



# MA THESIS “NOW IS THE TIME TO KILL ALL CHINESE!”

Social Revolution and the Massacre of  
Chinese in Tangerang, 1945-1946.



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## GLOSSARY OF FOREIGN TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<i>Badan Perjuangan</i>	Struggle organization
<i>Bapak</i>	Father
<i>Barisan Banteng</i>	Wild Buffalo Corps
<i>Bersiap</i>	To be ready, vigilant (used to characterize the early period of the revolution)
BKR (Badan Keamanan Rakyat)	People's Security Corps
<i>Bupati</i>	Administrative head of <i>kabupaten</i> or regency
<i>Camat</i>	Sub-district head, below <i>wedana</i>
<i>Dewan Rakyat</i>	People's Council
Guncho	Sub-district level administration under Japanese
<i>Haji</i>	Somebody who do pilgrimage to Mecca
Heiho	Indonesian auxiliary forces under Japanese
Hizbullah	Army of Allah (militia attached to Masyumi Party)
Hokokai	Service association under Japanese
<i>Jawara</i>	Bandit (Banten and Tangerang); <i>lenggaong</i> (Tiga Daerah)
<i>Jus Sanguinis</i>	Nationality by descent
Kabupaten	Regency, administrative division above district, under a <i>bupati</i>
<i>Kecamatan</i>	Administrative division, sub-district level, under a <i>camat</i>
<i>Kedaulatan Rakyat</i>	People's sovereignty
Kenpeitai	Japanese military police
<i>Kewedanaan</i>	District, administrative division, under a <i>wedana</i>
KNIP (Komite Nasional Indonesia Pusat)	Indonesian National Committee
KNIL (Koninklijke Nederlandsch Indisch Leger)	Royal Netherlands Indies Army
KNIDT (Komite Nasional Indonesia Daerah Tangerang)	Indonesian National Committee of Region Tangerang
<i>Kyai</i>	Title of respect for orthodox Moslem scholar or teacher
LPBM (Laskar Pasukan Berani Mati)	Suicide army
<i>Laskar</i>	Militia
<i>Lurah</i>	Village chief
<i>Merah-Putih</i>	Red and white, the Indonesian Republic's flag

NICA	Netherlands Indies Civil Administration
ORI (Oeang Republik Indonesia)	Republic of Indonesia currency
<i>Peranakan</i>	Chinese Indonesian of mixed ancestry; Indonesian-born Chinese
<i>Pangreh Pradja</i>	Administrative corps on Java
<i>Perang Sabil</i>	Holy War
PARI (Partai Republik Indonesia)	Republic of Indonesia Party
PARINDRA (Partai Indonesia Raya)	Greater Indonesia Party
<i>Patih</i>	Chief Minister of regent
<i>Pemuda</i>	Youth, young people
<i>Penghulu</i>	Head of religious officials at regency level (Java); lineage head (West Sumatra)
<i>Pesantren</i>	Religious boarding school
<i>Perjuangan</i>	Struggle
Pesindo (Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia)	Indonesian Socialist Youth
PETA (Pembela Tanah Air)	Defenders of the Fatherland (volunteer army on Java under Japanese)
PNI (Partai Nasional Indonesia)	Indonesian Nationalist Party
<i>Rakyat</i>	People
Sabilillah	Path of Allah (Moslem militia)
<i>Santri</i>	Strict or devout Moslem, also pupil in <i>pesantren</i>
SI (Sarekat Islam)	Islamic League or Union
Seinendan	Youth Corps (under Japanese)
<i>Totok</i>	Pure Chinese; China-born Chinese
TKR (Tentara Keamanan Rakyat)	People's Security Army, People's Salvation Army (name of official Republican armed forces from October 1945-January 1946)
TRI (Tentara Republik Indonesia)	Army of the Indonesian Republic (name of official Republican armed forces from January 1946-May 1947)
<i>Ulama</i>	Islamic scholar
<i>Wedana</i>	District head

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## INTRODUCTION

“Tidak ada revolusi yang memakai sarung tangan sutra dan beludru.”<sup>1</sup>

Anti-Chinese violence is not a new phenomenon in Indonesia, its roots traceable even prior to the birth of Indonesian nationalism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>2</sup> Since the Dutch VOC period, Chinese were often convenient scapegoats for the nation’s problems, becoming frequent targets of rioting or robbery. Burning, looting and confiscating Chinese property was frequently carried out by militant groups and ordinary Indonesians, whose hatred of the Chinese transformed them into “a violent mob.”<sup>3</sup> Several historians mark the Chinese massacre dating back to 1740, when more than 10,000 Chinese were massacred in Batavia, as the beginning of a series anti-Chinese violence in the later period of Indonesian history.

Thomas Lindblad and Freek Colombijn write of Indonesia as 'a violent country,' with anti-Chinese violence within the country as an important issue to examine in the history of violence in Indonesia. According to them, Chinese Indonesians suffered recurrent violent treatment perpetrated both by state or society under various political regimes in the colonial and post-colonial period.<sup>4</sup>

Violence against Chinese also marked the transition from the Dutch to the Japanese government in Indonesia. During the vacuum of power that existed between the retreat of the Dutch and the consolidation of Japanese rule, Indonesian extremists plundered, burned, and

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<sup>1</sup> “There is no such thing as a revolution using silk gloves and velvet.” *Persahabatan Indonesia Tionghoa*. (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, April 1946), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Based on the definition given by the *Merriam Webster Dictionary* violence is interpreted with two definitions: 1) Exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse; 2) Injury by or as if by distortion, infringement, or profanation.

<sup>3</sup> Abidin Kusno, “Remembering/Forgetting the May Riots: Architecture, Violence and the Making of ‘Chinese Cultures in Post-1998 Jakarta,” *Public Culture*, Vol. 15. No. 1, (2003), 150.

<sup>4</sup> Freek Colombijn & J. Thomas Lindblad, “Introduction”, in Freek Colombijn & J. Thomas Lindblad (eds.), *Roots of Violence in Indonesia* (Leiden: KITLV, 2002), 14-15.

looted Chinese homes and establishments *en masse*, aggravated by the ‘scorched-earth’ tactics of the Dutch military.<sup>5</sup> In Tangerang, such acts were termed *penggedoran* by the local people.<sup>6</sup>

The Indonesian Revolution years of 1945-1949 are considered the most violent eras in modern Indonesian history. Taufik Abdullah describes the period as ‘multi-complex,’ as it was not merely a period of decolonization, but also a time of “revolution full of social tensions and political conflicts between social classes.”<sup>7</sup> During this period, violence erupted unexpectedly in many parts of the country. The main cities of Java and Sumatra became scenes of countless kidnappings, disappearances, shootings, thefts, street fights, and murders, with former Dutch internees systematically attacked and fired upon.<sup>8</sup> For Leo Suryadinata, the Indonesian revolutionary period was the genesis of modern anti-Chinese movements in Indonesia: “The government had changed and were now in the hands of the ‘indigenous’ population, but the economic factor, at the root of past conflicts, remained.”<sup>9</sup>

As a ‘remembered history,’ the Indonesian revolution is often remembered as a period of upheaval (in Javanese, *gegeran*), marked by ousters, takeovers, and annexations, besides being glorified as a moment of unified struggle in Indonesian history. Sartono posits that conflicts between groups were inevitable, given the political crisis, and the government’s subsequent inability to guarantee the safety of its citizens.<sup>10</sup> Most contemporary Indonesian history textbooks portray this episode as a heroic revolution, which saw the deaths of many revolutionaries at the hands of the Allied Forces. While these facts are partially correct, these books are biased, and indeed hide one of the darkest chapters of Indonesia’s struggle for independence, as they

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<sup>5</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, “Anti-Chinese Violence in Java during the Indonesian Revolution, 1945-49,” *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 14, 383.

<sup>6</sup> Herwin Sumarda, “Tangerang 1945-46: Pemerintahan dan Rakyat,” Skripsi Sarjana FSUI, (1969), 43.

<sup>7</sup> In Soejatno & Benedict Anderson, “Revolution and Social Tensions in Surakarta 1945-1950,” *Indonesia*, No. 17, (April 1974), 104.

<sup>8</sup> Peter Post, “Historical Overview: Introduction,” in Peter Post (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War* (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2010), 20

<sup>9</sup> Leo Suryadinata, “Anti-Chinese Actions in Southeast Asia: In Search of Causes and Solutions,” in Dewi Fortuna Anwar (eds.), *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2005), 155.

<sup>10</sup> Sartono Kartodirdjo, “Wajah Revolusi Indonesia Dipandang dari Perspektivisme Struktural”, *Prisma*, Vol. X, No. 8, (August 1981), 3.



conveniently omit the fact that radical Indonesian nationalists were also involved in assaulting, kidnapping and murdering civilians, particularly the Chinese and Indo-Europeans.

A number of scholars have tried to seek a comprehensive explanation concerning why Chinese were specifically targeted, instead of other ethnic groups. Various historians have put forth the 'middleman minorities' theory. The theory argues that Chinese were positioned as a buffer or intermediary between colonial elite and society, as they engaged in trading and distributing merchandise produced by members of the dominant group to other customers.<sup>11</sup> As a result, the Chinese were often used as scapegoats by the elite to prevent riots. The Chinese middleman became a perfect target because they were seen as 'elite-collaborators,' 'a powerless community,' and in some cases 'infidels.'<sup>12</sup> According to the theory, the position of Chinese Indonesians as the trading class and persecuted minority is similar to that of the Jews in Europe, the Indians in East Africa, the Arabs in West Africa, and the Vietnamese in the former Indo-China.<sup>13</sup>

### Case Study: Tangerang

On 15 May 1946 the Allied Forces dropped pamphlets from the air onto *onderdistrict* Serpong, ordering people who lived near the Cisadane River to move at least two kilometers to the west by 17 May 1946. Several meetings were held by Komite Nasional Indonesia Tangerang (Indonesian National Committee of Tangerang/KNIT), together with Laskar Rakyat and Tentara

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<sup>11</sup> Mely Tan argues that the concept of "middleman minority" has been developed by Blalock, Jr. These are minorities who "occupy intermediate positions owing to a competitive advantage or a high adaptive capacity. Such minorities are often associated with special occupational niches by virtue of a combination of circumstances, plus a cultural heritage that has been used as an adaptive mechanism over a prolonged period." As examples of this group he mentions the history of the Jews in Europe, the Chinese in Southeast Asia, East Indians in Burma and South Africa. Blalock's ideas have been further developed in Turner and Bonacich, in which they propose a composite theory developing 9 propositions to account for the conditions promoting the (1) concentration of ethnic populations in middle-rank economic roles, (2) development of patterns of intragroup solidarity, (3) hostility from the non-ethnic population. These propositions can be applied to the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, at least for the beginning of the formation of the community. See Huber M. Blalock, *Toward a Theory of Minority Group Relations* (Wiley and Sons, 1967); Jonathan Turner and Edna Bonacich, "Toward a Composite Theory of Middleman Minorities," *Ethnicity*, (1980), 144-58.

<sup>12</sup> Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2005), 24-25.

<sup>13</sup> Mely G. Tan, "The Role of Ethnic Chinese Minority in Development: The Indonesian Case," *Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 25. No. 3. (December 1987), 66.

Republic Indonesia (the Army of Indonesian Republic/TRI) to discuss the possible courses of action regarding the Dutch order to turn the area by the Cisadane River into a *Niemandsland* (no man's land). On 28 May 1946, several Muslim groups, together with *laskar*, *jawara*, and the Tangerang locals decided to carry out a 'Perang Sabil' (Holy War).<sup>14</sup>

Following the occupation of Tangerang by Allied troops, the situation of Chinese in the interior of Tangerang worsened, with many of them robbed, raped and even killed.<sup>15</sup> Residences were looted, and residents burned alive in their homes.<sup>16</sup> Every grown man was slain in the most heavily populated Chinese town in Tangerang. In almost every suburb of Tangerang, the rights of innocent Chinese were violated.<sup>17</sup>

This thesis focuses on the Tangerang massacre between late May and June 1946, whose victims were mainly Chinese. To date, no one has taken up the challenge of specifically studying this event. While the massacre is briefly acknowledged in various publications, it has never been analyzed thoroughly.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, this thesis aims to fill that historiographical gap and outline the complex background of the massacre.

Two questions will be raised in this thesis: (1) What factors caused the Tangerang massacre?; and (2) Why were Chinese the primary target of the massacre? This thesis attempts to compare and reconcile the ways that numerous accounts interpret the massacre. Why, for instance, were the number of casualties given by Republican and Dutch accounts different? To answer those questions, I will try to examine the background of Tangerang and the relationship between the Chinese and the local population in the period leading up to and during the Indonesian revolution time.

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<sup>14</sup> *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521

<sup>15</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

<sup>16</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

<sup>17</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946

<sup>18</sup> Some authors like Mary Somers Heidhues, Richard McMillan or Matia Madjiah write a small piece about Tangerang massacre in their books. See Mary Somers Heidhues, "Citizenship and Identity: Ethnic Chinese and the Indonesian Revolution," in Jennifer Cushman and Wang Gungwu (eds.), *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II* (Hongkong: Hongkong University Press, 1988); Richard McMillan, *The British Occupation of Indonesia, 1945-1946* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005); Matia Madjiah, *Kisah Seorang Dokter Gerilya dalam Revolusi Kemerdekaan di Banten* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1986)

This thesis argues that several factors contribute to the outbreak of the violence. The roots of violence were embedded among the different communities in Tangerang. Furthermore, this study places the violence against Chinese in Tangerang in a broader paradigm of violence by tracing the roots of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia to the colonial period. Ultimately, it argues that anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia cannot be understood from a single perspective.

The Tangerang massacre is a curious and interesting event for many reasons: *First*, the Chinese are usually considered an apolitical community, and thus seen only as the victims in many riots. However, the case of Tangerang is unique because it led to the emergence of Pao An Tui (Chinese Security Force, PAT), a semi-military army, just a few months after the massacre occurred. Several Chinese organizations also attempted to bring the issue to the attention of the UN thus strengthening China's relations with Chinese-Indonesians. Thus, it subverts the notion that the Chinese were a powerless community that could not speak for themselves.

*Second*, most of the books and articles written on the subject point to the Chinese collaboration with the Dutch as the sole motive for the massacre.<sup>19</sup> Was it true that many Chinese involved were willing to serve the Dutch? If so, was it for prestige, economy, or safety?

*Third*, the Tangerang incident also triggered worldwide responses. China, who considered Chinese Indonesians as their citizens based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*<sup>20</sup>, started to pay more attention to the plight of the Chinese community in Indonesia. At the same time, both Republicans and Allies attempted to justify what already happened in Tangerang. Those responses will be examined in this thesis.

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<sup>19</sup> See Rosihan Anwar, *Kisah-kisah Zaman Revolusi: Kenang-kenangan Seorang Wartawan 1946-1949* (Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 1975); Herwin Sumarda, "Tangerang 1945-46: Pemerintahan dan Rakyat," Skripsi Sarjana FSUI, 1969.

<sup>20</sup> At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century China started to realize and pay attention to the fate of Chinese overseas (*hoakiao*), particularly in Southeast Asia. The Chinese Emperor made a number of laws to regulate this policy, which in fact was quite contrary with the policy of the former Chinese emperors. The act is based on the principle *jus sanguinis* that recognizes every Chinese person, both inside and outside the country, as a citizen of China. Leo Suryadinata, *Politik Tionghoa Peranakan di Jawa* (Jakarta: Sinar Harapan, 1994), 25.

## Previous Related Studies

The study of anti-Chinese violence is unpopular among Indonesian scholars and does not get vast attention of foreign scholars either. Nevertheless, some exceptions should be pointed out, such as the works of Jamie Mackie,<sup>21</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues,<sup>22</sup> and Jemma Purdey.<sup>23</sup>

Leo Suryadinata has been prolific in his study of the role of the Chinese during the colonial period. In his book *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java 1917-42*,<sup>24</sup> Suryadinata provides a useful chronological approach to the development of three Chinese political streams in Indonesia. The first was the China-oriented *Sin Po* group, which began its political activities with the creation in Batavia in October 1910 of a weekly called *Sin Po* or 'The New Newspaper' (becoming a daily in 1912 soon after the establishment of the Republic of China). The second was the Dutch Indies-oriented Chung Hwa Hui (CHH) or 'Chinese Association', which was founded by Dutch-educated and well-to-do *peranakan* Chinese in 1928, and began its life as a Semarang-based political organization. The third was the Indonesia-oriented Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (PTI) formed by Liem Koen Hian in 1932 in Surabaya. Suryadinata analyzes the rise, development and rivalries of these three political streams that characterized the political life of the Javanese Chinese *peranakan* society between the two World Wars. His work focuses on the struggle among them, and analyzes the difficult relationship between *peranakan* and the Indonesian nationalist movement.

Both W.F. Wertheim and The Siauw Giap argue that economic competition – particularly the role of Chinese Indonesians as middlemen – was the sole cause of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia.<sup>25</sup> Wertheim says that economic factors dominated relations between Chinese Indonesians and the Indonesian majority, and concludes that anti-Chinese violence occurred

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<sup>21</sup> J.A.C. Mackie (eds.), *The Chinese in Indonesia Five Essays* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii, 1976).

<sup>22</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, "Anti-Chinese in Java during the Indonesian Revolution," *Journal of Genocide Research*, Vol. 14, No. 3-4, (1 November 2012), 381-401.

<sup>23</sup> Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia, 1996-1999* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981)

<sup>25</sup> Wim Wertheim, *East-West Parallels* (Van Hoeve: The Hague, 1964); The Siauw Giap, "Group Conflict in a Plural Society, Anti-Chinese Riots in Indonesia: The Sukabumi (1963) and Kudus (1918) Incidents," *Revue du Sudest Asiatique*, Vol. 2, (1966), 1-31.

predominantly during periods of economic crisis or transition: "It is economic competition, institutionalized in line with the traditional patterns of group definition, which is at the root of our problem."<sup>26</sup>

Mary Somers Heidhues's work devotes a small section of her book to anti-Chinese violence in Tangerang in 1946. Like Wertheim, she argues that the anti-Chinese incidents from the 1940s-1960s were often triggered by economic exploitation, competition, or jealousy. However, according to Somers, the methods employed within Indonesian society to stir up anti-Chinese sentiment were more varied, and included religion, tribalism, and nationalism. She concludes that converting anti-Chinese sentiment into violent attacks on Chinese-owned property, "to them the symbol of Chinese economic power," demonstrated the dominance of economic factors.<sup>27</sup>

Many academics have conducted research on the social revolution in Indonesia. In his book, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945-1946*, John Smail attempts to see the Revolution from a local vantage point: the city of Bandung and the surrounding rural areas. Smail deals extensively with the social changes and shifts in power in Bandung, which was accompanied by the kidnappings and murders of Eurasians and Chinese, along with a steady influx of refugees. Ultimately he argues that the Indonesian Revolution was not only a nationalist, anti-colonial struggle, but a revolution within the revolution as well, with strong social undertones.<sup>28</sup>

Michael Williams, in his book *Communism, Religion and Revolt in Banten*, attributes the Banten revolts of 1988, 1926 and 1945 to the potent combination of communism and religion. The greater part of the book is devoted to the 1926 uprising, which according to Williams related to economic aspects like poor soil, low yielding land, and heavy taxation. The book argues that opposition to taxation escalated into rebellion out of the belief that the colonial oppressors/infidels could be overthrown, and taxation ended under the promised new order. Williams shows how Islam played an important role in the proliferation of ideas in Banten

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<sup>26</sup> Wim Wertheim, *East-West Parallels*...81.

<sup>27</sup> Mary Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University, Modern Indonesia Project, 1964), 46.

<sup>28</sup>John Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945-1946: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1964).

society, with many *hajj* in Banten residing in the Middle East before returning to Banten with pan-Islamic, anti-colonial, and anti-imperialist ideas.<sup>29</sup>

## Sources and Methodology

Most of the sources used in this thesis come from memoranda, newspapers, and other archival records. The archival records used in this research include: *Algemene Secretarie van de Nederlands-Indische Regering en de daarbij Gedeponeerde archieven*, (1922) 1944-1950, 2.10.14; *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hoogerechtshof van Nederlands-Indië*, (1936) 1945-1949 (1969), 2.10.17; *Ministerie van Koloniën: Dossierarchief 1945-1963*, 2.10.54; *Marine en Leger Inlichtingendienst, de Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service en de Centrale Militaire Inlichtingendienst in Nederlands-Indië*, 2.10.62; *Strijdkrachten in Nederlands-Indië*, (1938 - 1939) 1941 - 1957 [1960], 2.13.132.

Different Dutch, Chinese, and Indonesian newspapers are used in this paper because when public records and state archives were 'silenced', there is one type of source which does not suffer from any of the restrictions that kept death records hidden from public scrutiny: newspapers. *Sin Po*, *Keng Po*, *Star Weekly*, the 'Chinese *peranakan* newspaper'<sup>30</sup> are used to see Chinese responses to the massacre; *De Vrije Pers*, *De Locomotief*, *Het Nieuws van den Dag*, and *Het Dagblad*, Dutch newspapers with their headquarters in Indonesia, are used to see Dutch responses. For Indonesian responses, newspapers written in the vernacular will be examined, such as *Merdeka*, *Soeloeh Merdeka* and *Gelora Rakyat*. For other perspectives, Australian and Singaporean newspapers such as *The Straits Times*, *The Singaporean Free Press*, and *Sydney Morning Herald*, will be examined. This paper does not intend to discredit Indonesians or their roles during the revolution, but to offer an alternative analysis of the Tangerang massacre, and to eliminate the misconceptions that the Chinese were 'economic animals' with no political power.

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<sup>29</sup> Michael Williams, *Communism, Religion and Revolt in Banten* (Athens: Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1990).

<sup>30</sup> *Peranakan* newspapers were owned by Chinese born in Indonesia, who often of mixed Chinese and Indonesian descent and to some degree assimilated to local culture. Leo Suryadinata, "Pre-War Indonesian Nationalism & the Peranakan Chinese", *Indonesia*, (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971), 83-84.



## Chapter Descriptions

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter will contextualize the roots of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia by tracing the socioeconomic positions of Chinese in the colonial period. It attempts to show that violence against Chinese is not incidental, as its roots were already embedded within the community.

The second chapter seeks to examine the sociopolitical transition of Tangerang from the late Japanese occupation until the restoration of the Republic in Tangerang. This chapter will elaborate on the complexity of the area, and the significant role of Islamic groups in Tangerang.

The third chapter reconstructs the events of the Tangerang massacre. The chapter is divided chronologically, discussing events prior to the massacre, during the massacre, and afterwards. The response of Chinese *peranakan*, Dutch, Republican, and foreign media regarding the massacre itself will also be examined. Furthermore, the political responses of the Chinese community in Indonesia, the Dutch, Indonesian, and Chinese governments will be explored in this chapter. This chapter will end with an examination of Pao An Tui (Chinese Security Corps) that proliferated in Java soon after the massacre.

## CHAPTER I

### ROOTS OF ANTI-CHINESE VIOLENCE IN INDONESIA

The Chinese in Indonesia were, and are, a small, heterogeneous, and complex minority. They are as diverse as the Indonesian archipelago itself. According to Anthony Reid, the Chinese were already residing in Indonesia as early as the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, part of the invading Mongol army that entered Java in 1293. Some of the troops opted to remain in Java, and were among the first Chinese that settled in this Island.<sup>31</sup> In the colonial era, they served as intermediaries between the Indonesians and Dutch, purchasing goods for resale to the latter for export, and buying products from Dutch importers for resale to the Indonesians. Peter Carey argues that before the coming of the Dutch to Indonesia, the Chinese Indonesian community had a harmonious relationship with indigenous Indonesians, and contributed to agricultural and culinary development in Indonesia.<sup>32</sup>

As already mentioned in introduction, the history of Chinese in Indonesia is also inseparable from persecution and violence. Thus, this chapter aims to see why violence against Chinese was so prevalent in Indonesia. In order to answer this, the position of the colonial state must be seen juxtaposed with the local Indonesian communities. Furthermore this chapter also outlines several anti-Chinese riots during the colonial period, and the roots of and catalysts for these riots. In order to understand how physical violence operated within the political system, some background knowledge of colonial society is necessary, as is an understanding of the Chinese Indonesian communities in Indonesia under the Dutch colonizers, during the Indonesian National Movement, the Japanese occupation, and the Indonesian revolutionary period.

#### 1.1. Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia

Historians have attempted to draw parallels between the Chinese community in Indonesia with Chinese communities elsewhere in Southeast Asia. Leo Suryadinata points out

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<sup>31</sup> Anthony Reid, "The Rise and Fall of Sino-Javanese Shipping," in Geoff Wade (eds.) *China and Southeast Asia*. (London: Routledge, 2009), 74.

<sup>32</sup> Peter Carey, "Changing Javanese Perceptions of the Chinese Communities in Central Java, 1755-1825," *Indonesia*, Vol. 37, (1984), 3-5.

that in the entirety of Southeast Asia, cases of anti-Chinese violence have taken place most frequently in Indonesia. This statement is echoed by Onghokham, who adds that that Indonesia's postwar history has been more violent than those of its neighbors: Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand.<sup>33</sup> However, it must be noted that the majority of conflicts during the colonial period were primarily between the Dutch East Indies authorities and the Chinese. Conflicts between Chinese and native population are considerably less common.<sup>34</sup>

Charles Coppel's work draws comparisons between the Chinese in Indonesia and the Chinese in the Philippines. In the Philippines, the Spanish colonial government created four main racial classifications: (1) Spanish and *mestizo* Spanish; (2) *Indios*; (3) Chinese; and (4) *Mestizo* Chinese. *Mestizo* Chinese<sup>35</sup> were separated from 'pure' Chinese, though they were afforded certain privileges, such as property ownership and the freedom to live wherever they desired.<sup>36</sup>

Unlike in the Philippines, where the ethnic Chinese were treated as a 'special kind of native' by the Spanish colonials, in the Dutch East Indies they were treated as a 'special kind of Chinese.'<sup>37</sup> Chinese in Indonesia were included in one category by the Indies government, without differentiating between their roots as Chinese '*totok*' or '*peranakan*'.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Onghokham, "Anti-Chinese Roots, *Jakarta Post*, 1 June 1998.

<sup>34</sup> The most notorious violence that perpetrated by colonizers perhaps the 1740 massacre in Batavia and the 1762 Red Christmas Affair in the Philippines. In the Philippines the riot was triggered by a decision of the Spanish authorities to introduce heavy taxes and strict rules on the Chinese community. The Chinese in Guagua (Pampanga), collaborated with the British soldiers, prepared to launch attack to massacre the Spaniards on 24 December 1762. The plan was revealed by the Spaniards and Governor General Simon de Anda led his troops to Guagua to crush the Chinese Rebels. A similar situation also occurred in Batavia where the Dutch decided to implement harsh measures against the Chinese during the time of economic crisis in Batavia. In both affairs, thousands of Chinese were slaughtered after being accused of planning a rebellion against the colonial government. Christine Halili, *Philippine History* (Manila: Rex Book Store, 2004), 100; Leonard Blusse, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Amsterdam: Foris Publications, 1986), 94-96.

<sup>35</sup> 'Mestizo' was a racial term used to denote a person of mixed parentage, who had at least one parent who was Spanish.

<sup>36</sup> Charles Coppel "Kendala-kendala Sejarah dalam Penerimaan Etnis Cina di Indonesia yang Multikultural" in *Antropologi Indonesia*. (Jakarta: University Indonesia, 2003), 16-18.

<sup>37</sup> As cited in Filomeno Aguilar, "Citizenship, Inheritance, and the Indigenizing of "Orang Chinese" in Indonesia." *Positions* (3), (2001), 505. The original idea was introduced by Mary Somers Heidhues.

<sup>38</sup> *Peranakan* Chinese are Chinese born in Indonesia (often of mixed Chinese and Indonesian descent), and they are to some degree assimilated to local culture. *Totok* Chinese, by contrast, are recent immigrants, and

In the case of Malaysia, there have been fewer anti-Chinese riots than in other former colonies in Southeast Asia. The biggest riot was the May 1969 riot that took place after the general elections, owing to the fact that “the Malay-dominated Alliance Party won but with a reduced margin, while the Chinese-based opposition parties picked up additional votes and seats.” Physical clashes resulted in about 200 casualties and another several hundred seriously injured.<sup>39</sup>

## 1.2. Dutch Colonial Period

It is imperative to understand the economic context of the Chinese in Indonesia during the colonial period in order to understand their political position. The Chinese, it is generally acknowledged, were important trading partners of the Dutch since the early days of the Dutch East Indies Company (VOC). Their position as middlemen and retailers were extremely important to the Dutch.

The 17<sup>th</sup> century marked what Anthony Reid calls the emergence of the Chinese as ‘brokers to the expanding state.’<sup>40</sup> Not only did they function as intermediary businessmen, some of them were also involved in revenue farming, a system that reached its peak in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>41</sup> Between 1677 and 1777 the Dutch East Indies Company extended its political and economic domination over Java, and the Dutch colonials used the ethnic Chinese to collect taxes from the indigenous population, and to run colonial enterprises. Interestingly, “the system of assigning farming revenues to Chinese appears to have been copied by Javanese rulers in the 1680s directly from the Dutch practice, no doubt encouraged by the Chinese entrepreneurs who spread inland from the Dutch-governed coastal towns.”<sup>42</sup>

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they remain culturally and linguistically oriented toward China. Leo Suryadinata, “Pre-War Indonesian Nationalism & The Peranakan Chinese”, *Indonesia*, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, (1971), 83-84.

<sup>39</sup> Leon Comber, *13 May 1969: A Historical Survey of Sino Malay Relations* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Asia, 1983).

<sup>40</sup> Anthony Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities, Nationalism, and the State,” in Daniel Chirot and Anthony Reid, (eds.) *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 43.

<sup>41</sup> Anthony Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities...” 44.

<sup>42</sup> Anthony Reid, “Entrepreneurial Minorities...” 45.

Subsequently, economic policy during this period still favored the Chinese, and they would again play an important role in accelerating the Indies economy, with Chinese retailers and entrepreneurs spread throughout the whole Island. The indebtedness of the peasantry to the figure of the Chinese moneylender was also apparent, and saw an increase during this period. The colonizers also gave the Chinese shares in the lucrative opium trade at the expense of native entrepreneurs.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese also received privileges in other fields, such as running gambling houses or ferries. Many of them also involved in money lending and the supply of rural credit.<sup>2</sup>

By the early 1900s, a few years after the 'ethical policy'<sup>3</sup> had been implemented by the Dutch, many Chinese businesses were forced to close, and hundreds of Chinese lost their jobs as a consequence of the termination of the revenue farming system by the Dutch.<sup>4</sup> This ethical policy became a catalyst for the creation of new political changes. The Chinese were no longer needed as tax collectors nor as financiers. By 1904, the tables had been turned, with the Dutch depriving the Chinese of their monopolies on leases, pawn shops, and the opium trade, and implementing a policy of protection for the native peasantry. Travel and residence restrictions implemented by the Indies Government were only lifted between 1904 and 1911, and only due to continuing pressure from the Chinese. Moreover, the Chinese became more vulnerable due to the jealousy from the native population, as they were deemed to be the main obstacle to the economic advancement of the native population.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Hefner, "Introduction: Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia" in Robert Hefner (ed.), *The Politics of Multiculturalism, Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 17-19.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Coppel, "Patterns of Political Activity in Indonesia," in J.A.C. Mackie (eds.), *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays* (Melbourne: Nelson, 1976), 24.

<sup>3</sup> This policy highlighted the moral duty of the colonial government to the people of the Netherlands Indies and introduced further government involvement in economic and social affairs. Ethical policy included improvements to education, health care and irrigation, most of these changes, however, were aimed at meeting the needs of Dutch capital in Indonesia, instead of genuinely advancing the Indonesian society. See Chee Kiong Tong, *Identity and Ethnic Relations in Southeast Asia: Racializing Chineseness* (Springer, 2011), 114.

<sup>4</sup> Lea Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (IL: Free Press, 1960), 26-27.

<sup>5</sup> Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *The Chinese in Indonesia: An English translation of Hoakiau di Indonesia*, translated into English by M. Lane; M. Redway, T.D. Feng (eds.); with contributed essays from K.S. Jomo et al., (Singapore: Select Pub, 2007), 139.

In addition, one reason that may also explain the prevalence of animosity against the Chinese in Indonesia was the purposeful racial segregation of Chinese from other ethnic groups, which classified them as 'Foreign Orientals,' a term that, according to Coppel<sup>6</sup> emphasized the 'foreignness' of Chinese people.<sup>7</sup> This system of class stratification started in Batavia, and soon spread to other cities in Java; by 1850, it was already a fixture in Javanese society.<sup>8</sup>

Onghokham views the segregation as "...an embryonic form of what later became known in South Africa as apartheid, and which now has pariah status among the world's political ideologies."<sup>9</sup> Daniel Lev argues that segregation only accelerated the process of categorizing the ethnic Chinese as a minority in Indonesia,<sup>10</sup> but, according to Furnivall, did not bring about an integrated society, instead forming a three-tiered plural society that was divided by economic class and role. Furnivall defined a 'plural society' as one with "...different sections of the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit."<sup>11</sup> Under this social system, Chinese Indonesians' interactions with the indigenous populations were limited.

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<sup>6</sup> Charles Coppel, "The Indonesian Chinese: 'Foreign Orientals', Netherlands Subjects, and Indonesian Citizens," in M. Barry Hooker (eds.), *Law and the Chinese in Southeast Asia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2002), 133.

<sup>7</sup> The racial classifications was based on the *regeeringsreglement* of 1854, subjecting Chinese as *Vreemde Oosterlingen* (Foreign Orientals), together with Arabs, Indians, Japanese, and other foreign Asians. Based on that law, Europeans were placed on the top of the social layer with a legal status different from those categorized as Native. The latter formed the lowest strata in the society in Java during that period. Meanwhile, the Chinese, together with the Arabs and the Indians, were categorized as 'those equated to the Natives.' The Chinese shared the same public law as 'natives' and were tried in the same courts with regard to criminal procedure. Eric Tagliocozzo argues that this legal bifurcation showed that in the eyes of the colonial state, the 'Foreign Orientals' are both to be feared and controlled, and at the same time engaged for commercial profit. Eric Tagliocozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States along a Southeast Asian Frontier 1865-1915* (Yale University Press, 2009), 130.

