

Bart van Poelgeest, Report of a Study of Dutch Government Documents on the Forced Prostitution of Dutch Women in the Dutch East Indies during the Japanese Occupation, Unofficial Translation . 24th January, 1994

Introduction and summary

In August 1993, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs commissioned a study into the forced prostitution of Dutch women during the Japanese occupation of the Dutch East Indies. The study was to result in a list of the documents kept in government archives, an analysis and summary of the information contained in them and a detailed list of sources. Access to and information on such documents had been requested on a number of occasions, but, in view of the provisions of the Government Information (Public Access) Act concerning the protection of privacy, public access to them could not always be granted. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Welfare, Health and Cultural Affairs therefore felt that an internal study was called for.

For the purposes of this study, the official documents drawn up by the various government bodies responsible for investigating, prosecuting and trying war criminals and collaborators in the Dutch East Indies were consulted. Forcing women into prostitution was regarded by the government of the Dutch East Indies as a war crime and material on the subject was therefore collected by the various government bodies concerned. The annex contains an overview of the archives and index numbers of the documents consulted. These documents consist largely of statements submitted by witnesses, victims and suspects and a number of judgements, with the relevant documents, of the temporary war tribunal at Batavia, which was responsible for trying war criminals and collaborators. As a result, accounts of personal experiences - with the exception of letters used as evidence which were encountered in the case files - were not consulted for the purposes of this study. However, there is no reason to suppose that the overview presented below would have been significantly different had such sources been used.

The study shows that during the Japanese occupation, the Japanese military forces or military authorities were responsible for procuring the services of prostitutes for Japanese soldiers and civilians on the five large islands and a number of the smaller islands of the Dutch East Indies. The women involved were not only of indigenous origin but also European (Dutch and Indo-Dutch). The extent to which these women were forced into prostitution or provided their services voluntarily could only be established with any certainty if sufficient information were available on the general

and specific circumstances in which they were recruited and on ensuing events. However, the term "voluntary" must generally be seen as relative within the context of the Japanese occupation and the circumstances in the internment camps, where the cruelty of the guards and extreme food shortages led to disablement, chronic illness and a very high death rate among the internees. The financial and social circumstances of the European women living outside the camps were equally dire. In such circumstances, the women who agreed to the proposals put to them - after having been provided with insufficient information or threatened with action on the part of the Japanese authorities - could hardly be regarded as acting voluntarily. There are as many cases of European women refusing to agree to the proposals put to them, but refusal was impossible if the Japanese authorities applied physical force, and this was how the temporary war tribunal at Batavia interpreted the term "forced prostitution". This interpretation has also been adopted for the purposes of this report.

The study shows that in recruiting European women for their military brothels in the Dutch East Indies, the Japanese occupiers used force in some cases. Of the two hundred to three hundred European women working in these brothels, 65 were most certainly forced into prostitution.

A brief summary of the findings is given below.

I Prostitution

For the purposes of this study, the term prostitution refers to a woman's providing a man with a service of a sexual nature in return for payment and within an establishment, specifically set up for that purpose. A woman's acting as a concubine or working individually as a prostitute does not therefore fall within the meaning of the term prostitution as used in this study.

Prostitution was officially prohibited in the Netherlands and in the Dutch East Indies, but occurred, in practice, in both countries. In the years prior to the Japanese occupation, the prostitutes in the Dutch East Indies were mainly of Indonesian or Chinese origin, although a number of European women were also involved, working either as madams in brothels or as prostitutes in brothels and elsewhere. According to the law applicable in the Dutch East Indies at the time, the term European referred not only to the "totoks", or full-blood Dutch, and other persons of European origin, such as Germans, Italians, Hungarians, Russians, Belgians, British etc., but also to persons of Eurasian and, since the Japanese Act of the early 1900s, Japanese origin living in the Dutch East Indies. In addition to approximately seventy million Indonesians, there were thus approximately three hundred and sixty thousand Europeans in the Dutch

East Indies, most of whom lived on the island of Java.

Prostitution was officially prohibited in Japan too, but, unlike Europe, the practice of visiting brothels was not particularly frowned upon. The rules applicable in this regard to Japanese army and navy personnel were different from those applicable to Japanese civilians. During the war in China in the 1930s, the occurrence of venereal disease among the troops had led to problems with deployment and the Japanese military forces therefore decided to set up military brothels as a preventive measure. In addition to local women, Japanese and Korean women - Korea being part of the Japanese Empire – were recruited for the brothels in China.

