'The Eurasian Question' : the colonial position and postcolonial options of colonial mixed ancestry groups from British India, Dutch East Indies and French Indochina compared

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1   Introduction

1.1   Introduction

This chapter first introduces the main question. This is followed by several sections that clarify why this question is interesting and relevant, and which key concepts are used in this book. This includes an overview of debates on 'mixing' and mixed relationships, both of which are highly contested concepts. Furthermore, the group that takes central stage in this book – the Eurasians – are described and compared to similar groups, such as the Eurafricans. All this leads up to a heuristic framework and a set of working hypotheses, which structure this book. The section on historiography explains what this book adds to the literature. The chapter concludes with sections on method and material, and a brief outline of the rest of the book.

1.2   Main question

The migration of Europeans to the colonies was part of the process of colonisation. Many of these migrants entered into – what were labelled – racially mixed relationships, which were mostly between colonising men and colonised women.[1] When in the mid-twentieth century the European colonial empires in Asia – namely, British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina – fell apart, the populations of mixed ancestry had to choose whether to stay in or leave the former colonies. Both the colonial authorities and the rulers of the newly independent countries viewed these mixed ancestry groups as a problem. This led to large debates before and after decolonisation on what was called, at the time, 'The Eurasian Problem', 'The Eurasian Question' and 'The Eurasian Dilemma'.[2] In the late nineteenth century, this 'Eurasian Question' only preoccupied the British middle class living in British India.[3] In the following decades there were, however, extensive debates about this issue in all three colonial contexts.[4] When independence was discussed, the colonisers and the future rulers of the soon to be independent countries developed policies for the Eurasians, which was a challenge as the Eurasians did not form a legal category nor a well-defined or fixed group. There was no consensus on who was to be considered Eurasian, and as a result it was also difficult to establish how many Eurasians there were, or which colonial and postcolonial policies would best deal with them. Once the colonies became independent, the problem became urgent because the Eurasians had to choose between staying in or leaving the former colony.

In this book, I use the terms 'Anglo-Indians', 'Indo-Europeans', and *'Métis'* for the mixed ancestry groups in, respectively, British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina, while I use the term 'Eurasian' to refer to the group as a whole. The labelling and categorisation of the mixed population, currently and at the time, have been highly debated and contested issues, with some people strongly opposing certain labels while advocating others.[5] I discuss this point at length below. Notwithstanding the debates, I use the term 'Eurasians' throughout this study since that *was* the prevalent term in use at the time.[6] Categories may be linguistic constructions from a Foucauldian perspective, but their use, especially by policy makers and other state authorities, has concrete societal consequences, because states have the authority to decide who belongs to which group and divide rights accordingly.[7] Rather than attempting to avoid or abandon particular labels, or to introduce new ones, the way forward, in my view, is to identify how colonial authorities and others (including the Eurasians themselves) categorised people and to explain why this changed over time. I am aware that the term 'Eurasian' may not meet the approval of all readers. Yet, in the absence of another collective term and because scholars continue to use the term in the related historiography, I felt that this was the most appropriate term to consider Anglo-Indians, Indo-Europeans and *Métis* together (see below for a further discussion of the term).

This book deals with the position of Eurasians before and after decolonisation in three colonial settings. Although some of the phenomena I describe happened before 1900, I focus on the period between the end of the nineteenth century and the 1960s. This study is about the position of Eurasians in colonial society, how, when and why their position changed, and to what extent this affected the margins within which they made their choices. The main question is: Which factors determined the margins within which the Eurasians made their choices to stay in or leave the former colony, and why did these factors differ between the three colonies? Sub-questions are: How did state citizenship policies and the Eurasians' sense of belonging affect their decisions to stay or leave? What was the dominant discourse in media and government circles of the Eurasian dilemma? How did this influence state policies?

Debates ran their course through a complicated interplay between Eurasians and their interest organisations, former colonial governments and the governments of the newly independent nations. These discussions revealed a great deal about the form of colonial rule and the categorisations of people. Governments set criteria for acquiring or losing citizenship and rights to stay in the former colony, or to leave for the mother country. In this book, I use the term 'mother country' instead of 'metropolis' or 'metropole' because 'mother country' is the word that is generally used in the literature on colonialism, post-colonialism and decolonisation. The words 'metropolis' or 'metropole' are less suitable given their general meaning of a 'large city'.

I chose British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina as case studies because they were located in the same region. Furthermore, they all were exploitation colonies (with the colonisers exploiting natural resources and labour) rather than settler colonies (such as New Zealand and Australia).[8] Lastly, these were the most prestigious Asian colonies of the Dutch, British and French empires and they played an important role in the imagination of these empires. They were portrayed in similar

terms as respectively 'Gordel van Smaragd' (Emerald Belt, Dutch East Indies), the 'Jewel in the Crown' (British India) and 'la Perle d'Extrême-Orient' (the Pearl of the Far East, Indochina).[9] These were the key colonies on which the Eurasian debate focused. I could, for instance, also have included British Malaya, but it did not have the same status as British India in the British Empire and its Eurasian population was not that large.[10]

The choice between leaving and staying was not taken at one point in time. Decision-making was a process in which Eurasians pondered the idea of staying or leaving. Little is known about the context or the margins partly resulting from state policies, in which people made their choices and the reasons for making them. It was a process that for some Eurasians took years because conditions, for example criteria for citizenship, changed. Part of the dilemma – staying or leaving – sprang from the 'in-between' position of the Eurasians. I elaborate on this point in the sections below. Debates about the position of Eurasians were intense after 1945, when British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina became independent. However, I also look at the period prior to decolonisation (from around 1900 onwards) because, as I will show, the colonial legacy had an influence on the options Eurasians had and the choices they made. In short, in this book I describe the position of the Eurasians before, during and after decolonisation, and I explain the context in which they made their choices. The Eurasian people themselves and authorities in all three former empires were confronted with a dilemma: what would or should happen to a people sometimes labelled the 'colonial remnants' by European authorities? The goal of this book is to go beyond the conventional national perspective in (post)colonial studies by providing an overarching perspective of the experiences of Eurasians in the period before, during and after decolonisation in Asia. This enables me to highlight unexpected common features and connections between the cases as well as unique national specificities of each single case.

