

服務於日本軍隊:二次世界大戰時期在東南亞 的印尼人與臺灣人

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In Japanese Military Service: Indonesians and Taiwanese in Southeast Asia during World War II

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Abstract

At the onset of World War II in Asia, the Japanese armed forces quickly captured Southeast Asia. To win the war, the Japanese required manpower from through their empire. This paper examines the Taiwanese and Indonesians who were recruited by the Japanese military as soldiers and servicemen. Through an analysis of their very different perspectives, this paper explains not only the systematic Japanese approach to wartime recruitment but also key differences in both groups' experiences and views during that era and beyond. The paper uncovers a shared hope for prestige and belief in propaganda combined with the lure of economic rewards. It finds that differences in nationalism were highly significant in the contrasting Taiwanese and Indonesian wartime experiences. It further concludes that former servicemen in the political reality of post-war Taiwan were unable to express their sentiments whereas in Indonesia these sentiments became a preparatory tool for national struggle.

Keywords: Japanese Military Service, World War II, Indonesia, Taiwan, nationalism

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1. Introduction

The world took notice when, in 1974, a lone Japanese soldier was found after spending decades hiding in the jungle of Morotai Island, Indonesia. Identified as Teruo Nakamura, this man came from the Amis tribe in Taiwan and was 57 years old when he was found. This former soldier in the Imperial Japanese army was eventually repatriated, but found himself in a strange situation. The island on which he was born was still the same, but politically his home was now no longer part of Japan but the territory of the Republic of China. His own identity was even more complex. His aboriginal Taiwanese name was Suniuo, yet now he had the Chinese name Lee Kuang-hui — something he had never had when he left Taiwan in 1942 or traveled to Morotai with the Takasago Volunteer Unit in 1944.² His wife had remarried more than 10 years ago and his world, as he remembered it, had ceased to exist. Formally, he could claim a mere 7,000 NTD in unpaid wages from Japan; he received a total of 380,000 NTD.³

Several decades after World War II, various Indonesians who had been soldiers for Japan similarly tried to reclaim unpaid due wages. Their argument was that they had been in the service of Japan and should therefore have the right to claim these funds from the Japanese authorities. Having worked for Japan and honored their contracts, it seemed only just that they should be rewarded for this service. One major association in Indonesia consisted of former Indonesian Heiho (auxiliary soldiers or servicemen).4 Some funds were donated, but it is common knowledge in Indonesia that much of the Japanese reparations did not go to former Heiho, Romusha (slave laborers), or Ianfu (sex slaves).⁵ In 1958, Indonesia had signed a bilateral treaty with Japan, which

¹ "Japanese Soldier found after hiding 30 years," New York Times, 30 December 1974, https://www.n ytimes.com/1974/12/30/archives/japanese-soldier-found-after-hiding-30-years.html (accessed September

² "The Last Holdout of Morotai," Taipei Times, 03 January 2016, https://www.taipeitimes.com/News/f eat/archives/2016/01/03/2003636296 (accessed September 9, 2023).

³ "The Last Holdout of Morotai," Taipei Times.

⁴ Yayasan Kesejahteraan Persatuan Keluarga Heiho, Buku Kumpulan Kenang-kenangan Heiho Indonesia 1942-1945 [Heiho's collection of memories: Indonesia, 1942-1945] (Jakarta: Yayasan Kesejahteraan Persatuan Keluarga Heiho, 1980).

⁵ T. Jacob, Tahun-tahun Yang Sulit Mari Mencintai Indonesia [Difficult years: let's love Indonesia] (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2001), p. 106.

formally settled the matter of compensation. About one hundred Indonesian *Heiho* tried to sue the Japanese government for backpay some 38 years after the end of the war, arguing that they had not received compensation as part of the war reparations.⁶ Japan, however, officially considered the matter settled through its treaty with Indonesia.

The personal stories and experiences of these people, swept up in a war that they did not necessarily understand, left many people victimized decades later. This paper will focus on the Taiwanese and Indonesian soldiers and servicemen who actively served the Japanese in Southeast Asia during the war. Using a multi-facetted approach, it will examine the issue of military service in order to offer a different historical view of articulation of soldiers' and servicemen's memories of the war based on an analysis of differences and similarities between the Taiwanese and Indonesians. The paper asks why, despite obvious historical pre-war differences between Taiwan and Indonesia, there is such a difference in their articulation and perception of the wartime experiences of service and exploitation.

2. Background: Taiwan and Indonesia

There can be little doubt that the Indonesian and Taiwanese situations differed both before and after the territories became part of the Japanese empire. For the Taiwanese, Japanese rule began in 1895, whereas for the Indonesians the Japanese empire only controlled their lives after the Dutch surrender in March 1942. A background perspective will allow insight, with an analysis of these peoples' shared experiences contributing to an understanding of how the Taiwanese and Indonesians individually and collectively experienced the war. It is important to provide a brief background of Taiwan and Indonesia to make this picture clear before going into their actual war experience.

⁶ Tempo, *Cerita Pilu Korban Kerja Paksa Romusha Jepang* [The Heartbreaking Story of Japanese Forced Labor Romusha Victims] (Jakarta: Tempo Publishing, 2019), p. 21.

⁷ On this perspective also see: Ken'ichi Goto, *Tensions of Empire: Japan and Southeast Asia in the Colonial and Postcolonial World* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2003).

(1) Taiwan

By the time Southeast Asia was under Japanese administrative control in 1942, Japan already had decades of experience as colonial ruler of Taiwan and Korea, as well as the South Seas Mandate (consisting of former German islands in the Pacific that Japan administrated after World War I).8 In Taiwan, the Japanese Governor-General ruled over the Taiwanese through decrees. In the 1910s and 1920s, Taiwanese students in Japan came to experience the Japanese civil rights and constitutional government during their studies in Japan and saw the contrast with Japanese rule in Taiwan. 9 Taiwanese student leaders came to see Taiwan as having its own distinct history and cultural traits. 10 The conception of Taiwan as an entity in the 1920s played an important role in its future development. 11 Changes were implemented in Taiwan, with the Japanese policies of doka (assimilation) and kominka (imperialization) being used to transform the Taiwanese into Japanese people and imperial subjects. ¹² This doka policy of assimilation suffocated other alternatives and maintained Japanese dominance. 13 Japanese militarism of the 1930s put a stop to Taiwanese political development, especially Taiwanese-grown communism.¹⁴ The subsequent kominka policy of 1937 did not follow a pure doka concept, as it was influenced by the wartime necessity of requiring colonies to become Japanized in order to ensure their loyalty to the Japanese empire.¹⁵ The kominka policy focus was on the political obligations of the Taiwanese as 'converted Japanese'. 16 For the Taiwanese, as noted by contemporary author Kiyoshi

⁸ See on the Japanese role in World War I for instance: Frank Dhont, "Aspiring Modernity: Japan's role in World War I," in Jarosław Suchoples and Stephanie James, eds., Re-visiting World War I. Interpretations and Perspectives of the Great Conflict (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 63-84.

⁹ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey (Taipei: SMC Publishing, 2020), p. 222.