, II The occupation of the Dutch East Indies

After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, the Netherlands declared war on Japan on 8 December 1941. In January 1942, the first Japanese attack was launched on the Dutch East Indies and Borneo and Celebes were taken. The Japanese army landed on Java on 1 March 1942 and the Dutch East Indies capitulated a week later. In the ensuing weeks, Sumatra, the Sunda islands, Timor, the Moluccas and practically the whole of New Guinea were occupied.

During the invasion and the start of the occupation, various incidents of rape on the part of Japanese soldiers occurred, in, for example, Tarakan, Manado, Bandung, Padang and Flores. In some cases, the Japanese military authorities imposed strict disciplinary measures on the culprits. A serious incident occurred at Blora, a place not far from Semarang on Java, when some twenty European women were imprisoned in two houses. For three weeks at least fifteen of their number, including mothers and their young daughters, were raped several times a day by soldiers passing by with their regiments. The women protested in vain to the commander of one of these regiments. The situation remained the same until a high ranking Japanese officer happened to pass by and put an end to it.

The capitulation of 8 March 1942 put an end to the Dutch East Indies as an administrative entity. The territory of the former Dutch East Indies was administered by the Japanese army and navy, the latter being responsible for the outlying islands, the former for Java and Sumatra. Java was administered by the 16th army, Sumatra by the 25th army. The supreme command of the 7th army at Singapore, which fell directly under the authority of the government in Tokyo, was responsible for these three districts of the former Dutch East Indies.

Neither the government in Tokyo nor the supreme command of the 7th army issued general regulations or instructions with regard to the establishment of military

brothels in the former Dutch East Indies. There were only a few general rules on the treatment of the local population and of prisoners of war and internees, but these did not include any regulations or exceptions specifically relating to prostitution. However, the Japanese armed forces regarded the establishment of brothels as an accepted practice.

In practice, it was the local military commanders who had to draw up regulations on the establishment of military brothels in their territory. The chief of staff of the 16th army on Java and thus head of the military administration there decided that a licence was required for the establishment of a military brothel. A licence was issued only if certain conditions were met, relating to, for example, regular medical check-ups and payment. A further precondition was that the women working in the brothels had to do so voluntarily; according to the regulations, a licence would only be issued if the women involved signed a statement to the effect that they were providing their services voluntarily. Within the organisation of the 16th. army, the officer in charge of the commissariat (the "heitan" officer) was responsible for issuing these licences and for ensuring observance of the conditions under which they were issued. Such supervision was needed, as the women eligible for work in the military brothels were very young and frequently could not read the "volunteer statement", which was drawn up in Japanese or Malay.

The navy adopted a different approach on Borneo. In early September 1943, the Tokeitai (the navy's military police, comparable to the Kempeitai within the army) banned all relations between Japanese navy personnel and the local population, with the exception of the women working in the military brothels which were to be set up. The military government then instructed the federation of Japanese companies on the island to set up and supervise these brothels, but the military authorities later assumed control. The Tokeitai was responsible for recruiting prostitutes.

No information has been found on arrangements on the other islands of the archipelago. As, on a number of occasions, women were transported from Java to military brothels on the outlying islands, it may be concluded that the army and navy authorities responsible for these two administrative units maintained contact with each other. However, no further regulations in the matter have been found.

Apart from women of Japanese and Korean origin, the women recruited for the Japanese military brothels in the Dutch East Indies came from three groups, i.e. Indonesian women, European women living in the internment camps, and European women living outside the camps. European women were not interned simultaneously throughout the country, but most had been interned by the latter half of 1942. More

than 150,000 Europeans were interned either as prisoners of war or civilian internees, while approximately 220,000 of their number (mainly those of Indo-Dutch origin and living on Java) stayed out of the camps. European women who were nationals of neutral countries or of countries with which Japan was allied were not interned. Indonesian women were, in general, not interned. In practice, however, these criteria were not applied consistently. Policy with regard to Indo-Dutch women in particular varied; they had to register with the Japanese authorities several times and each time provide evidence of their origin. This led, in some cases, to internment.

An account will now be given of the way in which women were recruited, starting with the situation on Java; most of the information available relates to this island and the majority of the European women who had settled in the Dutch East Indies lived there. The situation on Sumatra will then be examined, as this island had the second largest concentration of European inhabitants. Finally, a summary will be given of the information on the outlying islands, where more than 50% of the Japanese troops occupying the Dutch East Indies were garrisoned.