1.3 'Mixing'

European colonialism in Asia – which started well before the nineteenth century – created a population which was regarded as being of mixed ancestry. The issue of mixing led to widespread and long-lasting debates among policy makers, journalists, the Eurasians themselves and others. These debates showed continuity over time. In 1949, the Bishop of Birmingham gave his Galton Lecture to the Eugenics Society in London on the subject of 'Mixed Marriage'. According to the Bishop, mixed marriages generally led to decay, but there was some hope. Under good conditions – and the Bishop specifically mentioned the Eurasians at this point in his speech – mixed races could attain a certain measure of stability, with good qualities of their own.[11] The Bishop's speech illustrates the way of thinking about mixing at that time, and in the decades before.

In current academic literature, the concept 'mixed' is contested because it suggests that there *are* 'races' that can be 'mixed'.[12] The notion of 'mixed' draws on the idea that 'races' are real entities, an idea to which the Bishop quoted above, adhered.[13] 'Race'

is however not a reality, but a social construction. 'Race' *is* not something, but its use *does* something.[14] It is a fluid, shifting, situational and relational category of power, similar to and intersecting with gender, class, sexuality and religion.[15] Some authors have addressed this intersection. Ann Laura Stoler and Bart Luttikhuis, for instance, discussed whether race or class was more important in the attempts of mixed people to climb the social ladder in colonial societies.[16] In my view, and as this book will show, class had more prominence in the Dutch East Indies case, while race was more important in the British Indian case. Indochina took the middle road as a young colony. Gender, class, sexuality and religion are not only categories of power, but also of identity. People – in this case Eurasians – use these categories for their self-definition.

All these categories of power and identity work to include and exclude people via discourses and practices (including laws).[17] Categorisation is the key element of governmentality in the Foucauldian sense. According to Foucault, discourse is about the way knowledge is created by power strategies that are hidden in various kinds of texts.[18] The stereotypes that were used in the colonial discourse not only reflected colonial and postcolonial ideas, but also reinforced those stereotypes as a performative power.[19] Categorisations are used to legitimise differences within policies and between groups of people.[20] According to Foucault, categorisation does not describe social order but rather shapes and reshapes power relations.[21] Within the Foucauldian perspective, race, like gender, sexuality, class and religion, are regulatory ideals that were created to discipline and govern.

Part of the literature on 'race' is rather US-oriented and ignores the influence of race on colonisation and genocides around the world. Conceptualisations of race formed the basis for colonialism, genocide and slavery. Europeans ranked themselves as the most advanced race in an invented racial hierarchy and believed this gave them the right to enslave, kill, exploit or educate those whom they ranked lower on the racial ladder. To avoid confusion, it is important to note that the US literature commonly uses the term 'race', while the European literature favours the term 'ethnicity'. There is in essence little difference between the use of these concepts. Both have evolved along the same lines: both were originally perceived as static and real, and over time both were increasingly recognised as social constructions.[22]

Debates about race or ethnicity are connected to debates about whiteness.[23] Whiteness is also a construction, along gendered lines, and is created as much by culture, education, class, religion, occupation, and geography as by phenotype.[24] In the words of Fanon in his study *The Wretched of the Earth:* 'you are rich because you are white: you are white, because you are rich.'[25] In the late colonial period, 'modernity', 'westernisation', and 'whiteness' were interlocking concepts with none of these three having predominance.[26] Whiteness was not only about skin colour, some Eurasians could 'pass' themselves off as white if they were well-educated, upper class and Christian. Bhabha uses the word 'mimicry' to describe this imitation of whites. For example, Eurasians mimicked Europeans by wearing European clothes and speaking the coloniser's language perfectly.[27]

'Race' was used to define some people as inferior and within that perspective, 'mixing' was constructed as a threat.[28] Authorities in many countries introduced anti-miscegenation laws to prohibit relationships and marriages that were defined as mixed.[29]

While the term 'mixed' is frequently related to what is perceived or defined as racial or ethnic difference, debates about mixed relationships in the European context were for a long time mostly about religion. Until the 1960s, the term 'mixed marriage' was widely used in the European context for a marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant. The concept mixed marriage is therefore not static; it is continuously redefined, depending on the geographic, social, political or religious context.[30] Central to all definitions of mixed marriages is the perception of difference.[31] Mixed marriages are treated with suspicion because they call into question the boundaries between the Self and the Other.[32]