¹⁰ Wan-Yao Chou, "The Kōminka movement: Taiwan under wartime Japan, 1937-1945" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1991), p. 26.

¹¹ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey, p. 230.

¹² Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), p. 7.

¹³ Hui-Yu Caroline Tsai, Taiwan in Japan's Empire Building: An institutional approach to colonial engineering (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 190.

¹⁴ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey, p. 239.

¹⁵ Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, p. 93.

¹⁶ Wan-Yao Chou, "The Kōminka movement: Taiwan under wartime Japan, 1937-1945", p. 36.

Takeuchi, it was no longer good enough to merely be Japanese (as under the *doka*); they needed to be "good Japanese" under the *kominka*.¹⁷ Taiwanese intellectuals thereby failed in their attempts to push for more rights and recognition.

In 1936, as Japan engaged militarily in mainland China, the empire began to accept Taiwanese volunteers. Later, it conscripted Taiwanese people into the Japanese imperial army. By the mid-1930s, the Japanese had already claimed Manchuria. It was from Manchuria that Japan attacked China proper in 1937. This is accepted as the beginning of the War in Asia, a conflict that would combine with the 1939 invasion of Poland by both Germany and the Soviet Union to become World War II.

(2) Indonesia

Although the Netherlands initially managed to stay neutral in World War II, the German attack of May 10, 1940, on the territories of Belgium and France crossed through Dutch territory and forced the empire into World War II. The result was a quick defeat for the Netherlands, Belgium, and even France, all of which signed an armistice with Germany in June 1940. This left the Dutch authorities in the Netherlands Indies in a position of weakness as the Dutch homeland had been occupied since 1940.

By then, Indonesian nationalism had been developing for decades in the Netherlands Indies. After the establishment of Boedi Oetomo, a movement of Javanese intellectuals, in 1908, various strands of communist, Islamic, and nationalist parties emerged. By 1940, the Indonesian archipelago was full of political movements and parties that strove for Indonesian self-rule. The Netherlands did not go the way of fascism, but gradually and begrudgingly gave more and more Indonesians positions on the Volksraad (People's Council), which had served as an advisory council to the Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies since 1918. The situations in Taiwan and Indonesia were completely different, as many Indonesian intellectuals served on councils, as members of the press, on school boards, or as doctors and lawyers. When political objections to colonial rule became too prominent, the colonial government did

¹⁷ Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, p. 93.

not hesitate to imprison nationalist leaders, but the public debate on the future of the Netherlands Indies never halted and there was thus far more freedom in the Netherlands Indies than in Taiwan.

The Dutch fully intended to maintain control over the Netherlands Indies and had implemented various development policies. The Dutch language dominated formal education. Meanwhile, the Royal Dutch Indies Army (KNIL) consisted of Dutch officers but predominantly Indonesian recruits. Access to Dutch education was severely limited for indigenous Indonesians, with some exceptions — such as for children of some indigenous soldiers, and even then it was uncommon through the 1920s. 18 Overall, there was an emphasis on implementing Dutch in formal official life. Indonesian nationalists responded by emphasizing the use of Bahasa Indonesia (Indonesian) through the political declaration of Sumpah Pemuda (Youth Pledge) of October 28, 1928. In so doing, they declared Indonesia to be one single motherland, one single nation, and use one single national language. The Dutch did not hesitate to interfere in the nationalist movements. For instance, Sukarno — who had formed the Indonesian National Party (PNI) in 1927 and later served as Indonesia's first president — was imprisoned and later exiled from Java in 1934 after repeated conflict with the colonial authorities. By 1942, he was living in Bencoolen, where the Japanese authorities apprehended him up and sent him to Java to assist them in their military occupation administration of Java.

(3) The Buildup to the Japanese Attack on Southeast Asia

The 1930s were a tense time in Southeast Asia, where countries were increasingly moving toward independence in a colonial world that tried to maintain its power. Japan had become an important trading partner for the Dutch East Indies. In 1935, 30% of the imports of the Netherlands Indies came from Japan — six years previously, it had only been 11%. At the same time, only 5% of the Netherlands Indies' exports went to Japan.¹⁹

¹⁸ Kees Groeneboer, Weg tot het Westen [The Way to the West] (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1993), p. 375, footnote 126

¹⁹ H.J. van Mook, *Nederlandsch-Indië en Japan: hun Betrekkingen in 1940-1941* [Dutch East Indies and Japan: Their Relations in 1940-1941] (London: The Netherland Publishing Company, 1945), p. 12.

Trade with Japan decreased during the latter's war with China in 1937; that same year, only 15% of the Netherlands Indies' imports came from Japan.²⁰

The Japanese needed raw materials, to which they had very limited access. The Netherlands Indies was particularly desirable, replete with resources desperately needed by the Japanese war economy. The Dutch, however, were not eager to give in to Japanese demands for natural resources. Japanese pressure on the Dutch mounted when Germany captured the Netherlands in May 1940, but the Dutch continued to stall. Hubertus van Mook, who later became the last governor-general of the Netherlands Indies, left us a detailed firsthand account. He relates how thirteen export products were requested from the Netherlands Indies in a statement of May 20, 1940, which requested a supply of one million tons of oil — more than the actual yearly production in the years 1937 (869,000 tons), 1938 (668,000 tons), and 1939 (573,000 tons).

Because the Dutch did not bow to Japanese pressure, they made themselves a primary target. Even as Japanese-Dutch negotiations continued through 1941, the Dutch continued to refuse to open their markets to the Japanese. The American sanctions of July 26, 1941, caused the Japanese to be cut off from American oil. Ultimately, Japan launched attacks on Malaya and Luzon in Southeast Asia on December 8, 1941, local time — consecutively with the attack on Pearl Harbor.²²

By 1941, the Japanese forces on Taiwan were already part of the Japanese army and involved in the conflict. The 1st and 2nd Formosan Infantry regiments — each of which had 2,580 personnel — were based in Taipei and Tainan. These were part of the 48th Division, which first went to Manila before capturing Java; by the end of the war, it was based on the island of Timor.²³ According to the official Japanese historical

²⁰ H.J. van Mook, *Nederlandsch-Indië en Japan: hun Betrekkingen in 1940-1941* [Dutch East Indies and Japan: Their Relations in 1940-1941], p. 18.

²¹ H.J. van Mook, *Nederlandsch-Indië en Japan: hun Betrekkingen in 1940-1941* [Dutch East Indies and Japan: Their Relations in 1940-1941], pp. 35-36.

For the events, see: Frank Dhont, "In Search of an Independent Indonesia: Japanese Occupation Policies for Asia versus Indonesian Nationalist Aspirations during World War Two," in Jarosław Suchoples, Stephanie James, Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, eds., World War II Re-explored: Some New Millennium Studies in the History of the Global Conflict (Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019), pp. 114-134.