III Java

As mentioned above, the 16th army operated a licensing system for the establishment of military brothels. Policy on brothels can only be reconstructed, however, on the basis of various, dispersed data as the archives did not contain any original policy documents.

Brothels on Java during the Japanese occupation

Reconstruction on the basis of the information available yields the following picture. During the invasion and immediately after the occupation, the Japanese used third parties to procure women for them. This occurred in several ways. In certain cases, at the start of the occupation, Dutch East Indies government officials were pressurized into seeking suitable candidates, but internment soon put an end to this. At this point, European men and women who had managed to stay out of the camps - for the moment at least - were responsible for recruitment, together with Indonesians and individuals of Chinese origin - though their activities were largely geared to the procurement of indigenous women. Up to mid-1943, women were mainly recruited to act as housekeepers for individual Japanese officers or civilians. At this stage, the Japanese went to individual prostitutes of European or indigenous origin, or to local privately-run brothels. At the same time, they instructed the owners of hotels and other private persons to convert their establishments into brothels for the use of the

Japanese. The prostitutes, women of European and indigenous origin, were recruited by the brothel owners or other intermediaries.

In the latter half of 1943, policy underwent a change when the army and the military government decided to take the establishment of brothels into their own hands, with the assistance of Japanese and Korean pimps. This occurred in Batavia, Bandung, Pekalongan, Magelang, Semarang and Bondowoso. European women were recruited for these brothels, the army and the Kempetai using physical force in some cases on women both from the camps and elsewhere. Separate brothels were set up for Indonesian and Chinese women. Javanese women and a smaller number of European women were now directly recruited for transport to brothels on the outlying islands. In April 1944, the authorities decided that European women should no longer work in the brothels and that some of them should be closed - for the time being at least. At the same time, the transport of Javanese women to Japanese military brothels on the outlying islands came to an end.

From mid-1944 to some time after the Japanese capitulation on 15 August 1945, the Japanese on Java mainly had to procure European women through existing privately-run brothels and procurers. Organised force was no longer used to any extent by the army or military government. The remaining military brothels, (e.g. that at Semarang) obtained their European prostitutes from privately-run brothels.

First stage (mid-1942 to mid-1943)

There are no cases on record of women being forcibly taken from the internment camps to work in brothels in the period between mid-1942 and mid-1943. European women responded to advertisements or direct requests on the part of the Japanese for them to work as barmaids in restaurants, clubs and hotels. In some cases, the police and the Kempeitai (the much-feared military police) intimidated the women by, for example, threatening the lives of their families; in others, the threat of internment in the civilian camps, with their extreme shortages of food and medicine, played a role. Many Indo-Dutch women were in financial difficulties as their husbands or fathers had been interned as prisoners-of-war. Work was not easy to find and wages were considerably lower during the Japanese occupation than before the war. In addition, people of Indo-Dutch origin living outside the camps were not very popular with the indigenous population and the Japanese occupiers did not trust them.

In most cases, the duties of the European women working in restaurants, clubs and hotels were indeed limited to serving their Japanese visitors with food and drinks. Though some of these establishments were eventually converted into brothels, the

Japanese generally provided the women with board and lodgings elsewhere and most of them subsequently became involved in relationships with individual customers. Pressure was placed - either by the Japanese or by third parties - on those European women not interned in the camps who did not work as waitresses to work as housekeepers. These women were sometimes given the choice of working in a Japanese restaurant/brothel or of becoming the mistress of one of the Japanese occupiers. Physical force and intimidation were used and the women's families threatened.

Privately-run brothels, managed by European women, were to be found at a number of locations. European women either lived on the premises, or opportunities were provided - at certain set times or during parties - for Japanese men to meet them. Privately-run brothels were officially prohibited as they did not carry out medical checks, but the local Kempeitai commander frequently turned a blind eye to their existence, and was more often than not a regular customer. It was therefore of vital importance that the European madams maintain a cordial relationship with the Japanese authorities and they thus supplied European women for the Japanese military brothels. They made use of their contacts with the Japanese authorities by threatening the women and girls they wished to recruit with action on the part of the Kempeitai. However, this study revealed no evidence of direct intervention on the part of the Kempeitai to force women to work as prostitutes in privately-run brothels.