<sup>8</sup> Wim Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition: A Study of Social Change* (The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1959), 137.

<sup>9</sup> Onghokham, "Anti-Chinese Roots," *Jakarta Post*, 1 June 1998.

<sup>10</sup> Daniel Lev, "Politik Minoritas: Minoritas Dalam Politik" [Minority Politics: Minorities in Politics] part of a seminar entitled Orang Indonesia-Tionghoa: Manusia dan Kebudayaananya [Chinese Indonesians: Their Humanity and Culture], Jakarta 31 October to 2 November 2000.

<sup>11</sup> J.S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice: A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1948), 304.



Moreover, according to Robert Hefner, the ethnic distinction in the Dutch East Indies became one of the most enduring legacies that has affected Indonesian society until the present.<sup>12</sup>

In assigning different ethnic groups to specialized positions in everything from agriculture to the opium trade, the Europeans crystallized the most essential of supra-ethnic categories: the distinction between indigenous Melayu-Indonesian “children of the soil” (Malay, *bumiputera*, Indonesian, *pribumi*) and “non-indigenous” or immigrant Asians (Indians and, especially, Chinese). This latter distinction was to be one of the most enduring categorical legacies of the colonial era (Hefner 2001:19).

Following the 1740 Chinese uprising in Batavia, the colonial government began to apply a policy that made it easier to control Chinese activities. The policy was called *wijkenstelsel*, and forbade the Chinese from settling in areas outside the district specifically designed for them. In the case of Batavia, the Chinese were relocated to Glodok, a district to the south of the city. Every ‘ghetto’ was led by a Chinese leader called *kapitan* and usually the *kapitan* came from a noble Chinese family. The *wijkenstelsel* was not abolished until 1905.<sup>13</sup>



Map 1. Location of Chinese Officers in the Netherlands Indies, 1867. Source: Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* (NIAS Press, 2000). Map Number: 4.40.

<sup>12</sup> Robert Hefner, ‘Introduction: Multiculturalism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia’ in Robert Hefner, (eds.) *The Politics of Multiculturalism, Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001), 19.

<sup>13</sup> Mona Lohanda, *The Kapitan Cina of Batavia, 1837-1942: A History of Chinese Establishment on Colonial Society* 2nd edition. (Jakarta: Penerbit Djambatan, 2001), 18-19.

The policy of segregation also dictated such symbolic and bodily matters as dress. The Chinese were forbidden to dress like Europeans or the natives. Men were forced to wear their hair in the Manchu queue style, and both sexes were required to wear traditional Chinese clothing. These racial distinctions were constructed openly in Dutch colonial society. Additionally, a *passenstelsel* (pass system) was required for Chinese to travel outside their allocated zone. Constraining the Chinese in a ghetto resulted in the development of Chinatowns, and this ghettoization greatly contributed to the stereotyping of the Chinese as 'the other'. The separation policy inevitably strengthened the animosity between each ethnic group.

### 1.3. Indonesian National Movements

The perceived othering of the Chinese is intimately linked with the evolution of the Indonesian nationalist movements in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although this period is crucial, as it marked the emergence of indigenous social organizations and groups such as Budi Utomo (Noble Endeavour), *Pemuda Indonesia* (Indonesian Youth), and *Sarekat Islam* (SI, Islamic Union), it is telling that they did not permit Chinese Indonesians to join as regular members. Even the PNI (Nationalist Party) formed by Sukarno in 1926 admitted Chinese only as observers. The exceptions to this exclusivity were the *Indische Partij* of Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Douwes Dekker, Ki Hajar Dewantara, and Amir Syarifuddin's left-wing Partindo (Partai Indonesia), which accepted Chinese and other ethnic minorities as members.

On the one hand, the idea of Indonesia as it began to be imagined in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century emphasized 'the notion of an Indonesian 'racial identity' that exclusively included the 'indigenous Indonesians,'<sup>14</sup> but on the other hand the nationalist movements of this period emphasized racial differences, and encouraged competition between ethnic Chinese and non-Chinese.<sup>15</sup> As a consequence of being largely excluded from the Indonesian political sphere,

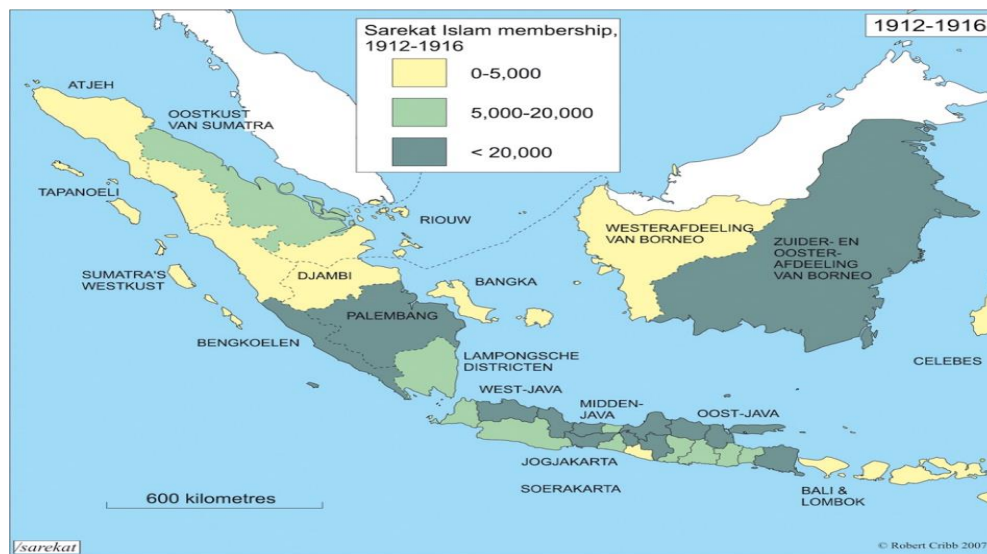
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<sup>14</sup> Robert Elson, *The Idea of Indonesia: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 78.

<sup>15</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, "Indonesia" in Lynn Pan (ed.) *Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas* (Surrey: Curzon, 1999), 184.

Liem Koen Hian decided to establish Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (PTI/Chinese Indonesian Party) in order to expedite the progress of the independence movement.<sup>16</sup>

*Sarekat Islam* (Islamic Union), established in 1912 partly as a response to Chinese economic domination, exacerbated already tense relationships between the Chinese and the indigenous population.<sup>17</sup> The organization aimed to promote indigenous business, and sought to protect ‘indigenous’ traders from the Chinese, who were ‘harming’ their businesses, particularly in the batik and *kretek* cigarette industries.<sup>18</sup> Membership was limited to the Javanese; needless to say, Chinese Indonesians were not permitted to join.<sup>19</sup> By 1918 *Sarekat Islam* had more than two million members throughout the archipelago.<sup>20</sup>



Map 2. Sarekat Islam Membership, 1912-1916. Source: Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* (NIAS Press, 2000). Map Number: 4.75.

<sup>16</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-42* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Studies), 1976.

<sup>17</sup> The original name of the movement was Sarekat Dagang Islam (SDI), or Islamic Trade Union, which reflects the non-political beginnings of the organization. SDI was founded by Haji Samanhudi, a businessman, in 16 October 1905.

<sup>18</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, "Indonesia" in Lynn Pan (ed.) *Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas* (Surrey: Curzon, 1999), 154-155; Judith Nagata "Post Orde Baru: Can Religion Contribute to a New Civil Society in Indonesia?" in Andi Faisal Bakti (eds.), *Good Governance and Conflict Resolution in Indonesia* (Jakarta: IAIN Press, 2000), 227.

<sup>19</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, The Chinese Minority and China* (Singapore: Heinemann Asia, 1992), 15.

<sup>20</sup> Audrey Kahin, "Introduction," in Audrey Kahin (eds.), *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution: Unity from Diversity* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 3.

*Sarekat Islam's* existence was an indicator of the deep-set problems between the Chinese and the Indonesians. George Kahin explains that SI "was seen by Indonesians in general, regardless of their economic function, as a symbol of religious -and thereby of Indonesian- unity against foreigners, at first especially Chinese."<sup>21</sup> According to Kees van Dijk, it was a time when "slumbering anti-Chinese feelings manifested themselves in a concrete form all over Java for the first time in the twentieth century."<sup>22</sup> As the group's influence grew in Indonesia, anti-Chinese violence was taking place in Solo and Surabaya. Under this antagonistic relationship, previously existing interethnic engagement and cooperation between Chinese and indigenous Indonesians disintegrated.

The first of the massive clashes between SI and the Chinese occurred on 31 October 1918 in the town of Kudus. An outbreak of Spanish influenza made the Chinese community in Kudus initiate a *toapekong* procession to counter the disease. According to SI, the Chinese had mocked Islam by dressing in the *haji* uniform, while the Chinese argued that SI had mocked their ritual procession first. This resulted in a massive riot which killed 16 people on both sides. SI then incited people to burn and loot the houses of the Chinese. 40 houses were destroyed, including some Chinese temples.<sup>23</sup>

The rise of SI, with its anti-Chinese character, is arguably related to a wider emergence of violence against the Chinese community in Indonesia. Prior to the founding of the organization, no significant anti-Chinese disturbances occurred. Reports from Dutch officials suggest this: "before the founding of SI the relation between Javanese and Chinese were cordial, and were characterized by mutual help and toleration."<sup>24</sup>

Sartono Kartodirdjo attributes the antagonism against the ethnic Chinese in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the anti-Chinese rhetoric of the SI to the rise of Muslim traders and the ideology espoused by SI. As Muslim Javanese traders began to establish themselves in Surakarta and other

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<sup>21</sup> George McTurnan Kahin. *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952), 67.

<sup>22</sup> Kees Van Dijk, "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly. Explaining the Unexplainable: *amuk massa* in Indonesia." In *Roots of Violence in Indonesia*, edited by Freek Colombijn and J. Thomas Lindblad (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002), 277-297.

<sup>23</sup> Benny Setiono, *Tionghoa dalam Pusaran Politik* (Jakarta: TransMedia Pustaka, 2008), 383-387.

<sup>24</sup> Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Protest Movements in Rural Java: A Study of Agrarian Unrest in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1973), 151 & 161.

cities on Java at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they felt threatened by their Chinese competitors who dominated typical Javanese industries, such as Batik. As this coincided with the widespread consciousness of Indonesian nationalism among the indigenous population, these Javanese traders regarded their competition with the Chinese as a competition between Indonesians and foreign people.<sup>25</sup>

Moreover, the situation was aggravated by a growing discourse on religious divisions between Muslims and Non-Muslims, which was also promoted by the SI. It was further exacerbated by the attitudes of some Chinese, who, in the aftermath of the founding of the Republic of China in 1911, hoped that this would elevate the status of Chinese in Indonesia to that of the Europeans.<sup>26</sup>

Lynn Pan's work discusses the divisions of Chinese in Southeast Asia through speech groups, firstly by their hometowns in China, then by their occupational affiliations.<sup>27</sup> The Qing government attempted to transform these fluid identities into a fixed sense of 'Chineseness,' which only reinforced boundaries between Chinese and non-Chinese.<sup>28</sup> Any Chinese person who was born in Indonesia automatically became a Chinese citizen, as long as they did not reject Indonesian citizenship and opted for Chinese citizenship. Compounded with the Chinese policy of *jus sanguinis*<sup>29</sup>, this automatic acceptance of the ethnic Chinese as citizens, according to Jamie Mackie and Charles Coppel, raised doubts in the mind of indigenous Indonesians about the loyalty of the Chinese.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Sartono Kartodirdjo...151-162.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Lynn Pan, "Definitions" in Lynn Pan (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas* (Surrey: Curzon Press, 1998).

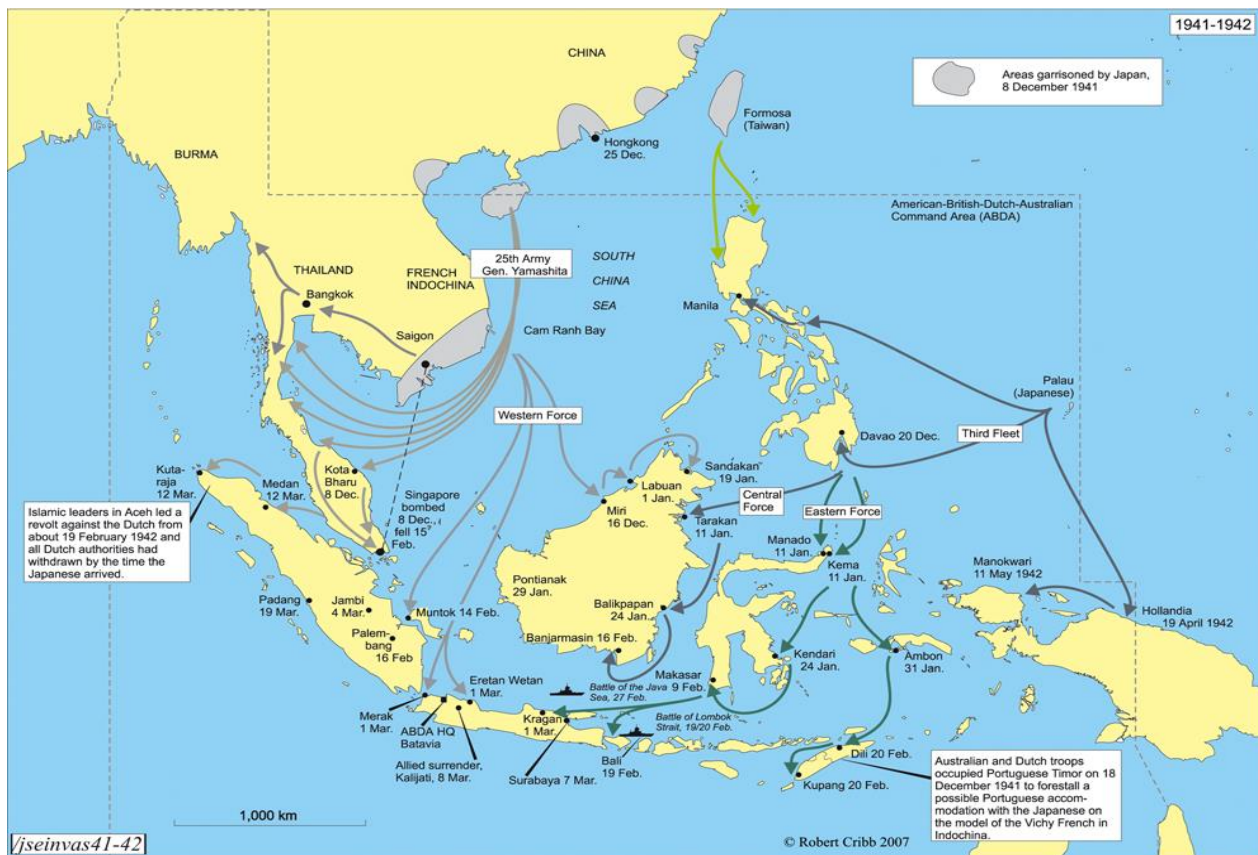
<sup>28</sup> Prasenjit Duara, "Nationalists among Transnationals: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900-1911" in Aihwa Ong and Donald M. Nonini (eds.) *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 40-41.

<sup>29</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, "Indonesia"...9.

<sup>30</sup> J. A. C Mackie, and Charles Coppel, "A Preliminary Survey" in J. A. C. Mackie (ed.) *The Chinese in Indonesia* (Melbourne: Thomas Nelson, 1976), 10.

## 1.4. The Japanese Occupation

On 14 February 1942, the Japanese invaded South Sumatra. Less than a month later, on 1 March 1942, they had already landed on Java. The Dutch Commander in Chief of Allied Forces, Lt. Gen. Ten Poorten, on behalf of all the Allied Forces in Java, surrendered to the Japanese on 9 March 1942, despite the fact that approximately 8,000 British and American troops stationed in Java, led by the British Major General Sitwell, were still willing to continue fighting the Japanese. Ter Poorten, it was later revealed, had surrendered without even consulting the British or the Americans.<sup>31</sup> The Japanese would soon take over the entirety of Indonesia.



Map. 3. Japanese Conquest of the Netherlands Indies. Source: Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* (NIAS Press, 2000). Map Number: 5.01.

The Japanese occupation in Indonesia is rightly defined as a watershed in modern Indonesian history. This period marked not only the end of the colonial regime, but also the

<sup>31</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, *Nationalism and Revolution in Indonesia...*100-101.



breaking down of the traditional social relations at the village level, and laid the groundwork for a national and social revolution.<sup>32</sup>

The Dutch defeat, according to Kahin, entailed two long-term consequences. First, many Indonesians no longer saw the Netherlands as an imperial superpower. Second, many Indonesians became convinced that after the Japanese capitulation, as long as they were armed, they could fight for Indonesian independence.<sup>33</sup> A wave of violence and chaos immediately swept across Java. As Karl Jackson argues, the transition to the Japanese government was followed by:

“...the internment of the colony’s functional elite (the Dutch), the rampant inflation, the massive forced rice deliveries, the famine, black-marketeering and corruption, and the impressment and forced exportation of tens of thousands of Indonesian peasants to feed the labor demands of the imperial Japanese war machine. The situation led to an unprecedented level of social and economic disruption on Java.”<sup>34</sup>

The Japanese government attempted to create a good impression to Indonesians by implementing several important policies. The Japanese permitted the Indonesian national anthem Indonesia Raya (Great Indonesia) to be sung, and the national flag to be flown.<sup>35</sup> They also established a unified educational system; Indonesian schools replaced Dutch schools, Bahasa Indonesia became the common language. Freedom of religion was maintained for Moslems in the archipelago and, moreover, the Japanese authorities promised to give them more freedom in politics.<sup>36</sup> In order to enlist the support of the prominent nationalist leaders for their war effort, including Sukarno and his future vice-President Mohammad Hatta, the Japanese promised that

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<sup>32</sup> According to Aiko Kurosawa during the late Dutch period (mid-19th century to 1942) basic colonial policy toward the village was to give the rural society autonomy and leave it intact as much as possible. While under the Japanese occupation the village institutions were more directly connected to outer world in the political and economic sense. Aiko Kurosawa, “Forced Delivery of Paddy and Peasant Uprisings in Indramayu, Indonesia,” *The Developing Economies*, (March 2007), 52

<sup>33</sup> Kahin, 101.

<sup>34</sup> Karl Jackson, *Traditional Authority, Islam, and Rebellion: A Study of Indonesian Political Behavior* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 7.

<sup>35</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Interpreting Indonesian Politics*. (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998), 76.

<sup>36</sup> R. de Bruin, *Islam en Nationalisme in door Japan Bezet Indonesie 1942-1945* (’s-Gravenhage: Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie, 1982), 99-100.

self-government would ultimately be granted.<sup>37</sup> The Investigating Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence was even established in 1945.

Under the Japanese occupation (1942-1945) Islamic community emerged as a newly robust political force. Islam's prestige as a traditional defense against colonial penetration combined with the past prominence of *ulama* in leading or quashed rebellions, played a vital role of people's mobilization in traditional villages. The Islamic party groups like Laskar Rakyat, Sabilillah and Hizbullah emerged as an important paramilitary groups throughout Java. Their political movement most of the time were based on traditional anti-colonial spirit of Islamic religious teachers (*ulama* or *kyai*) "into an instrument for instigating Holy War (*jihad*) against the infidel Dutch."<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the Japanese administration introduced military and paramilitary training for thousands of young Indonesians and the promise of independence for Indonesia.

On the contrary, Chinese communities experienced violence not just from the Indonesians, but from the Japanese as well. Chinese-Indonesian relations were adversely affected by several factors: (1) The memories of the atrocities that had been committed against the Chinese community was still fresh; (2) A ferocity of economic competition due to Japanese support of Indonesians taking over economic positions traditionally held by the Chinese; (3) Political differences due to the pro-Allies Chinese and the pro-Japanese Indonesians; (4) The abuse of power of certain Indonesian officials who gained favor with the Japanese.<sup>39</sup>

Chinese newspapers and leaders were vocal of their criticism of the Japanese occupation in China, and as a result were seen as threats that needed to be silenced. Ordinances were implemented in order to suppress Chinese communities, such as press censorship, which saw the closing of all Chinese-Indonesian newspapers (with the exception of *Hong Po*) and the interment of 500 pre-war Chinese leaders in Java, some of whom were executed.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, 106.

<sup>38</sup> Karl Jackson, 8.

<sup>39</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity Perpetrated by Indonesian Bands on Innocent Chinese before and after the Dutch Police Action was enforced on July 21, 1947* (Batavia: Chung Hua Tsung Hui, 1947), 3

<sup>40</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Politics in Java....*

The Japanese regime in Indonesia officially ended after Emperor Hirohito announced the surrender of Japan via radio at noon on 15 August 1945. Indonesia was subsequently placed under the Allied SEAC (Southeast Asia Command). To the Indonesian youth, the Japanese surrender gave them the opportunity and momentum to proclaim the independence of Indonesia. They pushed Indonesian nationalist leaders to use the momentum created by the vacuum of power to campaign for Indonesian independence, which they did on 17 August 1945, with Sukarno and Muhammad Hatta as its proponents. The transitional period following the proclamation marked the beginning of the Indonesian revolution. The Japanese were tasked by the Allies to maintain law and order until British and Australian forces could take over from them. However, in many towns and rural areas both in Java and Sumatra, Republicans were already firmly in charge.

### 1.5. The Indonesian Revolution

The beginning of the revolutionary period (1945-1946) is also referred to as a 'power vacuum' in Indonesia.<sup>41</sup> During this period, Dutch colonial NICA agents, as part of the Allied military forces, carried out their activities in various parts of Indonesia. The Dutch slowly achieved and consolidated control of Jakarta, Semarang, Surabaya, and Bandung until the end of 1946, when the islands outside the Indonesian Republican sphere of Java and Sumatra were also seized by the Dutch. Yet the Dutch could not completely control the whole area, usually only controlling the main cities, with the periphery remaining under the Republican army.

A report issued by the Federation of Chinese Associations (CHCH) following the proclamation of Indonesian independence optimistically assumed that the new republic would adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the Chinese, for several reasons: (1) A rumor was circulating that Chiang Kai Shek had, in a radio speech, promised to back those countries which had not yet won their independence; (2) The assumption that China had become a powerful, influential and well-organized country; (3) A rumor circulating in Indonesia that if Chinese were molested, the

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<sup>41</sup> It is usually a political situation that can occur when a government has no identifiable central authority. In a power vacuum, much like a physical vacuum, other forces will tend to "rush in" to fill the vacuum as soon as it is created, perhaps in the form of an armed militia or insurgents, military coup, warlord or dictator. <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/power-vacuum>

Allies would respond accordingly.<sup>42</sup> All these factors contributed to the safety of Chinese in Indonesia during the beginning of Indonesian revolution.

Nonetheless, it later became apparent that China was not yet strong nor domestically peaceful, and was in no position to assist Chinese overseas. Therefore, China could not really guarantee the safety of Chinese in Indonesia. Anti-Chinese collaborators were not immediately arrested. Japanese arms fell into the hands of Indonesian extremists. It became increasingly apparent that both the Indonesian army and the Allied Forces could not maintain law and order, especially in the interior regions of Indonesia.<sup>43</sup>

Robert Cribb calls the months of October and November 1945 as 'jaman bersiap' or 'bersiap tijd' (the 'get-ready' period), a period when the Allied (British) forces were still too few to maintain order and the Dutch had not yet returned in force. According to Kahin, the first year of the Indonesian Republic had been an unpleasant one for most of the 1.5 million Indies Chinese, many of whom, politically and economically, had intertwined their destinies with the Dutch.<sup>44</sup> Cribb characterizes this period as a time of massacre among not only Eurasians and Chinese, but also other minority groups like Arabs, Ambonese, and Timorese.<sup>45</sup> Systematic killings of Chinese did not occur during the beginning of 'bersiap' period, hence in the first months after the declaration of independence. At that time Chinese were considered friends of Indonesia, at least until the eruption of Surabaya battle on November 1945.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence...*3

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> George McTurnan Kahin, "The Chinese in Indonesia," *Far Eastern Survey*. Vol. 15, No. 21, (October 1946), 326-329.

<sup>45</sup> Robert Cribb, "The Brief Genocide of Eurasians in Indonesia, 1945/46," in A. Dirk Moses (ed.), *Empire, Colony, Genocide: Conquest, Occupation and Subaltern Resistance in World History*. (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 424-439. However, the term 'bersiap' itself has multiple interpretations, for non-Indonesian the word means that they need to 'be prepared!' or 'shun,' because after the word was echoed then it was usually followed by horror situation like robbery, kidnapping, or murdering, but for Indonesian troops they considered it as a call to defend their nation. Interview with Ibrahim Isa (83), a former Indonesian troop who witnessed and participated during the Indonesian revolution (3 December 2013). Johanes Herlijanto, "Emulating China: Representation of China and the Contemporary Critique of Indonesia," PhD Dissertation Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, (2013), 95.

<sup>46</sup> However, people also should bear in mind that a considerable number of leftist Chinese fought alongside the Indonesians against the British in Surabaya. Sumarsono, a former commander of the Indonesian troops, had a company of 250 leftist Chinese Indonesians in his troops.

From the Indonesian perspective, the Chinese were not neutral during the Indonesian-Dutch conflicts. Although some Chinese organizations like Sin Ming Hui and CHCH announced their neutrality, this did not satisfy Indonesians who wanted the Chinese to side with the Indonesians, and to enforce an economic boycott against the Dutch and not supply them with goods. This fell on deaf ears, with the Chinese continuing trade relations with the Dutch, and some Chinese even receiving monetary and material aid from the Dutch government. A number of them worked in Dutch offices and joined NICA's army. Increasingly, the Chinese group in general began to be seen as Dutch collaborator.<sup>47</sup>

During the revolution, many people called themselves *pejuang* (combatant), although no clear lines could be drawn between *pejuang* and bandits, as some of them were also involved in perpetrating violence against minority groups.

"Youth groups were formed everywhere without central control, seizing Japanese arms, occupying public buildings, and claiming to speak for the revolution in each local area. The society had come undone, change was everywhere in the air, everything seemed equally plausible and implausible."<sup>48</sup>

In Central Java, for instance, some members of the Barisan Pemberontak Republik Indonesia (Republic's Revolutionary Army/BPRI) under Mardjuki committed robberies in various places in Salatiga, Ungaran, and Boyolali. Some members of the Angkatan Laut Republik Indonesia (ALRI/Indonesian Navy) in Surakarta did likewise.<sup>49</sup>

Social protests during the revolution were usually accompanied by vandalism and violence. Chinese were repeatedly harmed, threatened, robbed, and murdered in every way imaginable by Indonesians, because they were seen as contemptible representatives of the bourgeoisie class. These atrocities usually started with a minor incident that escalated into mass riots, very often ending by targeting and murdering members of a specific ethnic group – Chinese, Europeans, Arabs, or Eurasians.<sup>50</sup> Most acts of lawlessness occurred in areas that lacked

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<sup>47</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence...3*

<sup>48</sup> Karl Jackson, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Soejatno, 107.

<sup>50</sup> Those minor incidents for instances are flag removal, dispute at market, random shootings, searching for kampung, etc. Cribb, 54.

government surveillance or weapons control, where unofficial militia organizations and gangsters flourished. The proximity of a black market made firearms readily available to citizens. In addition, the surrender and subsequent withdrawal of the Japanese also provided the *pemuda* with Japanese arms.

Bad economic conditions from the beginning of 1946 also contributed to the violence against Chinese, as these became catalysts for the spread of corruption, embezzlement of state assets, and anarcho-syndicalism in the region controlled by the Republic of Indonesia.<sup>51</sup> The Sjahrir Cabinet did not enforce a determined economic plan and financial policy, which led to the increase in the price of rice from f.1,60 to f.15 per liter.<sup>52</sup> Wertheim posits that such dismal economic conditions also spawned an increase in banditry, robbery, and chaos.<sup>53</sup> This was aggravated by a lack of communication between the Chinese people in affected areas and those outside, due to the prohibition of the usage of Chinese characters for correspondence, and technical difficulties with communication between Jakarta and the interior of Java. *Thien Sung*, a Kuomintang-affiliated newspaper that utilized Chinese characters, criticized the restrictions on the Chinese language, and hoped for its swift removal.<sup>54</sup>

Apparently the level of violence against Chinese was perceived as very disturbing. Many Chinese deplored the number of human rights violations that the Indonesians committed against them in the pursuit of their independence; though they had weathered discrimination and violence against them in regimes past, this was arguably one of the worst period for Chinese in Indonesian history.

## 1.6. Conclusion

Social interaction between Chinese and indigenous Indonesians during the Dutch colonial period was limited and restricted to economic transactions. Under the Dutch, the differences in

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<sup>51</sup> Sukarno, *Dibawah Bendera Revolusi* (Jakarta: Panitia Penerbit Dibawah Bendera Revolusi, 1965), 11-12.

<sup>52</sup> Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken, *NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949*. Inv. Nr: 01857.

<sup>53</sup> W.F. Wertheim, *Indonesian Society in Transition* (Bandung and The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1956), 144.

<sup>54</sup> *Thien Sung* (Voice from Heaven) is a daily Chinese-Indonesian newspaper written in Chinese characters. Published by *Thien Sung Yit Po*, the circulation reached 9,000, and made *Thien Sung* as the largest Chinese characters newspaper in Jakarta. *Thien Sung*, 19 April 1946.

ethnicity and religion brought about the negative stereotyping of Chinese Indonesians, which would severely damage their relations with the indigenous population after Indonesian sovereignty was attained in 1949. As a result, Chinese Indonesians were generally excluded from the process of building a nation-state.

One reason that may explain the prevalence of animosity against the Chinese in Indonesia was the purposeful racial segregation of Chinese from other ethnic groups, which classified them as 'Foreign Orientals'.<sup>55</sup> The othering of the Chinese was only furthered by their role as middlemen in intermediary trade, which afforded them economic privileges in the Dutch East Indies. This in turn only served to create a huge gap between *pribumi* and Chinese.

As Benedict Anderson argues, 'the apartheid' of the Dutch colonial policies that placed Chinese as intermediary traders eventually led to Chinese segregation from the rest of the population.<sup>56</sup> In some areas (such as in legal matters), the Chinese enjoyed a higher status than the indigenous population, they lived in segregated areas, and their children attended Chinese-language schools.<sup>57</sup> This has only reinforced the Chinese's image throughout history as an outsider, a foreigner, and an alien.

Such treatment only continued during the Japanese occupation. The conditions of the Chinese even worsened as the Japanese classified them as the lowest on the social stratification ladder, together with Europeans. Moreover, the Japanese also encouraged all Chinese to return to their Chinese roots, which further distanced Chinese from the native population.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> The racial classifications was based on the *regeeringsreglement* of 1854, subjecting Chinese as *Vreemde Oosterlingen* (Foreign Orientals), together with Arabs, Indians, Japanese, and other foreign Asians. Based on that law, the Chinese shared the same public law as 'natives' and were tried in the same courts with regard to criminal procedure. Eric Tagliocozzo argues that this legal bifurcation showed that in the eyes of the colonial state, the 'Foreign Orientals' are both to be feared and controlled, and at the same time engaged for commercial profit. Eric Tagliocozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States along a Southeast Asian Frontier 1865-1915* (Yale University Press, 2009), 130.

<sup>56</sup> Benedict Anderson, *The Spectre of Comparison: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London and New York: Verso, 1998), 13-14.

<sup>57</sup> Adam Schwarz, *A Nation in Waiting: Indonesia in the 1990s* (St. Leonards: Allen & Unwin, 1999), 102.

<sup>58</sup> Didi Kwartanada uses the term 'resinifikasi' to describe the policy of Japanese that try to encourage Chinese to go back to their Chinese roots. Didi Kwartanada, "Kolaborasi dan Resinifikasi: Komunitas Cina Kota Yogyakarta pada Jaman Jepang, 1942-1945," Undergraduate Thesis, Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University, 1997.

The Chinese were typically affluent in their communities, assuming the roles of rent-collectors or landowners, which played a vital role in alienating the Chinese from the natives. Wertheim argues that economic factors dominated relations between ethnic Chinese and the majority of the population, and therefore anti-Chinese violence occurs predominantly during periods of economic transition. The role of Chinese as traders and middlemen in society, which created to serve the interests of the elite, made their position vulnerable to hostility and violence.<sup>59</sup>

All those factors inevitably played a role in the clash that ensued between Indonesians and Chinese, including the Tangerang massacre in the late May 1946. The following chapter will contextualize the background of Tangerang during the transition from the Japanese government to the proclamation of and struggle for Indonesian independence in order to see the Chinese's position in Tangerang during the regimes transition. It seeks to elucidate on the complexity of Tangerang as a region and examine the roots of violence against Chinese within that region.

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<sup>59</sup> Wim Wertheim, *East-West Parallels* (Van Hoeve: The Hague, 1964).



## CHAPTER II

### THE SOCIO-POLITICAL HISTORY OF TANGERANG 1945-1946

Tangerang's social, religious and cultural history is complex. Tangerang is a very ethnically mixed area, Chinese and other ethnic groups having settled in this region for centuries. According to a Sundanese manuscript 'Tina Layang Parahyang' (Notes from Parahyangan), the Chinese community of Tangerang and Batavia had been in existence since at least 1407, with the majority working as farmers or fishermen. Intermarriage with *pribumi* was also quite common in Tangerang, sometimes it is quite difficult to distinguish them from the natives since most of them no longer possess distinct Chinese features.

The number of inhabitants in Tangerang grew significantly since the colonial times. In 1894 the total inhabitants in Tangerang was 307,349, growing to 414,500 in 1917 and 512,076 in 1930. Before the Indonesian revolution in 1945, approximately 650,000 people lived in Tangerang.<sup>60</sup> Meanwhile, the Chinese population of the town of Tangerang and its surroundings was estimated to be about 25,000-40,000 in mid-1946.<sup>61</sup>

Table 1. Total Population of Tangerang (1930)<sup>62</sup>

District	Onderdistrict	Natives	Europeans	Chinese	Arabs	Total
Tangerang	Tangerang	47,553	191	2,934	62	50,740
	Djati	28,774	32	3,419	-	32,225
	Serpong	46,450	17	5,394	43	51,904
	Cengkareng	42,188	8	4,687	27	46,910
	Curug	31,968	2	3,300	-	35,270
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>196,933</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>19,734</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>217,049</b>
Balaraja	Balaraja	39,081	7	2,396	-	41,484
	Kresek	4,952	4	558	-	5,514
	Tigaraksa	55,971	18	1,738	-	57,727
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100,004</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4,692</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>104,725</b>
Mauk	Mauk	91,457	13	10,813	29	102,312
	Teluknaga	38,985	-	5,184	16	44,185
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>130,442</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15,997</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>146,497</b>
<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>		<b>427,379</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>40,423</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>468,271</b>

<sup>60</sup> *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang*, 36.

