Achinese. But he was also active in more peaceful spheres, and it was he who laid the basis of a popular educational system for Indonesia.

Java meanwhile remained the focus of Dutch attention. The Dutch exchequer (as we have seen in Chapter 3) had benefited enormously from the Culture System, and it continued to profit after this system was virtually ended by the Agrarian Law of 1870 which opened the way for private enterprise to succeed State exploitation. But a change of attitude towards the colonies was in the last decade of the century taking place in Holland. This happening can be described as nothing less than qualms of conscience leading to a 'change of heart'.

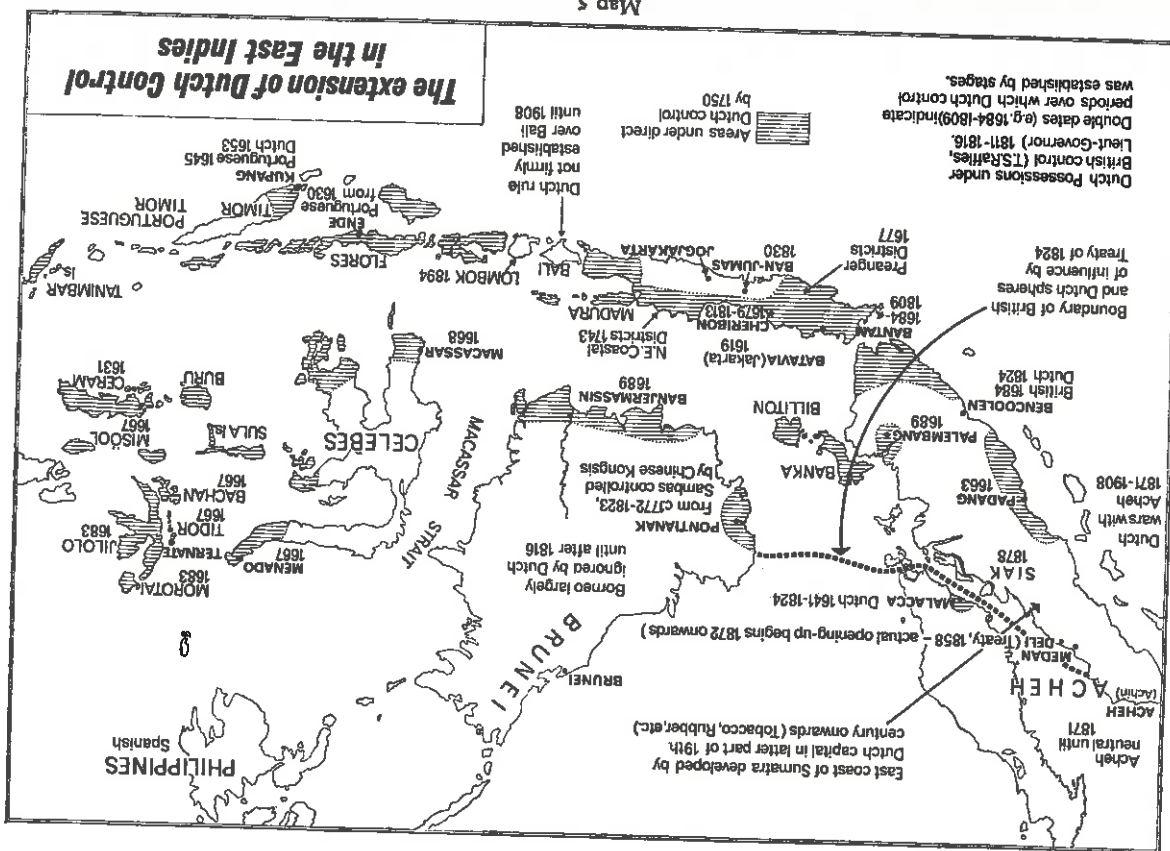
The new feeling, which was widespread in Dutch governing circles, was voiced by Dr Abraham Kuyper, who became Prime Minister in 1901. He had long before written a pamphlet, *Ons Program*, in which he had argued that the Dutch government must adopt a policy of moral responsibility for native welfare, and this idea he incorporated in the 'Speech from the Throne' that year. The speech declared, 'as a Christian power, the Netherlands is obligated in the East Indian Archipelago to imbue the whole conduct of the government with the consciousness that the Netherlands has a moral duty to fulfil with respect to the people of these regions.' The policy thus announced became known as the 'Ethical Policy'. As an earnest of the new spirit, a loan of 40 million guilders advanced by the Netherlands treasury to the East Indian (Indonesian) government was cancelled so that the funds might be released for the improvement of economic conditions in Java and Madura.