States claim the right to interfere in the privacy of relationships because the right to citizenship is connected to the idea of nationhood.[33] Ideas regarding citizenship, as we know them today, were formulated in the nineteenth century. In the literature, a distinction is made between discursive and juridical citizenship. Juridical citizenship means that there are people (citizens) who have full rights, and others (non-citizens) who do not.[34] Discursive citizenship means that citizens are believed to form a community and share a history, language, phenotypical features, and a religion. Colonisation was pivotal to the formation of discursive national identities.[35] Englishness, Frenchness or Dutchness were defined and constructed in contrast to a colonised 'Other'.[36] In short: 'They' were everything 'we' were not.[37]

Rights to citizenship were gendered.[38] Women who married non-citizens were described in sexually laden disapproving terms even if they were in a stable monogamous relationship, implying that by crossing one (ethnic) boundary they had also crossed the boundary as to what was morally acceptable.[39] Women were accused of adultery, whereby the betrayed party was not the husband, but the group she was felt to belong to.[40] These women were considered lost to their original community while men who married non-citizens were not. Women were seen as objects of loss and gain, whereas men were seen as losers or conquerors.[41] After their 'mixed' marriage, women were no longer considered to belong to their original 'group' emotionally and often also juridical.[42]

Ideas about citizenship were reflected in the so-called marriage rule or derivative citizenship. In many countries women (but not men) automatically changed their nationality when they married a partner with a nationality different from their own.[43] The laws that deprived women of their citizenship upon marriage dated from the end of the nineteenth century, when nationality became more important. Many countries moved towards the introduction of laws to stop 'mixing'. In the nineteenth century, Western states enforced their ideas about citizenship on their colonies.[44] Ideas about citizenship were presented as egalitarian,[45] but in the colonial reality they were not.[46] In Dutch and French colonies, for example, the so-called native population of the colony was defined as subjects and non-citizens. In 1898, the Mixed Marriage Act came into force in the Dutch East Indies.[47] A Dutch woman who married a man who belonged to the juridical category of the 'natives', became a native herself, lost her Dutch citizenship, and was subjected to Islamic law. For a Dutch man who married a native woman, the same did not apply. He could however only marry her if she converted to Christianity.[48] In many colonies Islam and citizenship were constructed as mutually exclusive categories.[49]

1.4 'Mixed' relationships

There are two strands in the literature on mixed relationships. In the first strand, mixed relationships are seen as key markers of assimilation.[50] In the older American literature assimilation is seen positively, and it implies the disappearance of the group that is to be assimilated. According to Reeves Kennedy, in her 1944 publication, minority groups could sustain intermarriage rates of 30 per cent without succumbing to assimilation.[51] If the percentage was higher, the group ceased to exist as a recognisable entity. That development was seen as positive by the assimilationists. The second strand of literature on mixed relationships focusses on the (semi-)colonial context and does not see mixing and assimilation as positive. The crucial difference between the two is that in the last case the 'whites' are 'at risk' of disappearing.

The problematisation of 'mixing' was not restricted to the formal colonial context. Mixing between blacks and whites in seventeenth century' Virginia and Maryland, for instance, led to the introduction of a statute in 1664 to discourage or prohibit interracial marriage. An informal one-drop rule was introduced in the US South to deal with the growing number of multiracial children. Anyone with a tiny trace of 'black blood' was labelled black. So-called 'mulatto' (derived from the word 'mule') children of enslaved mothers and white fathers were classified as black and remained slaves. Because slavery was built upon the assumption that whites were a superior 'race' and could not be enslaved, this one-drop rule was important to justify the enslavement of people who looked white. After the end of slavery in the United States in 1865, the one-drop rule continued to persist. The Jim Crow laws prohibited interracial marriage between blacks and whites, and this made it necessary to identify who was white and who was black. The informal one-drop rule was codified into law. The census started to deny mixedness and only recognised the categories 'white' and 'black'. People who had previously self-identified as 'mulatto' or 'mixed' were now classified as 'black'.[52]

In the Caribbean and Latin America there was more recognition of 'mixedness', although authorities were equally worried by the results of mixed sexual relationships. However, there was a subtle difference between the definitions of white and black of originally Iberian whites and the whites of North-West European origin. Whereas in the North-West European colonial and US variant, people defined as 'light coloureds' were not accepted as marriage partners, in the Iberian version a slightly darker norm emerged. Thus, 'light coloureds' in the Iberian version were more often accepted by the white elite. This was probably affected by Iberian-European standards of beauty which integrated Moorish influences.[53]

In both the Caribbean and Latin America, tables were drafted and illustrations were made to categorise the outcomes of mixed relationships. The word *Casta* was used to refer both to the illustrations – consisting of sixteen little paintings, each depicting forms of mixing – and to the *Casta* system, originally used by the Spaniards to control their colonies. A variety of words was introduced to describe the outcomes of mixing, next to the already introduced *Mulatto*. The children of *Mulattos* and whites were called *Quadroons*, and an *Octroon* was the child of a *Quadroon* and a white. *Mestizos* were the children of whites and Amerindians, and *Zambos* the children of Amerindians and blacks. *Mulattos* and others of mixed origin were seen in the Caribbe-

an and Latin America as a problematic category. In 1685, French colonial authorities in the Caribbean drafted their *Code Noir* which defined status and rights according to race.[54] White paupers (or *petits blancs*) were seen as equally problematic when it came to maintaining the colonial hierarchy, partly because they were seen as the ones who would not object to mixed relationships. From the seventeenth century onwards, there were fears in the Caribbean that *Mulattos* and others of mixed origin might lead slave rebellions against the western coloniser.