There were a number of private brothels, run by and employing European women, in all of the major towns and cities on Java (including Batavia, Yogyakarta, Buitenzorg, Bandung, Semarang, Surabaya, Malang, Jember). Recruitment for these brothels, in which three to six women usually worked, took place in the town or city in question and the neighbouring districts. Women were recruited continually, as replacements were constantly needed for those who had become infected with venereal disease, had become pregnant, or had had an abortion and were thus no longer able to work. Moreover, many of the women left the brothels to live with one of their customers. Higher ranking Japanese officers, company managers and government officials also preferred keeping a concubine to visiting the brothels. A recruitment network was set up by the European madams on Java. One madam at Malang, for example, mainly employed women supplied by her colleagues in the neighbouring districts and Jember, while another madam in Semarang was mainly supplied by her daughter in Magelang. The brothels of European women in Java acted chiefly as suppliers for Batavia. Turnover in Batavia was high and there was a constant demand for new recruits. The madam of the Sakura club in Batavia, for example, made various trips through Java to recruit women in, for instance, Bandung and Semarang.

Second Stage (mid-1943 to mid-1944)

In the period between mid-1943 and mid-1944, the use of direct physical force by the army and the Kempeitai to recruit women for the brothels became a more prominent feature of Japanese policy; in the earlier period, persuasion, intimidation and indirect threats on the part of procurers had been the usual means of exerting pressure. It was at this stage that the army and the Japanese military government - assisted by Japanese and Korean pimps - took the initiative in establishing brothels. The data show that such military brothels, employing European women, were established in Batavia, Bandung, Pekalongan, Magelang, Semarang and Bondowoso. This change of policy was probably due to the increasing incidence of venereal disease and the inability of the privately-run brothels to remedy this problem. In addition, fewer European women were available for work in the brothels, as most of them preferred to establish a relationship as mistress to one Japanese man. These were the reasons cited by Japanese officers for the application of force in recruiting women in the camps around Semarang. They believed that among the twenty thousand women interned in these camps enough volunteers could be found to solve their recruitment problems.

Batavia

In June 1943, the Japanese owner of the Akebono restaurant was instructed by the Japanese major of Batavia to set up a brothel. In September 1943 he opened the Sakura club in new premises on the Gang Horning. Eleven of the twenty European women working at the club had volunteered for the job as a means of escaping from Cideng internment camp in Batavia. In July and August 1943, these women had been approached by two of the restaurant owner's female employees, who told them that they would work as ..barmaids and have permanent boyfriends. Only one woman later alleged to have been misled by this story, but this seems unlikely. The other women came from other parts of Java. Two women from Semarang - one of whom was a girl of fifteen - said that they had agreed only after the women recruiting them had threatened to call in the Kempeitai.

After the war, nine women stated that they had gone to work in the brothel voluntarily, but that they had been kept there against their will once they had made it known, having worked there for varying periods, that they wished to leave. Two girls were picked up by the Kempeitai or the police for refusing to work. One was released after a short time, but the other was detained in Grogol prison. The Japanese pimp was sentenced by the temporary war tribunal at Batavia to ten years' imprisonment.

By late 1943, a second military brothel had been established in Batavia for the use of

officers. This brothel, which was on the Telokbetongweg and was known as the Theresia club or Shoko club, had a Japanese pimp who used European procurers to recruit women. In December 1943, one of these procurers received instructions from the heitan officer in Batavia to seek women in the city. In January 1944, she was instructed by the same officer to accompany the Shoko club's Japanese pimp to Cihapit internment camp at Bandung. Eleven women agreed to leave the camp to work at the brothel; none of them were given misleading information. A European woman from outside the camps later came to work at the brothel; she tried to commit suicide on returning to the brothel after having had an abortion in hospital.

Bandung

A military brothel, in which European women worked, was also established at Bandung for the use of officers. This brothel - the Shoko club - was known before the war as the Welgelegen hotel. Women from outside the camps were recruited, the Kempeitai and the police making use of various male and female procurers. In March 1943 an attempt was made to recruit women from Cihapit internment camp. Eight women were taken under false pretences (the promise of a meal in a Chinese restaurant) to the Shoko club, but when they were told by the women working there what would really be expected of them, they were given the opportunity to return to the camp. Only two women decided to stay.

Kalijati/Timor

A Japanese restaurant - in which thirty women were working, among whom at least two European women - was opened near Kalijati airfield in the vicinity of Bandung in 1943. Information from one source indicates that this restaurant was in fact a brothel. However one of the two European women stated that a Korean couple had lured her to the establishment under false pretences. When she discovered that the women were to be taken to a brothel on Timor, she persuaded a Japanese pilot to take her as his mistress. A third source indicates that the transport (with a stop at Flores) did indeed take place in 1944 and that at least one European woman was involved.