<sup>61</sup> In 1930, the Chinese minority in the Netherland East Indies numbered about 1,2 million or about two per cent of the population. 580,000 of them settled in Java. By 1945 the total may have been about 1,5 million with 700,000 of them were concentrated in Java. See Department van Economische Zaken, *Volkstelling 1930*. (Batavia: Landsdrukkerij, 1935), Vol.7, 'Chineez en andere Vreemde Oosterlingen in Nederlandsch-Indie.'; Louis de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de tweeder wereldoorlog* (Leiden/Den Haag: Nijhoff/Staatsuitgeverij, 1969-1991), 745-746.

<sup>62</sup> *Volkstelling 1930, I*, (1933).

This second chapter examines the situation in Tangerang during the transition from Japanese rule to the Indonesian Republic, the emergence of 'Dewan Rakyat' (People's Council) under Haji Achmad Chaerun, and eventually the return of Tangerang to the hands of Indonesian Republic. Furthermore, this chapter contextualizes the sociopolitical situation in Tangerang in order to examine why the area was a hotbed of violence during the Indonesian Revolution.

Although the primary aim of this thesis is to shed light on the 1946 massacre of Chinese in Tangerang, this chapter is necessary as it provides the background regarding the roots of the anti-Chinese violence in Tangerang. The massacre of Chinese in 1946, this chapter argues, is inseparable from the complex, multi-faceted historical background of Tangerang.

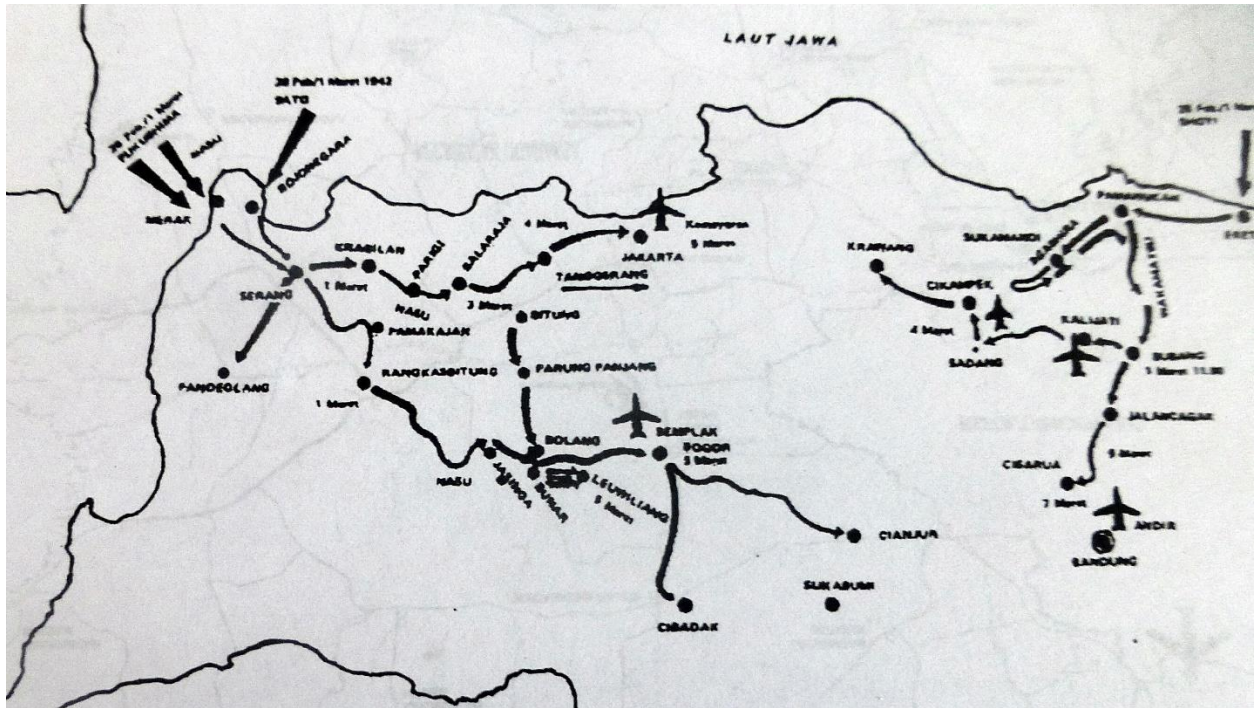
This chapter also examines the sociopolitical conditions within Tangerang, as well as the general condition of Chinese during the different political transitions in Tangerang. The proliferation of resistance movements in Tangerang will also be discussed.

Several questions will be raised in this chapter: How was the transitional process following Sukarno's proclamation of Indonesian independence implemented in Tangerang? Moreover, this chapter outlines the period from Agus Padmanegara to the establishment of Chaerun's government until its subsequent turnover to the TKR. What significant events occurred in Tangerang during his regency? Why did the TKR take over the government? How was the condition of Chinese during those different regimes transition? The answers to these questions will be detailed in a critical examination of every regime transition in Tangerang from the Japanese occupation, the beginning of Indonesian Revolution, the establishment of Haji Achmad Chaerun's government, and, lastly, the TKR/TRI government. By answering these questions, this chapter aims to explain the sociopolitical uniqueness of Tangerang as an area, as well as the roots of violence in Tangerang.

## **2.1. 'Tangerang di Persimpangan': The Transition from the Japanese to the Indonesian Government**

On 1 March 1942, the very day of the arrival of Japanese military in Java, the Dutch military headquarters in Tangerang sounded an alert at 23.00, informing all inhabitants (Europeans, Eurasians, Javanese and Chinese) in the city of Tangerang to take refuge in the hinterlands. They had received intelligence that the Japanese army was moving to Tangerang. On

3 March 1942, the Japanese army easily occupied Tangerang without any resistance from the Dutch troops that had already left Tangerang for Jakarta the day before.<sup>63</sup> Their subsequent occupation of Tangerang from 1942-1945 would bring fundamental changes to the city's government.



Map 4. Map showing the Japanese invasion to Tangerang, 1-7 March 1942. Source: Edi Ekadjati, *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang* (Tangerang: Pemerintah Kabupaten Tangerang, 2004), 256.

Just a few weeks before the arrival of the Japanese soldiers in Tangerang, the Chinese residing in Karawaci, Cilogok, Pasar Baru, Sepatan and Kramat left their companies, seeking protection in Jakarta. The local inhabitants, together with *jawara* Tangerang used this opportunity to plunder and burn Chinese dwellings, only ceasing when Japanese soldiers entered Tangerang.<sup>64</sup>

Following the occupation, the Japanese government faced difficulty in restoring order in Indonesia, eventually deciding to suppress every anti-Japanese activity in Indonesia. All

<sup>63</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 42.

<sup>64</sup> *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang*, 140-141.

regulations implemented in Indonesia were recorded in *Oendang-Oendang dari Pembesar Bala Tentara Dai Nippon*. One of the regulations (Article 3) reads:

"Strictly forbidden to take, steal, or rob belongings although it is not owned or protected by anybody. Anybody who committed those actions will be given severe punishment. Any violator has to return the possessions he stole to their original owner. If it has been returned, he/she will be forgiven."<sup>65</sup>

The regulations were generally effective in restoring law and order in Tangerang. After Article 3 was introduced in Tangerang, many looters placed all goods they had stolen on the road, as they were afraid of being executed by the *Kenpeitai* (Japanese police). Anyone who committed acts of looting, arson, murder, or other illegal activities were summarily executed by the Japanese. Many *jawara* (criminal gang leaders) were used to show an example of Japanese ruthlessness; they were beheaded by the *Kenpeitai* and their corpses drowned in the Cisadane River.<sup>66</sup>

Although Tangerang was already under Japanese control, it did not mean that the safety of Chinese was completely secured. The segregation policy against the Chinese still continued during this period.<sup>67</sup> The Japanese government decided to amend the social stratification, which was applicable for all regions in Indonesia. Naturally, the Japanese occupied the highest positions, replacing the Dutch/Europeans. The native inhabitants, who had always occupied the lowest positions, were replaced by the Chinese and Europeans.<sup>68</sup> The Japanese also forced Chinese to study in schools established by the Japanese, which used Chinese as the medium of instruction in the classroom. Moreover, Chinese were forced to speak Chinese in their daily activities.<sup>69</sup>

The Japanese government also removed policies regarding private land ownership in Tangerang, which had favored the Chinese since the colonial period. The lands were transferred by the Japanese government from Chinese to 'rakyat' for maintenance under the government's

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<sup>65</sup> *Oendang-Oendang dari Pembesar Bala Tentara Dai Nippon*, No. 20, Dai Nippon Gunseibu, Betawi, 1942.

<sup>66</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 45.

<sup>67</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Ethnic Chinese in Contemporary Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2008), 58-59.

<sup>68</sup> Hardjasaputra, 78.

<sup>69</sup> Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, Chinese Minority and China* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books, 1978), 147.

surveillance. Plantations previously owned by Chinese and other foreign companies were also taken over by the Japanese government and given to 'rakyat.'<sup>70</sup>

Despite a dramatic decrease in the crime rate across Indonesia, many Chinese were still interned all over Java and Sumatra, their treatment subject to the mood of the local Japanese commander. In some regions of Indonesia, Chinese were brutalized, tortured, and even killed. However, because of their sheer numbers –over two million- the Japanese could not intern all the Chinese in Indonesia. Most of them were permitted to continue working as they had before. Some were recruited for espionage purposes, which worsened their image among Indonesians, as they were seen as Japanese collaborators.<sup>71</sup>

Meanwhile in Tangerang, the first major decision undertaken by the Japanese government was to embrace the local religious leaders. Thus they were also given key roles in the local government.<sup>72</sup> Like In Cilongok for instance, where Haji Nafis chosen as the leader.<sup>73</sup> The second decision was to establish a semi-military organization in Tangerang. A training center for *pemuda* called *Seinen Dojo* was erected in January 1943, starting with only six boys.<sup>74</sup> However, it did not last long, closing its doors in October 1943 and producing only 100 students.<sup>75</sup> In the beginning of 1944, a semi-military organization called 'Barisan Banteng' was established by local people in

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<sup>70</sup> *Asia Raya*, 2 May 1942; *Tjahaja*, 10 June 1942.

<sup>71</sup> Stuart Person, *Bittersweet: The Memoir of a Chinese Indonesian Family in the Twentieth Century* (NUS Press & Ohio University Press, 2008), 79-81

<sup>72</sup> Else Ensering, "Banten in Times of Revolution," *Archipel*, Vol. 50, (1995), 144.

<sup>73</sup> Harry Benda, in his book, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun. Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945*, argues that the Japanese followed a policy towards Islam nearly the reverse of the Dutch. They called themselves as the 'liberators and defenders of Indonesian Islam.' The Japanese tried to mobilize Islam for their own purposes, assisting them to fight off the threatened return of the Dutch. In return, Indonesian leaders were able to obtain important concessions. The Japanese authorities rewarded *ulama*, the religious teachers in the villages, for their collaboration, by increasing their local power and prestige at the expense of the hereditary officials. As a result of that policy, the Islamic movement was growing rapidly and the position of grassroots Moslem leaders also elevated as strong rivals of the secular nationalist leader. Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun. Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942-1945* (The Hague and Bandung, W. van Hoeve, 1958).

<sup>74</sup> Shigeru Sato, "Gatot Mangkupraja, PETA, and the Origins of the Indonesian National Army," *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land en Volkenkunde*, Vol. 166, (2010), 194.

<sup>75</sup> The alumni of this organization known as predecessor of Pembela Tanah Air (PETA/Fatherland Defence Force).

Tangerang, located at Menteng 31 Jakarta.<sup>76</sup> It was led by Haji Achmad Chaerun and Syekh Abdullah, with Deos, a member of Partai Republik Indonesia (PARI), and one of Tan Malaka's followers, as the instructors. However, because of their suspicious activities, Barisan Banteng Tangerang was forbidden to operate during the Japanese occupation.<sup>77</sup>

Another important decision, undertaken on 9 November 1943 by the *Gunseikanbu* (central government) in Jakarta, was to change the status of Tangerang from 'kewedanaan' (district) to 'kabupaten' (regency), thus elevating Tangerang's status.<sup>78</sup> There were two reasons behind that decision: *First*, Jakarta was already chosen as *Tokubetsusi* (Kotapraja Istimewa/Special Municipality); *Second*, the Jakarta Regency was considered ineffective in carrying out its duties.<sup>79</sup> This was authorized in 27 December 1943, and Atik Soeardi who had previously served as a deputy of R. Pandu Suradiningrat,<sup>80</sup> was selected as its first regent,<sup>81</sup> replacing Mas Mochamad Hapid Wiradinata.<sup>82</sup> Following that decision, Tangerang was no longer considered as merely 'Jakarta's periphery.'

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<sup>76</sup> Menteng 31 group was led by Sukarni and Chaerul Saleh, two figures who often spread propaganda around Tangerang. Menteng 31 known very active in preparing and educating young cadres in Tangerang, particularly among *jawara* and Islamic clerics. Herwin Sumarda, 47-48.

<sup>77</sup> Barisan Banteng Tangerang had 4,000-5,000 active members, with its main headquarter in Sepatan. The main figures like Haji Achmad Chaerun, Syekh Abdullah, Usman and Dulloh were arrested by Kenpetai, while the rest were fleeing to Menteng 31 to seek for shelter. This group emerged again during the Indonesian Revolution and became one of the most notorious and violent organization at that time. Herwin Sumarda, 47-48.

<sup>78</sup> Initially Tangerang was part of 'Regentschap Batavia' together with four other districts, namely Balaraja, Curug, Batavia, and Weltevreden. "Verslagen van de Inlichtingendienst van het Territoriaal tevens Troepencommando B-Divisie over West-Java, Maart-Mei." *Ministerie van Defensie Collectie Archieven Strijkrachten in Ned. Indie*. Inv. Nr: 132.

<sup>79</sup> *Asia Raya*, 4 January 1944.

<sup>80</sup> R. Pandu Suradiningrat was a deputy of *Gunseibu* or 'local government' in West Java. See *Kan Po*, No. 34, 1944.

<sup>81</sup> Atik Soeardi then replaced by Agus Padmanegara, who originally from Sumedang, West Java, just before Japan's defeat in Pacific War. Herwin Sumarda, 51-53

<sup>82</sup> "Verslagen van de Inlichtingendienst van het Territoriaal tevens Troepencommando B-Divisie over West-Java, maart-mei." *Ministerie van Defensie Collectie Archieven Strijkrachten in Ned. Indie*. Inv. Nr: 132.

## 2.2. Tangerang after the Proclamation of Independence

The Japanese rule in Indonesia, nevertheless, could neither stop nor restrain the growth of Indonesian nationalism. All military training given by Japanese to *pemuda*, in fact, was instrumental in fostering the growth of patriotism among the Indonesians.<sup>83</sup> By the Japanese strong emphasis on youth training, and particularly by establishing these military organizations, “the Japanese thus made an important contribution to the development of an incipient new elite group which was to come to sudden prominence in the early days of the revolution.”<sup>84</sup>

The situation reached its climax when the Republic of Indonesia, through Sukarno and Hatta, eventually proclaimed its independence on 17 August 1945, only two days after Japan surrendered. This event marked the culmination of the political desire of the Indonesian nationalists to attain sovereignty for their nation. Like a tidal wave, it carried every Indonesian along with it.<sup>85</sup> Thus began the revolutionary period in Indonesia.

News about the proclamation of Indonesian independence only arrived a day later in Tangerang, despite its proximity to Jakarta. Two representatives from Jakarta, Mr. Sumanang and Mr. Datuk Djamin, forwarded the news to Martosugriwo and Abdel Hanan. Copies of the proclamation were given, to be disseminated amongst the residents of Tangerang.<sup>86</sup>

On Monday morning, 20 August 1945, all Tangerang *pangreh-pradja* (general administrative corps) held a meeting to discuss the proclamation, as well as the Red-White flag

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<sup>83</sup> During the Japanese occupation special attention given to organizing and indoctrinating the youth. A number of youth military organizations were established namely, *Seinendan* (Youth Corps) and *Gakutotai* (Student Service Corps). The members were composed of students in secondary and higher school, and given some military drill and was prepared for light labor. In 1943 the Japanese took a further step by forming PETA (Pembela Tanah Air/Defenders of the Fatherland), a voluntary army created to strengthen the defenses of Java, Sumatra and Bali. Just a year later two subsidiary semi-military organizations were formed and given training by PETA units: *Hizbullah* (Army of God) and *Barisan Pelopor* (Pioneer Corps). Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation 1942–1945* (The Hague and Bandung, W. van Hoeve, 1958), 252.

<sup>84</sup> John Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project Cornell University, 1964), 14.

<sup>85</sup> *The Voice of Free Indonesia*, November 1945.

<sup>86</sup> Sumo Atmodjo, who at that time was the head of irrigation in Tangerang District, was also known as Gerindo activist in Tangerang who often made correspondence with Amir Syarifuddin. His house in Kebon Djahe was often used as meeting point for Menteng 31 members, namely Deos, Sukarni, Abdul Muluk, Suryawinata, etc. Herwin Sumarda, 51-53.



sent by Sumo Atmodjo from Jakarta. The letter contained several instructions, which were as follows: (1) The raising of the Red-White flag in the Tangerang District courtyard; (2) The swearing of allegiance of all Japanese government employees in Tangerang to the Indonesian Republic; (3) The immediate takeover of all government offices in Tangerang, which would be recognized through the seal 'Hak Milik Republik Indonesia' (the property of Republic Indonesia).<sup>87</sup>

Martosugriwo and Mohammad Tabi'ie, civil servants in the Tangerang government, were assigned to carry out those mandates. The *Hinomaru* flag of Japan was removed and then replaced by Red-White flag sent by Sumo Atmodjo. Agus Padmanegara, a prestigious government official during the Japanese occupation, was powerless, unable to do anything but watch.<sup>88</sup>

Furthermore, in order to restore the government structure in Tangerang, the Komite Nasional Indonesia Daerah Tangerang (KNIDT, Indonesian National Committee of Tangerang) was established on 26 August 1945, chaired by R.M. Koesoemo and his second in command, Suryoseputro. On the same day, Badan Keamanan Rakyat (BKR, People's Security Corps) was also formed.<sup>89</sup> R. Soetedjo, a coworker of Sumo Atmodjo's in the Irrigation Department in Tangerang during the Japanese occupation was chosen to lead the organization. The regent position was still occupied by Agus Padmanegara.<sup>90</sup>

Although Agus Padmanegara was the official regent of Tangerang, he never truly fulfilled his actual function in Tangerang.<sup>91</sup> Since the proclamation of the Indonesian Republic, the KNIDT

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<sup>87</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 54

<sup>88</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 56.

<sup>89</sup> BKR was a militia organization funded by 'Fonds Kemerdekaan' (Independence Charity). The structure BKR was different compared with the official structure of Indonesian military, because the leader and rank structure were not really clear. BKR was also formed without evident law procedure, thus its constitution and household budget were also not clear. Most of BKR were just fragment of ex-PETA battalion unit. The similar structure also applied for Barisan Rakyat (Volksfront/People's Band), which flourishing after the Indonesian independence.<sup>89</sup> However, the influence of both organizations did not last for a long time, because of the emergence of local powerful people, who usually known as *jawara*, *jago*, *bromocorah*, etc. See *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service/Centrale Militaire Inlichtingendienst (NEFIS/CMI) 1942-1949. Inv. Nr: 03122*

<sup>90</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 55-57

<sup>91</sup> The same problem also happened with police force in Tangerang, which supposed to sustain the civil government. One example was in Curug, the police office there led by Ali Djaja but never considered themselves as part of Tangerang government.

ran the government in order to avoid a 'vacuum of power' in Tangerang. In line with this, they established Badan Fonds Kemerdekaan Tangerang (Organization of Donation for Independence)<sup>92</sup> led by Haji Entong and R. Acang; created Barisan Pelopor, led by Mohammad Tabiih; and formed Badan Lalu Lintas Sosial (Organization of Social Traffic), chaired by Djogoprayitno and Abdel Hanan. In practice, these groups did not have any significant impact in Tangerang, as evidenced by the conflicts between the Barisan Banteng Merah and the Barisan Pelopor.<sup>93</sup>

The political situation in Tangerang was complicated by the emergence of three main groups, namely the 'Bureaucratic' group, the 'Barisan Banteng Merah' (Red Buffalo's Corps) group, and the 'Sangiang' group. The *Bureaucratic* group consisted of people who cooperated with the government during the Japanese occupation. This group, whose key figures include Suryoseputro, Martosugriwo, and R.M. Koesoemo, was mainly comprised of police, *Hokokai* staff, and civil servants. The Bureaucratic group played an important role during the transition of power from the Japanese government to the Indonesian Republic, as they were responsible for maintaining law and order in Tangerang. While they never received the sympathy of the Tangerang residents, they were supported by most civil servants in the area.

The second group was *Barisan Banteng Merah* led by Deos. The majority of the members of this group, which had Kampung Tanah Merah in Sepatan as its headquarters, were from Barisan Banteng Tangerang, which had been dissolved during the Japanese occupation. In September 1945, Deos commanded Barisan Banteng Tangerang to attack Japanese defenses in Cikoleang-Bogor, in order to seize Japanese armaments. The attack was a failure, and it earned the group a reputation as a radical and aggressive organization. Only on 19 September 1945 was that tainted image slowly restored, as Barisan Banteng Merah decided to take part in a meeting between Sukarno and his people at Lapangan Ikada (Ikatan Atletik Jakarta, Jakarta Athletic Union). Barisan Banteng Tangerang successfully mobilized thousands of their supporters to

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<sup>92</sup> Haji Sa'roni was appointed as the chair of this Fonds Kemerdekaan in Tangerang. He instructed to all local leaders in Tangerang to create the Fonds in order to support Indonesian struggle. Just within few months, Fonds Kemerdekaan was established in different locations in Tangerang, like in Cengkareng for instance, where Haji Moekri and Haji Abdulradjak became the leader and vice. *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950. Inv. nr. 1056.*

<sup>93</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 63.

participate in that event. Ikada is also considered the first united action of the residents of Tangerang after the proclamation of Indonesian independence.<sup>94</sup>

*Sangiang* was the third politically active group, with over half of its members coming from Barisan Banteng Tangerang, and led by Haji Achmad Chaerun, a known revolutionary leader in Tangerang since the 1920s.<sup>95</sup> With its Islamic approach, the group attracted many new followers, especially amongst clerics, Islamic boarding schools students, and other Islamic scholars in Tangerang. Haji Achmad Chaerun also offered lessons on 'ilmu kebatinan' (mysticism) to his followers at his house in Kampung Sangiang. Many people who attended these classes aspired to possess the power of 'ilmu kebal' (invulnerability).<sup>96</sup> First offered to his followers on 21 September 1945, thousands of people flocked to Achmad Chaerun's house for lessons thereafter, with students coming not only from Tangerang, but also from Jakarta, Bekasi, Bogor and Krawang.<sup>97</sup> Later Chaerun would play an important role in organizing a social revolution against the old regime (bureaucratic group) together with *Barisan Banteng Merah*.

The beginning period of Indonesian Revolution was also marked by the emergence of militia organizations in Tangerang. The military training that they received during the Japanese occupation made them more confident to fight for 'kemerdekaan 100%' (100% sovereign and

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<sup>94</sup> Prior to the Ikada meeting, dozens of resistance movements (*strijdorganisaties*) had emerged in many cities, among them 'Laskar Rakyat,' (People's Army) whose members were ex-PETA soldiers and the common folk. Herwin Sumarda, 57-59.

<sup>95</sup> Haji Achmad Chaerun was the son of Kiai Chaerun, a prominent *ulama* in Banten. Chaerun completed his studies in Mecca in 1920, where he also followed the teachings of Abdulkarim Banten. He received his initial education in the pesantren Doyong, but soon he was committed to the care of Asnawi in, from 1908-1913, in Caringin. He assumed the leadership of Sarekat Islam Tangerang from Said Usman Alasgaf in 1921 after accusing him of being too soft with the Dutch. Chaerun was known as a mysticism expert who had involved in Tangerang rebellion in 12 November 1926. Strong support came by Moslem groups in Tangerang and also many hajj who decided to become his followers. He managed to mobilize all the masses through the network of Tangerang underground, for which the colonial government punished him by exiling him for ten years to Sumenep, East Java. See Else Ensering, "Banten in Times of Revolution," *Archipel*, Vol. 50, (1995), 144; Nana Suryana (eds.) *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang*. (Tangerang: LPPM UNIS Tangerang, 1992), 91-93.

<sup>96</sup> According to Onghokham the ideas of mysticism were inseparable from Javanese people. People who were aware of oppression and exploitation, responded to this situation which took the form of belief in amulets, supernatural powers, and prophecies, together with form of panic. Ideas developed which were inseparable from this primitive class consciousness, such as seeing rich as devils or in the possession of imps (*tuyul*), or seeing the Chinese merchant minority as infidels who ate pork, and so forth. Onghokham, "Encounter with the West: Reaction & Results", *Prisma*, (September 1984).

<sup>97</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 61.

free). They disdained diplomatic action and negotiation, believing that as an independent country they had their own right to determine their own future; thus negotiation, considered a 'soft' approach, was unnecessary.<sup>98</sup> In Tangerang, these were *Angkatan Pemuda Indonesia* (Youth Force of Indonesia/API) led by Sutejo, *Barisan Pelopor*, and *Laskar Hitam*.<sup>99</sup>

The KNIL, *Heiho*, and PETA, who had experienced Dutch or Japanese military training, were encouraged to join BKR. Those who had not were entreated to join Laskar Rakyat. On 30 October 1945, the army headquarters in Yogyakarta issued a general statement to form 'Laskar Rakyat,'<sup>100</sup> with the purpose that later on this organization could be used to fight the enemy with the TKR.<sup>101</sup>

The main purpose of the establishment of Laskar Rakyat, in essence, was to give information, education, and military training to Indonesian men and women, so that in the future they could be united within a single army in order to defend the Indonesian Republic. This semi-military organization consisted of four to five platoons with one battalion consisting of four to five companies. Initially, Laskar Rakyat was intended to be a Territorial Army unit, while TKR functioned as a mobile unit. Laskar Rakyat also formed 'Barisan Laskar Rakyat' (Laskar Rakyat's Band), who were tasked to fight enemies who threatened Indonesian independence. Together with the TKR, they also planned war strategies, which however were never implemented.<sup>102</sup> In

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<sup>98</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 96.

<sup>99</sup> Matia Madjiah, 46-47.

<sup>100</sup> In English, 'laskar' can be translated as soldier, militia, or army. However, during the revolution, the term was also interpreted as a private army, usually allied with certain political organizations. When the national army was established on October 1945, the position of *laskar* in the structure of the Indonesian Republic triggered a serious debate. Many *laskar* did not want to join the national army, seeing it as a 'mercenary army,' which to them resembled the Dutch colonial or Japanese army. On the other hand, professional military personnel, who typically had proper military education and official army status, tended to see *laskar* as a bunch of undisciplined and ineffective amateurs. Their existence was seen as a huge obstacle to maintaining order in Indonesia. The subsequent friction between the *laskar* and the national army is therefore unsurprising. *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49. Inv. Nr: 03129.

<sup>101</sup> The months September to December 1945 were the period of the proliferation of *laskar* in Indonesia. They were initially subsumed in the Badan Keamanan Rakyat (BKR/People's Security Corps). Soejatno, "Revolution and Social Tensions in Surakarta 1945-1950," *Indonesia*, No. 17 (April 1974), 102

<sup>102</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Java in the Time of Revolution*, 268; A.H. Nasution, *Tentara Nasional Indonesia I* (Bandung: Ganaco, 1963), 146-8; *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49. Inv. Nr: 03129.

principle, anybody could join this organization, as long as they were willing to fight. Funding for this organization came from 'Fonds Kemerdekaan' fundraisers and charity events.<sup>103</sup>

Laskar Rakyat expanded quickly, particularly in Jakarta, but also in smaller cities like Bekasi and Tangerang. However, as Robert Cribb argues, this type of organization, in principle, was formed from a social core which had existed before, in local *jawara*, bandit, Islamic clerics, ethnic groups, school groups, semi-skilled labor groups, youth groups, neighborhood associations, and other outlaw groups. According to Audrey Kahin these groups "had long existed on the periphery of the colonial society in rural areas."<sup>104</sup> The majority of its membership, though nationalistic, did not have any political affiliation. They were just eager to participate in the ideal of the 'Republic.'<sup>105</sup>

In Tangerang, Laskar Rakyat was established almost in every *desa*. The initiative usually came from influential groups or persons within the area. Therefore, many hajj or *jawara* were chosen to lead this militia organization, as people believed that they were invincible. The role of 'Rukun Tetangga' (*tonarigumi*/neighboring associations), which had existed during Japanese occupation and maintained during the revolutionary period, controlled and mobilized masses, and facilitated the establishment of Laskar Rakyat in the interior Tangerang. Thus, by December 1945, it attracted more than 5,000 followers in Tangerang. Laskar Rakyat Tangerang was led by Haji Arsjoedin, with Mohammad Tabi'ie and Haji Gias as the military instructors.<sup>106</sup>

On 30 October 1945, a 600-man strong Laskar Rakyat, led by Chaerun, attacked NICA's<sup>107</sup> headquarters in Kebayoran Lama. Chaerun and his army were forced to retreat after

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<sup>103</sup> *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken*, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49. Inv. Nr: 03129.

<sup>104</sup> Audrey Kahin, "Introduction..." 16

<sup>105</sup> Cribb, 51-52.

<sup>106</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, "Kerusuhan Anti Cina Tangerang 1913-1946," Master Thesis, (Jakarta: Fakultas Sastra Universitas Indonesia, 2000), 91.

<sup>107</sup> NICA (Netherlands Indies Civil Administration) was a semi-military organization, established on 3 April 1944 in Australia, for civil administration and judicial affairs in the parts of the Netherlands East Indies. NICA was intended to restore Dutch authority in the Netherlands East Indies and functioned as the liaison between the government of the Netherlands East Indies and the Allied Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific Area. Although NICA consisted solely of Netherlands Indies personnel, it was really an Allied organization. For more information about NICA see Elly Touwen-Bouwsma en Petra Groen, *Tussen Banzai en Bersiap. De afwikkeling van de Tweede Wereldoorlog in Nederlands-Indië*. (Den Haag: Sdu, 1996); G.C. Zijlmans, *Eindstrijd en Ondergang van de Indische Bestuursdienst: Het Corps Binnenlands Bestuur op Java 1945-1950* (Amsterdam: Bataafsche Leeuw, 1985).

encountering NICA troops on patrol, without ever reaching Kebayoran Lama. This further tarnished the image of the Tangerang Council, resulting in the residents of Tangerang losing respect for their government and questioning the power wielded by Chaerun. In order to restore its tainted image, the Tangerang Council decided to cooperate with its counterpart in Banten. This partnership was marked by a large meeting in Tangerang on 11 November 1945, which was attended by thousands of Tangerang and Banten residents. Here it was decided that both governments would cooperate to face all threats from the Dutch and the British.<sup>108</sup>

However, later it became clear that the proliferation of Laskar Rakyat and other militia armies in Tangerang was the cause of instability in Tangerang. The conditions in the area were beyond the control of the local government, and gave an opportunity to these militia groups to loot, rape, burn, or confiscate property in the name of 'perjuangan', the Chinese usually becoming the victims. As they were seen as a powerless and defenseless community, the logic was that it would be difficult for them to fight back against their oppressors. This period was just the beginning of all anti-Chinese violence in this region. The situation only worsened for Chinese in Tangerang during the two other regime transitions in Tangerang: Chaerun's government and TKR/TRI government.

### 2.3. Social Revolution in Tangerang, 1945

The situation in Tangerang deteriorated significantly soon after the proclamation of Indonesian independence. The Sjahrir Cabinet seemed uncertain or apathetic about how to solve problems in the interior parts of Indonesia.<sup>109</sup> Moreover, shortages of food and clothing in Tangerang became particularly acute. During the six months following the declaration of Indonesian independence, Tangerang, supposedly under Republican control, merely reappointed most of the pre-existing office holders once they had pledged their allegiance to the Republic. The years 1945 and 1946 were marked by a strong social revolutionary impulse, demonstrated by the overthrow of the old administrative structure. The withdrawal of Japanese forces and widespread fears among people in Tangerang that the local administration was

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<sup>108</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 80-81 & 88.

<sup>109</sup> Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken, *NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949*. Inv. Nr: 01857.

preparing to welcome back the Dutch, also contributed to the sparking of social revolution in Tangerang.

From the beginning of October 1945, a series of upheavals occurred in interior Tangerang. Headed by local *jawara*, a mob attacked civil servants and Chinese, who were considered as an obstacle in their struggle. Assassinations of government officials occurred in Tangerang, but these were less brutal in comparison to the social unrest taking place elsewhere, such as East Sumatra or 'Tiga Daerah' (Three Regions: Brebes, Tegal, Pemalang), as most officials and senior police officers had taken the precaution of leaving Tangerang for their own safety.<sup>110</sup>

The dysfunction of traditional institutions during the colonial period combined with Dutch or Chinese landlord oppression contributed to the growing of anti-Chinese sentiment in Tangerang. Many Chinese were blacklisted as Dutch henchmen by the natives, or used as convenient scapegoats to explain the miserable conditions in Tangerang.<sup>111</sup> This anti-Chinese sentiment intensified with the arrival of Allied Forces that followed by Dutch NICA in Tangerang.