1.5 'Mixing' in the colonies

The issue of racial mixing in the colonial setting and its consequences for citizenship and nationality laws after decolonisation not only played itself out in the former colonies in Asia, but also in other former Dutch, English and French colonies in Africa and the Caribbean.[55] As said above, the construction of 'race' was crucial to the colonial project, and in all colonial settings 'mixing' was problematised. People who were labelled as being of mixed ancestry occupied an in-between place. Apart from Eurasians there were Eurafricans and others who were the subject of debate, categorisation and concern for colonial authorities before, during and after decolonisation. The responses to the results of 'mixing' differed.

In Hong Kong, both Chinese and British people despised Eurasians. Contemporaries were certain that 'nowhere in the East is the colour line so strictly drawn as in Hong Kong.'[56] Within the Eurasian community there were tensions between Portuguese Eurasians with strong Catholic ties and Portuguese names, the Chinese Eurasians, who had Chinese names, clothes and observed Chinese customs, and the British Eurasians who led a British lifestyle.[57] Over the years, the boundaries between these groups blurred. As a result, all of them leaned more towards the British side of their ancestry although they were never really considered white due to colonial racial prejudices.[58] In February 1942, the Japanese conquered Hong Kong and hundreds of Eurasians were interned.[59] After the end of Japanese occupation, the Eurasians were granted a period of recuperation in Britain or Australia, and many never returned to Hong Kong. They believed they had more options outside Hong Kong. The Eurasian community largely disappeared. Nowadays no more than 1,000 Eurasians live in what was the British colony of Hong Kong.[60]

Eurasians living in the Malay Strait settlements, which later became the independent countries of Singapore and Malaysia, had forebears from many European countries (including Russia) as well as from India, Burma, Japan, China, Indochina, and the Dutch East Indies. In 1931, in the last census which was taken before the Second World War, the Malay Eurasians numbered over 6,900. In 1947 (with a total population of 1.5 million), their numbers had increased to 9,000 people, partly due to new arrivals.[61] The majority of Malay Eurasians did not leave after decolonisation, although a couple of hundred young people left in 'the years of uncertainty' in the 1950s and 1960s. They went to study abroad and did not return.[62] Upper class Eurasians adapted to the new circumstances by adopting habits that were formerly seen as 'unsuitable', and typical of the 'lower-classes', such as listening to Portuguese folk mu-

sic. They started to identify themselves as 'Portuguese Eurasians'. Paradoxically, these were the people they had considered far below their status in colonial times.[63] Overall, the Eurasian community did continue to exist in the post-colonial period.

On Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) there were, from 1815 onwards, descendants of Dutch settlers who formed a rather diverse community with the descendants of the Portuguese and the British on the island. The Portuguese came before the Dutch, and the British arrived after the Dutch rulers had left. Those with Portuguese ancestry were generally lower-class and darker-skinned than those with Dutch and British forefathers. The latter group, who were largely Protestant, confirmed this hierarchy by jealously guarding racial boundaries and distinguishing themselves from the Portuguese Catholics.[64] The mixed offspring of all these groups – called Burghers – did not depart for a mother country (which could be Portugal, the Netherlands or Britain). Some of them did leave for alternative destinations such as Australia after independence, while others stayed. There is still a distinctive Burgher community in Sri Lanka today.[65]

A group called the Rehoboth Basters lived in South-Africa and later in Namibia, which originated from relationships between Dutch white settler men in the Cape Colony and black native women. 'Basters' is derived from the Dutch word 'bastaard' which means 'crossbreed'. The Basters used this name as a badge of honour. In 1868, they left the Cape Colony and sought to establish the independent Republic of Rehoboth in present-day Namibia. When the Germans colonised South-West Africa (Namibia) they categorised the Basters as natives. They, however, did recruit the Basters for an armed contingent, which fought alongside the Germans during what was later called the Namibian genocide.[66] Eugen Fischer, a German professor of medicine who is seen as one of the architects of the Holocaust, studied the Basters extensively. He concluded that the Basters were useful to the German colonisers, but that further mixing should be prohibited, and the Basters should not be allowed to reproduce.[67] In 1912, interracial relations were forbidden in the German colonies. The Basters currently form an ethnic group of 20,000 to 40,000 people in Namibia. They speak Afrikaans and are Calvinists.

In South-Africa and Rhodesia miscegenation was the white settler's greatest fear. If 'mixing', or 'bastardisation' as it was called, was allowed the 'white race' would cease to exist, it was generally feared. Whites who were 'mentally retarded', as well as 'low-grade whites who had no self-respect or racial pride', were the ones who were believed to forge mixed relationships. Segregation laws were introduced to reduce the chances of mixing. The 'coloured' population – as the mixed-race population was labelled – was privileged by the whites over the blacks in terms of education, residence and employment. However, the coloureds were also discriminated against, and as a result these two groups were pushed to more cooperation and alliance. The income of coloureds was also much closer to blacks than to that of whites. A 'return' to the 'mother country' after the end of white dominance was not seen as a possible scenario.[68]

Migration of Europeans to most of the African colonies was recent and on a small scale when compared to the colonies in Asia. At the beginning of the twentieth century miscegenation was disapproved of, and on the eve of independence few people of mixed ancestry – sometimes labelled Eurafricans – moved away. For instance, not many moved from the Congo to Belgium, certainly if we compare the numbers to

the migrations from the Asian colonies.[69] Belgian colonial authorities only moved children of mixed parentage to the mother country. In the Belgian colonies Ruanda, Urundi and the Congo, authorities separated mixed ancestry children from their indigenous mothers and transferred them to Belgium after decolonisation. The principal reason authorities gave for this separation was that they were concerned about the children's future in the independent countries.[70]