Pekalongan

There is little information available on recruitment for the brothel at Pekalongan, which was attached to the Kaikan restaurant. The whole operation was supervised by a Kempeitai officer, a regular customer at the brothel and much feared by the women. The manager of the brothel was of Chinese origin. The information available shows

that at least twenty-three European women worked at Kaikan of whom at least sixteen - according to two of the women - had not volunteered but had been forced to work there. Further details are given below of the way in which the Kempeitai forced three of these women to work in the brothel.

Magelang

The most infamous cases of forced prostitution relate to the recruitment of European women for the military brothels at Magelang and Semarang. The Japanese decided to take European women from Muntilan internment camp, which was in the vicinity, to work in the brothel at Magelang. In November 1943, a Japanese resident of Magelang and a Kempeitai officer contacted the European camp leaders who drew up a list of possible candidates for the job of barmaid. The suspicions of a number of mothers were immediately aroused and they demanded to see the list. On 25 January 1944 it became apparent that the Japanese also had a copy of the list; they arrived in a bus and called the women involved into the church (the camp was on monastery grounds) for inspection. The camp leaders and camp doctor went to the church to protest, while a group of women and teenaged boys gathered outside. When the Japanese tried to leave the camp with the women they had chosen, a riot broke out; the Japanese and the Indonesian police responded violently, attacking the crowd with swords drawn. The Japanese succeeded, however, in leaving the camp with the women, only to return three days later with the proposal that volunteers take the place of the women they had taken. A few volunteers were found immediately, mainly women who were reputed to have been working as prostitutes before their internment. They were taken from the camp without any form of protest. When the Japanese carried out a further selection - in the presence of the camp leaders - at the police station, two volunteers and two of the women they had taken on the first occasion, one of whom was a fourteen-year-old girl, were sent back to Muntilan. On 28 January 1944, the remaining thirteen women, including four unmarried girls, were taken to Magelang, where they were examined very roughly, raped and forced to work as prostitutes.

Semarang

A major from the local Japanese army cadet school took the initiative to establish a military brothel with European women at Semarang. As deputy heitan officer, the major was able to persuade his superiors to approve his plan. During talks with the officers from Semarang, the commanders at the Batavia headquarters of the 16th Army (including the chief of staff and his successor) agreed to issue a licence for this

purpose, provided the usual conditions, including those relating to the use of ~: volunteers only, were met. Prior to carrying out the 'operation at Semarang, the aforementioned major obtained information from the heitan officer at Bandung and visited a military brothel there in which European women worked. A large-scale recruitment operation was then carried out; in the last two weeks of February 1944, visits were paid to seven women's camps near Semarang for the purpose of making a first selection. The European leaders of three of the camps - Sumawono (Ambarawa 9-II), Bangkong and Lampersari (Sompok) - put up so much opposition that the Japanese abandoned their attempts.

The Japanese were more successful at the other four camps, where, by the last week of February, a second and third selection could be made in the presence of the Japanese managers of the Semarang brothels. The true reason for selecting these women was never given. The women were taken from the camps on 26 February 1944; of the eleven selected in Halmaheira camp, only eight were actually taken, as the other three were ill. When some women volunteered to take their places, the Japanese refused. After a few days, one of the women - a girl of sixteen - was sent back to the camp as she was considered to be too young. After Halmaheira, the Japanese delegation paid visits to Ambarawa 6 and Ambarawa 9. Though the women in both camps - and especially in Ambarawa 9 - openly protested, the Japanese succeeded in leaving with the women they had selected. The nine women who had been selected in each camp were taken forcibly.

Lastly, the Japanese arrived at Gedangan where they met with fierce opposition. As a result, they were forced to settle for volunteers - most of whom, as was the case at Muntilan, were reputed to have worked as prostitutes before their internment. On arrival at Semarang, a number of the women from Gedangan were sent back, but at least ten of them stayed there. A total of thirty-six women were therefore involved, of whom at least twenty-four - i.e. the women from Halmaheira, Ambarawa 6 and Ambarawa 9 - were forced to work as prostitutes in the military brothels at Semarang. They were examined very roughly, raped, beaten and forced to receive Japanese men. Two of them tried to escape, but they were picked up by the police and returned to the brothel. One of them attempted to commit suicide. Another woman pretended to be mentally deranged and was locked up in an institution, while yet another had to have an abortion in Semarang hospital.