Srimastuti Purwaningsih argues that the violent actions in Tangerang were probably based on ill feelings that local people had as a result of previous colonial experiences. From the perspective of the people, 'pangreh pradja' and Chinese were seen as nothing more than the henchmen of the colonialists. On 22 September 1945, the sub-district chief of Sepatan, Tubagus D. Karia, was killed by a member of Barisan Banteng Merah after being accused of protecting a *jawara* from Sepatan named Kho Sim Tek. A week after the Sepatan incident, the chief of Kresek sub-district, Iskandar, was exposed, shamed, and paraded around the village, though he was later able to escape with his family. This practice was known as 'dombreng' in Tangerang, and 'daulat' in Banten. In Kampung Parangkuda, Haji Muhur with his men forced the village chief to withdraw from his position, with Laut bin Pitak serving as his replacement. Very often the actions escalated into racism, with Chinese targeted because of their image as capitalists. As the result of

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<sup>110</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 104.

<sup>111</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 96.



'daulat', many government officials and Chinese living in central Tangerang, fearing for their safety, fled to Jakarta.<sup>112</sup>

After hearing about the turmoil and violence in Sepatan and other districts of Tangerang, a Jakarta resident named Sewaka visited Tangerang in order to conduct an investigation. He arrived at the conclusion that every government sector had been occupied by Achmad Chaerun, except TKR, which remained loyal to the Indonesian government.<sup>113</sup> A meeting was held by KNIDT on 6 October 1945 and 'daulat' became a main topic of discussion apart from other social unrest, such as arson and robbery, committed against Chinese in Sepatan, Kedaung, Kresek and Kronjo. These incidents were blamed on the ineffectual leadership of Agus Padmanegara, and the administration recommended his immediate replacement by Haji Achmad Chaerun, as the latter was seen to have more power and charisma in Tangerang. Agus Padmanegara himself was not present at the meeting.<sup>114</sup>

Haji Achmad Chaerun accepted the new position, and on 9 October 1945, moved to a building in Karawaci that was owned by Oey Kiat Djin.<sup>115</sup> Agus Padmanegara, who was legally still serving as official regent of Tangerang, worried that his replacement by Chaerun would cause people to 'daulat' him in public. As a response to this, Padmanegara gathered all *jawara* from Batu Ceper and Rawa Bokor, led by Haji Taung, to protect his house and family. This action, seen as an act of aggression, only worsened the situation, as it heightened the mistrust that people in Tangerang had for him. Another meeting, held on 16 October 1945 by Chaerun, decided that 'daulat' would be performed on Padmanegara, but in an orderly way.

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<sup>112</sup> During this period of revolution, the word 'kedaulatan' (sovereignty or authority) was linked to the work 'rakyat' (the people), thus creating the new word 'mendaulat,' a word that could be interpreted in a number of ways: deposition, humiliation, kidnapping, or murder of hated officials or other representatives of authority, usually carried out by groups of armed *pemuda*. See Benedict Anderson, 334.

<sup>113</sup> A. Sobana Hardjasaputra, "Pemerintah Daerah Jawa Barat pada Masa Revolusi Fisik (September 1945-Juni 1948): Tinjauan Mengenai Peranannya dalam Mempertahankan Proklamasi 17 Agustus 1945," Skripsi, (Bandung: Fakultas Sastra Universitas Padjajaran, 1980), 110.

<sup>114</sup> Abdel Hanan, 10.

<sup>115</sup> There are at least two political factors that make KNIDT chose Haji Ahmad Chaerun as regent of Tangerang and put himself in Karawaci. First, to prevent the coalition of Sangiang and Barisan Banteng Merah group which would be dangerous for Bureaucratic group. Second, by removing Haji Achmad Chaerun to Karawaci of course would make KNIDT's task to keep an eye on both of the groups became easier. Herwin Sumarda, 67.

The declaration of independence by the government had been followed by the order to take over authority from the previous administration, with the transfer of power in administrative posts carried out by Haji Achmad Chaerun. On 18 October 1945, in Curug, southwest of Tangerang, Chaerun named himself 'Bapak Rakyat' (Vader des Volks), and consolidated a rebellion in order to overthrow the remnants of the old regime in Tangerang. Thousands of people from Karawaci and Sepatan, led by Soetedjo, moved towards Agus Padmanegara's house to carry out the 'daulat'. Padmanegara was coerced by the mob to sign a letter that acknowledged the transfer of power from himself to Soetedjo, who at that time served as the leader of the BKR.

On the same day, in Sumo Atmodjo's house in Kebon Djahe, Soetedjo bestowed the letter to Chaerun and Atmodjo. Starting Thursday, 18 October 1945 at 16.30, the positions of civil servants and police in Tangerang were transferred to 'rakyat jelata' (common people). New officials were elected, and most of the strategic positions occupied by *ulama*.<sup>116</sup>

## 2.5. Tangerang under Chaerun's Administration

One of the most important developments during Chaerun's regency was the division of the political structure of Tangerang by the Council of Tangerang into three regional levels, or 'Daerah Tingkat'. 'Kewedanaan' (district) became 'Daerah Tingkat I,' 'Kecamatan' (sub-district) became 'Daerah Tingkat II,' and 'Kelurahan' (village) became 'Daerah Tingkat III.' Regional chiefs, known as 'wedana,' (district officer) 'camat,' (sub-district officers) and 'lurah,' (headman) were also renamed 'Kepala Daerah Tingkat I,' 'Kepala Daerah Tingkat II,' and 'Kepala Daerah Tingkat III.'

The system of 'Pemerintahan Bapak Rakyat' (Father of People's Government) was used to elect these regional chiefs, with Chaerun at the top<sup>117</sup>; Kepala Daerah Tingkat III was elected

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<sup>116</sup> "Laporan Jabatan 'Jawatan Pekerjaan Umum Jawa Barat' selama pemerintahan sementara Tangerang sejak 18 Oktober 1945 - 13 Januari 1946." *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49*. Inv. Nr: 03129

<sup>117</sup> At the end of October 1945 the position of Kepala Daerah Tingkat II and III had been occupied, and only the position of Kepala Daerah Tingkat I still vacant. The Council then divided Tangerang into 4 Daerah Tingkat II (Tangerang, Curug, Mauk dan Balaraja) and 13 Daerah Tingkat III (Tangerang, Teluk Naga, Batuceper, Serpong, Curug, Legog, Cikupa, Balaraja, Tigaraksa, Kresek, Mauk, Rajeg and Sepatan). From

by the people; Kepala Daerah Tingkat II was chosen by Kepala Daerah Tingkat III and several community leaders; and Kepala Daerah Tingkat II and several community leaders chose Kepala Daerah Tingkat I. Apart from these Kepala Daerah Tingkat, however, there were other leaders called “Bapak Rakyat Tangerang,” one of them being Soewono.

The first meeting was held just a day after the transfer of power, and Atmodjo argued that the new government in Tangerang was 'Pemerintahan Rakyat' (people's government) and would be run by Badan Direktorium Dewan Pusat (BDDP, Board Directory of Central Council), with its board members being: Haji Achmad Chaerun (Chairman), Sumo Atmodjo, Suwono, and Abbas. However, although the new government structure was occupied by several hajj, there was no clear line of Islamic orientation in the new government. Several important decisions were taken by the board, for instance to dissolve old government structures from village to regency levels, and to disband the KNIDT. BKR was the only government organization that was not dissolved. The relationship between Tangerang and the central government in Jakarta was temporarily severed by People's Council.<sup>118</sup>

Tangerang decided not to cooperate with the Republican government in Jakarta for several reasons. The decline of Tangerang's economy, combined with the return of Islamic scholars who quickly gained prestige among people in Tangerang, triggered a distrust of the new Republican government. The separation from the Indonesian Republic showed the radicalism in their new government, which followed the 'for the people, by the people' ideology.<sup>119</sup> Tangerang became a state within a state, though that in itself was not novel; in 1926 many Islamic leaders in Tangerang had worked together with Islamic leaders in Banten to launch a rebellion against the colonial government in Banten.<sup>120</sup> The close relationship between Banten and Tangerang was re-

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the 13 names of Kepala Daerah Tingkat III, only two people who had background in government, Kepala Daerah Tangerang and Teluk Naga, the rest were *jawara* or Islamic scholars. See Herwin Sumarda, 73-77.

<sup>118</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 69-71

<sup>119</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 106.

<sup>120</sup> The Banten uprising was intended to be part of a nationwide Communist attack against the Dutch colonial government. The key to the rebellion, as Michael Williams argues, was mounting discontent with the socioeconomic and political conditions in Banten at the time: the declining economy, the tax burden, the repressive Dutch measures against political opposition, and the alienation of religious leaders. These reasons were more than sufficient, for both the participants and the author, to claim the uprising as a holy war, albeit under the Communist leadership. See Michael Williams, *Sickle and Crescent: The Communist*

established during 1945-1946, again with the sole purpose of repelling the Dutch from Tangerang, but in a more radical manner. During Chaerun's government, Tangerang's leadership and political direction often created friction between the regional leaders and the Republican authorities in Jakarta because most of the time it did not correspond with the diplomatic principle of the central government.<sup>121</sup>

The issue of the relationship with the central government had been discussed by the chief of the Department of Public Works in West Java with one member of 'Bapak Rakyat' named Soewono. The chief was subsequently appointed as a member of central economic board in Tangerang, as well as the head of central irrigation and travel department, public works, and public transportation. The conversation between them heated when the chief proposed that Tangerang should cooperate with Indonesian central government in Jakarta, his suggestion was rejected by the 'Bapak Rakyat'.<sup>122</sup>

Another decision of Chaerun's was to form militia organizations. On 8 November 1945, the Board of Government of Tangerang, on behalf of 'Rakyat Jelata' (common people), issued an announcement to encourage all ex-members of military organizations like PETA (Pembela Tanah Air/Defenders of the Fatherland), *Heiho* (Auxiliary Troops), *Kaigun Heiho* (Naval Auxiliaries), *Seinendan* (Youth Troops), *Keibodan* (Auxiliary Police Troops), *Pelopor* (Pioneer Corps) and also other *pemuda* to register themselves as members of BKR and TKR Tangerang. All recruits had to be young, strong, and healthy, between the ages of 18-35, and, if possible, literate. District officers (*wedana*) in Tangerang coordinated and corresponded with each other concerning recruitment.<sup>123</sup>

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*Revolt of 1926 in Banten.* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University), Modern Indonesia Project, Southeast Asia Program (Monograph Series no. 61), 1982.

<sup>121</sup> Abdul Haris Nasution, *Di Sekitar Perang Kemerdekaan* (Bandung: Angkasa, 1977), 514.

<sup>122</sup> "Laporan Jabatan 'Jawatan Pekerjaan Umum Jawa Barat' selama pemerintahan sementara Tangerang sejak 18 Oktober 1945 - 13 Januari 1946." *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49*. Inv. Nr: 03129

<sup>123</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950*. Inv. nr. 1056.

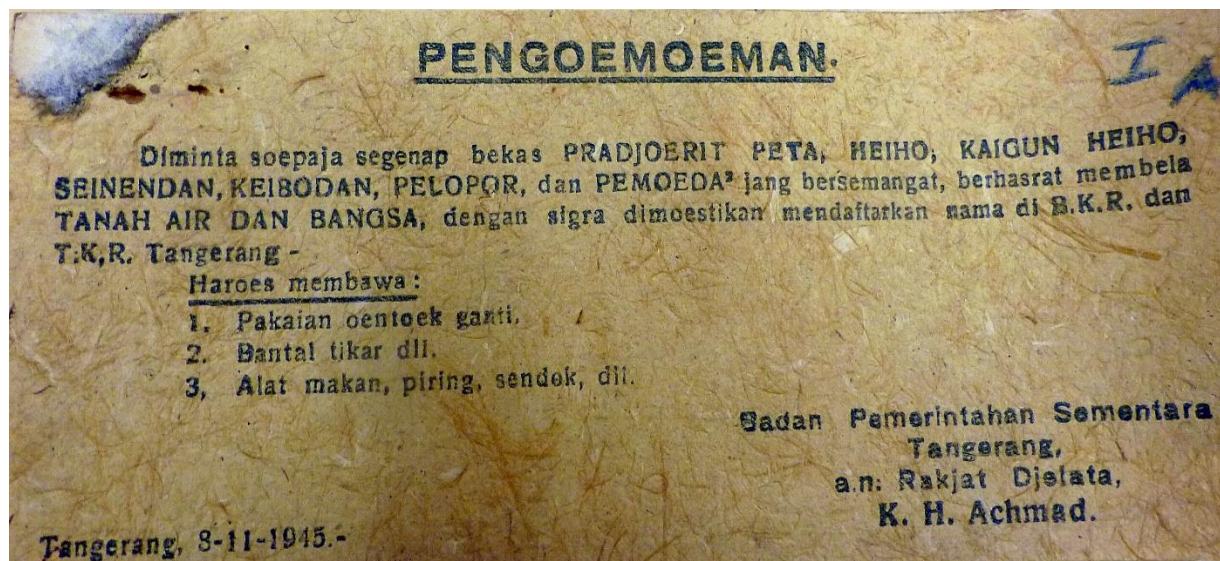


Figure 1. Announcement issued by People's Council to encourage Indonesians with Japanese military training to join BKR. Source: *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950. Inv. Nr. 1057.*

Another 'Bapak Rakyat' named Sumo Atmodjo also instructed Syekh Abdullah to establish Laskar Pasukan Berani Mati (Suicide Army/LPBM), with Abdullah himself as the leader, Mudjitaba as his deputy, and Usman, Dulloh, Lampung and Kyai Saadulloh as the commanders. The majority of the members came from *jawara* groups and Islamic boarding schools, and were usually *pemuda* recruited by local leaders from *kampung* or *desa*, whose sympathies lay with the Tangerang government. The members of LPBM wore black uniforms to represent *jawara*, while Abdullah, their leader, wore a green uniform to represent Islam. They also wore black conical hats ('diubel-ubel'), which led to their monikers 'Laskar Hitam' or 'Laskar Ubel-Ubel.' Oey Giok Kun's house in Pasar Baru, Tangerang, served as the LPBM headquarters.<sup>124</sup>

The political situation in Tangerang worsened due to the emergence of several militia corps such as the LPBM, causing many clashes in different parts of Tangerang. The social tension was aggravated by the deployment of guns bought at the black market among Indonesians, especially among the *pemuda*. As a result, people in Tangerang no longer heeded the instruction from the Indonesian army, and began acting on their own. Many *pemuda* considered themselves experts with weaponry and military strategy due to the mere fact that they possessed a gun. Their

<sup>124</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 74-77.

assumption was that they could maintain law and order in Tangerang, even without the TKR's intervention.<sup>125</sup>

Meanwhile, a rice shortage from November to December 1945 saw a spike in the social tension in Tangerang. According to an agreement between 'Bapak Rakyat' and the Tangerang working class, the latter would receive rice from their own *kampung*, which would be placed in the village barn to ensure an ample supply of rice for the poorer residents. However, the stock was frequently inadequate, causing people to buy rice at traditional markets, where a liter of rice cost f.3.50—too expensive for most.<sup>126</sup> A decree was issued to control the price of rice in the market. However, as soon as the regulation was implemented, rice started to disappear from Tangerang. Many people had to go from one *kampung* to another to find it, with inflated prices of f.4.50-f.5.50/liter. Due to the scarcity, some civil servants proposed that the sale of rice in the periphery of Tangerang should be allowed. This proposal was rejected by the Minister of Prosperity of Tangerang, because Klender, one of the biggest rice-producing areas in Indonesia, was under the jurisdiction of the Tangerang government. Chaerun insisted that the rice problem could be solved within a few months. It became apparent, however, that Chaerun's government was unable to control the rice market in Tangerang. By January 1946, a liter of rice cost f.10.50 in Tangerang.<sup>127</sup>

A firsthand account from a Doctor Gambiro, who had been stationed in Tangerang since the Japanese occupation, reports on the worsening conditions in the area:

"The new Tangerang government is really cruel. They act arbitrarily to people because they feel having power. People's sovereignty is abandoned. There are no more judicious court in Tangerang. They often rob and rape women. The security is no longer available in Tangerang."<sup>128</sup>

Under Chaerun's government, the condition of the Chinese in Tangerang became worse than before, with Chaerun's name and influence often misused by Laskar Hitam in order to

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<sup>125</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hoogerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950*. Inv. nr. 1056.

<sup>126</sup> The military officer and lower officer in Tangerang only received f.60/month and f.40/month. The amount was definitely not sufficient to buy rice, the price of which kept increasing on a daily basis, and especially to feed a family. "Stukken Betreffende Economische Politieke en Militaire Gegevens over het Gebied Tangerang, 1945-1946," *NEFIS/CMI, 1942-1949*. Inv. Nr: 03130

<sup>127</sup> *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49*. Inv. Nr: 03129

<sup>128</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 72.

oppress the Chinese. Chinese shops and dwellings were often robbed by Laskar Hitam, supposedly to find guns or any firearms. If none could be found, they would just pilfer anything that was of value. If a gun was found, the head of the family would be taken and then imprisoned as NICA's spy most of them never returning.<sup>129</sup> A boycott by the natives of all Chinese products and shops also led to a downturn in their fortunes. Chinese organizations were forced to give up their savings, while rich Chinese had to give thousands of guildens in the name of 'perjuangan.'<sup>130</sup>

Meanwhile, Achmad Chaerun was disinterested in preventing the spread of such action. The sovereignty of the people was no longer his main objective. Laskar Hitam often retaliated against those who were still loyal to the Indonesian government.<sup>131</sup> Between November-December 1945 many Chinese who lived in Sepatan, Mauk, Kronjo and Kresek, together with former members of Tangerang's civil administration, escaped to Tangerang City, at that time considered an autonomous state within Indonesia. The central government in Jakarta, located only 25 kilometers away, was unable to do anything.<sup>132</sup>

## 2.6. The Return of the Tangerang Republic

The Republican government in Jakarta could not ignore the situation in Tangerang, and worried that social revolutions in Tangerang and, to a lesser extent, Banten, might spill over to the Jakarta hinterland. Such an outcome would be dangerous for the image of the newly-created Indonesian Republic, because it would give the British and Dutch an opportunity to demonstrate

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<sup>129</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 93-94.

<sup>130</sup> Many Chinese residents in various places have supported (or being forced) the Indonesian movement. In Palembang, the Chinese residents contributed f.100,000 every month to the Indonesian Social Bureau for Relief Purposes. They also imported large quantities of rice from Siam and then sold it to the Indonesian Economic Department of the Municipal Government with a low price, adding to the saving of Indonesian government for f.1,000,000. The Palembang resident also tried elevate foreign trade in Palembang by exempting imports, as a result, the foreign trade of Chinese in Palembang became the largest and the most frequent in Sumatra. *Sin Po*, 22-23 April 1946; Mary Somers Heidhues, "Anti-Chinese..." 385; Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 124.

<sup>131</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 109.

<sup>132</sup> Cribb, 44.



the Republic's lack of governing ability and acumen.<sup>133</sup> Thus, the government, through the Tangerang regiment, decided to take the initiative in order to control the situation in Tangerang.

Upon his return from Yogyakarta, Daan Yahya brought a mandate from General Urip Sumoharjo to form several military regiments in Tangerang, Bogor and Cikampek. The Tangerang regiment, a Republican institution, was set up from the BKR unit in Jakarta, and its proponents were former Pembela Tanah Air (Defenders of Motherland/PETA) officers.<sup>134</sup> Most of its members had previously served in PETA during the Japanese occupation, many of them medical students who, during the war, had often corresponded with Hatta and Sjahrir. Perhaps due to the Dutch education they received in school, their political views tended to be very internationalist and westernized. The regiment played an important role in establishing the Tangerang Military Academy chaired by Daan Mogot, subsequently becoming an important political tool of Sjahrir in dealing with Allied forces and Dutch enemy soldiers.<sup>135</sup>

In contrast to the regiments of other cities, the Tangerang regiment was radical in action and ideology. Their main task was to perform surveillance on Haji Achmad Chaerun from across the Citarum River. In January 1946, after two months of intelligence gathering, they arrested two of Chaerun's henchmen, and occupied several key areas of Tangerang. Several key members of the Indonesian army, as well as the Republican regent of Jakarta, Singgih, decided to meet with Chaerun in order to convince him to disband all militia corps in Tangerang, and to allow the Indonesian army to maintain peace and order within the city. Chaerun's agreeability secured his position as Tangerang regent, with some of his henchmen, such as Syekh Abdullah, appointed in a committee for security.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Michael Williams, "Rice Debts will be Repaid with Rice, Blood Debts with Blood," in Audrey Kahin (eds.), *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 69.

<sup>134</sup> BKR was officially merged into TKR on 5 October 1945, but its unit reorganization in Jakarta was implemented after all troops withdrawn from Jakarta.

<sup>135</sup> Tangerang Regiment was a Sjahrir's most reliable unit. However, its loyalty to central government getting stronger when the old commander, Lieutenant Colonel Singgih, ousted in a bloodless coup at the end of April 1946 by several officers like Daan Jahja and Kemal Idris. Singgih, ex-PETA officer in Jakarta, known as a person who had strong sympathy towards Laskar Rakyat. Conversely with his replacement, Daan Jahja, known as an intellectual who had strong connection with Partai Sosialis (Socialist Party). Cribb, 52 & 106

<sup>136</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950*. Inv. nr. 1056.

In a decree issued by TKR Tangerang, Singgih declared that starting 14 January 1946, the government of Tangerang would be under TKR's protection. People were urged to continue to perform their duties to their country, and to follow all instructions from the new government. Patriotism was also encouraged, with all residents required to display the Indonesian flag in front of their houses, offices, and other buildings. TKR's aim was to prosecute all traitors to the Indonesian republic, as well as to severely punish crimes such as instigation, murder, robbery-kidnapping, theft, and arson.<sup>137</sup>

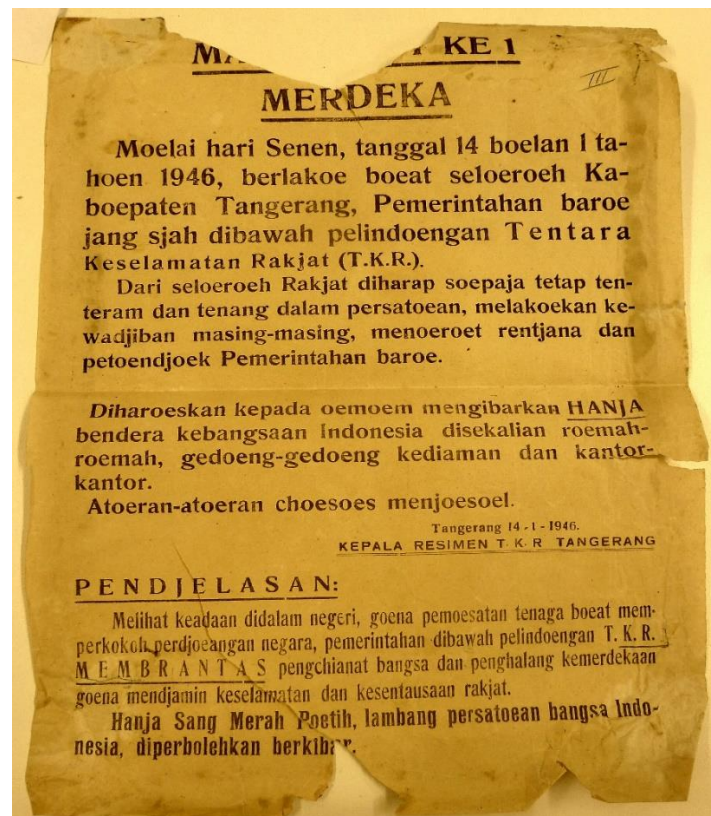


Figure 2. An official decree issued by TKR informing readers of the return of Tangerang to the Indonesian Republic. Source: *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950*. Inv. nr. 1057.

On 16 January 1946, the chief regiment of TKR Tangerang issued another decree stating that all regulations from the previous government were still valid, as long as they not conflict with the current government's regulations.<sup>138</sup> That compromise did not last long.<sup>139</sup> On March

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>139</sup> A rumor spread in some villages in Tangerang that Haji Achmad Chaerun was imprisoned by TKR. After receiving the news, Chaerun's followers held an urgent meeting and decided to spread that news to

1946 the Indonesian army captured Haji Achmad Chaerun, Syekh Abdullah, and other members of their underground movement, perceiving them as threats to political stability in Tangerang. Achmad Chaerun, Haji Alibasyah, Syekh Abdullah, Haji Muhur, Haji Arsyad, Haji Saelan, and Abbas were captured by TKR and exiled to Selabintana, Sukabumi, in West Java, under the surveillance of Didi Kartasasmita.<sup>140</sup> The People's Council of Tangerang then reorganized, a new regent was chosen, and the power of Republic was slowly restored in Tangerang.<sup>141</sup> The position of regent was occupied by Achyat Pena, who previously had served as vice-regent.<sup>142</sup> However, it did not mean that the situation of Tangerang was already secure; within a few months after the regime transition, TKR Tangerang was rocked by a series of events that would forever alter the landscape of Indonesian history: The battle of Pesing and Cengkareng against the Dutch, followed by one of the most notorious events in Chinese Indonesian history: the massacre of Chinese in Tangerang, which would place the Indonesian government in a difficult position.

## 2.7. Conclusion

This chapter has shown the anti-Chinese violence in Tangerang existed even prior to the Indonesian revolution. However, the structure of violence during the Japanese occupation and Indonesian revolution, as argued in this chapter, were different. During the Japanese occupation, the involvement of Japanese government was clear, with many Chinese interned following command from the top. Thus it was obvious during this period the anti-Chinese violence was

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other villages in Tiga Raksa Kronjo, Balaraja, Kresek, Sepatan, Mauk, and Sangiang. Herwin Sumarda, 98-99.

<sup>140</sup> Didi Kartasasmita was the Chief Commandment of West Java. *Propinsi Jawa Barat* (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan Republik Indonesia, 1953), 154.

<sup>141</sup> Cribb, 86; *Ra'jat*, 7 Maret 1946; *Republik Indonesia Propinsi Jawa Barat*. (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, 1952), .153-154; Sewaka, *Tjorat-tjoret dari Djaman ke Djaman*. (Bandung, 1956), 88-89. A similar situation also occurred in Banten, a few kilometers away from Tangerang. A rumor spread that Banten intended to declare itself independent, the resulting Council of Banten would challenge the legitimacy of the rule of President Sukarno, and the Bantenese sultanate would be restored. By late October 1945, these rumors had begun to appear in the Jakarta press. The rumor was taken seriously by Banten officials, and caused members of the Djajadiningrat family to leave the region following the death of Raden Soekrawardi in August 1946 and the imprisonment of Hilman Djajadiningrat in October 1946. Others would follow suit, including former officials, policemen, and PETA officers. See Michael Williams, "Rice Debts will be Repaid with Rice, Blood Debts with Blood," in Audrey Kahin (eds.), *Regional Dynamics of the Indonesian Revolution* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 69.

<sup>142</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 98-99.

inflicted by the state or state organs. This condition, however, did not only apply for the Chinese, but also for local population.

Tangerang, ultimately, was beyond the control of Indonesian government during the revolutionary period. The transition of power within Tangerang was followed by the proliferation of militia groups, and the termination of the relationship with the central government of Indonesia, which revolutionary groups in Tangerang thought was nothing but an extension of old bourgeois or princely groups. This only encouraged the emergence of a state within a state under the rule of Haji Achmad Chaerun. Although in principle, the main task of these militia armies was to assist the central government in defending Indonesian independence, in reality they acted on their own. Very often Chinese became victims of their 'perjuangan'. They were often violated and turned into scapegoats regarding the economic situation in Tangerang. Once again, the Chinese were trapped in a quandary.

Filomeno Aguilar argues that the "alienness of Chinese can be understood as the ideological product of socio-historical processes specific to Indonesia, particularly in its construction of nationhood."<sup>143</sup> Therefore, this thesis attempts to use a similar approach. Besides examining the sociopolitical conditions of Tangerang during the revolution, this chapter has also discussed the major events in Tangerang during the various transfers of power, which could possibly shed light on the extremity of violence in Tangerang during the revolution.

During the Japanese occupation, the positions of the two dominant social groups in Tangerang, the *ulama* and the *pangreh praja*, changed significantly. The Japanese made use of religious leaders and nationalists, as well as the bureaucratic elite. Religious and nationalist leaders occupied key positions in such Japanese-organized organizations as Putera (Center of People's Power) or *Barisan Pelopor* (Pioneer Corps). In Tangerang, the *ulama* and *jawara* coalition successfully changed the order at the village and district levels as well. In the transitional period after the Japanese capitulation, they collaborated in creating the new government, electing their own leaders and even forming representative councils.

This chapter has shown that the social revolution in Tangerang initially aimed to remove the bureaucratic elite that had ruled during the Dutch colonial period, and to replace it with an

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<sup>143</sup> Filomeno Aguilar, "Citizenship, Inheritance, and the Indigenizing of "Orang Chinese" in Indonesia." *Positions* (3), (2001), 505.

Indonesian government, radically different in values and attitudes. Popular leaders of political movements attempted to install a more egalitarian system, hence the new system, 'Pemerintahan Bapak Rakyat' (The government of people's father).

However, it later became apparent that the Chaerun's government politically and organizationally had been unable to develop sustainable structures and programs in the face of local and national opposition. The dissolution of the government did not stop the social revolutionaries in Tangerang. Chinese were still victimized and violated as the result of government's lack of control in Tangerang, with Laskar Rakyat and other militia groups sowing social unrest.

On the other hand, the central government in Jakarta did not take firm action to solve the problem in an interior area like Tangerang. Thus, within a short time, social revolution easily spread from one area to another, aggravated by the emergence of many local militia organizations. People could easily get arms to form their own militia group for their own political purposes. The police force also failed to suppress the numerous acts of violence, with some factions even refusing to acknowledge the existence of the new local government of Tangerang.<sup>144</sup>

1946 was a significant year in Tangerang, marking the unfolding of two major events: the Indonesian Republic's successful takeover of Tangerang from Chaerun, and the massacre of Chinese residents around Tangerang districts that occurred on June 1946. Just within few weeks after the return of Tangerang to the hands of Republic, Tangerang Regiment received another 'severe blow' when the Dutch could occupy the city of Tangerang without serious Indonesian resistance. Many houses owned by Chinese and Indonesian *kampung* were set alight, and several areas situated on the north and southwest of Tangerang were burnt to the ground. The friction between the Chinese and local inhabitants in Tangerang erupted in massive killings of Chinese in the interior of Tangerang, regarded in Indonesian history as the worst massacre of Chinese during the Indonesian Revolutionary period. This topic will be discussed further in the next chapter.

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<sup>144</sup> Abdel Hanan, 37.

## CHAPTER III

### “NOW IS THE TIME TO KILL ALL CHINESE”

#### THE MASSACRE OF CHINESE IN TANGERANG 1946

This chapter outlines one of the most infamous incidents of anti-Chinese violence during the Indonesian Revolution: the Tangerang massacre. The first two sub-chapters will depict two important events: Pesing and Cengkareng incidents, leading up to the ‘Perang Sabil’ (Holy War) against the Dutch, and the subsequent massacre not of Dutch but rather of Chinese. This information is based on the minutes of seven pre-massacre meetings between executive members of the Indonesian Republican Cabinet (Badan Pekerdja K.N.I), several Muslim groups (including Laskar Rakyat), *jawara*, and locals held in Tangerang from 17-28 May 1946. The obvious conflict of interests during the meetings also demonstrates that not all parties on the Republican side agreed with a decision of such an aggressive nature.

The following sub-chapter will discuss the massacre itself. The chronology of the massacre, the perpetrators, and also the result of the massacre will be given, based on different accounts. How did the numerous parties react to the massacre? What kinds of solutions did they provide?

The final sub-chapter will analyze why the Chinese were specifically targeted in the massacre. By answering these questions, this chapter aims to provide the background details of the massacre from untapped sources in order to arrive at a fuller understanding of the event.

#### 3.1. Battle of Pesing and Cengkareng

At the beginning of April 1946, at the request of the British Army, the Tangerang Regiment agreed to hold negotiations about the changing of the demarcation line in Pesing, situated just a few kilometers from the West of Jakarta.<sup>145</sup> During the initial agreement, Indonesia decided to withdraw its troops from Pesing, as long as they received orders from the Commander in Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces, General Sudirman. However, while the problem was discussed

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<sup>145</sup> The western parts of Jakarta and Pesing still officially belonged to the Indonesian government. Matia Madjiah, 45.

in Yogyakarta on 15 April 1946, 100 Dutch troops suddenly attacked and occupied Pesing. Even though TRI had been assisted by Laskar Rakyat, they could not defend Pesing.<sup>146</sup> *Gelora Rakjat* reported that 80 Indonesian *pemuda* were killed, and their corpses thrown into river. After the incident, TRI withdrew to Cengkareng, but several clashes still occurred along the way to Pesing and Cengkareng.<sup>147</sup> Starting 25 May 1946, Dutch soldiers continuously launched attacks on Cengkareng-Rawabuaya. In Cengkareng, despite Banten Police Army support (led by Ali Amangku), TRI remained unable to defend Cengkareng and were forced to evacuate the area.<sup>148</sup>

The occupation was clearly a direct violation of the instructions given by British to the Dutch. Colonel S. de Waal, a commander in the Dutch army, received an official reprimand from the Allied forces, but responded by stating that he could not obey the instruction. Pesing was finally occupied by the Dutch, and did not return into the hands of Republic until much later. This case indicates the dualistic nature of Dutch interactions with Indonesia, with diplomatic meetings on one hand, and betrayal of Indonesian trust on the other.<sup>149</sup>

The incident in Pesing was just the beginning of the chaos that would unfold in Tangerang. In April 1946 Kranji and Ujung Menteng were occupied by *pemuda*, with hundreds of the Chinese in these areas executed. Around 100 members of TKR, armed with *klewang* and carbines, took over Mauk after the *wedana* (district officer) was killed. Meanwhile, more than 5,000 armed soldiers remained in Tangerang, the majority of them *pemuda* led by Chaerul Saleh, a member of 'Bapak Rakyat' from Serang, and the founder of 'Barisan Pelopor-Jawa Hokokai.' Tangerang fortified its defenses with 35 mortars, two panzers, 40 trucks, and 30 cars, with mines spread along the road from Kedaung to Tangerang and a barricade erected near the Kalideres Bridge. By this time, the majority of the Chinese and Indo-European residents were already imprisoned by Indonesian extremists.<sup>150</sup>

The tension between the Indonesians and Dutch authorities increased after the collapse of Pesing. The Chinese fell under suspicion, especially after the local inhabitants received

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<sup>146</sup> Since 25 January 1946 the name of TKR was changed into TRI.