Italy, like Belgium and Germany, was a late and small-scale coloniser. In the early twentieth century, the practice of what was called *madamato* was common in the Italian colony Eritrea. Italian men established temporary domestic and sexual relationships with Eritrean women (referred to as the *madama*). As elsewhere, this resulted in mixed-race children. Italian colonial administrators in response introduced a law to regulate interracial ties between Italians and Eritreans. Having an Italian parent and European racial features could be a reason to grant Italian citizenship. Marriage between an Eritrean man and an Italian woman was forbidden because it was feared that these children would turn against the Italians.[71] Since colonisation was recent, the number of people who were identified or who self-identified as 'mixed' was small, and few moved to Italy after the end of colonisation.

French migration to Algeria was extensive. The French settlers, or *pieds-noirs* – about 1 million in total on the eve of Algerian independence (10 per cent of the population) – had French citizenship. Most were Catholic, while 130,000 were Jewish. The majority had been born in Algeria. They moved to France shortly before and after decolonisation. According to Claire Eldridge, their defining feature was their allegedly indisputable French identity and loyalty.[72] Almost all *pieds-noirs* left after independence, which was accompanied by extreme violence. Most went to France, while smaller groups migrated to Spain, Australia, the us, Canada, Argentina, Italy and Israel. About 10,000 of them stayed, but most of them left later as well. Their exodus took place despite the guarantees the *pieds-noirs* received regarding their cultural, linguistic and religious rights in the negotiations for independence, which resulted in the 1962 Evian Accords.[73] The guarantees that were put into place did not stop them from leaving. Mixing was largely denied.

This brief overview of the literature on 'mixing' shows that it was problematised by authorities in all (semi-) colonial settings. The Eurasians in the three former Asian colonies were at the centre of these debates, and therefore they are the subject of this research. In all three colonies, there were Eurasians who could pass themselves off as Europeans, while others could 'disappear' into the indigenous environment. Eurasians continuously negotiated their place between the European and indigenous colonial society, neither of which were static entities.[74]

1.6 'Eurasians'

From the end of the nineteenth century onwards, colonisers became increasingly concerned about the threat the Eurasians could pose to the racial hierarchies in colonial society. Authorities began to regard racial mixing as more and more problematic.[75] This change in attitude was partly influenced by the arrival of more European

women. Their arrival was however at the same time also the result of stricter rules regarding mixing. Stricter racial boundaries resulted in larger numbers of European women in the colonies, and the arrival of more women created a (perceived) need for stricter boundaries.[76] The colonial authorities also felt that they needed the Eurasians as intermediaries for their colonial projects. Eurasians were simultaneously included and excluded by authorities. Colonial empires could only exist by emphasising a shared culture, language and history of the colonised people and particularly the Eurasians among them, as convincingly demonstrated by Ann Laura Stoler and Frederic Cooper.[77] Colonisers could only rule with the help of the in-between category of Eurasians, who held important positions in the service sector and had knowledge about the culture and language of the indigenous people.[78]

Despite the privileges Eurasians enjoyed in the colonial period, they could be considered in the same way that the postcolonial studies theorist Homi Bhabha described colonised indigenous elites: 'almost the same but not quite'.[79] Eurasians were never considered real Europeans in the colonial context. Even if they had European citizenship, they remained 'blurred copies' – again Bhabha's words to portray colonised indigenous elites – of what was seen as the European ideal.[80] Eurasians in all three colonies tried to improve their position by imitating the colonisers. As an 'in-between' and hybrid group, they were both discriminated against and privileged at the same time. When colonialism ended, they lost their privileged position, as will be described at length in this book. The European rulers, whom their status had depended on, were gone and the new rulers regarded the Eurasians with suspicion, viewing them as colonial remnants and potential traitors because of their whiteness and support for the former colonisers. If they 'returned' or 'repatriated' to the mother country, to which most of them had never been before, they could be discriminated against because they were not 'white' or western enough.[81] Thus, after decolonisation the Eurasians were either seen as too white in the former colony or not white enough in the former European mother country.[82] Wherever they decided to settle, they lost their privileged position and experienced downward social mobility.

The labelling and accompanying categorisation of the group which this book describes as Eurasians has led to, and continues to generate, highly emotive debates. Historians have identified the separate category of 'Eurasians' as it was used by authorities and journalists, and by the Eurasians themselves, while largely avoiding the term because it has been seen as reproducing the colonial or authorities' rhetoric.[83] I acknowledge that this term sometimes obscures a range of contested categories, which is why I use the terms 'Anglo Indians', 'Indo-Europeans' and '*Métis*' when referring individually to British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina. Of course, these terms, as is the case with 'Eurasian', generalise and bring together people who may not have self-identified as such but this thesis tries to discover notable similarities and differences in how people of mixed Asian and European ancestry reacted to decolonisation across three Asian colonies. My objective is not to identify the often numerous divergences within these constructed categories, since for instance Taylor, Bosma and Raben, and Stoler have already done this.[84] Current debates are partly the result of changes in the meaning of these terms over time and from one context to another.[85]