²³ See "48th Division (Kai)" in JACAR Document Topic Browser: JACAR Glossary, https://www.jacar.go.jp/english/glossary_en/term/0100-0040-0130-0010-0020-0020-0010-0010.html (accessed September 9, 2023).

narrative, these two regiments had been involved in the Marco Polo Bridge Incident of 1937.²⁴ These regiments were Formosan in name only, being described as such due to their Taiwanese location of origin rather than any sort of Taiwanese representation.²⁵

In 1936, the Royal Netherlands Indies Army was 71% indigenous (including 13,000 Javanese soldiers, 5,000 Manadonese and 4,000 Ambonese) out of a total force of 33,000.26 There were also 2,000 Sundanese and 1,000 Timorese. Officers, however, were predominantly of European heritage; there were only 20 indigenous officers in the KNIL in 1937.²⁷ There were also regular Dutch troops on Java by 1941, but the bulk of the Dutch armed forces consisted of KNIL forces — which was nothing more than a police army and thus not designed to fight a major war against a foreign invader. Consequently, the Dutch were almost immediately defeated in March 1942. The Japanese 16th Army, active in the Philippines and later Java, consisted of 97,800 men, with an additional 10,000 personnel from the air units. 28 Japan very quickly captured virtually the entirety of Southeast Asia. Their military advances were so successful that even British India was threatened and Australia was repeatedly bombed.

The United States managed to stop the Japanese expanse toward Australia at the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands by August 1942. This military effort, combined with the naval battle of Midway in June 1942, halted the Japanese expanse. At Kokoda, in what is now Papua New Guinea, the Australians stopped the Japanese attempt to capture Port Moresby. From late 1942 onward, the Japanese were forced into a more stagnant situation of territorial control and later gradual loss of territory until their final military defeat on August 15, 1945. In their great success in capturing territory in Southeast Asia in 1941 and 1942, the Japanese armed forces became

²⁴ Willem Remmelink ed. and trans., The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies, compiled by the War History Office of the National Defense College of Japan (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2015), p. 23.

²⁵ Willem Remmelink ed. and trans., *The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies*, compiled by the War History Office of the National Defense College of Japan, p. 76.

²⁶ Petrik Matanasi, *Pribumi Jadi Letnan KNIL* [An Indigenous person who became a KNIL Lieutenant] (Yogyakarta: Trompet, 2012), p. 16.

²⁷ L. de Jong, Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog 1939-1945, Part IIa Eerste Helft [The Kingdom of the Netherlands in World War II 1939-1945, Part IIa First Half] (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), p. 178.

²⁸ Willem Remmelink ed. and trans., The Invasion of the Dutch East Indies, compiled by the War History Office of the National Defense College of Japan, p. 95.

overstretched and outnumbered by their enemies. This left them struggling with limited resources, always needing more. One such resource was soldiers and servicemen.

3. Japanese Policies of Propaganda and Ideology at the Outset of World War II

As we have seen, the Japanese implemented the *kominka* policy in 1937, making the Taiwanese into Japanized imperial subjects. Immediately after the capture of the Indonesian Archipelago in 1942, similar policies of propaganda and ideology were implemented; however, because of the short duration of Japanese control and the Indonesians' different cultural backgrounds, success was limited. Nonetheless, similarities can easily be found.

(1) Indonesia

For the Indonesians who had been eager to become free of Dutch colonial rule, the Japanese arrival offered a promise of independence. The Dutch government had consistently argued that the Indonesians were not yet ready for independence. The Soetardjo Petition of 1936, as well as requests in 1940 and 1941 for a certain degree of self-sufficiency, was voted down in the Volksraad (Advisory Council) of the Netherlands Indies — much to the disappointment of the Indonesians.²⁹ The Dutch did not want to relinquish the wealth of the Netherlands Indies and, even when Germany occupied the Dutch homeland, they refused to accept Indonesian demands.

This left Indonesians very susceptible for the promise of independence. After 1941, Japanese propaganda hinted at offering Indonesians the promise of a future as free country after the defeat of the Dutch.³⁰ The Japanese slogan "Asia for the Asians", which had been implemented as early as 1933, was extremely appealing.³¹ Japanese propaganda allowed the use of the Indonesian flag and pro-Indonesian songs, but only

²⁹ G.B. Jones, *Tussen Onderdanen, Rijksgenoten en Nederlanders* [Between Subjects, Compatriots, and Dutch] (Amsterdam: Rozenberg Publishers, 2007), p. 74.

³⁰ Herman Burgers, De Garoeda en de Ooievaar: Indonesië van Kolonie tot Nationale Staat [The Garuda and the Stork: Indonesia from Colony to Nation-State] (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011), p. 280.

³¹ Barak Kushner, The thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), p. 8.

in the first few weeks of the occupation. The Japanese also recruited the anti-Dutch nationalist Sukarno to become part of the Triple A Movement, which glorified Japan's role in Indonesia. In March 1943, Sukarno was made the head of Putera (Pusat Tenaga Rakyat: Center of People's Power).³² This organization gave the impression that the Indonesians would take control of their country. In fact, actual control remained firmly in the hands of the Japanese administrators.

Although Japan initially appeared to promote Indonesian independence, a mere twelve days after the archipelago was captured, Japan had already forbidden the use of Indonesian flags through their official Bulletin of Acts and Decrees on Java.³³ These Japanese policies were extremely confusing to Indonesians, as the Japanese seemed to want the Indonesian people to support Japan by promising freedom even as their true desire was to extract resources — including the Indonesians themselves as human resources. This was clearly stipulated in the November 20, 1941, secret policy issued by the Liaison Conference of the Imperial Headquarters and the Japanese Government stating that various governing principles of the Japanese military administrations were to be established in the occupied territories, as well as the various policies towards the region.³⁴ The Japanese attitude towards Indonesian independence was clear: "(...) trustbuilding in the Japanese military for the local indigenous people, but no encouragement of actual independence movements. "35

As the war progressed, Indonesians increasingly began to see the true intentions of the Japanese. Initially, however, Japan's propaganda provided an indirect benefit that explains the rationale behind its actions. Japan invaded Indonesia with 45,000 to 50,000

³² Sukarno, Sukarno an Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 177.

^{33 &}quot;MAKLOEMAT SAIKOO SIKIKAN No. 6 Teantang memperkenankan memakai bendera kebangsaan Indonesia dan lagoe Indonesia Raja." Kan Pō (Djakarta), 3: 51 (September. 1944), p. 11.

³⁴ "Document No.1 Principles Governing the Administration of Occupied Southern Areas (Nampō senryōchi gyōsei jisshi yōryō) Adopted at the Liaison Conference between Imperial Headquarters and the Government, November 20, 1941" in Harry J. Benda, James K. Irikura, and Koichi Kishi, eds., Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia: Selected Documents (New Haven, CT: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies,

^{35 &}quot;Document No.1 Principles Governing the Administration of Occupied Southern Areas (Nampō senryōchi gyōsei jisshi yōryō) Adopted at the Liaison Conference between Imperial Headquarters and the Government, November 20, 1941" pp. 1-2.

men in March 1942; only 10,000 remained in the territory by November 1942.³⁶ On Java and in Indonesia, the anti-Dutch sentiment that had gradually permeated Indonesian society over previous decades allowed the Japanese to continue governing through propaganda rather than physical occupation. This was in sharp contrast with the Philippines, where the Japanese had to deal with resistance movements of considerable strength.