The reforms now contemplated centred on a programme of 'decentralization'. This envisaged the delegation of powers from The Hague to Batavia, from the Governor-General to departments and local officers, and from European to Indonesian officers. (In the meantime, the Socialists, who had for the first time entered the Dutch parliament, were loudly proclaiming the doctrine of 'Government of the Indies for the Indies'—with the ultimate aim of self-government.) This decentralization also entailed the establishment of autonomous organs managing their own affairs in co-operation with the government. In practice, however, the Decentralization Law of 1903 and the decrees of 1904-5 creating local councils composed of Indonesians, Europeans, and Chinese fell far short of the scheme which the Governor-General had submitted to the Dutch government as far back as 1867. In fact, up to the outbreak of the First World War, which cut off Batavia's communications with The Hague, the Governor-General remained completely under the control of the home government.

In the meantime the officials who were charged with implementing the 'Ethical Policy' were utilizing the village (*desa*) as the pivot for the improvement of native welfare. A regulation was passed in 1906 which provided for a village government, comprising the headmen and village officers, and measures were taken to improve agricultural production and the veterinary services, to establish village schools, to provide credit, and to improve health (the Dutch doctors and health officers were among the best in Southeast Asia). But although an elaborate village administration was built up, there was such excessive interference at every stage from the authorities above that the local self-government became largely nominal, and the general effect was to turn the villages against Dutch rule. J. S. Furnivall (a Burma civil servant who was also a close student of the Netherlands East Indies) described the Dutch method as being in three stages—'Let me help you; Let me show you how to do it: *Let me do it for you.*' It was, in fact, a case of excessive paternalism.

But Dutch plans for the improvement of Indonesia now began to be impeded and cut across by the beginnings of Indonesian Nationalism—a development, however, which must be reserved

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for a later chapter. The inauguration, too, of the *Volksraad*, or Parliament, by the Dutch can best be considered in this connexion.

SIAM'S GRADUAL TRANSFORMATION: THE REVOLUTION OF 1932

King Chulalongkorn, whose services to his country have received notice in a previous chapter, had thirty-four sons and forty-three daughters. The sons were sent to English public schools, universities, and technical colleges, and quite a number of them showed exceptional ability. Others received training in the British, German, Russian, and Danish armies, and in the British navy. They all played a part in the modernisation of their country.

Siam's move to modernisation was, as has already been seen, prompted by a desire to secure an equality with other nations. Law reform was the removal of extraterritoriality, and one of the most important steps taken in this direction. The Anglo-Siam Treaty of 1907, which neutralized central Siam, but left the French and British spheres of influence intact, turned to the disadvantage of Siam. The French of Battambang came to be regarded as a threat to Siam from France. Dansai, who was a French subject, was a powerful figure in the extraterritorial zone. Power was concentrated in the hands of a few British officials. The British had a large influence over the Siam. Siam was the United Kingdom's largest market in the Far East. Siam was the United Kingdom's largest market in the Far East. Siam was the United Kingdom's largest market in the Far East.

Chulalongkorn died in 1910, and was succeeded by his son Vajiravudh (Rama VI). Rama VI was educated at Cambridge and also served for a time in the British army. He was a lover of the arts and of the theatre, and an accomplished writer in the Thai language (he contributed a series of articles to a Thai newspaper under the pseudonym of Asavabahu (Pegasus),

attacking the Chinese as the 'Jews of Asia'). He relied on favourites for advice rather than on elder statesmen, and the appointment of members of his clique to sinecures and the unparalleled corruption that ensued resulted in widespread discontent and two attempts were made to dethrone him. During his reign, in 1917, Siam entered the First World War on the side of the Allies and sent a small expedition force to Europe, but part of the Siamese army was pro-German and anti-French and hatched a military plot to dethrone the king.

Under Rama VI there were few important administrative reforms, but his social reforms, directed to bring Siam in line with Western nations, were to have long-term consequences. One of these was a law enforcing monogamy, and another was the edict of 1916 ordering all Siamese to adopt surnames. Rama VI also introduced the Gregorian Calendar, started compulsory elementary education (1921), made vaccination compulsory, founded Chulalongkorn University (1917), and instituted the Red Cross Society. He started a public school on the lines of Oundle (in England) under the famous headmaster Sanderson, and through his influence Siamese women adopted European fashions and hair-styles.

Rama VI died in 1925 and, having no son, he was succeeded by his younger brother, Prajadhipok, the seventy-sixth child of Chulalongkorn and his thirty-fourth (and last) son. Rama VII, the new king, was faced by the need for economy since his late brother's extravagance had played havoc with the country's finances. He therefore dismissed many of his brother's favourites and cut down the Royal Corps of Pages from 3,000 to 300. These measures, coupled with a boom in trade, however, enabled the Treasury to balance the budget without resorting to foreign loans or increased taxation. Many developments took place in his reign (including the building of Don Muang airport, the improvement of public health, and the foundation of a Royal Institute of Literature and a National Library and Museum). Then came the great world slump (1929-32) whose effects began to be felt in the Far East in 1930.

The world slump hit Siam less hard than it did some other countries in Southeast Asia since she was rice-producing (with a large surplus) and could therefore feed herself and had no large export