A large number of sometimes rather derogatory terms existed and still exist to describe the Eurasian group, including *Métis*, *liplap*, *sinjo* (male Indo-European)*, nonna* (female Indo-European)*, half-caste, out-cast*, Britasian, Euro-Indian, Indo-Briton, Asiatic Briton, Anglo-Asian, Indo-European, Indo, 'Indische', creole, mestizo, and pseudo-European.[86] Over time, scholars and policy makers introduced numerous words to describe the group that is here called 'Eurasian'. The introduction of neologisms reflects the fact that earlier words and categories were felt to be inadequate.[87] Debates came to be more about definitions than about the effect of categorisations. All these terms had a different function for the people concerned and for the 'outsiders' creating the labels (such as policy makers and rulers) in colonial and postcolonial society. They were meant to indicate distinct levels of mixedness connected to a particular place and to rights.[88]

Debates about terms and categorisations continue today and the large number of labels attached to this group is one of its key characteristics. The terms describe the variations and stereotypical images of mixed parentage and accompanying 'whiteness'. From what was seen as almost European at one end of the scale to what was regarded as almost indistinguishable from the indigenous people, at the other.[89]

Rights, in the colonial case, were rights to European citizenship, rights to certain jobs and education, or rights to own land. The authorities that did the labelling changed over time: colonial authorities in the period of colonisation, Japanese authorities during the Second World War in the case of French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies, colonial authorities both after the war and after decolonisation, and the new post-colonial regimes.

In colonial society, eight forms of mixing were identified. Most common were the Eurasian children who had a European father and an indigenous mother, and who were referred to as *mestizos*.[90] Other combinations were children with a European father and a Eurasian mother, a Eurasian father and a European mother, a Eurasian father and a Eurasian mother, a Eurasian father and an indigenous mother, an indigenous father and a Eurasian mother, and an indigenous father and a European mother.[91] This sub-categorisation in the French, British and Dutch colonies built on earlier Portuguese influences in Asia and the distinctions they had made between *mixtiezen* (mixed), *castiezen* (one half Asian ancestry), *pustiezen* (one quarter Asian ancestry) and *christiezen* (one eighth Asian ancestry).[92] The categorisation and identification of degrees and forms of mixing indicated the importance that was attached to the differences within the Eurasian group. In the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina, Eurasians were included in the legal category of 'Europeans', while in British India they were not. In all three colonial settings, however, formal proof of European – mostly paternal – ancestry was important for categorisation as European or 'native' and thus access to certain rights, both before and after decolonisation.[93]

Children with an indigenous father and a European mother were highly uncommon in colonial society, but they were extremely worrisome for colonial authorities. These liaisons were especially seen as undermining the colonial project.[94] In the Dutch East Indies, there were only 40 marriages authorised between a European woman and an indigenous man between the years 1886 and 1897. Yet, these marriages led to the introduction of the *Gemengde Huwelijken Regeling* (Mixed Marriages Act) in 1898. In this

act it was codified that the woman would lose her nationality by intermarriage, and become part of the legal category of 'natives'.[95] This was already the case under Dutch law, so in fact a separate law was not needed. The introduction of the separate law showed how authorities sought to discourage these marriages and how strong their disapproval was of this kind of relationship.

In the Indochinese case, a letter, which the Minister of Justice wrote to the *procureur général* on 2 February 1917, revealed why French colonial officials were concerned about unions between French women and indigenous men:

> They are only drawing attention to our prestige in the indigenous environment, and on the other hand, they are commonly utterly disappointing our compatriots.[96]

Thus, it was about the prestige of the French colonial project in indigenous circles and the potential disappointments this could cause. In addition, the French women who were married to indigenous men were considered by both French and indigenous people as inferior, as 'une femme de seconde rang'.[97]

As I already explained at the beginning of this introduction, there are three groups involved in the process of labelling: firstly, the policymakers and other authorities, secondly, the members of the group that was labelled – Eurasians in this case – and thirdly the 'others'. When it comes to the second group – the 'Eurasians' themselves – their self-identification changed over time. An important shift occurred – described at length in this book – when the migration from the mother countries increased at the end of the nineteenth century and the percentage of women migrating from the mother country increased. In the early colonial period, few Europeans migrated to the colony, and most of those who did were men. They entered into relationships with indigenous women.[98] Couples did not always marry, and the women could be housekeepers and providers of sexual services at the same time. In the Dutch East Indies, the indigenous housekeeper was called a *njai*. In Indochina, she was called a *congai* and having a concubine was referred to as *encongayement* there.[99] When their European bride arrived in the colony, European men sent their concubines and children into the *kampong* (the parts of town where the indigenous people lived) without acknowledging the children as their offspring.[100] At the beginning of the twentieth century, more European women came to the colonies. As a result, the boundaries between the colonisers, the colonised people and mixed ancestry groups became sharper.[101] The arrival of more Europeans also led to the emancipation of the Eurasians, who started to distinguish themselves as a separate category from both the 'natives' and the more recent European 'newcomers'. It was a way for them to climb the social ladder and experience upward mobility. When the Eurasians emancipated and organised themselves in associations, they emphasised that they belonged to a higher class than the 'native' population. However, when authorities increasingly problematised the 'Eurasian Question' in class terms – putting an emphasis on Eurasian paupers – the label acquired a negative connotation and the Eurasians started to distance themselves from it.