<sup>147</sup> *Gelora Rakjat*, 23 April 1946

<sup>148</sup> Matia Madjiah, 45.

<sup>149</sup> *Gelora Rakjat*, 23 April 1946; *Persatoean*, 3 May 1946; *Het Dagblad*, 24 April 1946.

<sup>150</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hooggerechtshof Ned. Indie, 1945-1950*. Inv. Nr. 1056.

information that hundreds of Chinese had joined KNIL. Hundreds of Chinese in Tangerang were captured, shot, and tortured by TRI and Laskar Rakyat after being accused of being NICA spies. The Tangerang government imprisoned thousands of Chinese in Tangerang, and instituted travel bans from April 1946 onwards. The Chinese had to obtain TRI-issued travel letters, and were given a short window of time for travel. Chinese residents who stayed away from Tangerang for one or two weeks were automatically considered NICA spies.<sup>151</sup> If they did not come back in time, their family members would be imprisoned.<sup>152</sup>

### 3.2. Pre-Massacre: Internal Meetings<sup>153</sup>

On 15 May 1946, following those incidents, the Allied Forces dropped pamphlets from the air onto *onderdistrict* Serpong, ordering people who lived near the Cisadane River to move at least two kilometers to the west by 17 May 1946. The area by the Cisadane River would become *Niemandsland* (no man's land).<sup>154</sup> Residents of Serpong had mixed reactions to the pamphlets. Some believed that it was just a provocation from the enemy, while others believed those pamphlets were legal and had been approved by the Republican government.

K.H. Djoenaedi, the head of the religious department of Tangerang, was himself uncertain of the legitimacy of the pamphlets, as he had not received any information from the regent of Tangerang. On 16 May 1946, at 13.00, Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI/Radio Network of Republic Indonesia) in Yogyakarta announced that those pamphlets were illegal, an announcement that they would make throughout the day. Despite repeated attempts to contact the vice-regent of Tangerang for a possible course of action, the latter did not respond, hence delaying meetings regarding the fate of Tangerang.

The first meeting was held on 17 May 1946 at 16.00. It was at this meeting where the pamphlets were pronounced legal, and that they had been approved by the Republic. Two KNI members, Djoenaedi and Raden Partakoesoema, would be sent to Langkang-West in order to

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<sup>151</sup> *Sin Po*, 29 April 1946.

<sup>152</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 124.

<sup>153</sup> Most of information in the first part of this sub-chapter are based on an archive *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>154</sup> The *Niemandsland* was from the west of Cisadane River to the east of Citarum River. TRI and Laskar Rakyat had to move their troops four kilometers north of Jakarta-Serpong railway on 17 May 1946 at 18.00.



disseminate the information to the people about the pamphlets. They were also tasked to cooperate with the village chief of Serpong to mobilize the people, and to maintain law and order in the area.

The second meeting occurred on 18 May, and clarified that the Allied Forces would not invade Tangerang on 21 May 1946, but on the 28th of May instead. Furthermore, the Allied Forces requested the cooperation of the people, saying that failure to comply would result in the bombing of Tangerang. TRI and Laskar Rakyat were ordered to move out of Tangerang, at least to 5 kilometers from the west of the Cisadane River, before Tuesday, 28 May 1946 at 06.00.

TRI decided to let the Allied Forces occupy the Eastern part of Cisadane River without any resistance. However, Laskar Rakyat and some KNI members refused to surrender. Tensions heightened when Djoenaedi, with the backing of his followers, expressed his displeasure with Laskar Rakyat's decision to fight the enemy on behalf of the Religious Affairs Department of Tangerang. Laskar Rakyat, Djoenaedi pointed out, were supposed to be subordinate to the TRI: "TRI has agreed to retreat and Laskar Rakyat has to respect that decision! And if Laskar Rakyat is still not satisfied with the result of this meeting and if they feel they would be able to fight the enemy, everything is up to them. However, it needs to be discussed with other Laskar Rakyat's leaders in every village." Furthermore, they lacked the sufficient military equipment and manpower to successfully fend off the enemy. Finally, he added that it would be wise if the Tangerang government followed the ultimatum in order to prevent any unnecessary bloodshed.

The leader of Laskar Rakyat, K.H. Arsjoedin, argued that it would be a jihad war against the infidel. This was refuted by Djoenaedi, who said that jihad had to fulfill several requirements—the sufficiency of weapons, an army consisting of men who were not slaves, the effectiveness of war strategy, and *moekallaf* (the state of being physically and mentally healthy)—which in his opinion, Laskar Rakyat did not. Djoenaedi's decision is clear, "...the power of our Laskar is not sufficient yet to fight the enemy armed with sophisticated weapons." If Arsjoedin insisted on a jihad, the matter should also be discussed with other Laskar Rakyat leaders in Tangerang: "I personally do not agree with Laskar Rakyat's decision to defend Tangerang,

because TRI is the official army in Tangerang!” Djoenaedi’s arguments almost made him a victim of ‘daulat’, although Muchtar Brata interfered before the situation got out of hand.<sup>155</sup>

Two other meetings were carried out on 19 and 20 May 1946, attended by the chief of the Tangerang Regiment, officials in Tangerang, and TRI and Laskar Rakyat leaders.<sup>156</sup> Laskar Rakyat remained obstinate in their desire for a jihad, and elaborated that such an action would not affect daily life in the district of Tangerang. Vital elements, such as the financial office and all confidential letters of Tangerang, would be moved to a secret location somewhere in Jatiuwung, which was five kilometers away from Tangerang. The Office of Religious Affairs and Education would remain in the city, as they were not directly related with the tense political situation. The Tangerang police would also remain in the city in order to maintain security there. For governmental purposes, some other civil institutions were temporarily moved to Balaraja. All the male residents were asked to stay, except for those who were afraid of explosions from bombs, cannons, and mortars. Women and children were to be evacuated.

The final meeting was held on Sunday, 27 May 1946. TRI was represented by Lieutenant Kaharudin Nasution, and attended by all Laskar Rakyat leaders from Tangerang, Curug, Cengkareng, Teluk Naga, Mauk, Serpong, Legok, et. al. The meeting was led by Soetedjo, an executive member of the Indonesian Republican Cabinet (BPKNIP Tangerang), who suggested that all Laskar Rakyat leaders allow the Allied Forces to enter Tangerang without the TRI, saying: “Although we lose in terms of weapons, we are strong in terms of morals.”<sup>157</sup> Nasution added: “with the mobilization of Allied Forces to the East of the Cisadane River, TRI has to be disciplined and move forward.”<sup>158</sup> K.H. Arsjoedin, representing Laskar Rakyat, stated: “Laskar Rakyat will

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<sup>155</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 112.

<sup>156</sup> “Als jullie in mij nog jullie geestelijke vader zien, als jullie mij nog beschouwen als maatschappelijke voorman, weet dan dat ik geen toestemming geef om weerstand te bieden tenzij de TRI ook gaat blijven. Vinden jullie het zelf niet raar dat waar de TRI met haar zoveel betere uitrusting ervan door gaat, jullie zelf gaan blijven?” (Djoenaedi). See “De Tangerangse ultimo Mei 1946.” *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>157</sup> “Alle laskarleden en hun leiders dienen weerstand te bieden aan de oprukkende bezettingstroepen van de geallieerden, indien nodig dient dit verzet onafhankelijk van de TRI te worden geboden. Wij zijn verplicht om op te komen voor de onafhankelijkheid van het land en ons volk, al mogen wij materieel bij de geallieerden achter staan, moreel dienen wij zeer zeker niet ten achter te staan.” (Soetedjo). See “De Tangerangse ultimo Mei 1946.” *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>158</sup> “De TRI zal zich terug trekken in de richting van de westelijke oever van de Cisadane, want wij hebben daartoe bevel gekregen van het hoofdkwartier, en militairen dienen zich aan orders van boven te

defend Tangerang from Allied Forces, even if TRI withdraws their army. People from South Tangerang will assist us, but perhaps a few days after the battle." The meeting culminated in the election of K.H. Arsjoedin bin Haji Arsjad as the head of the rebellion<sup>159</sup>, and with the agreement that Laskar Rakyat would attack the Allied Forces, as long as they were fighting on behalf of 'Rakyat' (people).

Laskar Rakyat, together with several Moslem groups (like Hizbullah or Sabilillah, for example), *jawara*, and *Barisan Pelopor*, decided to carry out a 'Perang Sabil' (Holy War).<sup>160</sup> Tangerang residents who insisted on fighting moved towards the frontlines in Rawabuaya, Cengkareng, Pakulonan, Bendungan Palar, Cipondoh, and Serpong, who confronted enemies coming from Jakarta and Kebayoran.<sup>161</sup> They disregarded the instructions given by the commander of 'Tentara Repoeblik Indonesia' (Indonesian Republic Army) to establish a no-man's land in line with the agreement reached with the Dutch.<sup>162</sup>

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onderwerpen. Wat de laskars echter met Tangerang denken te moeten doen, zijn de zaken van de laskars zelve." (Nasution, Wakil Kepala Resimen/Onder-regimentscommandant). See "De Tangerangse ultimo Mei 1946." *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>159</sup> "Indien de laskars zich door de leger discipline gebonden voelen, de strijd ook zou kunnen worden voortgezet uit naam van de 'Rajat' zelve, en herhaalde 'dus op naam van het volk' en 'niet op naam van de Laskar Rakjat." Net had hij deze worden geuit, of daar klonk de kreet "Berontak" (revolteert) uit de mond van Moedjitaba, commandant van de LR van Teluknaga. Moehamad Noer bin H. Bermawi (Goeber), commandant van de LR van Jati, schreeuwde "Perang Sabil." See "De Tangerangse ultimo Mei 1946." *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>160</sup> *Jawara* and *jago* were gangs of bandits who were central in the struggle against Dutch colonial rule, along with youths who joined irregular militias, known as *laskar*. During colonial times *jawara* and *jago* acted as powerbrokers for the colonial and indigenous elite. These gangs often emerged as sites of rebellion such as in the Banten peasant uprising in 1888. During Indonesian revolution, these gangs and militias were recruited by the nationalists but often also pursued their own interests. The *jago* gangs who moved into this new power vacuum were those who tied their personal ambitions to the establishment of the Republic. According to John Smail, the *jago* band is an accepted, though deviant, social institution. It has its justificatory myths and a collective mystique and is headed by a leader marked by strong charisma, though it is only parochial in scope. The individual *jago* characteristically carried an amulet which usually convers invulnerability on him. John Smail, *Bandung in the Early Revolution, 1945-1946: A Study in the Social History of the Indonesian Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1964), 88; Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1991). On the relationship between the *jago* and the colonial state, see Henk Schulte Nordholt, 'The Jago in the Shadow: Crime and "Order" in the Colonial State in Java', in *RIMA*, (25)1: (1991), 74-91.

<sup>161</sup> *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang*, 203.

<sup>162</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity...5*.

Laskar Rakyat would implement guerilla warfare strategies by Akhyad Pena, Captain H. Effendi, Irawan, Moh. Tabi'ie and Muhtar Brata. Furthermore, TRI would equip Laskar Rakyat with hand grenades<sup>163</sup>, allowing them to contribute to the struggle but not directly engage in the battles. On the other hand, TRI continued to follow instructions from the highest authorities to withdraw from Tangerang.

### 3.3. The Outbreak of the Massacre

"Our possessions have gone up in smoke. The honor of our wives and daughters were violated. They attacked and violated our freedom. The Indonesian Freedom Flag has been tainted by the killings of thousands innocent Chinese people." -Pouw Kioe An-<sup>164</sup>

One of the main reasons for NICA's desire to occupy Tangerang was because of its strategic location between Banten and Jakarta. NICA also considered West Java as the nest of terrorists and extremists, and Tangerang a part of that. Thus, the Dutch soldiers under Admiral Conrad Helfrich felt that they had the right to restore law and order in West Java, with Tangerang as the starting point. Helfrich ordered his army to assist the British soldiers in carrying out the plan, with the Dutch hunting down the TRI and Laskar Rakyat. The resulting battle, which initially took place in the city, slowly moved to the interior as the result of Laskar Rakyat and TRI's guerilla tactics.<sup>165</sup>

Based on the agreement between NICA and TRI, the area northwest of Jakarta would be handed over from the Allies to the Dutch. The Indonesian Republican Army would then withdraw to the west of Cisadane River, leaving the town which had been their headquarters for approximately nine months. After the signing of the agreement, all civilians were evacuated from the town to Jakarta, Banten, or other evacuation points in Tangerang like Tanah Tinggi or Mauk. However, most of the Chinese preferred to stay for various reasons, mostly economic. The head of CHCH Tangerang, Tjoa Boen Lie, on behalf of Chinese population in Tangerang, rejected the offer. He was afraid of the reoccurrence of a similar incident in 1942, when Chinese properties were robbed by extremists. Unfortunately for the Tionghoa, their refusal was interpreted by the

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<sup>163</sup> Matia Madjiah, 63-64.

<sup>164</sup> "Waarom wij Chinezen de Pao An Tui oprichtten!" *De Vrije Pers*, 18 March 1949

<sup>165</sup> Abdul Haris Nasution, 191.

Indonesians as an alliance with the Dutch.<sup>166</sup> Rumors also circulated in Tangerang that the Chinese in the area opted to stay as they were truly on the side of the Dutch. The situation worsened when some eyewitnesses stated that they had seen several Chinese soldiers among the advancing Dutch troops.<sup>167</sup>

Following the withdrawal of TRI from Tangerang, Dutch troops successfully occupied Serpong without significant resistance from Laskar Rakyat. Dozens of Laskar Rakyat were killed, among them A. Dimiyati (Chief of Laskar Pasar Baru) and Haji Ali (Chief of Laskar Cipondoh).<sup>168</sup> Nonetheless, TRI's withdrawal contributed to the spread of violence in Tangerang, as Laskar Rakyat assumed TRI's duty to maintain law and order in Tangerang, but were indifferent to the plight of the Chinese community there. There were no official force to maintain peace or guarantee the people's safety in Tangerang, nor any laws.

When the Dutch troops entered Tangerang on the night of 28 May 1946, Laskar Rakyat had prepared a huge amount of kerosene in order to launch scorched-earth tactics in Tangerang, though the plan was never carried out because of heavy rain. The arrival of the Dutch in Tangerang brought relief to the Chinese community, as they felt that their presence would increase their security. A Laskar Rakyat-initiated revolt was easily quelled by the Dutch. There were no significant damages in the city of Tangerang, only a prison and residential building that had been burned by Indonesians before they withdrew.<sup>169</sup>

Following the occupation of Tangerang by Allied troops, Laskar Rakyat commenced attacking the Chinese population in West Tangerang on the night of 2 June, armed with bamboo spears, rifles, carbines and Japanese swords. Residences were looted, and the residents burned alive in their homes.<sup>170</sup> They swept down on the most-Chinese town of Tangerang and killed every grown man. In almost every suburb of Tangerang, innocent Chinese were violated. In Kampung Prahoe, only two Chinese of 350 survived the massacre, while 76 were killed in Kampung Ceplak. Sometimes the violence was gendered: men were forcibly circumcised, and

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<sup>166</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 119.

<sup>167</sup> *The Voice of Free Indonesia*, Volume 20, (8 June 1946), 5.

<sup>168</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 113.

<sup>169</sup> Srimastuti Purwaningsih, 132.

<sup>170</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

women and girls raped.<sup>171</sup> Forced circumcision is also examined in one of Star Weekly's article. It said that many Chinese residents in Lontar, both men and women, were forcedly circumcised by an extremist group in that area.<sup>172</sup> In Curug and Balaraja, Chinese were brought to mosques to be circumcised in front of an *ulama*. Women were bathed and their hair cut to symbolize their conversion to Islam. Married couples had to undergo a marriage ceremony in front of a *penghulu* in order to show that they had been converted.<sup>173</sup>

The majority of Tangerang's Tionghoa victims lived on the west of Cisadane River, an area notorious for anti-Chinese violence even before it was occupied by the Dutch. *Jawara* had a strong influence in the area, with their targets usually Chinese, possibly due to the lack of surveillance either from the Dutch or TRI. Anti-Chinese violence was not a new phenomenon in that area.

*Sin Po*, a prominent Chinese *peranakan* newspaper, described instances looting, arson and murder committed in and around Tangerang. The newspaper describes how 11 Chinese were burned to death in a house in Sabi, about one mile from Tangerang, and how in Bajoer, another village nearby, 50 children were locked in a house and burned to death while their parents were forced to look on.<sup>174</sup> Moreover, *Sin Po* also reported that most of the victims in the incident were children and women.<sup>175</sup>

"Not long after the clash, many Chinese fled from Kampung Bayur, Kali Sabi, Rawa Lele, Rawa Rengas, Rawa Bamban, Rawa Saban, Pisangan, Bendah Ngarak, Laban Bulan, Cadas, Malelah, Rawa Beureum, Sulang, Kosambi, Sepatan, and Kedaung Ujung. Most of them were children and women. Based on the survivors' account, their houses were burnt, their properties were robbed, and the men were massacred by Indonesians." (*Sin Po*, 4 June 1946)

Based on the report compiled by 'Chung Hua Tsung Hui' (Federation of Chinese Associations, CHTH), on 3 June 1946 at the village of Panggang (Tjilongok), an old Chinese of 71 years, Lim Tjiauw Hie, a girl of 20 years, Lim Tjoen Nio, and a child of 3 years, Lim Tiang Tjeng,

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<sup>171</sup> Mary Somers Heidhues, "Anti-Chinese..." 386.

<sup>172</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946

<sup>173</sup> Herwin Sumarda, 123-124

<sup>174</sup> "Children Burnt to Death by Indonesian People's Army: 600 Chinese Murdered," *Cairns Post*, 12 June 1946.

<sup>175</sup> *Sin Po*, 4 June 1946.

were burnt alive. At Rawa Tjina, a woman in pregnancy had her womb cut open resulting in untimely birth and death of the child. In Sepatan, the baby of Oey Hap Sioe was snatched from the mother, and thrown into the fire. Until 5 June 1946, there were 28 incidents of arson around Tangerang in which Chinese were burnt alive.<sup>176</sup> According to an Indonesian priest, about four hundred Chinese females, including old people, children and babies were driven into a big house by TRI and Laskar Rakyat in order to be burnt alive. However, two hours before the execution, they were saved by the Dutch troops and the executioners fled.<sup>177</sup>

Following the arrival of Dutch troops in Tangerang, British soldiers guarded the Bridge of Cisadane River, barring the Dutch from proceeding any further. Thus Chinese residents to the west of the river were left to fend for themselves, until Consul-General Tsiang Chia Tung requested the Allied Forces to cross the Cisadane River to rescue the Chinese people there. At a conference in Batavia, Sin Ming Hui issued three orders. First, Tsiang Chia Tung would be requested to draw the attention of the Indonesian Republican government to the Tangerang incident, and urge the Allied Forces to protect the security of the Chinese residents. Second, a report about the situation in the district of Tangerang would be cabled to various newspapers in China. Third, foreign pressmen would be urged to pay attention to the matter.<sup>178</sup>

The area between Djati and Serpong became a battleground of Dutch and TRI. From this point until the Cisadane River, a vast, empty area was visible – remnants of Chinese dwellings that had been decimated by the Indonesian extremists. Residents were only able to check on their belongings in the daytime, as this was the only time it was safe; Laskar Rakyat could appear from anywhere and attack them at any time.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>176</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity...5.*

<sup>177</sup> "Dutch Rescue 2500 Chinese in Java," *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>178</sup> *Sin Po*, 5 June 1946.

<sup>179</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946





Figure 3. The remnants of Chinese dwellings in Tangerang. Source: *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.



Figure 4. The remnants of a house in the interior of Tangerang. Source: *Star Weekly*, 30 June 1946.



In the first few days of the violence (2-3 June 1946) 3,600 Chinese fled into the Dutch lines at central Tangerang, although they were denied passage by Laskar Rakyat. Thereafter they were concentrated in the villages southwest of Tangerang, including 1,200 in the police barracks of Curug.<sup>180</sup> Meanwhile, the situation of Chinese in the interior of Tangerang also worsened, with many of Chinese robbed, raped and even killed.<sup>181</sup> By 12 June 1946 it was estimated that over 600 Chinese had been murdered.

All Chinese residents in Sepatan, Radjeg, and the surrounding areas were ordered by TRI through chief villages to take refuge temporarily in Mauk on 2 June. Indonesian authorities promised that the Chinese would be housed in protected areas far from Pamong Pradja (civil servants) and TRI. In Mauk, more than 2,500 refugees were placed in six Chinese-owned buildings.<sup>182</sup> Seven refugee centers in Mauk housed 984 Chinese. Based on their accounts, they were robbed blind by the extremists, and some of them had witnessed family members being executed.<sup>183</sup>

The Chinese condition in Mauk went from bad to worse. They were often tortured by TRI and Laskar Rakyat. 1,000 men in Mauk prison were left without food for four days.<sup>184</sup> Moreover, based on a statement of a Chinese survivor from Mauk, Chinese were slaughtered on a daily basis. Until 10 June 1946, there were more than 2,000 Chinese in the refugee centers.<sup>185</sup>

“Monday, 10 June 1946. Since 07.00 an emergency alarm had been continuously sounded in Tangerang. Intermittently, we heard that people shouted Siap! Siap! (Get ready!). Member of Laskar Rakyat were flocking on the road with their weapon unsheathed. They kept shouting and look really confused. We also became confused and really scared. Maybe there was another riot and we would again become a victim. This vacillation lasted for almost two hours. And approximately at 09.00 we heard a fire. Initially we heard that sound from faraway, but then it became closer and closer. Suddenly our door was smashed. We saw a group of armed soldiers together with 4-5 Chinese among them went inside. They purposely came to Mauk in order to liberate Chinese people who were captured by extremists.” (*Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.)

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<sup>180</sup> "Wekelijkse Inlichtingenrapporten van 23th Indian Division over Java, April-Juli." *Ministerie van Defensie Collectie Archieven Strijdkrachten in Ned. Indie (1938-1939) 1941-1957* [1960]. Inv. Nr: 147.

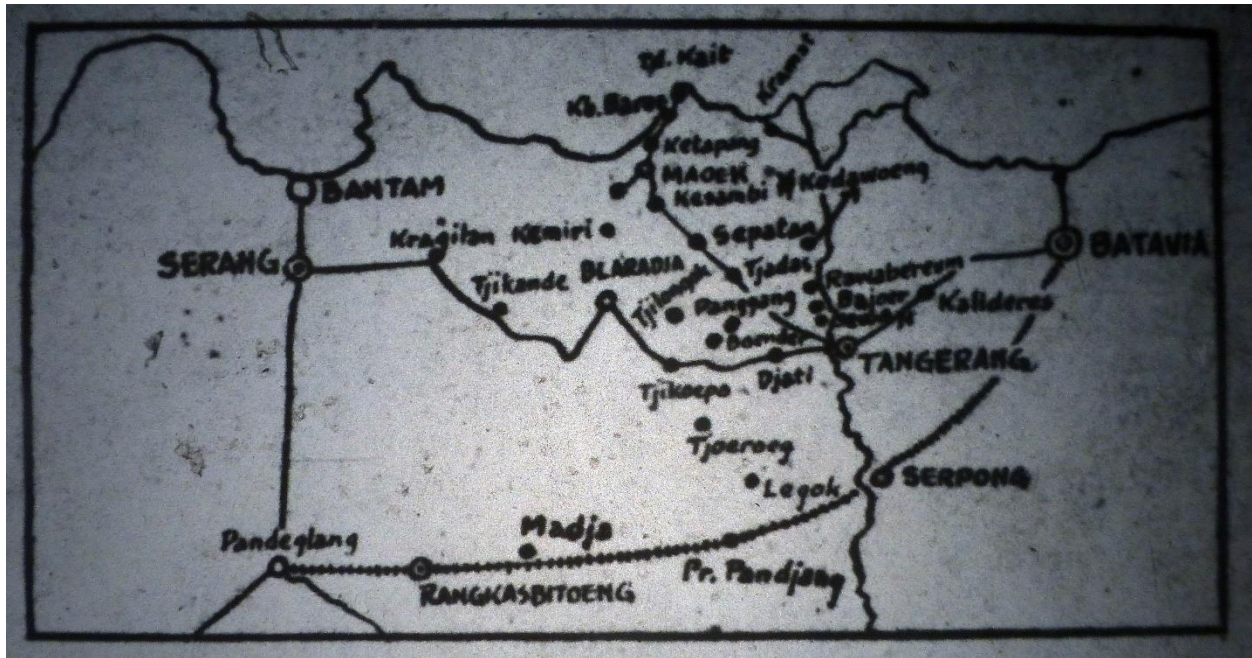
<sup>181</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

<sup>182</sup> *Merdeka*, 14 June 1946.

<sup>183</sup> *Zaman Baroe*, 26 June 1946.

<sup>184</sup> *Townsville Daily Bulletin*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>185</sup> *Thien Sung*, 7 June 1946.



Map 5. Map of Tangerang made by Star Weekly when the massacre was still going on. Source: *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

Within a week (15-22 June), from an area west of Tangerang, more than 1,000 Chinese were evacuated from Mauk to Tangerang, including hundreds of women and children. Nevertheless, many Chinese were still trapped in Kendal, Kemiri, Pengalengan, Werabas, and in the surrounding areas of Mauk. In Curug and Jati Betung more than 1,200 Tionghoa were still imprisoned by Laskar Rakyat and TRI.<sup>186</sup> A stream of thousands of Chinese refugees continuously flowed into the cities of Tangerang or Jakarta.<sup>187</sup> *Star Weekly* likened the Chinese in Tangerang to “an animal ready for slaughter, its meat to be distributed to citizens and soldiers.”<sup>188</sup>

<sup>186</sup> *Zaman Baroe*, 11 June 1946.

<sup>187</sup> *Star Weekly*, 23 June 1946.

<sup>188</sup> *Star Weekly*, 30 June 1946.



Figure 5. Chinese Refugees in Curug. Source: *Star Weekly*, 23 June 1946.

There was no significant information that could explain the situation in Curug, Cikupa, Legok, and the district of Serpong, because communication with the government in Tangerang was temporarily cut off. The Tangerang district was quite safe, with only Teluk Naga suffering a minor incident. Four barracks were established in Tangerang to accommodate 3,500 refugees, while 1,500 others lived with their relatives. Many opted to flee to Jakarta or Krawang because both areas were not affected by the tragedy. In Cikupa, where the Chinese numbered over 1,700, the district officer promised to protect lives and property of the Chinese people. Until 11 June 1946, more than 2,400 Chinese sought refuge in Jakarta, two-thirds of them women and children. 1,300 of them would be placed in seven different refugee camps, some of them in Chinese-owned storage warehouses – Alaydroeslaan, Laan Songsi, along the way of Laan Songsi, Mangga Dua, Toko Tiga Seberang, Kampung Malaka 45, and Tangsi Polisi Glodok, while the remainder stayed with their relatives in Jakarta.<sup>189</sup>

Transporting was not without its difficulties. Many Chinese were still captured or ‘secured’ by Indonesian extremists, who controlled the border, which made Chinese hesitant to

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<sup>189</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946

stray from their hiding places. In Mauk, Dutch troops and Chinese volunteers evacuated Chinese who had been left behind. Meanwhile in Gandu, thousands of Chinese refugees from Cilongok and Pasar Kemis had to wait until 'Komite Penolong Keselamatan Korban Tionghoa' sent 55 Chinese *pemuda* to rescue them. The Chinese in Gandu were lucky, as the village chief was willing to help them; this was not always the case.

### 3.4. The Losses

The Tangerang affair created a massive loss for Chinese. However, an intriguing fact about the tragedy is the different number of casualties given by Indonesians, Chinese, and the Dutch. Based on the narrative of the Chinese survivors, the number of casualties of Tangerang incident from 3-15 June was 177 men, 92 women, and 97 children were killed; 59 men, 40 women and 70 children were missing; and 864 men, 960 women and 1312 children flee to Jakarta.<sup>190</sup>

According to the official report received by Jang Seng Ie Red Cross in Batavia, about 653 Chinese were murdered around Tangerang, including 136 females and 36 children. About 1,269 Chinese houses were burnt down and 236 ruined, with approximately 25,000 refugees in Batavia from the suburbs of Tangerang.<sup>191</sup> Another source also mentioned that the number of casualties in Tangerang reached 1,800, including 385 women and 291 children.<sup>192</sup>

*Star Weekly* reported on the damages in Tangerang: 40-50 kampung were devastated; 1,200 dwellings looted and flattened; 700 Chinese massacred, 200 of them women and children; 200 Chinese missing; material damages in excess of 7 million rupiah (Japanese notes).<sup>193</sup> Meanwhile *Merdeka* reported 'only' 132 Chinese killed in Tangerang until 14 June 1946 and 100 houses were razed in Sepatan, Rajeg, Cilongok, Karawaci, Jati, Kramat, Bajoerkali, Rawasaban, Sangean, etc.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> *Soember Penerangan*, 22 June 1946.

<sup>191</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity Perpetrated by Indonesian Bands on Innocent Chinese before and after the Dutch Police Action was enforced on July 21, 1947* (Batavia: Chung Hua Tsung Hui, 1947), 5-6. Meanwhile according to Indonesian Information Minister, Mohammed Natsir, 'only' 100 Chinese houses were burnt by Indonesians, 140 Chinese were killed, 40 were missing and 2,000 were "under protective custody of the Republican Army." "Natsir Talks on the Massacre," *The Straits Times*, 14 June 1946; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 June 1946.

<sup>192</sup> "Stop this Slaughter: Appeal by Chinese," *The Singapore Free Press*, 16 August 1947.

<sup>193</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946

<sup>194</sup> *Merdeka*, 14 June 1946.

*Merdeka's* estimation became the official statistics issued by the government of Indonesia, which was far lower than the estimation issued by the Dutch or Chinese.

The Chinese Committee also issued a number of casualties in Tangerang. From 3 June to 1 July 1946, about 573 Chinese were killed, 212 missing and 11,035 flee to Jakarta.<sup>195</sup>The Federation of Chinese Associations (Chung Hua Chung Hui) of the Central Committee in Jakarta, as quoted from *Aneta*, reported that 703 men, 239 women and 143 children (1085 in total) died as a result of massacre in Tangerang. Meanwhile, 78 men, 51 women, and 84 children (213 in total) were still missing. More than 15,300 had escaped to from Tangerang to Jakarta. This number was based on a report from 3 June up to 15 July 1946.<sup>196</sup>

Based on a report compiled by Komite Tionghoa Pembantu Keamanan Umum Jakarta to Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Indonesian Republic, details of victims of Tangerang Affairs from 3 June-9 July 1946 were as follows: 703 men, 239 women and 143 children were killed; 78 men, 51 women, and 84 children were still missing; and the number of Chinese refugees who arrived safely in Jakarta were 4,085 men, 4,353 women, and 6,862 children.<sup>197</sup>

Table 2. Information on Specific Areas in the Tangerang District until 16 June 1946<sup>198</sup>

Area/Neighborhood	Onderdistrict	Severely Damaged	Minor Damaged	Unclear	Safe
Kemiri	Mauk	V			
Kosambi	Mauk	V			
Karang Serang	Mauk	V			
Patra Menggala	Mauk	V			
Mauk	Mauk		V		
Keboen Baroe	Mauk		V		
Ketapang	Mauk		V		
Tandjung Kait	Mauk		V		
Kendal	Mauk		V		
Cadas	Sepatan	V			
Kali Baroe	Sepatan	V			
Rawa Sabab	Sepatan	V			
Rawa Beureum	Sepatan	V			
Bajoer	Sepatan	V			
Sewan Kebon	Sepatan	V			

<sup>195</sup> *Pandji Ra'jat*, 19 July 1946.

<sup>196</sup> *Soeloeh Ra'jat*, 22 July 1946

<sup>197</sup> *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521.

<sup>198</sup> The table made based on data given by *Star Weekly*. Some areas/neighborhoods are not mentioned by the source. See *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.

Gandoe	Sepatan			V	
Etek	Sepatan			V	
Kelapa Dua	Curug	V			
Kelapa Satu	Curug	V			
Rawacana	Curug	V			
Sabi	Curug	V			
Curug	Curug			V	
Cikupa	Cikupa			V	
Legok	Legok			V	
Cisauk	Serpong			V	
Lengkong Kulon	Serpong			V	
Pondok Jagung	Serpong			V	
Teluk Naga	Tangerang		V		
Karawaci Ilir	Tangerang				V
Lengkong	Tangerang				V
Kebon Nanas	Tangerang				V
Pekulonon	Tangerang				V
Source: <i>Star Weekly</i> , 16 June 1946					

### 3.5. Different Accounts, Different Interpretations

**Table 3. The Chronology of Tangerang Occupation as Written by Ibrahim Abdoellah<sup>199</sup>**

Date	Information
20 May 1946	People panicked and fled Serpong after NICA fired a mortar.
22 May 1946	Serpong locals protested the decision of TRI.
23 May 1946	An order to withdraw to the west of Cisadane was issued by the TRI headquarters.
24 May 1946	Most locations around Tangerang were empty, with only a TRI and Laskar Rakyat presence.
26 May 1946	Laskar Rakyat and the Police Army captured an informant, who alleged that many Chinese worked as spies for NICA.
27 May 1946	TRI left Tangerang following heavy shelling from NICA forces.
28 May 1946	A blast was heard from Tangerang. NICA moved forward to Batuceper. Many people, including members of Laskar Rakyat who lived across Cisadane River, decided to flee. NICA occupied Tangerang at 13.00.

<sup>199</sup> Ibrahim Abdullah was a member of Indonesian Republican Army (TRI). "Tentara," Documenten Balaradja, Zakboekje van Ibrahim Abdoellah, *NEFIS Document* No. 1891.

2 June 1946	A battle broke out in nearby Djati. NICA bombarded Kampung Cimone and Kampung Cibodas before entering Djati. TRI, with the help of the locals, banded together to fight NICA, who were forced to withdraw to Tangerang. Several <i>kampung</i> in Pabuaran were burned. Many Chinese were killed by 'rakyat.'
3 June 1946	Laskar Rakyat, with the help of the locals, indiscriminately killed Chinese people around Djati, as they were thought to be NICA spies.
7 June 1946	A 'Civil Investigation Base' was established, which oversaw the outsiders who entered the village, and investigate the Chinese community.