In the last week of April 1944, the brothels in which European women had been put to work were suddenly shut down after a colonel of the Ministry of War in Tokyo, who was responsible for supervising both the civilian and prisoner-of-war camps, had made a

tour of inspection of the internment camps on Java. One of the camp leaders of Ambarawa 9 whose daughter had been taken away managed to arrange a meeting with the Japanese colonel to tell him what had happened. The colonel informed Batavia, Singapore and Tokyo of his findings and recommended the immediate closure of the Semarang brothels. The headquarters at Batavia responded immediately by sending orders to this effect to the general responsible in Semarang. After the war, this general, a number of his staff members and other soldiers, the Japanese pimps and the doctor responsible for conducting the examinations, were tried before the temporary war tribunal at Batavia. The major referred to above was sentenced to death and the others were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. One of the Japanese soldiers responsible committed suicide before he could be brought to trial.

The European women who had worked in the military brothels at Semarang were transferred, together with their mothers, to the Kota Paris camp near Buitenzorg in early May 1944 and from there to the Kramat camp near Batavia in early November. The European women from the Shoko clubs in Batavia and Bandung, the military brothel at Magelang and the Kaikan at Pekalongan were also transferred to these camps, along with a number of women from a brothel in Malang, about whom no information is available. Altogether, more than a hundred women were transferred from brothels to these camps. According to two women who had worked in the brothels at Magelang and Semarang only thirty to thirty-five of these women, in addition to the three from Pekalongan and Malang, had been forced to work as prostitutes.

Semarang/Flores

One particular incident of European women being forced to work as prostitutes in Japanese military brothels occurred in Semarang in mid-April 1944. A few days before the closures referred to above, the police and the Kempeitai conducted a raid in Semarang, picking up some hundred girls and unmarried young women and taking them to the Semarang club military brothel, formerly the Splendid Hotel, for selection. The women in question - European women living outside the camps and Indonesian women - had worked in hotels and restaurants before and, for various reasons, were not very popular with the police and the Kempeitai. The same evening, members of the women's families and their friends formed a large, angry crowd outside the Splendid Hotel. Some twenty women were selected and examined in a very rough manner. The following day, they were transported by train to Surabaya. Two months later, seventeen of their number - one being ill, two others having escaped - were shipped to a military brothel on Flores, where they were forced to work as prostitutes. Seven of

these women were Europeans.

Bondowoso

Lastly, mention must be made of the two military brothels at Bondowoso, for which women living locally were recruited by the police and the Kempeitai with the assistance of lists drawn up by a number of European women. As early as the first few months of 1943, women were forced to work as prostitutes in the Baroe hotel at Bondowoso. In the last week of August 1943, a number of police and Kempeitai officers at Situbondo forced four European women to report to the Kempeitai headquarters so that they could be taken to work at a bar at Bondowoso. However, for two days, the women were raped in the Zeezicht hotel at Pasir Putih. Two of them subsequently attempted to commit suicide.

At the end of October, Kempeitai officers took the other two girls (sisters), two of their other sisters and two cousins to the Baroe hotel at Bondowoso. Two of them were allowed to return to Situbondo, but the remaining four were imprisoned in the hotel. Three went on hunger strike and were also sent home twelve days later. At least another eight European women were taken to the hotel, and there are indications that four of them were held there against their will. At least ten other women were put to work at the Bondowoso hotel between late August 1943 and January 1944. One of these women stated that she had been raped by a Kempeitai officer and then forced to work as a prostitute throughout the month of November, 1943. However, the temporary war tribunal at Batavia was of the opinion that she had offered too little resistance. All these women were transferred to Halmaheira camp near Semarang in January 1944. One of them died as a result of the treatment she had received at the Bondowoso hotel.

It is possible that by this stage other military brothels had been established on Java where European women were forced to work as prostitutes, but, as the many documents consulted contained no evidence of their existence, it is unlikely that this was the case. Surabaya, where two brothels run by Japanese pimps and using the services of European women had been established as early as 1942, should possibly be added to the list. During the first six months of 1943, volunteers from the local camp at Darmowijk were recruited for the bars and brothels of Surabaya, but, at the same time, European women working in the bars and brothels were interned in the camp. In late 1943, this camp was due for closure and the women were transported in stages to the camps on Central Java. As the Japanese were still asking for volunteers in early 1944, the European leader of the final transport, which took place in March 1944, was afraid

that women would remain in the camp to work in the Japanese brothels.

There is no record of a military brothel at Malang, though there were a number of privately-run brothels in which European women worked. One woman also stated that Kempeitai officers in Malang had confined three European women to a house near their headquarters, where they had threatened them with rape and prostitution.