As a third actor, there are the 'others' – non-governmental organisations for instance – who labelled the 'Eurasians' as a separate category. These were, for example, orphanages and child-welfare societies, who designated the 'Eurasians' as a category worth saving. The local, indigenous population also falls within this category. The

Eurasians could become, for instance, low-class civil servants or soldiers, and thus up-holders of the colonial regime. Contemporaries made distinctions within the group. The position of Indo-Europeans in the Dutch East Indies was clearly described by the journalist H.C. Zentgraaff in 1932:

> The Indo-group does not form a layer of our society, but stands in it like a vertical figure. The lowest part is among the indigenous people and the top is amongst the best of us.[102]

The heterogeneity of the Anglo-Indian group in British India was similarly identified by a former head of the colonial Post and Telegraph service, Sir Geoffrey Clarke, at a luncheon address during the Anglo-Indian Deputation in 1925, published in *The Anglo-Indian,* the magazine of the Anglo-Indian Association of Southern India:

> We are dealing with a community that varies from what I might call a very Anglo community to a very Indian community. There are Anglo-Indians sitting at this table today who are practically Englishmen in thoughts, ideas, habits, customs and everything else: there are other Anglo-Indians who are to all intents and purposes low caste Indians.[103]

In short, 'Eurasians' were definitely perceived to be a certain category in the colonial and post-colonial setting, albeit referred to by a variety of names. The large number of words that was used reflects the hybridity and fluidity of the group, and shifting criteria of those who were doing the categorisation. Because of this heterogeneity, and shifting definitions over time, it was (and still is) impossible to speak of 'the Eurasian class' or 'the Eurasian' people. Terms were temporarily fixed, instead of permanent and static.[104] In my opinion, it is important to use the terms that were used at the time when Eurasian people had to make choices, in the 1940s and 1950s, despite later debates on the use of such terms in other discourses and situations.[105]

1.7 The emancipation paradox

As has been observed in the section above, and will be discussed at length in this book, the Eurasians were increasingly seen by state authorities as a separate group from the end of the nineteenth century onwards. They were also seen as such by 'others' (organisations and the indigenous populations), and they self-identified as such. This process of self-identification and identification by others was strengthened in the years before and after decolonisation. Part of this process was that the Eurasians also emancipated as a group and started to claim rights, including the right to have their own homeland, as will be described in the next chapters.

In 2006, Dutch researchers stated to use the word 'integration paradox' to describe how some people with a migrant or minority background feel more discriminated against than others.[106] The key explanation authors provide for this is related to both education and integration. Especially those people with a migrant or minority background that are more integrated – or who are regarded to be more integrated – feel more discriminated. They have done well in school, are well-educated, and do well on the labour market. Those involved however feel that they do not get the chances and opportunities they deserve, and feel they are entitled to for instance better jobs with

higher income. The result is anger and frustration, and for part of the people this means they turn away from the dominant society and undo their integration.

In earlier studies, going back to the 1950s, authors had already used the similar, but not quite the same, concept of the 'emancipation paradox' to describe the phenomenon that discrimination against Jews and African-Americans increased when they started to emancipate and claim more rights.[107] When they broke out of segregated communities – moved out specific neighbourhoods, started working outside a restricted number of jobs, married outside what was seen as 'their' ethnic group, or tried to join other organisations than their 'own' – this was perceived as a threat. Their emancipation led to a backlash and xenophobic responses. Although the phenomena – integration paradox or emancipation paradox – has been observed, both concepts are not discussed at length in the literature. As will become clear in the chapters below, the concept of the 'emancipation paradox' does seem to be able to explain both the trajectories taken by the Eurasians, as well as the differences between colonies.

1.8   The numbers

Precisely because the definition of the Eurasians was the subject of debate and was constantly shifting, it is impossible to give precise numbers. At the same time numbers were important to structure debates, and therefore, claim makers always mentioned (sometimes rather randomly) numbers. Based on the numbers that appeared in governmental sources and secondary literature, the minimum and maximum amounts for Eurasians living in all three colonies both before and after decolonisation can be given. As Table 1 shows, the difference is large, depending on who was counting and who was counted as members of the group. Therefore, in Table 1 differences in estimates before and after independence (for example in the case of the Indo-Europeans) can be considerable. Policy makers frequently used these higher or lower figures in the debates on the Eurasian Question, for example when they asked for more money, or for larger numbers of people to be admitted to the mother country. The Dutch sociologist W.F Wertheim in 1947 estimated there were 8 to 9 million Indo-Europeans in the Dutch East Indies. These people however wanted to become invisible by disappearing in the indigenous environment of the postcolonial society. Therefore, they were not easily traceable in any sources and Wertheims statement is hard to prove.

1.9   Working hypotheses

The simple answer to the main question 'which factors determined the margins within which the Eurasians chose to leave or stay after decolonisation', is that it depended on who the Eurasians were (their personal factors), and on what limitations they faced or opportunities they had (structural and legal factors).[108] These three clusters of explanatory factors are summarised in Table 2. They serve as the heuristic framework for this study.