The diary of Ibrahim Abdoellah shows, chronologically, that the occupation of Tangerang was related to the involvement of Laskar Rakyat and TRI. Although TRI had to withdraw from the city of Tangerang, the situation in the interior of Tangerang remained under their jurisdiction and responsibility. Laskar Rakyat refused to leave the city, and aimed to die defending it. The situation in the interior of Tangerang grew increasingly dire, as many Chinese were killed. The diary also mentions that Laskar Rakyat successfully incited the local population to loot Chinese buildings or to kill Chinese. The involvement of both Laskar Rakyat and TRI in the Tangerang massacre, despite being glaringly obvious, remains silenced in Indonesian historiography.

Different accounts naturally interpret the massacre differently. The heightened tension during the revolution provided an opportunity for the Dutch to lay the blame on the Indonesian government for not being able to maintain law and order within its regions. Conversely, the Indonesian government accused both the Dutch and the Chinese for causing the massacre. With these inherent biases and motives in play, it is difficult to find neutral media information provided during the revolutionary period. In this sub-chapter, I provide information on prominent newspapers who reported on the massacre, in order to obtain further data and to understand the politics behind their reportage.



**Table 4. A List of Newspapers from the Indonesian Revolutionary Period Used**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Publisher/Printing House</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Orientation</b>	<b>Circulation</b>
<i>Aneta</i>	Persbureau Aneta	Dutch	Jakarta	Dutch	---
<i>Het Dagblad</i>	Stichting Nederlandse Dagblad Pers Batavia	Dutch	Jakarta	Dutch	21,000
<i>Merdeka</i>	Badan Penerbit Merdeka/Pemandangan	Indonesian	Jakarta	Republic	6,000
<i>The Voice of Free Indonesia</i>	---	English	Jakarta	Republic	---
<i>Thien Sung Yit Po</i>	Thien Sung Yit Po	Chinese	Jakarta	Kuomintang	9,000
<i>Het Inzicht</i>	---	Dutch	Jakarta	Republic	---
<i>Sin Po<sup>200</sup></i>	Sin Po	Indonesian/Chinese	Jakarta	---	30,523
<i>Star Weekly (Weekly)</i>	Keng Po	Indonesian	Jakarta	---	8,500
<i>Soeloeh Merdeka</i>	---	Indonesian	Pematang Siantar	Republic	---
<i>New China Times</i>	Sin Chung Hwa	Indonesian	Medan	---	3,000
<i>Soeloeh Ra'jat</i>	Locomotief	Indonesian	Semarang	Dutch	5,000
<i>Vrije Pers</i>	De Vrije Pers	Dutch	Surabaya	Dutch	10,000
<i>Daily Telegraph</i>	Chinese Consulate Red Yu Chian Kuo	Chinese	Makassar	Kuomintang	1,350
<i>Lee Ming Pao</i>	Lee Ming Press	Chinese	Pontianak	Anti-Kuomintang	1,500-2,000
<i>Zaman Baroe</i>	Rumah Frater Padang	Indonesian	Padang	---	---

Source: *Perslijst Indonesië* (Jakarta: Regerings Voorlichtings Dienst, 1949).

<sup>200</sup> \*Chinese and Indonesian Edition



As the biggest radio and news agency of the Indonesian Republic during the revolutionary period, *Antara* played an important role in disseminating news to the Indonesian public. During the revolution time, *Antara* became an important tool of the Indonesian Republic to spread anti-Dutch propaganda. *Antara* used the Tangerang massacre to blame the Dutch of endangering lives in the name of Dutch military strategy. *Antara* accused the Chinese of assisting the Dutch under the group name 'NICA-Chinese', to oppress the local population.<sup>201</sup> These accusations by *Antara* were then used as the main reference point of other Republican newspapers like *Merdeka*, *Oetoesan Sumatera* or *Soeloeh Merdeka*. *Zaman Baroe* criticized *Antara* to spread hoax news by saying it was the Dutch who committed all crimes in Tangerang and for trying to twist all the truths by showing to the world how cruel the Dutch and the Chinese were.<sup>202</sup>

*Antara* lauded the effort of TRI Banten, who informed the local people that the Chinese were not enemies of the Republic quickly, so that by 8 June 1946, the situation in Tangerang was already under control. Chinese residents were reported that they felt safe under the protection of Laskar Rakyat, Indonesian soldiers, and Police Army.<sup>203</sup> However, if we compare the news with reports from Chinese, Australian, and Dutch newspapers, it was obvious that the first two weeks of Dutch occupation in Tangerang were the tensest period for the Chinese refugees. Both *Star Weekly* and *Sin Po* published articles that reported that the Chinese feared Laskar Rakyat. All across Tangerang, murders, arson, and robberies continued. If *Star Weekly* and *Sin Po* were correct in their assumption that Laskar Rakyat was the main perpetrator of the incident, it is highly unlikely that the Chinese residents felt safe under Laskar Rakyat's protection. It is highly likely that this was merely *Merdeka* propaganda to show the Indonesian public that the Republic could control the situation in Tangerang.

Meanwhile, *Het Inzicht*, a weekly pro-Indonesia magazine published in Dutch, described the Tangerang incident as a demonstration of vicious vengeance and retaliation against the Dutch. Just like *Merdeka* and other Republican newspapers, *Het Inzicht* also blamed the Dutch for the tragedy.

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<sup>201</sup> *Ministerie van Defensie Collectie Archieven Strijdkrachten in Ned. Indie (1938-1939) 1941-1957* [1960]. Inv. Nr: 147.

<sup>202</sup> *Zaman Baroe*, 22 June 1946.

<sup>203</sup> *Merdeka*, 10 June 1946.

"Only a third party, the Dutch reactionaries who want Indonesia to revert to a colony, will reap benefit from such troubles. And the profit they make consists not only of thousands of Chinese soldiers who join the NICA for revenge, but also political propaganda to reoccupy Indonesia."<sup>204</sup>

*Merdeka* reported at least six reasons why Chinese were attacked in Tangerang. *First*, there was a Chinese who removed the Indonesian flag. *Second*, Chinese were armed by NICA, who then attacked civilians on the West of the Cisadane River. *Third*, these armed Chinese fired upon elders and children. *Fourth*, the Chinese were used as NICA's henchmen to find Laskar Rakyat and other Indonesian *pemuda*. *Fifth*, the Chinese allegedly spread a rumor that the Indonesian nation would last only three days. *Sixth*, NICA burnt people's dwellings in Djati, and rumors spread that the action was committed by Chinese NICA agents.<sup>205</sup>

Furthermore, *Merdeka* also reported that the tragedy in Tangerang was triggered by the Chinese themselves: "Some Chinese groups secretly or openly assisted the Dutch troops and what they did harmed the Indonesian Republic."<sup>206</sup> The day afterwards, *Merdeka* published another accusatory article that pointed to "the involvement of Chinese who fought in the Dutch side as the main cause." The article went on to say: "People who saw that some Chinese had sided with NICA started to lose control...It was obvious, more or less, that the disorder was triggered by a few Chinese who held NICA weapons."<sup>207</sup>

Rosihan Anwar, a *Merdeka* journalist, had done his own investigation in Tangerang, and arrived at several observations. He classified the society in Tangerang into two categories: powerful landlords and poor farmers. Landlords were usually Chinese, who Rosihan categorizes as capitalist-bourgeois who only exploited farmers, casting them out from their lands once that they had taken their daughters. This situation was possible because the Chinese were protected by notorious Dutch 'marechaussee' and 'veldpolitie' in Tangerang. Such an image became deeply entrenched in people's minds, eventually resulting in uprisings, like in the cases of Tangerang (1916) and Batucapeper (1934). Poverty in Tangerang also contributed to the growing violence in

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<sup>204</sup> As quoted in *Persahabatan Indonesia-Tionghoa* (Jakarta: Kementerian Penerangan, April 1946).

<sup>205</sup> *Merdeka*, 11 June 1946.

<sup>206</sup> *Merdeka*, 6 June 1946.

<sup>207</sup> *Merdeka*, 7 June 1946.

Tangerang, with robberies and *penggedoran* becoming commonplace.<sup>208</sup> Moreover, according to Rosihan, the Indonesians in Tangerang were a mixed race descended from soldier-convicts and pirates from Bugis and Siam, who had been committing various crimes in Tangerang for several centuries ago. The Tangerang area itself had been used as a dumping ground for those convicts.<sup>209</sup>

### 3.6. Responses of Chinese-Indonesians Communities and Press

At a meeting of the Daily Affairs Council of the Chinese General Association in Jakarta on 7 June 1946, it was decided that 11 June 1946 would be a day of mourning for the victims of the Tangerang massacre. In accordance with this, all Chinese residents of Batavia would not report for work on the said day. Their announcement, released on 8 June 1946, outlines the points of their protest: "(1) To express our grief for our brothers in Tangerang who suffered greatly; (2) To protest the many atrocities and unlawful actions in Tangerang; and (3) To bemoan the failure of the authorities of the Allied Forces and TRI to fulfill their responsibility in protecting the Chinese residents."<sup>210</sup> This call to protest was echoed by the Federation of Chinese Associations (CHTH) in Batavia.<sup>211</sup>



Figure 6. An advertisement published in *Star Weekly* calling for the mourning of all victims in Tangerang. Source: *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

<sup>208</sup> *Merdeka*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>209</sup> *Merdeka*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>210</sup> *Sin Po*, 6 June 1946.

<sup>211</sup> "Request to be Protected," *The Straits Times*, 11 June 1946.

Several Chinese organizations also made several decisive actions, among them forming a 12-man investigative committee to inquire into the Tangerang massacre. Within a week of the incident, the committee traveled to Tangerang to collect evidence, assess the situation, and ease tensions. While the committee promoted Sino-Indonesian friendship in Tangerang, miles away, the lives and property of 10,000 Chinese residents remained in the hands of TRI. Their condition, as *Sin Po* wrote, could hardly be imagined.<sup>212</sup>

On 16 June 1946, Dr. Thung Sin Nio called a meeting of women of various ethnicities at her home at Kramat 99, Jakarta. During the meeting, it was decided that a protest would be launched against the massacre of hundreds innocent men, women, and children. The protest would not merely to show their grief for the victims of the Tangerang massacre, but also to raise awareness about similar incidents in Semarang, Surabaya, Ambarawa, Bandung, and Bekasi. The women's meeting also produced a petition that urged the United Nations to expedite peace negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia.<sup>213</sup>

In Malang, lawyers Oei Yong Tjioe and Tan Po Goan spoke at a meeting of Malang Chinese, appealing for cooperation between the Chinese and Indonesians. The following resolutions were adopted: (1) The Indonesian government would be requested to protect the security of various nationals within their country; (2) The British and Dutch military authorities would be requested to cease all military action in order to prevent further harm against the Chinese community in Indonesia; (3) A committee dedicated to handling the affairs concerning Tangerang refugees would be established.<sup>214</sup>

CHTH attempted to rally support from the United Nations Security Council (U.N.). The CHTH chairman in Batavia, Hung Yuan, made an appeal to the U.N. in the name of humanity and justice to call upon the Republican Government to release thousands of Chinese civilians who remained Republican prisoners. The U.N, Hung Yuan suggested, should call on the Republic to pay indemnification worth 100 million guilders, and to severely punish Indonesians who had a

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<sup>212</sup> *Sin Po*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>213</sup> *Sin Po*, 22 June 1946.

<sup>214</sup> *Thien Sung Yit Po*, 25 June 1946.

part in the atrocities. "If Indonesians feel that they have a right to independence, the Chinese have full right not to be treated as animals," Hung Yuan remarked.<sup>215</sup>

The Tangerang massacre triggered vast responses from Chinese newspapers in Indonesia. Almost all of them deplored the massacre, and demanded that the Indonesian government claim responsibility for such a heinous crime. Chinese newspapers sharply countered all allegations hurled by their Indonesian counterparts. *Sin Po*, the most prominent *peranakan* newspaper in Indonesia at that time, wrote in an article titled "Sad and Indignant City", that Indonesian extremists in Tangerang were as cruel as the former Japanese invaders.<sup>216</sup> *Pandji Ra'jat* even called this Republic as Republic 'Made in Japan' and 'Fascist Republic' because the protection system for Chinese people was fallible and vulnerable.<sup>217</sup>

On 8 June 1946, an article published in *Sin Po* stated that the Tangerang tragedy was not merely a misfortune to mankind, but also one of the greatest misfortunes to the 'weaker race.'<sup>218</sup> The Tangerang tragedy, according to the article, exposed the weak points of the Indonesian race, and was detrimental to the Indonesian fight for independence. Furthermore, an apology was insufficient to amend all the wrongs done to the Chinese community in Indonesia. The article advised a thorough investigation of the tragedy, the prosecution and severe punishment of perpetrators, and a guarantee of safety for all Chinese persons and property. Only after fulfilling these three suggestions could a peaceful coexistence between Chinese and Indonesians occur.<sup>219</sup>

A rumor about the involvement of Chinese in NICA already spread rapidly, justifying the capture or killing of any Chinese who was considered suspicious. This was heavily criticized by *Star Weekly*: "If it was true that several Chinese served as Dutch soldiers (maybe because one of their relatives was executed by Indonesian extremists), why were only Chinese targeted?" Furthermore, *Star Weekly* questioned why many innocent Chinese children and women were also executed. Just like 'bersiap' held negative connotations for minority groups, 'merdeka' (freedom)

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<sup>215</sup> "U.N.O Receives Complaint from Indonesia," *The Straits Times*, 11 August 1946.

<sup>216</sup> *Sin Po*, 6 June 1946.

<sup>217</sup> *Pandji Ra'jat*, 2 July 1946.

<sup>218</sup> The term was specifically addressed by *Sin Po* to describe the miserable conditions of Chinese who were victimized during the Dutch occupation of Tangerang.

<sup>219</sup> *Sin Po*, 7 June 1946.

also had negative connotation to the Chinese. To them, it was a warning that they might get raped, robbed, killed or become a victim of other kinds of violence.<sup>220</sup> Meanwhile, *Sin Po*, the biggest *peranakan* newspaper in Indonesia, said that the articles published by *Merdeka* had no basis in fact.<sup>221</sup>

*Star Weekly* attempted to address the numerous rumors and hearsay circulating about the Tangerang massacre. It rejected all Rosihan's accusations, and claimed that the Red-White flag in the office of Tangerang district was not removed by the Chinese, as *Merdeka* reported, but by a Dutchman who replaced that flag with the Dutch flag. *Star Weekly* boasted eyewitnesses who could confirm their statements. Furthermore, as there were no Chinese in NICA, it would be impossible for Chinese to be involved in the burning of Indonesian dwellings. While *Star Weekly* did not deny that Chinese landlords did oppress Indonesians during the colonial period, it said that fellow Chinese as well as Indonesians were subject to the oppression of the Chinese landlord. Thus, it would be very odd if Chinese, of whom the majority were poor, were victimized. In response to a claim that local people in Tangerang were a mixture of pirates and convicts, *Star Weekly* cited other areas like Sumatra, Ambarawa, Bandung, and Surabaya, where Chinese also suffered greatly. The weekly adds: "The rumor that a Chinese has removed Indonesian flag has never been clarified by the Indonesian government, as if they intend to mislead people. How many Chinese flags have been torn and trampled by Indonesians in Jakarta? Everybody already knew about that."<sup>222</sup>

*Sin Po* heavily criticized Indonesian newspapers, particularly *Merdeka*, for their glaring lack of journalistic integrity, and for frequently manipulating facts: "It is regrettable that the Indonesian pressmen have not fulfilled their responsibility of printing the truth. *Merdeka* newspaper, a vessel for Indonesian propaganda, blamed the Dutch for the tragedy in Tangerang while neglecting to mention the involvement of TRI and Laskar Rakyat."<sup>223</sup> *Merdeka* articles, *Sin Po* said, were nothing but lies.<sup>224</sup>

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<sup>220</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

<sup>221</sup> *Sin Po*, 7 June 1946

<sup>222</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.

<sup>223</sup> *Sin Po*, 10 June 1946.

<sup>224</sup> *Sin Po*, 7 June 1946

### 3.7. Responses of Indonesian Officials

After the Tangerang massacre, Sukarno and Sutan Sjahrir, the Indonesian Prime Minister (1945-47), apologized on the behalf of the Indonesian people, and promised to increase protection for foreign residents. At the same, they released an official statement blaming the Dutch for the atrocities in Tangerang. Sukarno and Sjahrir, unlike *Merdeka* and other Republican newspapers, noticeably did not explicitly blame the Chinese of siding with NICA. Neither did they mention the involvement of Laskar Rakyat or TRI in the massacre.

An official apology issued by Sutan Sjahrir was broadcast on the radio a week after the incident. Sjahrir expressed his regret and sorrow regarding the situation in Tangerang, and to the victimized Chinese in Tangerang. He said that the massacre occurred because the Indonesian army was forced to leave Tangerang, adding: "Our struggle is not only to defend external attacks, but the most important thing is to improve internal safety in our own country and also to be free from atrocities and arbitrary actions."<sup>225</sup>

"I express my regret and condolences to all the victims in Tangerang. The incident was a result of the retreat of Indonesian soldiers from an area that was supposed to be under their guard. I personally address my sorrow to Chinese people who were severely abused in the tragedy." (*Merdeka*, 7 June 1946).

Sjahrir admitted that he was unable to control the situation. He blamed Dutch troops for having cut the Indonesian government's communication lines with the Republican troops in the vicinity of Tangerang, and accused the Allies of using heavy mortars and artillery during their occupation.<sup>226</sup> Moreover, according to Sjahrir, the Indonesians who committed the massacre were 'under nobody's control' and were 'pure gangsters with no motive other than thirst for blood.'<sup>227</sup> The Republican Government also blamed the Allies because of their tactics of advancing and then falling back, leaving formerly captured areas to the Republican army.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> "Perjuangan kita bukan merupakan perjuangan pertahanan terhadap keluar, tetapi juga lebih penting lagi ialah menyempurnakan keamanan dalam negeri sendiri juga lepas dari kekejaman dan perbuatan sewenang-wenang." *Zaman Baroe*, 8 June 1946.

<sup>226</sup> "Indonesians said to be Massing: Java Situation Deteriorates," *The Argus*, 8 June 1946.

<sup>227</sup> "Dutch Failed to Stop Massacre," *The Straits Times*, 7 June 1946.

<sup>228</sup> "Batavia Press on Status of Chinese," *The Straits Times*, 19 June 1946

Sjahrir's argument was supported by the Minister of Information of Indonesia, Mohammed Natsir (1946-47). Yet, interestingly, Natsir put the blame on the Tionghoa massacre on both the Dutch and the Chinese themselves. The Dutch, according to Natsir, 'forced' the Republican Army to leave a four-mile deep no man's land west of the Cisadane River,<sup>229</sup> making it impossible to maintain law and order in this zone, where the greater part of the anti-Chinese incidents occurred.<sup>230</sup> Prior to the incident, he noted that Dutch troops had crossed the Cisadane River several times and razed more than 100 houses. To add insult to injury, Tionghoa had been armed by the Dutch to search for extremists near Tangerang,<sup>231</sup> and took down the Indonesian flag from Tangerang at the instigation of the Dutch. Natsir's statement again did not mention any involvement of Laskar Rakyat, TRI or Police-Army as the main perpetrators. Republican newspapers systematically downplayed their roles in the killings. Moreover, Natsir also charged Chinese with taking down the Indonesian flag from Tangerang at the instigation of the Dutch.<sup>232</sup> His official statement regarding the involvement of Chinese in NICA made Natsir the first Indonesian official who alluded to the issue.

The accusation regarding Chinese collaboration with enemy troops existed even prior to the Tangerang massacre. Findings from the Indonesian Intelligence Department revealed that many Chinese indeed welcomed the restoration of the Dutch administration.<sup>233</sup> Sukarno later addressed the issue of Chinese collaboration during a meeting in Yogyakarta, expressing his regret that many Chinese in Jakarta, Surabaya, Semarang, and Bandung had directly assisted the Dutch troops in destroying the monetary and economic structure of Indonesia.<sup>234</sup> Discontent was widespread even in the popular media. Pro-Indonesian newspapers such as 'Ra'jat' and 'Merdeka' revealed their dissatisfaction with Chinese residents in Java, accusing them of assisting NICA troops. *Sin Po* indirectly admitted that some Chinese might have been collaborators: "Although

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<sup>229</sup> Cisadane River separated Dutch and Indonesian controlled territories during the battle. "Java Massacre of Chinese Reported," *The Straits Times*, 6 June 1946.

<sup>230</sup> "Batavia Press on Status of Chinese," *The Straits Times*, 19 June 1946.

<sup>231</sup> *Soember Penerangan*, 15 June 1946; *Zaman Baroe*, 18 June 1946.

<sup>232</sup> *The Straits Times*, 14 June 1946; *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 June 1946.

<sup>233</sup> *Sin Po*, 23 March 1946.

<sup>234</sup> *Sin Po*, 23 March 1946.



the action of the Indonesian youths towards the Chinese residents in many places is improper and not necessary, we have to admit our own faults."<sup>235</sup>

Sukarno, as aforementioned, used the Tangerang tragedy as propaganda, accusing NICA and the Dutch government of masterminding it. According to him, the arrival of Dutch forces in Tangerang arose the anger of the people, resulting in the massacre: "The Tangerang invasion by the Dutch soldiers was only a phase in our struggle. The Dutch should be responsible for all murder and robberies of Chinese in that area!"<sup>236</sup> However, Sukarno also admitted to the dysfunction of the Tangerang government in a speech he gave on Antara Radio: "As a result of the absence of the state, the Chinese in Tangerang were attacked by our people...I deeply regret the sad incident because it contradicts with our spirit of Chinese-Indonesian friendship."<sup>237</sup> In closing, he encouraged all parties to respect the lives and property of Chinese in Indonesia.

"I instruct to all government officials, to all civil servants, to army, to police, to all militia organizations, and to all Indonesian people, to protect and respect the lives and property of Chinese and other foreign nations in our Republican territory." (*Merdeka*, 10 June 1946)

Sukarno apologized yet again to all Chinese victims during the CHCH congress (8-11 March 1947) in Solo, Central Java. It was a momentous occasion for him to publicly declare his sympathy for the Chinese victims, especially since the Tangerang massacre was followed by other such massacres in Palembang and Bagan Siapi-Api. The congress had many important delegates— Sjamsoeri, the mayor of Solo; Raden Pandji Soeroso, representatives from the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the General Consulate of China; and members of San Min Chu I Tsing Nien Tua. Also present at the congress were representatives of CHCH's Java and Madura chapters, CHCH being the organization that represented the voice of the Chinese community in Indonesia. Thus, it was of utmost importance for Sukarno to attract

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<sup>235</sup> In a majority of cases, the 'improper' actions were their involvement in a black market, smuggled Dutch notes from the interior. Most of them believed in Dutch soldiers' protection, instead of Indonesian troops. However, many of Chinese also sided with the Indonesians, such as John Lie or Siauw Giok Tjhan, and some of them did not have any choice than supporting the Indonesians, since over 80% of the Chinese residents in Java were living in regions under the control of the Indonesians. See *Sin Po*, 23 March 1946.

<sup>236</sup> *Merdeka*, 10 June 1946.

<sup>237</sup> *Merdeka*, 10 June 1946.

Chinese sympathy, and to show the world that Indonesia cared about the welfare of the Chinese. Before the meeting officially started, Sukarno declared:

“There is no one who deeply regrets what happened in Tangerang, Palembang and Bagan Siapi-api more than me. Together with this, I would like to apologize... To all my people, I would like to say that the Indonesia nation indeed has killed and robbed Tionghoa with amok in Tangerang, Palembang and Bagan Siapi-Api. It is a stain on the Indonesia nation! I call all Indonesians to hold your honor firmly! Ultimately, as a head of state, I call all audience to shout together: “Long live Republic of China! Long live the Republic of Indonesia! Long live the China-Indonesia unity!”<sup>238</sup>

As a consequence of internal and external pressure, the Republican Government acted to resolve the tension between Indonesians and Chinese. A committee was established by the Indonesian government in order to investigate the cause of the Tangerang massacre. It consisted of Mohammad Natsir, Nugroho, Lim Hok Soei, Mr. Masrin, Tubagus Aksan, all from the Ministry of Information; Kadir Said of Antara Newspaper; Rosihan Anwar of Merdeka Newspaper; Lee Soei Ke of Sin Po; Oey Kim Sen & Go King Liong of Sin Ming Hui; two TRI Officers, and a representative from the Ministry of Interior. Investigations formally commenced a week after the Tangerang massacre. From Jakarta, the committee traveled to Bogor, Jasinga, Rangkasbitung, Serang, Pontang, Lontar, Mauk and Rajeg. In Jasinga, they talked with an ex-chief of Tangerang, who was one of the refugees who had managed to escape from Tangerang. He explained his confusion regarding the massacre, as, prior to it, relationships between Chinese and Indonesians gave no indication of any hostility. Many Chinese supported 'Fonds Kemerdekaan' and the Indonesian Red Cross, and had even established a restaurant catering especially to TRI. While in the same area, the committee also met with Dudung Patrnosukarto, a battalion commander of TRI in Jasinga. When he was questioned about the Tangerang massacre, Dudung pointed to the involvement of Polisi Tentara in that massacre. He said that the group had a negative reputation,

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<sup>238</sup> Tidak seorang lebih menyesal atas kejadian di Tangerang, Palembang dan Bagan Siapi-api selain saya. Begitulah di sini saya menghaturkan maaf saya... Kepada rakyat saya, saya mengatakan bahwa bangsa Indonesia ketika terjadinya peristiwa Tangerang, Palembang dan Bagan Siapi-Api, benar telah merampok dan membunuh bangsa Tionghoa secara mata gelap. Ini merupakan satu noda bagi bangsa Indonesia! Saya menyerukan kepada bangsa Indonesia, peganglah teguh kehormatanmu! Pada akhirnya sebagai Kepala Negara dengan sangat gembira saya menyerukan kepada semua hadirin supaya bersama bersorak: Hiduplah Republik Tiongkok! Hiduplah Republik Indonesia! Hiduplah Persatuan Tionghoa-Indonesia!” See *Soeloeh Ra'jat*, 11 & 13 March 1947.

and that they were notorious for stealing from Chinese residents, and in some cases for acting crueler than the Japanese soldiers.<sup>239</sup>

A meeting between Chinese and Indonesians was held as soon as the committee arrived in Rangkasbitung. The Minister of Information of Indonesia, Mohammed Natsir (1946-47) stated that freedom could not be interpreted as a call to rob or kill Chinese: "We have a duty to guarantee lives and property of Chinese and foreign residents who are not the Republic's enemy. The Chinese are a nation that have been living in Indonesia for more than 300 years, thus they are not our enemy but our brother."<sup>240</sup>

An organization called the Chinese-Indonesian Committee for Relief of Tangerang Refugees was established in Jakarta on 18 June 1946 in order to facilitate refugees from Tangerang who escaped to Jakarta.<sup>241</sup> Meanwhile in Krawang, a joint Sino-Indonesian association was formed on 18 June 1946 in order to promote friendship between Indonesians and Chinese. The aim of this organization was to supply food to the Chinese refugees from Tangerang and to strengthen friendship and cooperation between the two races.<sup>242</sup>

Furthermore, Sjahrir also chose Tan Po Goan, a 35-year-old Chinese barrister born in Java, to become a Cabinet Minister. Tan's main task was to close the breach between Chinese and Indonesians. To achieve that, Tan planned to establish a national Chinese society with a two-fold purpose. First, it would attempt to explain the political sentiments of the Indonesians to the Indonesian Chinese, and to clarify the goals that Indonesian nationalism hoped to achieve. Second, it would provide unified opposition to any anti-Chinese measures which local authorities or groups might take. Tan argued that both individuals at the Chinese and Indonesian sides, not the Republican Government, were at fault, and that the Tangerang incident was the result of jealousy over the economic prosperity enjoyed by the Chinese: "The Republican Government is very friendly to the Chinese but the Indonesian masses do not share that feeling."<sup>243</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.

<sup>240</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.

<sup>241</sup> *Thien Sung Yit Po*, 19 June 1946.

<sup>242</sup> *Democratic Daily News*, 21 June 1946.

<sup>243</sup> "Mr. Tan Tries to Heal the Breach," *The Singapore Free Press*, 20 February 1947

### 3.8. Responses of the Chinese Government

The involvement of the Chinese government in dealing with overseas Chinese crisis in Indonesia became more apparent with the placing of seven Nationalist Chinese Consuls in Jakarta and several other cities. Tsiang Chia Tung (Jiang Jiadong)<sup>244</sup> was personally sent to Jakarta in January 1946 in order to assert and champion the neutrality of the Chinese during a war between Dutch-Indonesian. As China did not recognize the independence of Indonesia, Tsiang was sent to liaise with the government of the Netherlands.<sup>245</sup>

However, communication between China and Indonesia continued, arousing Dutch suspicion. The Dutch had become increasingly concerned with preventing any international recognition of Indonesian sovereignty, and were aware that the Kuomintang was sympathetic to the anti-colonial struggle in Southeast Asia. Tsiang assured the Dutch government that he needed the Republic's cooperation simply to protect Chinese nationals. However, it became another point of controversy because for the Dutch government, persons born in the Indies were Dutch subjects, even if they were of Chinese descent, and as such were not within the jurisdiction of Chinese diplomats.<sup>246</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Tsiang Chia Tung was only 41 years old when he was appointed as Chinese counselor for Indonesia. Tsiang came from Suchow, Kiangsu, but he was born in Kiukiang, Kiangsi. Soon after he graduated from Futan University in Shanghai, he worked in Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China (Waichiaopu). He was appointed as Chinese counselor for Australia, where he worked until 1933. From 1933-1935 he worked as the Chinese counselor in Sandakan, North Borneo, until he assumed the same position in Makassar. He spent five years as counselor in Fiji, then Bombay from 1940-1944. When he arrived in Jakarta, Tsiang immediately corresponded with General Christison and the Indonesian government about the political position of Chinese during a war between the Dutch and Indonesia. He went to Surabaya to see Chinese people's condition there, then to Yogyakarta to meet Sukarno. *Liberty*, 1 February 1946.

<sup>245</sup> After 1947, the vice-consul was in Yogyakarta. Mary Somers, 394.

<sup>246</sup> Somers, "Citizenship and Identity," 119-120

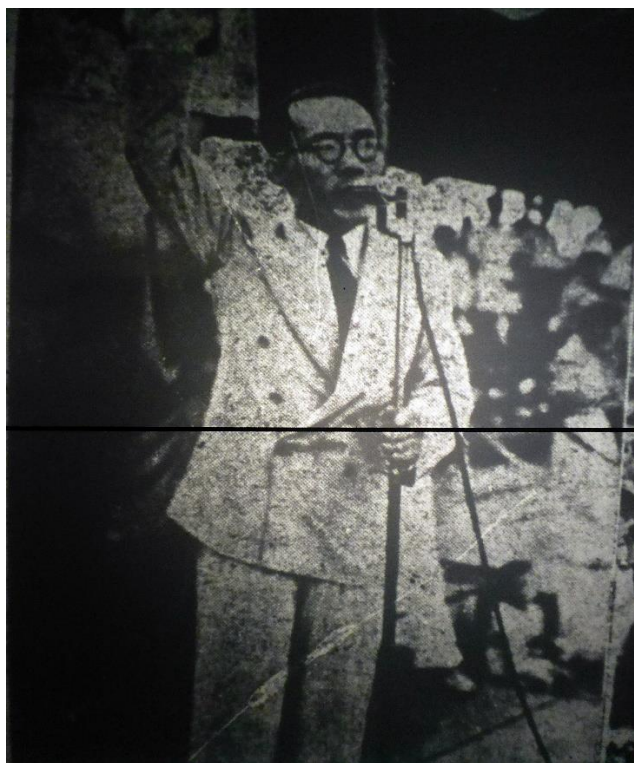


Figure 7. Consul General Tsiang Chia Tung. Source: *Star Weekly*, 13 October 1946.

China's concern regarding the Chinese in Indonesia reached an apex immediately after the Tangerang Massacre, especially since such an event was unanticipated. Just a few days prior, a visiting consul from China, Lin Chi Ming, expressed his admiration for the Indonesian struggle for independence. Lin even persuaded the Chinese in Indonesia to support and take part in the Indonesians' pursuit of independence.<sup>247</sup> The massacre made China doubt the abilities of both the Indonesian Republic and the Dutch in protecting the lives and properties of Chinese in Indonesia.

In a press conference, Li Ti Chun, the head representative from China, announced that China initially had been very sympathetic with the Indonesian struggle for independence. However, within a few months after the declaration of Indonesian independence, many instances of anti-Chinese atrocities were committed that provoked the anger of the Chinese government.<sup>248</sup>

China's involvement was seen by communist newspapers in China as an excuse for territory expansion. The allegation was refuted by the Chinese government, who argued that

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<sup>247</sup> "Persahabatan Tionghoa-Indonesia Erat," *Merdeka*, 20 May 1946.

<sup>248</sup> *Soeloeh Ra'jat*, 23 October 1946.

overseas Chinese represented an important tool for extending China's economic and political influence in Indonesia. Thus, the action taken by the government to protect the interests of overseas Chinese should be seen as a humanitarian effort.<sup>249</sup>

The reaction of the Chinese government to Tangerang Massacre was immediate and severe. A telegram from Nanking dated 5th June was sent by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek to Jakarta. The telegram made clear the position of Chinese government; it would urge Indonesian authorities to admit responsibility for the massacre.

"We are of course a strong nation, and the lives and the properties of a strong nation should be protected by the country. Hence, when anything happens abroad, which brings danger and losses to the lives and properties of the overseas Chinese, our government authorities should pay full attention to it and if necessary bring the matter before the UN. In case we fail to obtain any solution, we should take decisive action." (*Nankuang Batavia*, No. 7, 16 June 1946)

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, Wang Shih Chieh, immediately cabled Tsiang Chia Tung, the Chinese Consul-General in Batavia, on 7 June 1946 and ordered him to launch an official protest against the Indonesian Republic. On behalf of the Chinese government, Wang published an article in *Sin Po* that showed China's concern with overseas Chinese: "...regarding the massacre in Tangerang, the whole nation [of China] is greatly concerned. The Chinese government pays great attention to it." Moreover, Wang also highlighted three important points for the Indonesian government to take: (1) Punish all those involved in the massacre; (2) Compensate the Chinese for all losses of life and property; (3) Guarantee the safety of Chinese in Indonesia.<sup>250</sup>

The Chinese government launched an official protest precisely to the Indonesian government regarding the Tangerang tragedy, because this was an area that was supposedly under the surveillance and protection of the Indonesian government. The Chinese government also criticized the British Army, which had been tasked to maintain law and order in Indonesia. The British authority replied that they did not have a sufficient army to maintain law and order

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<sup>249</sup> NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949. Inv. Nr: 03130.