(2) Taiwan

In the case of Taiwan, the *kominka* policy implemented in 1937 continued. However, it differed from the previously implemented doka policy. Where the doka provided a level of legitimacy for the Japanese colonial rule but allowed room for equality, the kominka did not.³⁷ Taiwanese intellectuals in the 1920s, for instance, favored a policy that would provide the Taiwanese with the rights of the Japanese while also preserving Taiwan's cultural identity. 38 That was suppressed in the wave of Japanese fascism of the 1930s and sealed by the kominka policy. When kominka was proclaimed in 1937, the war required utmost loyalty, and this overruled any of the colonies' aspirations.³⁹ Japanization began to bear fruit in these years. Seiji Shirane stated that, betweenn 1937 to 1943, the number of Japanese language speakers in Taiwan rose from 37% to 80%.⁴⁰

That the kominka was effective, to an extent, can be seen from the testimonies of a Takasago volunteer. In Taiwan, the Japanese recruited the Takasago volunteers, but little is known about them except that they were recruited from the Taiwanese aboriginal community and that they avoided testifying out of fear of being labeled collaborators.⁴¹ These soldiers, as aboriginal Taiwanese, were proud to have fought in the Japanese

³⁶ George Sanford Kanahele, "The Japanese Occupation in Indonesia: Prelude to Independence" (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1967), p. 65.

³⁷ Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, p. 91.

³⁸ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey, p. 225.

³⁹ Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, p. 95.

⁴⁰ Seiji Shirane, Imperial Gateway: Colonial Taiwan and Japan's Expansion in South China and Southeast Asia, 1895-1945 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2022), p. 90.

⁴¹ Chih-Huei Huang, "The Yamatodamashi of the Takasago Volunteers of Taiwan," in Harumi Befu and Sylvie Guichard-Anguis, eds., Globalizing Japan: Ethnography of the Japanese presence in Asia, Europe and America (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 225.

Imperial Army — even to the point of sacrificing their lives for the Japanese emperor, as expected under the *kominka* policy of the 1930s. 42 Chih-huei Huang argues that the aboriginal Taiwanese people had previously been labelled barbarians, and thus had low social status. The promise and appeal to become akin to the Japanese was very meaningful. 43 For them, the *kominka* provided a path to social prestige. It promoted the use of Japanese in the private sphere, the display of patriotism by erecting Shinto altars in homes, and acts of worship at public Shinto shrines rather than temples involving Chinese traditional religious practices.⁴⁴

The bulk of the soldiers and servicemen recruited from Taiwan were not aboriginals, but rather the more numerous Taiwanese of Hokkien and Hakka ancestry, who were recruited as servicemen after 1937 and formally conscripted by 1945. The Japanese colonial impact on Taiwan was fundamentally different than in Indonesia, but the policies that impacted Indonesians and the Taiwanese showed similarities in the promises and ideology presented through propaganda. Examining the numbers and categories of recruited peoples allows for a more in-depth analysis, one which reflects these policies' impact on the Taiwanese and the Indonesians.

4. Categories of Service: Taiwanese and Indonesian Servicemen and Soldiers

As we will show, several similar categories of military service can be discerned in Indonesia and Taiwan, despite the obvious background differences. A clear distinction can be drawn between servicemen/army auxiliaries and soldiers. Formally, servicemen were unarmed, instead assisting the armed soldiers on the battlefield.

⁴² Chih-Huei Huang, "The Yamatodamashi of the Takasago Volunteers of Taiwan," p. 224.

⁴³ Chih-Huei Huang, "The Yamatodamashi of the Takasago Volunteers of Taiwan," p. 228.

⁴⁴ Seiji Shirane, Imperial Gateway: Colonial Taiwan and Japan's Expansion in South China and Southeast Asia, 1895-1945, p. 91.

⁴⁵ Yingzhen Chen, "Imperial Army Betrayed," in T. Fujitani, Geoffrey M. White and Lisa Yoneyama, eds., Perilous Memories: The Asia-Pacific War(s) (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 182.

(1) Taiwan

In the case of Taiwan, beginning in 1937 and more prevalently between 1942 and 1943, Japan tried to involve more Taiwanese recruits in the Japanese army. The kominka policy specifically expected the Taiwanese to serve the Japanese emperor with fervor. Japan used Taiwanese servicemen and soldiers throughout Southeast Asia, with servicemen carrying out more menial jobs than the soldiers. As early as 1937, Taiwanese were sent to China, doing a range of menial tasks from labor to translation to transportation and agriculture. 46 The Army and Navy special volunteer system for soldiers, meanwhile, was developed in 1942 and 1943. The conscription of soldiers only began in 1945.⁴⁷ Data show that the Japanese used 126,000 Taiwanese servicemen and 80,432 Taiwanese soldiers. 48 The volunteer soldiers were known as the Takasago Volunteers, and those from the aboriginal community consisted of only a very small percentage. One estimate claims that there were 4,200 indigenous volunteers, with only 10% surviving the war due to the harsh conditions to which they were subjected on the front.⁴⁹ It would seem that Japan had some level of caution toward the Taiwanese as armed soldiers, as it was only in 1945 that these were conscripted in large numbers. Servicemen were far more numerous, but they lacked the prestige of the soldiers.

(2) Indonesia

When the Japanese gained control of Indonesia in March 1942, they continued to use propaganda to gain the support of the Indonesians, who could be used in many roles that would reduce the need for Japanese troops in the region. This was useful in occupied areas where propaganda had successfully pacified indigenous resentment against the Japanese. In Indonesia, recruitment was not systematically different from Taiwan. Japan lured Indonesians into the Japanese army, something that was in fact

⁴⁶ Yingzhen Chen, "Imperial Army Betrayed," p. 182.

⁴⁷ Yingzhen Chen, "Imperial Army Betrayed," p. 182.

⁴⁸ Ruey-Tai Tsao, "Cong Jidi Dao Longzhu - Zi Lishi Shijiao Jiexi Taiwan Diwei Zhi Bianqian" [From a Base to the Dragon Pearl-analyzing Taiwan's Change of Status from Historical Viewpoint], *Journal of the Chinese for General Education* (Taoyuan) 6 (November, 2004) p. 39.