One more incident that has not yet been mentioned occurred in Central Java in December 1943 when the Japanese attempted to take women from Solo internment camp, probably to put them to work in the military brothel at Magelang or the brothel at Solo, though no further information was found on the latter. The attempt was foiled by a courageous camp leader.

Third stage (mid 1944 to mid-1945)

After the (temporary) closure of a number of military brothels in which European women worked in May 1944, including those at Batavia, Bandung, Pekalongan, Magelang and Semarang, probably as a result of the evaluation of the Tokyo inspector's report on 16th Army policy, a number of privately-run brothels, including those at Yogyakarta and Semarang, were shut down too. The transport of women from Java to Japanese military brothels on the outlying islands also came to an end at this stage. The remaining military brothels had to recruit European women from privately-run brothels or other procurers.

IV Sumatra

The seventy thousand Japanese troops on Sumatra, most of whom belonged to the 25th Army, constituted a slightly larger army of occupation than that on Java. European women were either interned in a number of large camps on the island, or they lived elsewhere. There were considerably fewer Europeans on Sumatra than on Java. No record has been found of any general 25th Army regulations on the establishment of brothels and there is not as much information available on recruitment on Sumatra as on recruitment on Java.

Palembang

As was the case on Java, privately-run brothels were established with indigenous and European women near all the larger towns on Sumatra where the Japanese troops were garrisoned. A number of European women in Palembang chose to work in Japanese restaurants rather than be interned in the camps. Some of these women ended up working in the local Japanese military brothel. The information

shows that women who had been recruited for work in bars and brothels were regularly transported from the Riau islands via Muntok to Palembang, but there are no indications that European women were involved.

Padang

It is widely known that European women were recruited from the internment camp at Padang. In late 1943 and early 1944, the Japanese attempted on several occasions to persuade the camp leaders to release women for work as barmaids, but they met with strong resistance. In October 1942 only two volunteers agreed to work in a brothel at Fort de Kock. A second attempt in early February 1943 led to a general uprising in the camp, during which the women received the support of the local Kempeitai. In late October 1943, the camp leaders were, however, forced to agree to the transport of some hundred women from the camp to a building in the town of Padang. They insisted that certain conditions relating to the work the women were to perform should be set down in writing; these conditions excluded any form of forced prostitution. Moreover, the camp leaders insisted that they should accompany the women.

Once out of the camp, the Japanese attempted to recruit volunteers among these women. When thirty volunteers were requested for work as barmaids at Fort de Kock, four women came forward and they were taken away. Another seventeen women who subsequently volunteered were taken to a restaurant for Japanese officers on the island of Nias, returning to Sumatra a few weeks later. The camp leaders refused to allow a group of twenty-five women, who had not volunteered, to be taken by bus to Fort de Kock. Against the wishes of the Japanese soldiers involved, the camp leaders got into the bus with the women.

When the driver did not turn back as agreed but drove off in the direction of Fort de Kock, the camp leaders and the women turned on the Japanese, forcing the driver to stop and return to their point of departure in Panang. Despite fierce opposition, the Japanese succeeded in persuading eleven women to accompany them to Fort de Kock. According to the camp leaders, these women saw this as a better option than returning to the camp. The rest of the women then returned to the camp. When this camp was moved to Bankingang in December 1943 and shortly after the move, the Japanese attempted once again to recruit women, but their efforts were in vain.

The Sakario restaurant (formerly De Eendracht) in Padang also functioned as a brothel, in which approximately twenty European women were forced to work as prostitutes by the Indian manager. In 1944 sixteen women were taken, against their will, from the town of Padang and district to Sibolga, to be transferred to a navy

regiment that had requested barmaids. The Sibolga Kempeitai, however, prevented the transport taking place.

Three European women from the camp near prostitutes in a nearby restaurant, which later Japanese soldiers. The Japanese attempted to Giesting agreed to work as became an R&R centre for take European women from Brastagi internment camp but, thanks to the camp leaders, succeeded in taking two volunteers only. The leaders received the support of the local Kempeitai in preventing women who had refused to leave the camp from being taken away.

V Outlying islands

There were few European women on the outlying islands, but the majority of the Japanese soldiers occupying the Dutch East Indies (some hundred and fifty thousand troops) were stationed there, especially near the frontlines on New Guinea, the Molukkas and Timor. The Japanese navy was mainly responsible for administering this area.