<sup>250</sup> *Sin Po*, 10 June 1946.

in all regions of Indonesia. This excuse did not pacify many parties, especially since the British had volunteered their roles as peacekeepers.<sup>251</sup>

On the same day, Kan Nai Kwang, the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of China, and Taik K'uei Sheng, Vice-Chief of the Overseas Department, held a conference with all overseas Chinese leaders from Java to discuss how to deal with the Tangerang tragedy. At 17.00 they met with representatives of the Dutch embassy in China in order to arrive at possible measures in safeguarding the Chinese community in Indonesia.<sup>252</sup> In the same meeting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China urged the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, Sutan Sjahrir, to take concrete action by ratifying a policy to protect the overseas Chinese.<sup>253</sup>

Consul-General Tsiang Chia Tung was immediately recalled to Nanking in order to negotiate with the Chinese government. Prior to his departure, Tsiang proposed to General Mansergh<sup>254</sup> that troops be sent to Tangerang in order to evacuate all Chinese people from the area.<sup>255</sup> In a press conference, Tsiang said:

"I have been ordered to come to the South (Indonesia) to handle Chinese overseas affairs. It is my duty to protect the Chinese residents... Regarding the conditions here (Indonesia), I have repeatedly cabled my reports to the government. Now I have been ordered to return to China to give a report. I am determined to convey in details the real conditions here and the difficulties of our residents. On the eve of my departure from Java, the Tangerang tragedy has arisen. This tragedy is deplorable. After the Bandung tragedy, the Allied authorities expressed their intent of preventing another incident, while the Indonesian government showed their deepest condolences to all Chinese victims, and promised to punish all perpetrators to prevent a similar tragedy. Now the Tangerang tragedy has arisen. These authorities can hardly be free from responsibility. As a result of negotiations during the past few days, the various parties involved have consented to take immediate steps to provide our residents with proper protection. I will report in detail to the government. I am determined to come back to the South in the shortest possible time. I hope our residents will keep calm, unite and cooperate to overcome all the difficulties." (*Sin Po*, 6 June 1946)

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<sup>251</sup> *Star Weekly*, 23 June 1946.

<sup>252</sup> *Sin Po*, 10 June 1946.

<sup>253</sup> *Sin Po*, 15 June 1946

<sup>254</sup> During his military career Robert Mansergh served in 144th Field Regiment RA (5th Indian Division) in Eritrea (March-May 1941), of 11th East African Division in Burma (early 1945) and of 5th Indian Division during the final stages of the Burma campaign (February-May 1945), the liberation of Singapore (August-September 1945) and the occupation of Java (October 1945-March 1946), and between April-November 1946 Mansergh was appointed as Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces in the Netherlands East Indies.

<sup>255</sup> *Sumber Penerangan*, 7 June 1946.

Upon Tsiang's arrival in Nanking on 9 June 1946, he immediately held another press conference. He pressured the Indonesian government to quickly improve the situation for the Chinese in Indonesia in order to avoid another tragedy. He accused both the Allied Forces, and implicitly the Dutch, as well as the Indonesians for being the cause of violence against the Chinese in Tangerang.

"If the present situation in the East Indies does not improve quickly and the administrative power there cannot be made into one, it is feared that a repetition of the tragedy like Tangerang can hardly be avoided. The Chinese residents in various places of the East Indies, whose number is 2 million, are now in a most difficult position. Wherever there is conflict between the Indonesian troops and the Allied Forces, injury to the interests of our overseas brethren can hardly be avoided." (Thien Sung Yit Po, 20 June 1946)

More Chinese government officials stepped forward to air their opinions on the Tangerang Massacre. Another telegram was sent by the Commission on Overseas Affairs in China to the Chinese Consulate-General in Batavia on 17<sup>th</sup> June. It stated: "To our overseas brethren in the East Indies: Regarding the slaughter of Chinese residents in the East Indies, we feel greatly concerned. Besides having requested the organizations concerned to discuss solutions, we are sending you this telegram to console you."<sup>256</sup> China also instructed Tung Lin, Chinese Ambassador to the Netherlands, to appeal to the Netherlands to heighten security for all Chinese residents in Indonesia. The Dutch *chargé d'affaires*, Jan van der Berg, promised to relay the sentiments of the Chinese to the Netherlands government.<sup>257</sup>

The Chinese Foreign Office announced that the Dutch and the Indonesians would be held jointly responsible for any damage to Chinese lives and property, and that the protection of overseas Chinese interests was "one of the most important tasks of the Chinese government." Li Ti Chun suggested that all Chinese in Indonesia maintain their neutrality, and reminded them that the Chinese government remained concerned about their welfare. In another occasion, Li suggested both Chinese *totok* and *peranakan* to unite. "Totok and peranakan should unite together, because both of them come from Chinese descent."<sup>258</sup> Li also stated: Republic of China would be

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<sup>256</sup> *Sin Po*, 21 June 1946.

<sup>257</sup> "Request to be Protected," *The Straits Times*, 11 June 1946.

<sup>258</sup> "Totok dan peranakan harus bersatu, karena biar bagaimana mereka adalah turunan Tionghoa." *Sumber Penerangan*, 5 November 1946.



the first country to officially recognize the independence of Indonesia. When he was asked by 'Antara' why China had not given significant aid to Indonesia, Li answered that the internal situation in China, as a result of their war with Japan for 8 years, forced China to solve that problem first.<sup>259</sup>

Strong allegations also came from newspapers in China such as *Ho Ping Daily News*. In an article titled "Sad Words on the Tragedy of Tangerang" and written in *kuo you*, the Nanking-based newspaper commented on the slaughter of Chinese residents in Tangerang, and discussed Chinese relations with the Javanese. According to the article, despite the long history of Chinese support for the Indonesian government and their non-cooperation with the Japanese, the Chinese were repaid with ingratitude.<sup>260</sup> The article circulated across China, New Zealand, Australia, and various other Southeast Asian countries. Thus, the world would know about the massacre of Tangerang.

Last but not least, to ensure that laws would be passed to protect Chinese residents in Indonesia, the Republic of China sent a representative to Indonesia in order to facilitate the creation of such policy, according to an article published by *Thien Sung Yit Po*. The article also proposed the creation of a neutral zone for Chinese in Indonesia.<sup>261</sup>

### 3.9. Arms from China?

"Are the lives of the oversea citizens of China -one of the Big Five country in the world- so mean as the flesh on the plate or a lamb under the knife? No! We are neither timid nor weak, but, as a matter of fact, we are too peace-loving, so others do not treat us with friendliness. On the contrary, we are given unreasonable treatment, and what is worse, inhumanly slaughtered! Are we going to be forever with this condition and not quickly think of a plan for self-defense?"

(*Daily Telegraph Makassar*, 11 June 1946)

When violence against Chinese reached its culmination, the Chinese Consuls in Jakarta proposed a number of measures to protect Chinese in Indonesia, one of them was to encourage the formation of Chinese security forces. This issue had been brought up several times after the

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<sup>259</sup> "Republik Tiongkok adalah negeri yang pertama yang akan akui Republik Indonesia Merdeka secara resmi." *Sumber Penerangan*, 26 November 1946.

<sup>260</sup> *Ho Ping Daily News*, 14 June 1946.

<sup>261</sup> *Thien Sung Yit Po*, 20 June 1946.

Surabaya incident,<sup>262</sup> however the issue became stronger after the Tangerang massacre. The Republic of China sent a 'mission of mercy' to Indonesia in September-December 1946 in order to show to the both conflicting parties, the Dutch and Indonesian, that Chinese stayed neutral and were non-combatants in the war.<sup>263</sup>

Tsiang also brought up the issue of Chinese neutrality by arguing that "towards the dispute between the Indonesian and the Dutch, our residents have strictly maintained, and are strictly maintaining a neutral attitude." He criticized the Dutch and the Indonesian Republic authorities for their lack of sincerity in protecting the Chinese and their interests, despite repeated requests for increased security for the Chinese community that went unheeded: "The Indonesian authorities have no power to control the extremists."<sup>264</sup> He even threatened the possibility of Chinese military intervention:

"I truly think that the Indonesian government must have secretly implemented this cruel policy towards the Chinese residents in order to coerce help spiritually and substantially from our Government. Under present circumstances, our country needs only to send two battleships, ten airplanes and 5,000 well-trained soldiers to Indonesia. They will be sufficient to face all sorts of disturbances. You must not say 5,000 soldiers are too small as there are thousands of angry Chinese here who are willing to volunteer." (*The Youth Weekly Batavia*, 17 June 1946)

According to Tsiang, the strongest measures should be taken to protect the Chinese, particularly those in Java, and suggested supplying them with arms to defend themselves:

"We are not going to fight a war for the Dutch nor do the Dutch need or expect us to do so. I tell you this because we do it in the most open manner for the most obvious purpose...I request the Republican Government to prove their sincerity in their proclamation of giving security to the Chinese population in their territories by taking the same action as the Dutch have done."<sup>265</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> The Battle of Surabaya occurred between pro-independence Indonesian soldiers and militia against Allied Forces. The battle was the heaviest single battle of the Indonesian revolution and became a national symbol of Indonesian resistance. The battle erupted when 6,000 Indian troops perished alongside British commander, Brigadier A. W. S. Mallaby, on 30 October. The British retaliated with a punitive sweep that began on 10 November, under the cover of air attacks. Surabaya was devastated while casualties were immense, taking of more than 40,000 lives, mostly civilians like Eurasian or Indonesian minority (Chinese, Arabs, Ambonese or Timorese). See Abdul Wahid, "The Untold Story of the Surabaya Battle of 1945," *Jakarta Post*, 12 November 2013; Merle Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300* (Palgrave and Stanford University Press, 1993), 217.

<sup>263</sup> Somers, "Citizenship and Identity" 120.

<sup>264</sup> *Thien Sung Yit Po*, 20 June 1946.

<sup>265</sup> "Chinese Appeal to Jogjakarta," *The Singapore Free Press*, 25 August 1947.

China fully supported Tsiang's suggestions. The Chinese naval headquarters in China even considered a proposal to send warships to Indonesia on a fact-finding mission, and to protect Chinese nationals who still feared mistreatment of Indonesian troops.<sup>266</sup>

However, strong protests came from Indonesia. *Merdeka* blamed the request of the Chinese consul-general to the Allied command in Indonesia as an added impetus to the worsening of the relations between Chinese and local inhabitants. It said: "Such a request for the supply of arms to the Chinese here for the protection of their lives and properties will make the situation develop from bad to worse. It will spur them to take revenge, and it is just these retaliatory actions and further revenge from the Indonesian side that have to be suppressed."<sup>267</sup> Arms supply became a real issue when several Chinese communities in Java decided to form *Pao An Tui* (Chinese Security Corps) for self-protection. As already predicted, there were a lot of controversies behind the decision and it will be discussed in the next sub-chapter.

### 3.10. Friend or foe: The Emergence of Pao An Tui in Java

"We have no political aspirations and we are sympathetic with the principle of independence of Indonesia. But of course we do not agree if because of this freedom our life is taken away."

- Tsiang Chia Tung-

The Tangerang incident inexorably put Chinese living in Indonesia in a potentially horrific and miserable situation. What was very disappointing to the Chinese was the fact that the power of the Republic did not extend to those areas where extremists ruled. Moreover, although Sukarno, Sjahrir, Natsir and a few other Indonesian authorities condemned the massacre, they took no significant steps to protect the Chinese from the perpetrators and the criminals. Criminal activity still occurred, despite Republican politicians giving their assurances to the Chinese.<sup>268</sup> According to Mr. Tsiang, the Republican government gave no indication of

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<sup>266</sup> "U.N.O Receives Complaint from Indonesia, *The Straits Times*, 11 August 1946.

<sup>267</sup> *Merdeka*, 13 June 1946.

<sup>268</sup> It was according to a report compiled by CHTH. See *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity...*p.6.

investigating the atrocities after the Tangerang massacre, but rather suggested that these atrocities might continue. Thus, many Chinese lost their faith in the Republican Government.

The Tangerang massacre became a turning point for Chinese community in Indonesia to take a political action. The miserable condition encouraged 1,000 of the 10,000 Chinese who were in Allied-held Tangerang to request arms for self-protection. Tsiang, proposed an idea to the Republicans to establish their own self-defense organization.<sup>269</sup>

“To prove to the whole world the truthfulness of our motive, I now ask the Republican Government to do the same by also allowing the Chinese community in Republican territories to form a security organization and to give them arms adequate for carrying out their mission. This request is made since I heard that a committee was set up in Jogjakarta for the protection of foreign life and property.”<sup>270</sup>

From Radio-Batavia, Mr. Tsiang specifically declared to President Sukarno and Prime Minister Amir Sjarifuddin (the successor of Sutan Sjahrir) that Pao An Tui units would be established and funded exclusively by Chinese.<sup>271</sup> The Republican government, which initially had not agreed with the idea, eventually gave approval of the establishment Pao An Tui within the Republic. The Republicans would also consider Tsiang's proposal to arm this organization.<sup>272</sup> Vale Kan Yun, the head of the Department of Overseas Affair Commission of the Chinese government, also agreed to send arms, ammunition and instructors for PAT from China as long as the Chinese government could benefit from this organization. Mr. Kan also said that China would provide full support for the victims and that any Chinese desirous to return to China would be facilitated.<sup>273</sup>

The idea of creating a self-defense organization was finally realized with the establishment of Pao An Tui (PAT) or Chinese Security Corps on 28 August 1947. PAT emerged after 31 delegations of the CHTH from every province in Indonesia (except CHTH Yogyakarta

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<sup>269</sup> "Dutch Failed to Stop Massacre," *The Straits Times*, 7 June 1946.

<sup>270</sup> "Chinese Appeal to Jogjakarta," *The Singapore Free Press*, 25 August 1947.

<sup>271</sup> "Chinezen gaan zich wapenen: Vorming van eenheden, Nederlandse overheid verstrekt wapens," *Het Dagblad*, 19 August 1947.

<sup>272</sup> "Oprichting Pao An Tui in de Republiek," *De Locomotief*, 8 January 1948.

<sup>273</sup> "Wapens uit China," *Het Dagblad*, 19 November 1947.

dan Solo) assembled in Jakarta for a three days conference from 24-26 August 1947.<sup>274</sup> As the result of the conference, PAT was founded as a homegrown solution from the Chinese community in order to protect the life and property of Chinese people (both *totok* and *peranakan*) in Java and Sumatra. The regulations of this semi-military organization were regulated in Military Ordinance No.516. They also agreed to give relief to the Chinese victims through a collective or personal donation. Many Chinese were enthusiastic with the emergence of this organization and when PAT got military barracks located at Mangga Besar 47, Jakarta, they tried to show their support by donating tables, cooking utensils, cutlery, etc.<sup>275</sup> PAT got their funding from fund raising among local Chinese and also from Chinese families directly paying for protection.<sup>276</sup> Fancy fair, sport activities, art exhibition, and movie screening were held regularly in order to ensure income and hence the continuity of this organization.

**De PASAR MALEM AMAL  
der C. H. T. H. Batavia**

gehouden in het

**PRINSENPARK**

**vanaf 24 October 1947 t/m 4 November 1947**

geheel ten bate van de

**a. Chin. Slachtoffers der binnenl. terreur.**  
**b. Pao An Tui (Chinese Safeguards)**

zal naast vele attracties: shows, dansgelegenheid  
tentoonstellingen enz. enz. ook een speciale Stand  
entameren voor de verkoop van Bahmi onder de  
afwisselende leiding van diverse uitgezochte  
Chinese Restaurant & Chinese Verenigingen.

26304-200

Figure 8. The advertisement from Dutch newspaper about fancy fair in Batavia for the Chinese victims and Pao An Tui. *Het Dagblad*, 24 October 1947.

<sup>274</sup> At that time, Solo and Yogyakarta were part of the Indonesian Republic. The Indonesian authority argued that law and order in both regions was under the jurisdiction of the Indonesian Republic, thus PAT was not needed in these areas. <sup>274</sup> Sulardi, "Pao An Tui Jakarta 1947-1949," Skripsi Universitas Indonesia, (1994), 80-81.

<sup>275</sup> The official name of the barracks was 'Pao An Tui Chung Pu.' "Pao An Tui krijgt kazerne," *De Locomotief*, 8 September 1947.

<sup>276</sup> Sulardi, "Pao An Tui Jakarta 1947-1949..." 80-81.

Lieutenant-General Spoor, the Dutch army commander in Indonesia, recognized the Pao An Tui as an official organization with its headquarters located in Batavia and other branches spread in different provinces, except Yogyakarta and Solo. Spoor realized how strategic this organization could be to assist the Dutch army, therefore he wished not to let the PAT turn into a 'foreign army.'<sup>277</sup> Dutch military authorities agreed to provide the corps with weapons on loan, military uniforms (with a special PAT badge -crossed Chinese swords surrounded by a chain, representing unity) and military training for the cadres in the police school in Cimahi.<sup>278</sup> Moreover, the Dutch through 'Stichting Holland Helpt Indië, also gave f 100,000 to help the continuity of the PAT.<sup>279</sup> By February 1949 the PAT had branch units in at least three dozen cities and towns. This corps would have the task of protecting Chinese business and houses in Java and Sumatra. However, PAT was not allowed to interfere in military operations and its function was different from the police.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> "Verslag over de reis naar Oost Java van Major A. Roskam en 1e Luitenant Tan Gwan Djiang, 29 February 1948", *NL-HaNA, Defence/Armed Forces, 1396*, in Roel Frakking (2012) 'Who wants to cover everything, covers nothing': the organization of indigenous security forces in Indonesia, 1945-50, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 14:3-4, 337-358.

<sup>278</sup> Since the uniforms of the PAT were similar like KNIL (Royal Netherlands Indies Army) uniforms except for the insignia, it must have appeared to outsiders that the PAT was part of the Dutch army. But this regulation did not apply to the PAT Medan. Jennifer Cushman and Wang Gungwu, *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II* (Hong Kong University Press, 1988) pp.126-8

<sup>279</sup> "Hulp aan de Chinezen," *Leeuwarder Courant*, 9 August 1947.

<sup>280</sup> "Generaal Spoor erkent Pao An Tui," *De Locomotief*, 17 September 1947.



Figure 9. The symbol of Pao An Tui. Source: *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hoogerechtshof van Nederlands-Indië*, (1936) 1945-1949 (1969). Inv. Nr: 679.

Initially PAT was created to be an entirely independent body. The PAT was not subordinate to neither the Dutch nor the Republican administration and should not be involved in any military or political movement.<sup>281</sup> Its primary purpose was to assist the Chinese community leaders in the task of maintaining peace and order and for the preservation of lives and property of the Chinese inhabitants against violence of 'unscrupulous elements.'<sup>282</sup> In fact, however, although the PAT was supposed to be neutral in the Dutch-Indonesia conflict, in reality it received arms from the Dutch.<sup>283</sup> The PAT was used as a tool by Dutch to fight the Republicans. The organization was used for military operations by the Dutch army, and allowed to carry weapon.<sup>284</sup> Moreover, during its development, PAT was also used for another purpose by wealthy Chinese. A lot of them recruited PAT members as bodyguards to protect the plantation

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<sup>281</sup> Anne van der Veer, "The Pao An Tui Medan: A Chinese Security Force in Dutch Occupied Indonesia, 1945-1948." Master Thesis, Utrecht University, (2013), 48.

<sup>282</sup> "Free Netherlands East Indies Trade Likely: Consul," *The Singapore Free Press*, 24 November 1947.

<sup>283</sup> Mary Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project Interim Report Series, 1968), 120

<sup>284</sup> Roel Frakking, 'Who wants to cover everything, covers nothing': the organization of indigenous security forces in Indonesia, 1945-50, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 14:3-4, (2012), 347.

area from the attacks of Indonesian gangsters.<sup>285</sup> Thus, it created a fierce debate among Indonesians, and one critic came from a prominent Javanese aristocrat, Noto Soeroto. He condemned the Dutch authorities for giving permission for the establishment of Chinese Security Guards (Pao An Tui) which he believed would only worsen the relationship between Indonesia and the Chinese. He was afraid that Chinese would use this corps to take revenge. Such a thought not only came from himself but also from other prominent Indonesian leaders.<sup>286</sup> The local Malay press, *Sinar Deli*, even assumed that the PAT was merely a disguise for an anti-Indonesian struggle group. However, pro-opinion also came from Soegardo Poerbakawatja, one of the committee of the Hollandsch-Inlandsche School. Writing in the *Sedar* magazine he argued that the Chinese had the right to defend their property and life, especially during the national revolution. Therefore, the emergence of Pao An Tui could be justified because no one could protect the Chinese people, and the Indonesian Republic could not do anything to assure their safety.<sup>287</sup>

Although some Republican leaders were willing to recognize the PAT, opposition to them came from the leftist trade unions, from more anti-Chinese leaders, and also from leading Chinese supporters of the Republic, such as Tjoa Sik Ien and Tan Ling Djie (both were the members of Sjahrir's Indonesia Socialist Party).<sup>288</sup> The main reason why the PAT was opposed by these groups was because of their close ties to Kuomintang. It was also suspected of being pro-Dutch and the Republican Government at first took a firm stand against them. Moreover, a lot of PAT members were reputedly used by Chinese capitalists to maintain their assets. Within the Chinese community there was therefore a good deal of controversy over the PAT. And even among those who favored them, there were accusations that they were being misused for the benefit of special groups. In any case, there were no further large-scale outbreaks of violence against the Chinese in Java, and the PAT were finally disbanded in the spring of 1949.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Roel Frakking, 347.

<sup>286</sup> "Politieke Zondebokken," in *De Locomotief*, 25 March 1949.

<sup>287</sup> "Waarom wij Chinezen de Pao An Tui oprichtten!" *De Vrije Pers*, 18 March 1949.

<sup>288</sup> *Sin Po*, 15 Dec 1947

<sup>289</sup> Donald Wilmott, *The National Status of the Chinese in Indonesia 1900-1958* (Itacha: New York, 1961), 38-40



The PAT was intrinsically an organization designed to be temporary. Once the Chinese would no longer have to fear for their safety, the corps would naturally lose its role and function.<sup>290</sup> Chinese feeling toward the Indonesians was improved since the 'Cheribon draft'<sup>291</sup> signed both by the Netherlands Commission-General and the Indonesian Prime Minister, Sutan Sjahrir. Before the draft was signed on 15 November 1946, a Dutch-Indonesian agreement had been announced on March 15, under which the armed forces of both sides were to retire two kilometers behind their previously existing lines as a preliminary to the completion of negotiations.<sup>292</sup>

On March 1949, the Federation of Chinese Associations (CHTH) indeed decided to terminate Pao An Tui in Java because the CHTH claimed that peace and order in that area had been restored.<sup>293</sup> In Tangerang the PAT had already been dissolved in May 1948.<sup>294</sup> The main reason behind the decision was not the return of safety alone, but also the loss of financial support. The funding for this organization got cut off because the wealthier Chinese merchants were no longer feeling under attack and hence discontinued their financial support.<sup>295</sup>

## EPILOGUE

A cursory glance at the minutes of the meeting of KNIDT (Indonesian National Committee of Region Tangerang) shows that there is no mention of the Chinese. All of Laskar Rakyat's actions concerned the elimination of the Dutch, so why did the Tangerang massacre occur?<sup>296</sup> Analyzing the context of Tangerang and the socioeconomic position of the Chinese in

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<sup>290</sup> Anne van der Veer, "The Pao An Tui Medan..." 48-49.

<sup>291</sup> The draft provided recognition of the Republic of Java, Sumatra and Madura islands for de facto and the setting up of the United States of Indonesia and Netherlands Indonesian Union by 1949. "Agreement in the N.E.I," *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 March 1947.

<sup>292</sup> "Agreement in the N.E.I," *Kalgoorlie Miner*, 26 March 1947.

<sup>293</sup> "Pao An Tui op Java wordt opgeheven," *De Locomotief*, 12 March 1949.

<sup>294</sup> "Pao An Tui Ontbonden," *De Locomotief*, 1 May 1948.

<sup>295</sup> "Chinees Corps ontbonden," *Het Nieuws Algemeen Dagblad*, 9 April 1949.

<sup>296</sup> I have found few cases where some Indonesians were also killed during the affair. Most of them worked for Chinese family. When a group of extremists entered a house of Chinese their primary target was to kill the Chinese inside. However, in some cases they were also executed because of their effort to protect their master. *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven 1942-1950*. Inv.nr: 5520.

Tangerang at that time will provide the answers to this vital question. By answering it, this sub-chapter seeks to elucidate the complexity of the riot itself. The riot was not only sparked by the matter of Chinese involvement in NICA, as Indonesian newspapers suggest, but it was also influenced by some other factors. This chapter will outline those main factors.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the sudden collapse of the Japanese colonial government in Indonesia and major structural changes in Tangerang contributed to the chaos in Tangerang. When the institutional mechanisms in Tangerang ceased to function, the local government faced a turbulent political and economic transition. As George Brunner argues, “during the political transition the old no longer works while the new will not yet function and the social costs grow.”<sup>297</sup> What resulted was a vacuum of instability and uncertainty about the political, social, and economic future of the communities, or – to use Lake and Rothchild’s term – “collective fears of the future.”<sup>298</sup> Such a situation facilitates animosity amongst ethnic groups, as was the case in Tangerang.

The rhetoric of fear, blame, and hate were used by Laskar Rakyat as a tool for mass mobilization and control. As Stuart Kaufman explains, “belligerent leaders stoke mass hostility; hostile masses support belligerent leaders, and both together threaten other groups, creating a ‘security dilemma’<sup>299</sup> which in turn encourages even more mass hostility and leadership belligerence.”<sup>300</sup> In the case of Tangerang, Laskar Rakyat manipulated the people’s spirit of anti-colonialism into the mass killings of Chinese. A slogan, “Bikin habis semua Cina sebab mereka anjing NICA” (kill all Chinese because they are NICA’s dogs) was used by Laskar Rakyat to incite people’s anger.<sup>301</sup> Additionally, Tangerang locals were heavily influenced by the political culture of Banten, an area associated with religious fanaticism, where the ‘ulama’ (Islamic cleric)’s word

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<sup>297</sup> Georg Brunner, *Nationality Problems and Minority Conflicts in Eastern Europe*. (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Foundation Publishers, 1996), 92.

<sup>298</sup> David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, “Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict,” *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2, (Fall 1996), 41.

<sup>299</sup> I borrow this term from Monica Duffy Toft, *The Geography of Ethnic Violence*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 8.

<sup>300</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman, “Spiraling to Ethnic War: Elite, Masses, and Moscow in Moldova’s Civil War,” *International Security*, Vol. 21, No. 2, (Fall 1996), 109.

<sup>301</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hoogerechtshof Ned. Indie 1945-1950*. Inv. Nr: 1053.

was more influential than that of the government's, which also made mass mobilization in Tangerang possible.<sup>302</sup>

In times of political and economic duress, people typically feel victimized, and blame their misfortune on other ethnic groups, leading to inter-ethnic competition.<sup>303</sup> The immediate roots of the political unrest in Tangerang can be traced to the announcement from the Indonesian government encouraging Indonesians to exchange their Japanese money for Republican money, an action which inflated the price of goods drastically. Many traders, who were mostly Chinese, were not allowed to sell rice at prices higher than 15 cents per liter. Selling rice at such a price would bankrupt the traders, they said, and as such they refused to sell their goods. Rice became extremely scarce, with people resorting to purchasing it from black market, where the price was ten times more expensive than the government-dictated rate.<sup>304</sup> The Chinese who controlled most of the rice market in Tangerang, were accused of hoarding, and were seen as responsible for the price increase in Tangerang, making rice unaffordable for many people.<sup>305</sup>

The situation in Tangerang was aggravated by the decline of authority, and owing to that, the failure of the central regime to protect the interests of ethnic groups in Tangerang. As Bojana Blagojevic explains for the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina, "once decolonization took place, the absence of old institutional mechanisms of group control allowed for ethnic emotions to surface and ethnic intolerance to take place."<sup>306</sup> The instability and feelings of uncertainty in Tangerang resulting from numerous major structural transitions (from the Japanese, to "Bapak Rakyat", and

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<sup>302</sup>The area of Banten, according to Sartono had been known as a troublesome area even before the days of colonial rule. It had long been noted for its intense religious feelings, which was more firmly embedded among the rural elements of Banten than was the case in most parts of Java. The most interesting of Banten is its persistent tradition of revolt, which Sartono traces through the entire 19th century and into the Communist revolt of 1926. Like some other parts of Java, Banten appears to provide an illustration of the symbiosis or convergence between various kinds of 'traditional' or 'primitive' phenomena of social revolt, notably the tradition of social banditry rising at times to armed rebellion, and that of millennial preaching and expectation. The traditional rebel families (dispossessed noblemen, rural gentry, wandering bands of outlaws, brigands, and exiles) were increasingly replenished through the rise of religious leaders, who continued to remain important even after the independence. *Star Weekly*, 30 June 1946; Sartono Kartodirdjo, *The Peasants Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course and Sequel* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966). See also Else Ensering, "Banten in Times of Revolution," *Archipel*, Vol. 50, (1995).

<sup>303</sup> Stuart J. Kaufman...109-110.

<sup>304</sup> *Soeloeh Ra'jat*, 29 November 1946.

<sup>305</sup> *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI 1945-49*. Inv. Nr: 03129.

<sup>306</sup> Bojana Blagojevic, 8-9.

then to the Tangerang Regiment) and the institutional inability to regulate inter-ethnic relations provided the perfect conditions in which Laskar Rakyat could manipulate ethnic emotions in order to mobilize groups for their own political purposes. Bojana Blagojevic posits that “certain parties often exploit ethnic differences by drawing upon historical memories of grievances and ‘whip up’ hatred in order to gain or strengthen their power.”<sup>307</sup> The massacre of Chinese in Tangerang was not only triggered by a single factor, but was an accumulation of pre-existing grievances embedded in the intertwined histories of these ethnic groups.

According to Crawford, whether or not identity politics turns into violent conflict depends on the functioning of state institutions: "Where identity politics is practiced, states can channel it in peaceful political competition as long as they can make credible commitments to shape and uphold agreements made among culturally defined political actors."<sup>308</sup> It is evident from the emergence of the Tangerang Council, as well as the 'daulat' action against Agus Padmanegara, that the spirit of social revolution was widespread in Tangerang. All the old elements that reminded people of their former colonial masters, the Dutch and the Japanese, were eliminated and replaced by leaders chosen by the 'rakyat' of Tangerang. All loyal Native Government Civil Servants fled, were kidnapped or even murdered.<sup>309</sup>

In addition, the breakdown in communication with Jakarta since October 1945 worsened the situation in Tangerang-Jakarta border. People could easily be accused of being members of Laskar Hitam or NICA spies. Someone could be killed if they wore Red-White-Blue clothes. A house could be set alight if its residents possessed Dutch currency. Moreover, with the emergence of Laskar Hitam in Tangerang, whose members were *jawara*, the situation in Tangerang's interior spiraled out of control. Meanwhile, most chosen 'Bapak Rakyat' did not have prior experience in government administration and hence were not able to control the situation.<sup>310</sup>

The Chinese composed around 4-6% of Tangerang's total population. The majority of them were poor, illiterate farmers who did not have any interest in politics. After the Tangerang

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<sup>307</sup> Bojana Blagojevic, 9.

<sup>308</sup> Beverly Crawford, "The Causes of Cultural Conflict: An Institutional Approach" in Beverly Crawford and Ronnie D. Lipschutz, (eds.), *The Myth of "Ethnic Conflict"*, International and Area Studies Research Series/Number 98, (Berkeley: University of California, 1998), 517.

<sup>309</sup> *Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI, 1942-1949*. Inv Nr: 01899.

<sup>310</sup> *NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949*, Inv. Nr: 01899.

Regiment under Singgih took over Tangerang from Haji Achmad Chaerun, the Chinese residents also supported the Indonesian Republic by making monetary donations. However, it was also possible that they were compelled to contribute for their safety, lest they be accused of being 'mata-mata musuh' (enemy's spy). Based on a report of the center of Fonds Kemerdekaan Kabupaten Tangerang from 4 March-30 April 1946, it is apparent that the Chinese community in Tangerang contributed great sums of money to support the Indonesian independence movement. In Kresek, Lie Soen Hiong donated f.200, Kerondjo and Pasilian donated f.750 out of the f.1,152 total donations, and Tangerang donated f.288,05.<sup>311</sup>

However, many other Chinese refused to support the Indonesians, and rejected political engagement. Such a decision only fanned the flames of anti-Chinese sentiment amongst the local Indonesians, resulting in occasional attacks on Chinese dwellings, especially in areas that the Republican, British, and Dutch had failed to control. The Tangerang massacre is just one example of other, numerous instances of anti-Chinese violence in Indonesia. The fact that at least a small number of Chinese had fought on the Indonesian side, as in the case of a leftist Chinese group in Surabaya during the battle against the British, did not do much to mitigate the popular perception of Chinese as disloyal to the struggle for Indonesian independence.<sup>312</sup>

Instances of anti-Chinese violence had occurred in Tangerang several weeks before the Japanese occupation, but most of the perpetrators then were executed by the Japanese authorities. Without a firm authority cracking down on those who committed acts of anti-Chinese violence, perpetrators could abuse the Chinese with impunity, and that is what happened in Tangerang in 1946.

The already volatile situation was aggravated by the increasing number of arms transactions between British soldiers and Indonesian extremists. In previous cases of anti-Chinese violence in Tangerang, the extremists attacked the Chinese with sharp weapons, like machetes or bamboo spears. By 1946, most of them possessed rifles, revolvers, carbines, and other firearms purchased at the black market or confiscated from Japanese soldiers<sup>313</sup>, although bamboo spears

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<sup>311</sup> NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949, Inv. Nr: 01899.

<sup>312</sup> *Memorandum Outlining Acts of Violence and Humanity...* 5-7.