⁴⁹ Chetze Lin, "The Life History of a Takasago Giyutai Survivor in Taitung, Taiwan," (Master Thesis. National Taitung University, 2014), p. iii.

encouraged by Sukarno as he tirelessly took on his wartime role of propagandist. When Cindy Adams compiled a biography of President Sukarno in the 1960s, at a time when many other key witnesses were still alive, she made it clear that Sukarno himself avoided discussing this era of his life and how other important figures from that era such as Ahmad Subardjo, Sartono, and Sukarni-all simply repeated the standard rhetoric that Sukarno had been forced to work with the Japanese to gain Indonesian independence. 50 It was certainly true that the Japanese would not have taken a refusal to cooperate lightly, as there were many examples of people being killed for not cooperating, but Sukarno's involvement remains somewhat controversial. Sukarno argued that he was trying to free Indonesia from Dutch colonial rule and they did indeed break the Dutch hold on Indonesia. Their need for Indonesian recruits opened opportunities. The Japanese, however, were also careful to mostly recruit servicemen or auxiliaries — known as Heiho.⁵¹

As for soldiers themselves, PETA (Pembela Tanah Air/Defenders of the Homeland) were the most prestigious volunteer soldiers recruited by Japan in Indonesia. In late 1943, when PETA was being formed and trained, Sukarno claimed in his memoirs to have supported and even been behind this policy as a long-term project to establish an Indonesian army.⁵² It is indeed true that these Japanese-trained soldiers would later form the backbone of the Indonesian military and officer corps. Three military-trained segments made up the core of the Indonesian Army in 1945: KNIL, Heiho, and PETA, and all three were involved in World War II to an extent. The Japanese were directly responsible for the training of the Heiho and PETA, with the Heiho being the servicemen (often referred to as auxiliaries) assisting Japanese regiments and PETA⁵³ being the trained volunteer soldiers.

⁵⁰ Cindy Adams, Sukarno my Friend (Singapore: Gunung Agung, 1971), pp. 188-192.

⁵¹ Heiho (兵補) is the Japanese term, but in the Indonesian scholarly literature the term Auxiliary Soldier is far more frequent than Servicemen. Although based on what they had to do in the regiments they were attached to, it is clear that they were in the same situation as the Taiwanese involved in the Japanese army since 1937 rather than the volunteer recruits of 1943.

⁵² Sukarno, Sukarno an Autobiography as told to Cindy Adams, p. 187.

⁵³ The term PETA only applies to Java. In Sumatra, the Japanese word Giyugun (義勇軍) was used. This distinction still remains in Indonesian historiography, despite both referring to the same category of volunteer soldiers.

Statistics from 1930 show that, in 1930, Java had a population of 41,718,364; in 1943, the Japanese estimated that 51,023,161 people lived on the island. 54 An additional twenty million people lived on other islands in 1942, giving a population of approximately seventy million Indonesians. However, the Dutch only maintained a colonial army of a mere 33,000 soldiers. This army was later reinforced with regular Dutch troops, but the majority of the army was quickly captured. Of the approximately 132,600 Dutch forces that were in the Netherlands Indies at the time of the surrender, 80% were Indonesians. The Japanese soon released those troops that were not ethnically European, Ambonese, or Manadonese, as the Japanese saw them as less of a security risk. A group of released KNIL soldiers actually formed the first section of the Heiho (auxiliary soldiers) or — and perhaps more appropriately — servicemen.⁵⁵ Further recruitment of auxiliaries and servicemen from Indonesia began in Java in May 1943 and in Sumatra in July 1943.56 Immediately after the training of the Heiho, volunteer soldiers were also sought in Java and Sumatra. There remains a degree of uncertainty as to the actual number, but Japanese data from November 1944 found by historian Aiko Kurasawa showed that the military administration on Java made clear distinctions between the groups. It mentioned 14,394 Heiho in the Army and 877 in the Navy, with PETA having 36,067 volunteers.⁵⁷

It is clear that, similar to Taiwan, there was a systematic distinction between servicemen and soldiers. Similarly, Japan did not trust the Indonesians enough to mobilize large numbers of armed Indonesian soldiers. Only the Heiho saw battle; PETA was never sent to the front, whereas the Dutch-trained KNIL fought against the Japanese. PETA on Java and its Giyugun counterpart on Sumatra were well-trained and important from a leadership and nationalist perspective in Indonesia, as they began to form the nucleus of the future Indonesian national army, but their combat experience only began during the years of Indonesian revolution — after the Japanese surrender — when the

⁵⁴ Gunseikanbu, Jawa Nenkan [Java Yearbook] (Jakarta: Jawa Shinbun Kai, 1944; reprinted in Tokyo: Biblio, 1973), p. 219.

⁵⁵ Peter Post, et al., The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War (Leiden: Brill, 2010), p. 505.

⁵⁶ Peter Post, et al., The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War, p. 69.

⁵⁷ Aiko Inomata Kurasawa, Mobilization and Control: A Study of Social Change in Rural Java, 1942-1945, (Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1988), p. 258.

Dutch tried to retake Indonesia. The servicemen consisted of former KNIL members and Japanese-trained *Heiho* recruits that were attached to Japanese regiments. Indonesians held a position lower than the Taiwanese, whom they saw as equivalent to the Japanese. In various prisoner of war and internment camps, for instance, the Indonesian *Heiho* formed the majority of the camp guards; only a very few Taiwanese were used for this function.⁵⁸

5. The Number of Military Recruits

During World War II, the Japanese wanted to extract resources from the territories under their control and required labor for various menial military tasks such as guarding prisoners. These soldiers or civilians could be supervised by servicemen, which freed more Japanese troops for the frontlines.

(1) Indonesia

In Indonesia, there were regular announcements offering employment in the service of the Japanese, with promises of financial incentives, status, and employment. Registrants were tested medically and sent for training, depending on the group they had joined. The exact figures remain shrouded in military secrecy. It is estimated that the Indonesian *Heiho* consisted of about 25,000 people in Java in August 1945, with another 12,000 in Sumatra, 21,000 in Navy-controlled areas, and several thousand in the rest of Southeast Asia and the South Pacific — including 4,000 in Singapore and Malaya and 1,300 in New Guinea, the Solomon, and Bismarck Islands. PETA on Java was the most prominent volunteer army, but there were also between 7,500 to 9,000 volunteer soldiers on Sumatra, giving an estimated 47,500 to 49,000 volunteer soldiers. This would mean that about 115,000 Indonesian volunteers were in service.

The situation in Indonesia is opaquer than in Taiwan, where the Japanese had been well-established and held clear control over the territory; this was not challenged by the

⁵⁸ Peter Post, et al., *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War*, pp. 168-169.

⁵⁹ Peter Post, et al., *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War*, p. 505.

⁶⁰ Kevin W. Fogg, Indonesia's Islamic Revolution (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), p. 46.

proximity of the frontline. In Indonesia, the situation was further complicated by the archipelago's sheer geographical size and the administrative complexity of being under different military branches; the Eastern part of the Netherlands Indies was governed by the Japanese Navy and Sumatra and Java were each under different Army commanders.

(2) Taiwan

In Taiwan, Japanese statistics seem more clear-cut, with over 80,000 soldiers and 126,000 servicemen; there were thus approximately 207,000 Taiwanese in the service of the Japanese armed forces. Very few, however, were accepted into the volunteer soldier army. Data shows that, from 1942 to 1944, 5,500 applicants (including 1,300 aboriginals) attended the Training Center for Army Volunteers. From 1943 to 1944, the Navy Training Center trained another 11,000 Navy Volunteers. This shows that the Japanese were very selective in the recruitment process, with the volunteer army privy to more specific training. In 1940, the population of Japan itself was 73,114,308, which included 1,694,428 soldiers and servicemen. That same year, Taiwan only had a population of 5,872,084. By 1945, there were 206,432 Taiwanese soldiers and servicemen. The implementation of conscription in 1945 increased the number of recruits.