Borneo

European women from Tarakan internment camp initially worked as waitresses in a local Japanese restaurant, but this restaurant was not a brothel. As mentioned above, in early September 1943, the authorities on the island banned all contact between Japanese soldiers and the local women, while at the same time establishing brothels. On the instructions of the Japanese military government, between five and seven brothels were set up in and near Pontianak by the local federation of Japanese companies, which were located on the island to exploit its natural resources. The military government itself took over control of the brothels at a later date.

There was also a military brothel at Balikpapan, for which a Japanese pimp had recruited women on Java. There is no information on the presence of European women in the Borneo brothels.

Celebes

Most of the European women living on the outlying islands were interned in Kampili camp near Macassar. At least one attempt was made to recruit women from this camp for the military brothels there. According to one source, one such attempt was foiled, while another source indicates that, in 1944 – either during this attempt or on another occasion - four European women left the internment camp, for financial reasons, for Macassar, but the source does not name a specific destination. On their return to the

camp three months later the women only reported that they had been treated badly. According to a third source, a few European women from Malino internment camp (one of the forerunners of Kampili camp) left for Macassar and returned a week later. Apart from the brothels at Macassar, a number of other brothels were established on Celebes in which local women and women recruited on Java worked. There is no evidence of any European women working at these brothels.

Moluccas

There were a number of Japanese military brothels on the island of Halmahera, where a large number of Japanese troops were stationed. Some of the women working in these brothels came from Singapore and Java, but there is no evidence of European women among their number. The Japanese also recruited women on the smaller Moluccan islands, such as Babar and Moea. There was a Shoko club, which was probably a military brothel, on Ambon and at least one European woman from Surabaya worked there in 1943.

Sunda islands

Japanese military brothels were also established on the islands directly east of Java. The records reveal no evidence of European women working in the brothels on Lombok and Bali, but, as mentioned above, European women from Java were transferred to those on Flores and Timor. The seventeen women transported from Semarang to Timor were, in any event, forced to work as prostitutes, and this could probably also be said of the European women transported from Kalijati.

New Guinea

There was a Japanese brothel on New Guinea in which Papuan women worked whose husbands had been executed for anti-Japanese activities. In addition, a small internment camp for the widows of government and police officials of mainly Javanese and Moluccan origin, was used by the Japanese soldiers as a brothel. There is no record of European women working at either location.

VI Conclusion

From the evidence contained in the documents, it may be concluded that military brothels were established on all the larger islands of the Dutch East Indies during the Japanese occupation and that European women were put to work in these establishments on Java, Sumatra, Celebes, Ambon, Flores and Timor. Though their

number cannot be determined exactly on the basis... of the material available, some two hundred to three hundred European women were probably involved, most of whom on the island of Java. In 1944, the approximately one hundred women working in military brothels on Java were transferred to Kota Paris internment camp at Buitenzorg, and later to Kramat camp near Batavia. However, an unknown number of European women were still working in the remaining military brothels and, by 1944, some women had left the brothels to live with a Japanese man or had been interned in the camps.

The following is of relevance with regard to the number of European women that were forced into working as prostitutes. Account must be taken of the possibility that the women outside the camps who were recruited for the brothels were not only in serious social and financial straits and under pressure from the civil and military police, but were also the victims of direct physical force on the part of the Japanese authorities. However, the information available contained no information on force of this type being exerted to procure women for the privately-run brothels.

Nonetheless, force was most certainly used during the second stage, (mid-1943 to mid-1944) to recruit European women from the camps for Japanese military brothels or for transport to brothels elsewhere. The incidents in question concern the thirty to thirty-five European women from Muntilan camp and the camps near Semarang on Central Java who were recruited for the Japanese military brothels, the seven women who were transported from Semarang to Flores, the unknown number of women transported to the military brothels at Pekalongan and Bondowoso (at least three and six respectively), the five to ten women who were transported from Java to Timor and the unknown number of women who were transported from Java to Ambon.

This group does not include the women from the camps who volunteered for work in the brothels. An exception may, however, be made for those women who volunteered to take the places of those who were forcibly taken to Magelang and Semarang. However, evidence must show that these women acted purely with this intention in mind; consequently, their activities prior to internment and their conduct in the brothels should also be taken into account.

In view of the above, the conclusion must be drawn that the majority of the women concerned does not belong to the group of women forced into prostitution. Too little information is available on the circumstances in which the other European women were recruited for the military brothels to establish with any certainty whether force was exerted in their cases.

To conclude, the documents available reveal that of the two hundred to three hundred

European women working in the Japanese military brothels in the Dutch East Indies, some sixty-five were most certainly forced into prostitution.

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