<sup>313</sup> *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

were still used.<sup>314</sup> Cases of robberies and murders that occurred prior to May 1946 forced the Chinese to take the initiative in arming themselves in order to protect their family or property. They sought training from Dutch soldiers, but their appeal was rejected by Dutch authorities.<sup>315</sup> In a report signed by the chief information officer of the Netherlands, H. Agerbeek, violence against Chinese, was said to worsen because of the attitudes of British soldiers who did not do anything to help the Chinese, despite their headquarters being only a few kilometers from Tangerang.<sup>316</sup>

Attacks on Chinese-owned property in Tangerang were considered a symbolic attack on Chinese economic power and dominance. The violence against ethnic Chinese in Tangerang bore 'the characteristics of a Holy War against the infidel,' as many victims were forcibly circumcised by followers of a radical Islamic group that had previously attempted to drive out elite civil servants.<sup>317</sup> The establishment of Islamic Council in Tangerang also showed that the massacre more or less had something to do with the breakdown of morality of people in Tangerang, at least from perspective of the local government.<sup>318</sup>

The stigma of being Dutch collaborators was not new for the Chinese in Tangerang, such an attitude having been in existence even prior to the Tangerang tragedy. After the Pesing affair in April 1946, the local government encouraged the speedy elimination of anyone under suspicion of being a NICA spy. Many Chinese from two villages, Blimbing and Cengklong were particularly victimized, their properties confiscated and many of them slaughtered. In Mauk and Kedaung Timur, the TRI launched attacks on Chinese properties after the Chinese were accused of being enemy spies.

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<sup>314</sup> *Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service/Centrale Militaire Inlichtingendienst (NEFIS/CMI) 1942-1949. Inv. Nr: 03068*

<sup>315</sup> *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven 1942-1950. Inv.Nr: 5486.*

<sup>316</sup> *Procureur-Generaal bij het Hoogerechtshof Ned. Indie 1945-1950. Inv. Nr: 1053.*

<sup>317</sup> *Mary Somers, Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University, Modern Indonesia Project, 1964), 45-6.*

<sup>318</sup> The task of this organization was to rehabilitate people's spiritual and also religion in Tangerang. Raden H. Djoenaedi was appointed as the chair of this organization. The Islamic Council was the first Islamic Council that established in an area occupied by Dutch/NICA in Java. The same council had already existed in Makassar and also Borneo. *Sumber Penerangan*, 14 November 1946.

The tense political situation, combined with a strong sense of nationalism made the spy issue extremely sensitive for both Chinese and Indonesian alike. Based on a NEFIS report, Chinese accused of being enemy spies were discouraged from returning to their villages, lest they be killed. Some of the accused were captured by TRI and disappeared thereafter, sparking rumors that they had been executed by TRI. Until April 1946, approximately 4,000-5,000 Chinese fled from Tangerang to Jakarta. Most of them did not come from central Tangerang, but from areas in Tangerang's periphery, such as Mauk, Kedaung, Balaraja, Curug, etc.<sup>319</sup>

What happened in Tangerang cannot be separated from the legacy of colonial political systems. In contrast with the Portuguese, the Spanish, the British, or the French, the Dutch, according to Robert Cribb, "were generally rather reluctant to bring their indigenous subjects under the umbrella of European law...and the legal system constructed within the Netherlands Indies over several centuries."<sup>320</sup> The colonial system that used a "divide and rule" strategy to create or separate groups along ethnic lines in order to strengthen the power of the colonial system, was still strongly embedded in Indonesian society. The Dutch colonial regime's special treatment towards the Chinese has provided a contentious legacy for the Chinese community in Indonesia.<sup>321</sup>

The colonial 'apartheid' stratification also stimulated the relationship between the state and strongmen.<sup>322</sup> Henk Schulte Nordholt argues that the long-standing use of thugs as vigilantes by politicians and administrators was and remains "a concubinage of crime and the state". The state also resorted to intimidation and criminal gangs to maintain a regime of fear for the rest of the colonial era.<sup>323</sup> During the Indonesian revolution, gangsters teamed up with radical young

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<sup>319</sup> *Algemene Secretarie en de Daarbij Gedeponeerde Archieven (1942-1950)*. Inv. Nr. 5521

<sup>320</sup> Robert Cribb, "Legal Pluralism, Decentralisation and the Roots of Violence in Indonesia," in Dewi Fortuna Anwar (eds.), *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific: Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Yayasan Obor Indonesia: Jakarta, 2005), 45 & 56.

<sup>321</sup> Thung Ju Lan, "LIPI Conflict Management and Transformation Program," in Dewi Fortuna Anwar (eds.), *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific: Histories, Political Economies and Policies* (Yayasan Obor Indonesia: Jakarta, 2005), 77.

<sup>322</sup> Freek Colombijn and Thomas Lindblad, "Introduction," in Freek Colombijn and Thomas Lindblad (eds), *Roots of Violence in Indonesia* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2002).

<sup>323</sup> Henk Schulte Nordholt, "The Genealogy of Violence," 40.

nationalists to form militia groups in Jakarta, sharing a belief in action, heroism, and resistance against a hegemonic power.<sup>324</sup>

*Soeloeh Ra'jat* gave two opinions regarding Chinese position in Indonesia. First, even though many Chinese received a lot of concessions from the colonial government, it took a long time before they saw those benefits. And second, the political status of Chinese as 'foreign orientals' still gave them an alien status in Indonesia, which would lead to stereotypes that the Chinese would find difficult to free themselves from.<sup>325</sup>

The legacy of gangsters, revolutionaries, and 'apartheid' remained strong in Tangerang. *Jawara* and *jago* Tangerang, who had been oppressed during the Japanese occupation, flourished in Tangerang after the proclamation of independence, particularly in the interior of Tangerang, which was not monitored by the government. The *jawara* and other extremists began to replace old government positions, leading to a regime of banditry, pitting not only extremists against the old government, but also extremists against local people and even other extremists.<sup>326</sup>

Several propaganda materials that were disseminated during the massacre, such as "sekarang waktunya buat mampuskan semua Cina-cina!" (Now this is the time to kill all the Chinese!) and "Berbagi dengan yang miskin!" (Share with the poor!), also show that anti-Chinese sentiment were deeply embedded in the Indonesian psyche. Akin to a bomb, it just needed the right conditions and time to explode. Mely G. Tan characterizes this relationship as a love-hate relationship, because while the Chinese played an important role in developing local economies, they were also accused of being an 'exclusive community' with no firm national identity.<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> Robert Cribb, *Gangsters and Revolutionaries: The Jakarta People's Militia and the Indonesian Revolution 1945-1949*. (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1991).

<sup>325</sup> *Soeloeh Ra'jat*, 6 August 1946.

<sup>326</sup> *Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken, NEFIS/CMI, 1942-1949*. Inv Nr: 01899.

<sup>327</sup> Mely G. Tan, *Etnis Tionghoa di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2008), 24.





Figure 10. A caricature about Tangerang massacre published in *Star Weekly*. The first column said “sekarang waktunya buat mamampusin semua Cina-cina” (now is the time to kill all Chinese).  
Source: *Star Weekly*, 9 June 1946.

The Chinese community found it difficult to shake off accusations of being NICA spies. Because of the political tension between Dutch and Indonesia, the Chinese were in a very precarious situation. Some of them felt that they should be neutral, owing to the fact that the Indonesians lived and intermingled with Chinese for hundreds of years. Others hoped for aid from their Fatherland, China:

"It seems that we are in the midst of unfriendliness from both parties. No outsiders will accept our sympathy and friendship. Then how should we govern ourselves? We must quickly request the government of our Fatherland to frame a policy for the protection of overseas Chinese as soon as possible. Simultaneously, we have to request the Dutch and the Indonesian people to understand more of the inherent national morality of the Chinese. Whenever and wherever, Chinese Indonesian will not hurt others."<sup>328</sup>

Neutrality was not always an effective strategy. During that period of chaos, there was no grey area, only two possible options: pro-Dutch or pro-Indonesian. Thus, the Chinese faced a dilemma:

"Our neutrality has already lost, our patience has also a limit. In the meantime, we also want to remind our own people to stand together whatever happens and to always bear in mind our compatriots who are still in very precarious situations."<sup>329</sup>

<sup>328</sup> *Lee Ming Pao*, 2 April 1946.

<sup>329</sup> *Thien Sung*, 30 March 1946

The Tangerang incident became a basis for Chinese to re-think their 'vulnerable position' in Indonesia. In less than one year's time the Chinese had been victimized several times and they did not believe if the Republican government could protect them. No wonder that the Chinese were overjoyed and received the Dutch as their rescuers. Thus, they had to choose which side they wanted to support. And since many Chinese had become victims of violence at Indonesian hands during revolution, some of them decided to support the Allied troops.

Chinese collaboration with the NICA or the Dutch army heightened the tensions between the Chinese and Indonesians. However, the background behind their involvement in NICA/Dutch forces has never been properly analyzed. Traditional Indonesian historiography paints this in broad, one-sided strokes, with the Chinese simply as traitors. The reasons for Chinese collaboration with the Dutch have to be further examined and questioned. This was a complex issue, especially during the revolutionary period.

Perhaps it is true that some Chinese served as NICA soldiers. However, we also have to bear in mind that NICA not only consisted of Chinese or Eurasian soldiers, but also many Ambonese, Timorese, and even Javanese, all of whom served the queen.<sup>330</sup> If we also acknowledge that most Chinese did not join NICA, I still hesitate that the friction between Indonesians and Chinese over this period would disappear.

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<sup>330</sup> *Star Weekly*, 16 June 1946.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the massacre of Chinese in Tangerang that occurred between May-June 1946, following the Dutch occupation in Serpong, Tangerang. More than a thousand Chinese men, women, and children were killed in various places in the interior of Tangerang. This thesis argues that the massacre was not an incidental event, but had its roots in the social disorganization, economic instability, and the collapse of authority occasioned by the Dutch colonial regime and Japanese occupation.

This thesis has reminded us that systematic acts of anti-Chinese violence began in Indonesia during the period of Dutch colonial rule, and increased in scale during the Indonesian Revolution. As shown in Chapter 1, the legacy of 'othering' the Chinese emerged during the colonial period and continued during the Japanese occupation and Indonesian Revolution. All these experiences inevitably contributed in alienating Chinese from Indonesians. This legacy of 'othering' even continued with the Sukarno and Suharto regimes, when Chinese maintained an exclusively ethnic-based business network, and were treated as 'economic animals.' Both regimes, especially Suharto's New Order, had forced Chinese to withdraw themselves from society and to start living exclusively.

The significant role that the Chinese have played in the Indonesian economy, primarily as middlemen in colonial intermediary trade in the Dutch East Indies, was instrumental in creating the gap between Chinese and Indonesians. The notion that the Chinese were economically more privileged than the native Indonesians was encouraged by the Dutch colonial authorities, and naturally incurred the jealousy and ire of the locals. The 'Foreign Oriental' legacy during the Dutch colonial period that separated Chinese from other racial/ethnic groups also contributed to the further alienation of Chinese within the schema of Indonesian society.

In the case of Indonesia, economic turmoil and instability, combined with widespread suffering during the Japanese occupation, had pushed large sections of Indonesia's population, especially those in rural Java, to support a revolution that rejected traditional – that is to say, Dutch colonial – rulers, as well as their local accomplices. In particular, the Chinese and to a lesser extent Eurasians were accused of profiting from the colonial system.

The initial wave of the revolution shattered the fragile Republican state structure, paving the way for the national leadership to take over Tangerang from the Japanese and Dutch-trained

bureaucratic elite. The first year of the Indonesian struggle for independence was rocky, with Tangerang experiencing a destabilization of its local government helmed by Haji Achmad Chaerun. *Jawara* groups emerged, revolutionary groups began to prepare for combat, and authority was increasingly shunned and disregarded. All elements of the old regime, such as the *pangreh praja* and the pre-existing police were eliminated, with revolutionaries determined to start afresh in the absence of any pro-Republican leadership.

This thesis also argues that in order to get better understanding about the massacre, it is necessary to examine Tangerang's historical context. Chapter 2 of this thesis shows that Tangerang is characterized as a region with a strong Islamic tradition and with a long history of resistance to external authority. The traditions of political resistance and Islamic identity were further reinforced during the Indonesian Revolution. The most important revolutionary groups in Tangerang had histories of anti-colonial, nationalist activity dating back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Haji Achmad Chaerun was not a new political player who simply emerged during the revolution; he had already been involved in the communist rebellion in Banten in 1926.

Chaerun's government, however, was marked by extremely heavy-handed interventions from *ulama* and *jawara* of his regime, including the termination of their relationship with the central government of Indonesia. Thus, a state within a state was created. The situation forced Sjahrir to decide to take over Chaerun's government, though this did not change the fact that violence continued in Tangerang, aggravated by the killings of hundreds of Chinese. State control over the interior of Tangerang was negligible at best.

Regime changes in Indonesia, history shows, Indonesia have often been accompanied by fierce anti-Chinese violence.<sup>1</sup> Such was the case with the overthrowing of the Dutch colonial regime in 1942 and the Japanese in 1945; the Indonesian revolutionary period from 1945-49; the transition period from Sukarno to Suharto in 1966 (preceded by the killings of anywhere between half a million and perhaps a few millions of Indonesian Communist Party sympathizers and alleged communists); and the fall of Suharto in 1998. A similar situation also occurred in

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project Interim Report Series, 1968); Charles Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1983); Jemma Purdey, *Anti-Chinese Violence in Indonesia : 1996-1999* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2006); Takashi Shiraishi, *Zaman Bergerak : Radikalisme Rakyat di Jawa 1912-1926* (Jakarta: Pustaka Utama Grafiti, 1997); Twang Peck Yang, *The Chinese Business Elite in Indonesia and the Transition to Independence, 1940-1950* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Tangerang, following the declaration of Indonesian independence, which provided the catalyst for an atrocity on such a massive scale.

So why were the Chinese especially targeted in the massacre? To answer this question I would like to refer to Blagojevic, who said: "ethnic conflict occurs when a particular set of factors and conditions converge: a major structural crisis; presence of historical memories of inter-ethnic grievances; institutional factors that promote ethnic intolerance; manipulation of historical memories by political entrepreneurs to evoke emotions such as fear, resentment, and hate toward the "other."<sup>2</sup> The Tangerang massacre fits in this case, especially if when we look back to the situation of the region at that time. Localized social and political tensions also had a part to play in the bloodshed.

As shown in Chapter 3, the roots of resentment towards the Chinese erupted following the shortage of rice and cloth in Tangerang, a condition which worsened during the political transitions between 1945-46. During this period of uncertainty, the Chinese were easy scapegoats for the violence and economic problems in Tangerang. Moreover, the anti-Chinese sentiment, already deeply rooted in Tangerang since the colonial period, also helped transform the peoples' sentiment into a massive revolution under the flag of 'perjuangan.'

Although outbursts of violence in Indonesia have a long history, the Tangerang massacre is a unique case, as it was targeted at a specific population, and it was perpetrated by a specific religious group. Moreover, *jawara* was also included in local patterns of violence and played a useful role of intimidation of those considered a problem of local government. Perpetrators of anti-Chinese violence in Tangerang justified their actions by saying that the Chinese were aliens in the community, as well as non-believers.

The presence of Chinese in Indonesia was like a 'time-bomb' that could explode anytime and anywhere. Owing to the Indonesian Chinese being 'socially thin', as Benedict Anderson suggests<sup>3</sup>, the stigmatization of Chinese was inevitable during the revolutionary period. In Tangerang's case, Chinese were labelled as 'triple-minorities.' They were depicted as actual

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<sup>2</sup> Bojana Blagojevic, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict: A Conceptual Framework," *Journal of Global Change and Governance*, Vol. III, (Winter 2009), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*. (California: University of California, 1997), 223.

puppets in colonial hands and profiteers of colonial rule; as capitalists; and as non-Muslims. They were never seen as *asli* (genuine) and therefore could never be 'true Indonesians.'

Freek Colombijn classifies violence in Indonesia into four levels: (1) Violence inflicted by the state or state organs (including the army); (2) Violence by communities (defined by inter-ethnic, inter-religious or inter-village boundaries); (3) Violence by gangs and militias; and (4) Violence by individuals loosely congregated in temporary crowds.<sup>4</sup> Based on Colombijn's classification, the Tangerang massacre falls under the second and third category.

Although TRI as a state apparatus was also involved in the massacre, this thesis did not find any evidence that showed the involvement of the Indonesian government in the tragedy, and perhaps it would be impossible or at least very difficult to find the direct chain of command in a massacre. Based on numerous primary resources, this thesis argues that it was purely the incapability –or the absence-- of Indonesia as a new state to control its apparatus. The central government could not do anything to prevent the Tangerang massacre because the Indonesian government had to face threats from other places near Jakarta. However it must be noted that the anti-revolutionary Sjahrir Cabinet did not alter the structure of the government, police, or army.<sup>5</sup>

During the vacuum of power and uncertain conditions which combined with frequent provocations from local leaders, the hatred of local people towards Chinese in Tangerang that had rooted since a long time ago, erupted again. Although it is difficult to say that state played a role in the massacre, it was apparent that the massacre occurred in the areas that supposedly were under Indonesian control. The transfer of sovereignty from Chaerun to TKR/TRI marked the fact that the Indonesian government in principle should be responsible for what happened in Tangerang.

The continuing violence suggested a depth of community resentment and hostility that left many ethnic Chinese wary of an independent state. Security was of paramount importance to the Chinese. The massacres of Chinese by Indonesian extremists in Bandung, Surabaya, and Tangerang, along with the burning of their dwellings and confiscation of their possessions in the

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<sup>4</sup> Freek Colombijn, "A Cultural Practice of Violence in Indonesia: Lessons from History," in Dewi Fortuna Anwar (ed.), *Violent Internal Conflicts in Asia Pacific: Histories, Political Economy and Policies* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor, 2005), 264.

<sup>5</sup> Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken, *NEFIS/CMI 1942-1949*. Inv. Nr: 01857.

name of 'freedom' made them realize how vulnerable they were. Although the Chinese in Indonesia felt that they should be neutral, many remained friendly to the Dutch, as they felt personally and economically secure with the Dutch than with the Republic.

"We have no objection for Holland with her old sovereignty to come back and rule the Netherlands Indies, especially when the friendship of an old ally still lingers in our mind." (*Sin Po*, 23 March 1946.)

Therefore, whoever could best guarantee their safety would have the loyalty of the Chinese, regardless of political background. In this case, it was not the Indonesian government, but the Dutch.<sup>6</sup> Their decision to aid the Dutch led and still leads to quick generalizations about the Chinese being traitors during the Indonesian revolution. In some documents this is apparent, as some Chinese did benefit from their closeness with the Dutch troops, as they were better able to secure their wealth and property. In the last chapter, it is evident that the Chinese took advantage of their Dutch ties in order to supply arms to PAT. However, their motivations behind those decisions are barely analyzed. It is impossible to simply generalize that all Chinese were allies of the Dutch, as many Chinese also actively fought on the Republican side, with others even entering Republican politics.

Heavily reported by the Indonesian press, the massacre was subject to interpretations by pundits, all from different perspectives – Indonesian (Republican), Dutch, and Chinese. China became involved in the conflict by denouncing both the Dutch and the Indonesians for incompetence in protecting the Chinese citizens. This brought the massacre to international attention, as China enjoyed a prestigious position as part of the Big Five (the USSR, the United States, France, and Britain being the other four), as well as a permanent seat in the United Nations Security Council. The massacre left a stain which made it more difficult for the Indonesian Republic to gain recognition from the international community at that time, as it was seen as a weak state unable to protect its citizens against barbaric mass violence.

The Tangerang massacre was only one in a long series of cases of anti-Chinese violence all over Java, in which both the Dutch and the Indonesian Republic failed to protect the lives of the Chinese population during the Indonesian Revolutionary period. Although considerable

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<sup>6</sup> Chinese in Sragen, Central Java even formed a committee to welcome the Dutch troops which was called the 'ontvangst committee.' Soejatno, 107.

efforts were made by the Republic to protect the Chinese in order to enlist their support, the Republic's military forces were insufficient to prevent hostile acts by extremist elements whose animosity had been directed against the Chinese. Soon after the massacre in Tangerang, more cases of anti-Chinese violence emerged in other parts of Indonesia: Bagan Siapi-Api (1946), Cirebon (1947), Cibadak (1947), and Cilimus (1947). To date, no specific research has been conducted to examine the communal violence in those areas.

William Frederick says that "the Indonesian Revolution is one of the most important and successful of the postwar anticolonial revolutions, but it is also a complex phenomenon that, despite considerable study, we still do not understand very clearly."<sup>379</sup> Therefore, further examination about the Indonesian revolution is necessary in order to deconstruct the prevalent historiography, which mainly glorifies the struggle of Indonesian combatants who expelled the Dutch from Indonesia with only bamboo spears, without shedding light on the atrocities suffered by powerless communities such as the Chinese, Eurasians, Timorese or Arabs. Therefore, further research about this period need to be conducted in order to reveal other facts that have been silenced under the New Order regime.

Indonesia has to start to make peace with its own history. The Indonesian government should cover both sides of the revolution including the violence perpetrated by Indonesians. The roots of violence must be studied in order to understand the roles held by the victimizers as well as the victims, but also those of the seemingly innocent bystanders and the international community at large. By studying this topic, we are also developing a complex understanding of mass murder, ethnic cleansing, and other cruel forms of eradication of ethnic groups. With this knowledge, we can work collaboratively to develop models and policies towards early warning, prevention, peaceful conflict resolution, reconciliation and reconstruction based on history.

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<sup>379</sup> William Frederick, "Review," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (May 1988), 426-427.



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*Thien Sung Yit Po*

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*Asia Raya*

*Het Inzicht*

*Gelora Rakjat*

*Kan Po*

*Lee Ming Pao*

*Liberty*

*Merdeka*

*Pandji Ra'jat*

*Persatoean*

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## APPENDIX

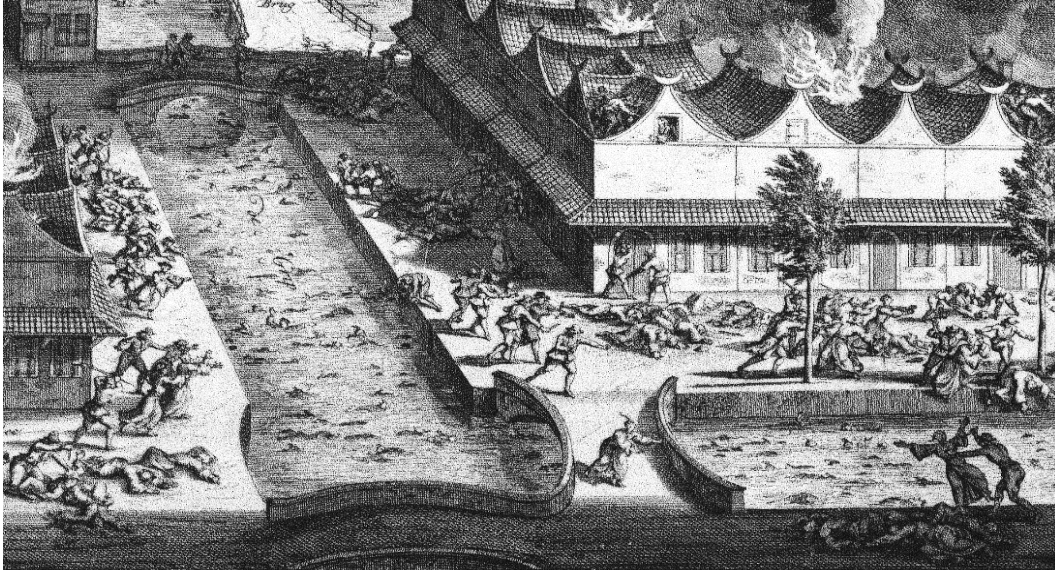
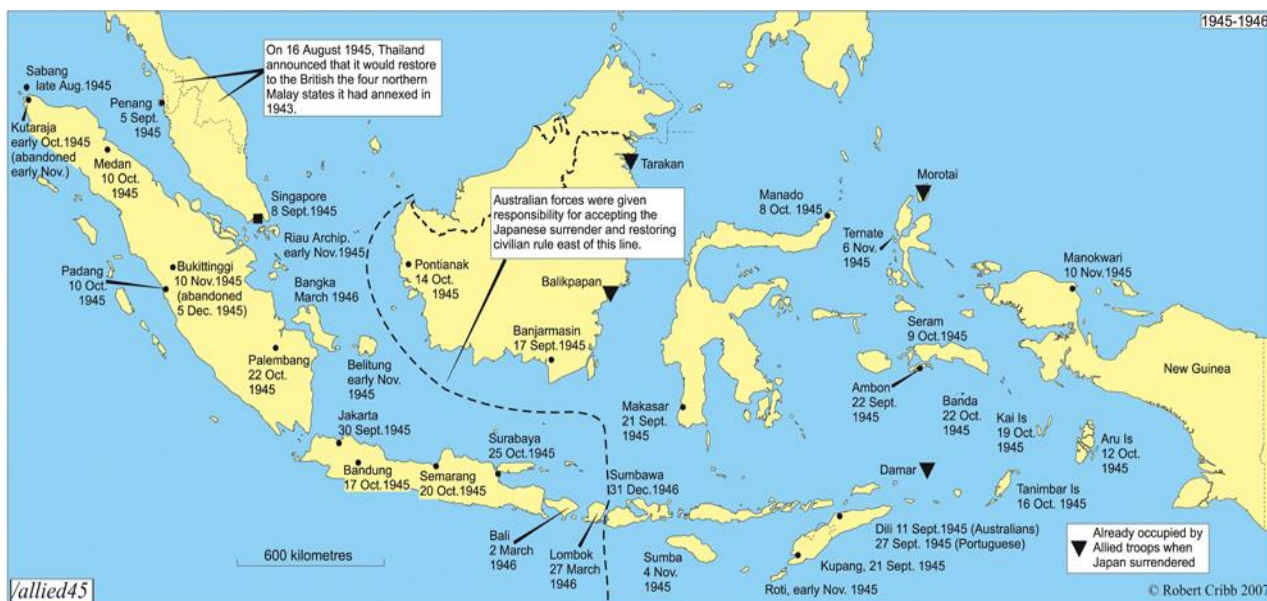


Figure 1. Depiction of the part of Batavia where the terrible slaughter of the Chinese happened after the discovery of their treason on 9 October 1740. INALCO Library, Paris. Taken from Claudine Salmon, "The Massacre of 1740 as Reflected in a Contemporary Chinese Narrative," *Archipel*, Vol. 77, (2009), 153.



Figure 2. Sketch of Chinese inhabitants in Java in the early nineteenth century with their Manchu queue (pigtailed) and special style of dress. Sketch by the Belgian artist, A.A. J. Payen (1792-1853). Photograph from the A.A.J. Payen Collection (Sketchbook E) by courtesy of the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden. Taken from Peter Carey, "Changing Javanese Perceptions of the Chinese Communities in Central Java, 1755-1825," *Indonesia*, Vol. 37; (1984), 1.



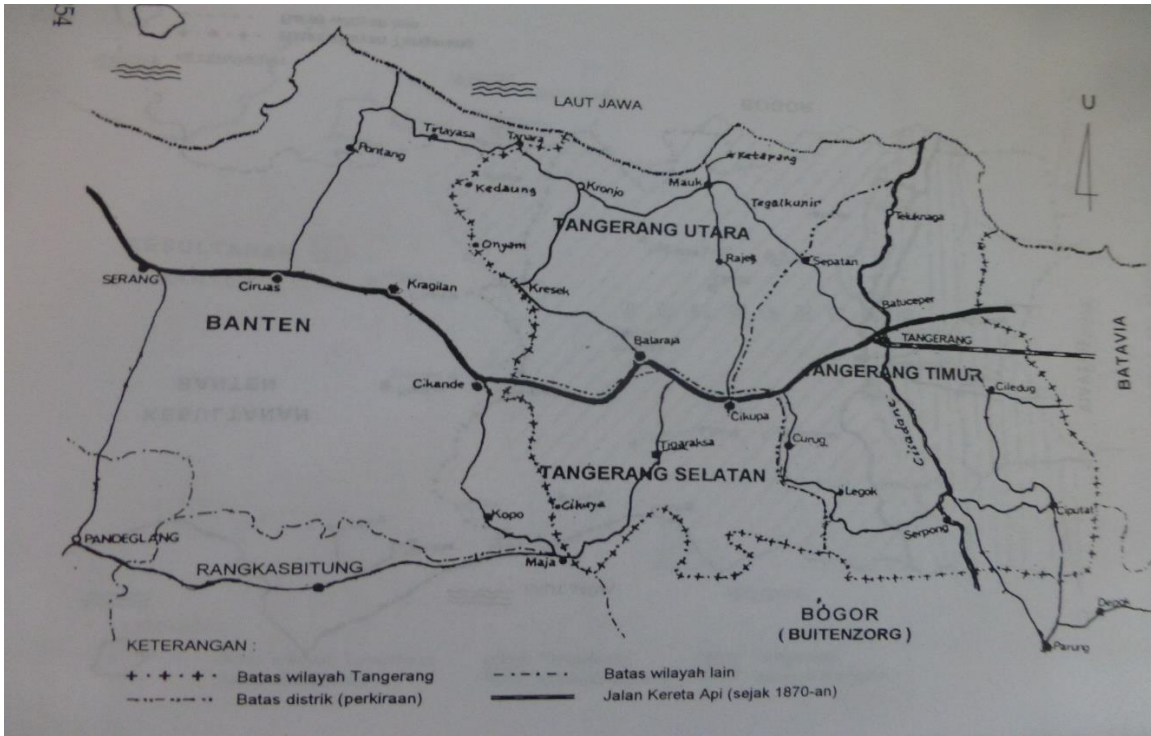


Map 1. Allied re-occupation of Indonesia, August 1945-March 1946. Source: Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* (NIAS Press, 2000). Map Number: 5.06.



Map 2. Social Revolutions in Java, 1945-1946. Source: Robert Cribb, *Historical Atlas of Indonesia* (NIAS Press, 2000). Map Number: 5.08.



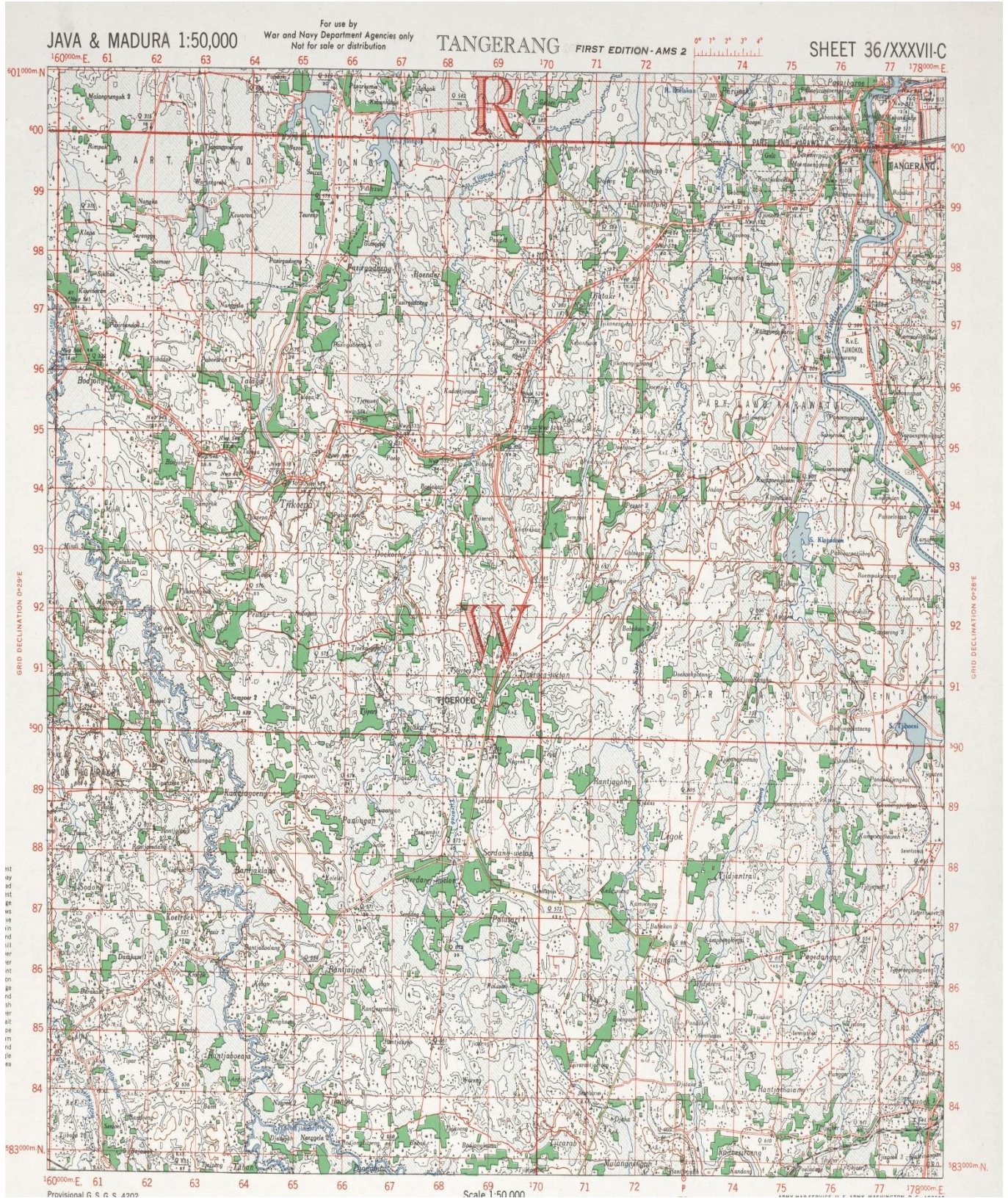


Map 3. Map of Tangerang during Colonial period (since 1860). Source: Edi Ekadjati (eds.), *Sejarah Kabupaten Tangerang* (Tangerang: Pemerintah Kabupaten Tangerang, 2004), 254.



Figure 3. Registration card for Tentara Keamanan Rakyat (TKR/People's Security Corps) Jakarta. Source: *Marine en Leger Inlichtingendienst, de Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service en de Centrale Militaire Inlichtingendienst in Nederlands-Indië*. Inv. Nr: 03284.





Map 4. Map of Tangerang 1942. Source: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/ams/java\\_and\\_madura/](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/ams/java_and_madura/)