⁶¹ Hui-Yu Caroline Tsai, "Wartime Mobilization in Taiwan 1936-45," in Paul Kratoska, ed., *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2006), p. 115.

⁶² Bureau of Statistics Office of the Prime Minister, ed., 1940 Population Census of Japan Volume I (Tokyo: Bureau of Statistics Office, 1961), p. 6, https://www8.cao.go.jp/okinawa/okinawasen/pdf/b0 401001/b0401001.pdf

⁶³ Taiwansheng Zhengfu Zhujichu, ed., *Taiwan Diqici Renkoupucha Jieguo Biao*, 1940 [Taiwan's Seventh Population Census Results Table, 1940] (Taipei: Taiwansheng Zhengfu Zhujichu, 1953), p. 2.

⁶⁴ Ruey-Tai Tsao, "Cong Jidi Dao Longzhu - Zi Lishi Shijiao Jiexi Taiwan Diwei Zhi Bianqian" [From a Base to the Dragon Pearl-analyzing Taiwan's Change of Status from Historical Viewpoint], p. 39.

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	Population	Number of soldiers and servicemen	Percentage of the total population
Japan (including Okinawa)	73,114,308 (1940)	1,694,428 (1940)	2.32%
Taiwan	5,872,084 (1940)	206,432 (1945)	3.52%
Indonesia	70,000,000 (1943)	+/-115,000 (estimated)	>0.2%

Sources: Bureau of Statistics Office of the Prime Minister, ed., 1940 Population Census of Japan Volume I, p. 6

Taiwansheng Zhengfu Zhujichu, ed., *Taiwan Diqici Renkoupucha Jieguo Biao, 1940* [Taiwan's Seventh Population Census Results Table, 1940], p. 2.

Ruey-Tai Tsao, "Cong Jidi Dao Longzhu - Zi Lishi Shijiao Jiexi Taiwan Diwei Zhi Bianqian" [From a Base to the Dragon Pearl-analyzing Taiwan's Change of Status from Historical Viewpoint], p. 39.

The Indonesian *Heiho* were akin to the Taiwanese servicemen and PETA/*Giyugun* were similar to the Taiwanese volunteer soldiers. However, far fewer Indonesian auxiliaries were recruited than Taiwanese ones, despite the fact that the population on Java alone far outnumbered that of Taiwan, where the Japanese had implemented the *kominka* and begun recruiting in 1937. When the voluntary system was introduced in July 1943, the Taiwanese became auxiliaries. ⁶⁵ This was the same year that the Indonesian *Heiho* and PETA/*Giyugun* volunteer systems were implemented. The Taiwanese volunteer soldiers were comparable to the Indonesian PETA/*Giyugun*, except the latter were never tested in battle. The conscripted Taiwanese soldiers from 1945 form a third group, one that was not present in Indonesia.

The situations in these territories have more complexities that are beyond the scope of this article. It is important to recognize that colonial society was divided into groups and categories that were all in some way recruited or mobilized to serve the Japanese war effort. One large group in both Indonesia and Taiwan were the *Romusha*, or forced laborers; the *ianfu*, or forced sex workers, formed another group. A November 1944 record states that there were 316,052 laborers in Indonesia, with 2,239,940 in the military administration and another 67,699 in the Japanese navy. This included all kinds

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⁶⁵ Hui-Yu Caroline Tsai, "Wartime Mobilization in Taiwan 1936-45," p. 115.

of workers, including *Heiho* and even PETA/*Giyugun*. 66 It is obvious that the Japanese intended to use these Indonesian troops to repel an Allied invasion of Sumatra or Java. Indonesian servicemen were attached to regular Japanese units in the army. These military auxiliaries mostly had little education, yet travelled outside of Java, whereas PETA had more training but never left the island where they had been recruited.

6. Motivations in the Service of the Japanese

We have seen that various groups of Taiwanese and Indonesians were drafted into the Japanese forces. We have also seen the policies and propaganda ideology used by Japan at the beginning of the war. In this section, we will examine the various motivating factors to which individual Taiwanese and Indonesians responded by entering Japanese military service.

(1) Indonesia

In the case of Indonesian, three factors can help ground an analysis of Indonesians' motivation to join the Japanese during World War II. The economic element is, as we will see, an important factor. Propaganda and Japanese ideology-induced prestige is another element, as is the nationalist ideology factor.

Economic Incentives

In the case of the Heiho auxiliaries, initially most recruits were former KNIL soldiers. By May 1943, they became more systematically recruited by Japan.⁶⁷ Of the former KNIL members recruited by Japan, it is estimated that about 25,000 were used as Heiho. They served as drivers and worked on various constructions, felling trees, staffing kitchens, and performing other duties. Many of these men died of exhaustion and malnutrition, or were executed for minor offences.⁶⁸ For example, on August 28, 1944, forty-eight *Heiho* were executed in Tjilatjap because they refused to board a

⁶⁶ Peter Post, et al., *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War*, p. 246.

^{67 &}quot;over de werving van romusha's, van heiho's en personalia van Soekarno," Indische collection, Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, File 2459, p. 3.

⁶⁸ Peter Post, et al., The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War, p. 178.

Japanese ship that would take them away from Java. ⁶⁹ What pushed the Indonesian Heiho to leave their homes in Java to be sent to places with which they were unfamiliar, such as Rabaul, Burma, and Morotai? The Heiho were mostly charged with logistic work, transportation, and road construction. As they had only completed primary school, the highest rank an Indonesian Heiho could achieve in the Japanese Army was sergeant. 70 More Heiho were recruited by May 1943, including 24,873 from Java and 2,504 from Timor. Additionally, about 15,000 were spread through places like Solor, Manokwari, Halmahera, and the Banda Sea, as well as Sumatra, Malaya, Siam, Indochina and Burma. On August 23, 1945, 14,873 Heiho were demobilized in Java and 2,504 in Timor. 71

The *Heiho* received a uniform and salary, but were clearly lower in position than the PETA, who had a full military position and higher rank.⁷² For the *Heiho*, the factors driving them were job security and, to an extent, a sense of adventure. However, testimony from a local Indonesian witness conveys the complexity of each person's story. Sutarman, aged 18 at the time, was enticed to become a Heiho by the promise of Japanese schooling. He testified that he was very interested in this education, as the alternative was working as farmer, but that he was cheated and put to work as a Romusha in Sumatra.⁷³ Recruits received two months of training, equivalent to army training. Of these people, 25% were selected and trained to become *Heiho*.⁷⁴ Another testimony stated that one recruit who was performing his Islamic prayers was kicked by a Japanese soldier angry at not receiving an immediate military salute. Many of the recruits could

^{69 &}quot;over de werving van romusha's, van heiho's en personalia van Soekarno," p. 6.

⁷⁰ G.A. Warmansjah, Sejarah Revolusi Fisik Daerah DKI Jakarta [The History of the Physical Revolution in the Jakarta Capital Region] (Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 1997), p.

^{71 &}quot;EXPLAINS REGARDING ALL KINDS OF ARMED BODIES," Indische Collection, Netherlands Institute for War Documentation, File 792, p. 4.

⁷² G.A. Warmansjah, Sejarah Revolusi Fisik Daerah DKI Jakarta [The History of the Physical Revolution in the Jakarta Capital Region], p. 71.

⁷³ Giming Saputra, "Pembangunan Rel Kereta Api Muaro Sijunjung-Pekanbaru 1942-1945" [The Construction of the Muaro Sijunjung-Pekanbaru Railway 1942-1945], Suluah (Padang), 14: 18 (June 2014), p. 133.

⁷⁴ I.J. Brugmans, ed., Nederlandsch-Indië onder Japanse Bezetting: Gegevens en documenten over de Jaren 1942-1945 [Dutch East Indies under Japanese Occupation: Data and Documents from the Years 1942-1945], p. 521.

not endure the training, but the punishment for running was being beaten half to death.⁷⁵ Although it is hard to generalize, these testimonies show that it was not idealism that drove the Indonesians to become Heiho, but rather economic necessity and the hope for a better future.

Unlike the Heiho auxiliaries, PETA soldiers were more highly regarded and used in propaganda. Their schedule was publicized and it was made clear that they were trained as soldiers, using a regiment that including various physical exercises, but also received Japanese classes. In February 1944 the first group of PETA soldiers completed their training. 76 PETA recruited unmarried youths aged between 16 and 25, who received more than six months of Japanese-language training. These Indonesian volunteer soldiers were exposed to intense propaganda. For members of the Sumatra Giyugun, the attractions were not only nationalism and idealism but also salary and work conditions. A captain would receive 150 (Japanese issued) Guilders monthly, but no indigenous recruits ever reached that rank. In Sumatra, only seven or eight Acehnese and two people from East Sumatra ever made first lieutenant.⁷⁷ These financial rewards were significant, as they helped Japan's recruiting process. The pride of membership offered its own reward for Indonesian volunteer soldiers.

Ideology and Propaganda

Japanese propaganda was a machine that relentlessly worked on Indonesians. Very young Indonesians joined the Seinendan (Youth Corps), established in April 1943, and these in turn formed a basis for PETA recruitment.⁷⁸ This mechanism was extremely potent, and young Indonesians were exposed to Japanese propaganda from a very early age. Several Indonesian nationalist leaders, such as Sukarno, featured predominantly in

⁷⁵ Zusneli Zubir and Rismadona, Sumpur Kudus dalam Perjalanan Sejarah Minangkabau Tahun 1942-1965 [Sumpur Kudus in the Course of Minangkabau History Years 1942–1965] (Padang: Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya, 2014), p. 88.

⁷⁶ I.J. Brugmans, ed., Nederlandsch-Indië onder Japanse Bezetting: Gegevens en documenten over de Jaren 1942-1945 [Dutch East Indies under Japanese Occupation: Data and Documents from the Years 1942-1945], p. 521.

⁷⁷ Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, Di Bawah Pendudukan Jepang: Kenangan Empat Puluh Dua Orang vang Mengalaminya [Under Japanese Occupation: Memories of Forty-Two People Who Experienced It] (Jakarta: Arsip Nasional Republik Indonesia, 1988), p. 104.

⁷⁸ Peter Post, et al., *The Encyclopedia of Indonesia in the Pacific War*, p. 118.

Japanese propaganda. This not only reinforced Japanese propaganda but also connected it to the underlying Indonesian nationalism that had grown for decades and penetrated Indonesian society. This is clearly different from Taiwan, where the Japanese policies silenced intellectuals.

After 1945, the memory of this complex situation during World War II became influenced by the post-war histories of Taiwan and Indonesia. In Taiwan, the Republic of China gained control, having experienced its own struggle against the Japanese during World War II. In Indonesia, nationalist Indonesians rose to power during a revolutionary war against the Dutch that lasted for another four years. This provided a safe and legitimate outlet for Japanese-induced ideology and propaganda, which was articulated as driven by nationalism and patriotism. Indonesia became a nationalist country, yet had little room for pro-Japanese sentiment because of the suffering experienced during World War II. Many Indonesians had starved or been victimized during the Japanese occupation.

The pro-Japanese experiences of individual PETA members may have been subdued by this larger trend. While training the indigenous people of Indonesia to be anti-colonial, Japan was not completely successful in convincing people that the Japanese had their best interests at heart. This is apparent from the rebellion of the PETA members in Blitar on Java on February 14, 1945, when these volunteer soldiers rebelled against their Japanese masters. The event has become a very important element of Indonesian national historiography, with clear nationalist connotations. Indonesians were no longer in lockstep with the Japanese, and this proved to be a problem — rather than an asset — for their Japanese trainers. Seventy-eight PETA members were imprisoned; six were executed and another six received life sentences as a result of the uprising.⁷⁹ The body of their leader, Supriyadi, was never found; however, he was posthumously appointed as the symbolic first Commander-in-Chief of the Indonesian national army and was later awarded the title of National Hero of Indonesia by President Suharto.

⁷⁹ Museum Perumusan Naskah Proklamasi, Pemberontakan Peta 14 Februari 1945 [PETA Rebellion on February 14, 1945], https://munasprok.go.id/Web/baca/112 (accessed September 9, 2023).

It is no coincidence that the PETA and Giyugun in Indonesia had the most positive impressions of the Japanese. Unlike the KNIL soldiers, who were recruited as Heiho and never saw battle and endured great suffering, they received a solid military education laced with propaganda. It is clear that the Japanese were not that concerned with the political thinking of the Dutch-trained former KNIL, since they simple retained some of them as Heiho after releasing them from captivity. At the same time, the fact that the Japanese did not hire every former KNIL soldier indicates that nationalism and patriotism also played some role. The Japanese clearly avoided hiring people whom they perceived to be pro-Dutch: Eurasians, Manadonese, and Ambonese. The military training received by these various groups helped the Indonesians during the revolutionary struggle against the Dutch after the surrender of the Japanese. The propaganda spread by Sukarno, who was installed as a figurehead by the Japanese, also rubbed off on the Indonesians people. They saw the Japanese for what they were: not liberators, but a new colonial power that exploited them during these harsh war years.

(2) Taiwan

In the case of Taiwan, the motivation to join the Japanese army was very fragmented and influenced by a history of Japanese colonial rule — including the decades of *doka* and *kominkan* explained briefly in this paper. It is clear that nationalist Taiwanese intellectual thinkers were given limited space by a Japanese regime that became increasingly fascist and more ruthless in its suppression of opposition voices. This is in contrast with the Dutch policies, which were harsh toward individuals considered political agitators but not as severe in suppressing indigenous voices arguing for political and social rights. In the case of Taiwanese recruits, three motivating factors can be discerned.

Economic Incentives

Most Taiwanese volunteers came from a rural background, and thus their status was elevated by their positions as volunteer soldiers.⁸⁰ Interviews with witnesses from

Sakaya Chatani, "Nation-Empire: Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea 1895-1945" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2014), p. 235.

the Takasago Volunteers related their desire to become patriots loyal to the Japanese emperor. 81 Higher wages were a factor for some volunteers, as were idealist sentiments of patriotism and social mobility, prestige and peer pressure within their social environment.82 Financial remuneration was, of course, welcome but the case of Teruo Nakamura — found on Morotai at age 57 — betrays a clear sense of fealty that extended decades beyond World War II and clearly shows the imprint of Japanese propaganda policies. Regarding Taiwanese volunteers, Chetze Lin estimated that only 10% of the Takasago Volunteers returned home. Nevertheless, these Taiwanese volunteer soldiers felt that they were treated equally by Japanese leaders and soldiers, thus making them respect and appreciate the Japanese. 83 The economic element was clearly important, as can be ascertained from several testimonies indicating that the pay offered for the work was sometimes double that earned in Taiwan.84

For the Taiwanese, the harshness of the experience was extreme. It seems that military servicemen were treated much worse, as these people were frequently seen as expendable and less protected from dangerous tasks. Taiwanese servicemen had a death rate ten times higher than their armed counterparts, 22.2% for Taiwanese military personnel versus 2.7% for Taiwanese soldiers. 85 Being lower in rank than soldiers, it would seem that both Taiwanese and Indonesian military servicemen suffered tremendously on the frontlines. The Indonesian Heiho and Taiwanese servicemen were the lowest on the social ladder and often blamed when things went wrong, resulting in harsh punishments. Logistical failures meant that Japanese soldiers on the front often had very limited supplies and faced very harsh conditions. There were simply not enough resources for everyone to be well-fed. These conditions seemed quite similar

⁸¹ Chetze Lin, "The Life History of a Takasago Giyutai Survivor in Taitung, Taiwan" (Master thesis, National Taitung University, 2014), p. 21.

⁸² Seiji Shirane, Imperial Gateway: Colonial Taiwan and Japan's Expansion in South China and Southeast Asia, 1895-1945, p. 97.

⁸³ Chetze Lin, "The Life History of a Takasago Giyutai Survivor in Taitung, Taiwan", p. 27.

⁸⁴ Yingzhen Chen, "Imperial Army Betrayed" p. 183.

⁸⁵ Sakaya Chatani, "Nation-Empire: Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea 1895–1945" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 2014), p. 229. Also footnoted: Osamu Kashikuma, "Taiwan Juumin senbotsusha no izoku nado ni taisuru chouikin no houritsu" [The Legal Provisions Regarding Compensation for the Descendants of Taiwan Residents Who Died in the War], Taiwan Kyoukaihou (Tokyo) 400 (January, 1988), p. 5.

for both the Taiwanese and Indonesians. Their situation and treatment depended very much on local conditions in the field, which varied enormously. 86 Those people who told their stories after repatriation were, of course, not the ones subjected to the harshest treatment; those whose stories were worst never survived the war.

Ideology and Propaganda Impact

As the kominka policy implemented in Taiwan in 1937 ramped up the Japanization initiated by the earlier doka policy, Japanese propaganda had an impact on the Taiwanese population. As in Indonesia, it was the youths — particularly the rural youths — who were targeted.⁸⁷ Testimonies collected from volunteer soldiers by Yingzhen Chen clearly showed that many youths believed the Japanese propaganda, and thus expected that working for the military would bring them higher social prestige.⁸⁸ These results are reflected in the case of many volunteers recruited by Japan.

When the Nationalist Chinese Army took control of Taiwan on October 25, 1945, it presented an ironic situation for the Taiwanese soldiers and servicemen serving Japan. For volunteers, the aspiration and sense of belonging to Japan was important; for servicemen and drafted soldiers, it was less so. They would return to a country ruled by people who saw them as having helped the enemy, as they had been Japanese soldiers rather than fight on the Chinese side. The celebration of Taiwan's victory over Japan did not allow for the stories, sentiments and memories of former Japanese recruited soldiers and servicemen. Wan-Yao Chou argued that "the ambiguity of their circumstances is perhaps related to the subsequent ambiguity of Taiwanese people regarding their identity."89

Those Taiwanese who fought for Japan were likely lured into military service in search of wages and glory, but propaganda waylaid them towards Japanization. This was a situation differed greatly from the Musha incident of 1930, wherein Taiwanese

⁸⁶ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey, p. 287.

⁸⁷ Sakaya Chatani, "Nation-Empire: Rural Youth Mobilization in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea 1895-1945," p. 229. Also footnoted: Osamu Kashikuma, "Taiwan Juumin senbotsusha no izoku nado ni taisuru chouikin no houritsu" [The Legal Provisions Regarding Compensation for the Descendants of Taiwan Residents Who Died in the Warl, p. 206.

⁸⁸ Yingzhen Chen, "Imperial Army Betrayed", p. 184.

⁸⁹ Wan-Yao Chou, A New Illustrated History of Taiwan, trans., Carole Plackitt and Tim Casey, p. 289.

aboriginals—including even Japanized ones — chose to act against Japan. This had important consequences for Taiwan and Japan, and has remained a major subject of study. ⁹⁰ It showed that, even a few years before World War II, aboriginal Taiwanese resisted Japanese colonial rule. On February 28, 1947, protests for self-governance in Taiwan by ethnically Chinese Taiwanese — not by the Japanese, but by troops from the Republic of China. Indigenous people were now required to take on Chinese, rather than Japanese, names. The complexity of Taiwanese identity is beyond the scope of this article, but clear hints are evident in the Musha incident and the protests of February 28, 1947.

For those Taiwanese who had served the Japanese, it was and remains hard to articulate their sentiments and the effect of Japanese propaganda. This is quite different than Indonesia, where the defeat of the Dutch in 1949 legitimized the Indonesian republic proclaimed in 1945 and confirmed the patriotic nationalism of the nation's soldiers. Such a feat was impossible in the case of Taiwan, wherein the former Japanese colony became the territory of the Republic of China.

7. Conclusion

This paper examined the Taiwanese and Indonesians who served in the Japanese military and the articulation of their stories in both countries. It establishes that there were several categories of soldiers and servicemen who entered Japanese military service. In examining the Japanese recruitment of both Taiwanese and Indonesian military personnel, this analysis makes it clear that the Taiwanese servicemen vastly outnumbered the Indonesians who joined Heiho.

There was a clear distinction between the different groups of people in the Japanese armed forces. At the same time, however, it is clear that there was a systematic Japanese approach to recruitment through various incentives. The lure of a fixed salary was a major economic driver for (mostly little-educated) people to enter Japanese service. However, the experience was very harsh for both the Taiwanese and the

⁹⁰ Leo T.S. Ching, Becoming "Japanese": Colonial Taiwan and the Politics of Identity Formation, p. 139.

Indonesians. The Indonesians had a lower social status than the Taiwanese, whom they perceived as Japanese. In Indonesia, military conscription was never a possibility for the Japanese, who had only gained control over Indonesia in 1942 and faced stronger nationalist sentiments in Indonesia than in Taiwan. The paper found as further distinct feature that in Taiwan, Japanese propaganda was more readily accepted, while former servicemen had no ability to articulate their sentiments in the political reality of postwar Taiwan. Conversely, in Indonesia, pro-Japanese sentiment and service to the emperor was readily justified as a preparatory tool for the national struggle that occurred after the war ended.

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