TABLE 1 ESTIMATES OF THE NUMBER OF EURASIANS[109]

	Before decolonisation		After decolonisation		Left for mother country		Left for elsewhere	
	min	max	min	Max	min	max	min	max
British India	140,422	500,000		300,000	25,000	180,000		**250,000
French Indochina*	25,000	45,000	20,000	100,000	30,000	40,000		
Dutch East-Indies	170,000	240,417	220,000	***9,000,000		300,000		****70,000

*   Number of Europeans in French Indochina including many Eurasians
**   To Canada, Australia, New Zealand
***   Most would have 'disappeared in the kampong'
**** To US and to Australia

Personal factors included gender, marital status, age, class, education, and religion. As a rule, old people were, for instance, less likely to migrate.[110] Class was relevant to the Eurasians' choices because the poor did not have the means to leave, while the rich were likely to stay because they stood to lose too much especially when their wealth was non-transferrable for instance when they owned businesses, property or plantations. The upper-class Eurasians had the money to pay for the expensive trip to Europe or elsewhere. However, they were also more likely to stay and have better options in the newly independent nations, because of their training, language skills and contacts. The majority of the Eurasian people who stayed were likely to have never been to the mother country, so they did not know what to expect when they left. The higher-class Eurasians had often been to the mother country on paid leave, or for study and education.[111] Paid leave was a right that European employees had, both in private firms and government services in most colonial empires in the late colonial period.[112] The well-educated thus had the knowledge, language skills, and contacts that would have made their migration more profitable and therefore more likely. Knowledge, language skills, and contacts could thus work both ways.

Religion was relevant because the Eurasians were generally Christian, which was considered to be part of their Europeanness,[113] while the colonised subjects were generally Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist. Another important personal factor with legal attributes was gender and marital status. The small number of Eurasian women who married indigenous men were more likely to stay after decolonisation, because they lost their European citizenship when they married.[114] Indo-European women in the Dutch East Indies who married Dutch men became Dutch and could leave for the Netherlands with their families.[115] Eurasians with Dutch, British and French citizenship could leave, while Eurasians without European citizenship faced more hurdles.[116]

Legal factors which explained the position of the Eurasians included in the first place their legal status under colonialism. Educated, Christian and middle or upper-class Eurasians, who had money and who participated in European circles in the colony were more likely to leave in the period of decolonisation or had better chances to do so because they could pass themselves off as 'white'.[117] This Eurasian upper-class saw itself, and was regarded by others, as European and westernised in colonial society. The degree to which Eurasians could pass as 'white' was associated with the

number of European privileges they enjoyed in the colonial period. Nevertheless, not everyone had so many privileges. The Eurasians who had almost disappeared into the indigenous environment before decolonisation were likely to stay. Others, who were more recognisable as being of European ancestry might have stayed because of their attachment to the country of their birth, good (sometimes familial) relations with the indigenous population, or insufficient money to make the trip to the mother country. This was especially true if they had large families, and their passages to the mother country were not paid for by the (former) colonisers.

A last key legal factor relates to bureaucratic regulations and access to citizenship in the mother country and the former colony. It differed according to personal factors such as gender, class, marital status and age. With regard to this factor, I focus on questions such as: Did the Eurasians attain or have European citizenship? Were the Eurasians able to retain part of their former privileges after decolonisation?

Structural factors included the Second World War and Japanese occupation in the Dutch East Indies and to a lesser extent in French Indochina, and the aggression and suspicion towards Eurasians and Europeans during the struggle for independence. In all three colonies, there was violence against Europeans and Eurasians in the period around independence including the period after the Second World War and Japanese occupation. However, the new regime in India was less aggressively towards Anglo-Indians than the new regimes in Indonesia and Indochina, which turned against Indo-Europeans and *Métis*. Hostility towards Indo-Europeans and *Métis* could have encouraged them to leave, whereas the absence of violence against Anglo-Indians in the British India case could have encouraged them to stay. Furthermore, economic opportunities were relevant, such as job prospects and housing in the mother country and in the former colony and the familial and social networks in the former colony and in the mother country. When people started to leave, the Eurasian social infrastructure in the former colonies – schools, newspapers, social clubs and churches – gradually collapsed. This development encouraged even more people to leave. For example, the largest interest organisation of the Indo-Europeans in the Dutch East Indies, the *Indo-Europeesch Verbond* (Indo-European League, IEV), lost many of its members in the 1950s, also because of its transformation into an Indonesian organisation.[118] This exodus made the decision to leave more attractive for others. The geo-political situation and the Cold War, which prompted a growing fear of communism gaining a foothold in South-Asia and South-East Asia, also motivated people to leave.

All factors had 'push' and 'pull' effects: they could keep people in the colony or stimulate them to go. The Eurasians may have been 'pulled' towards the mother country about which they had learned and heard so much growing up in the European sphere of the colony. Or they might have been scared away from moving there by stories about discrimination, housing shortages, unemployment rates, rationing and the horribly cold winter of 1947-1948. The final decision was based on both push and pull factors.

The list of factors described above suggests that Eurasians made their decisions rationally. However, in many cases, they chose to stay or to leave in a hurry. This points to a rather high level of uncertainty in their choices. Later, they reconsidered their decisions. This often happened as a result of changing state policies and (unexpected) legal implications. In all three colonies, this process eventually meant an increase in

opportunities either to leave or to stay for Eurasians. For example, most Indo-Europeans in Indonesia decided at a very late stage to stay and to choose Indonesian citizenship. Later, they came to regret this choice. Also in the other colonies, Eurasians reversed their earlier choices. The implications of decolonisation for Eurasians only became clear when the new postcolonial situation became real in the former colonies as well as in the former colonising countries.

TABLE 2   FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED EURASIANS' CHOICES

Personal factors	*Legal factors*	*Structural factors*
1. Class (economic status)	1. Colonial legal status and ethnicity	1. Socio-historical background, process and length of colonisation
2. Age	2. Bureaucracy: accessibility of citizenship and other governmental regulations.	2. The decolonisation process and aftermath (unrest, rumours, chaos, discrimination by new powers)
3. Education		3. Economic situation/future prospects in mother country and the former colony
4. Religion		4. Disappearance of social infrastructure/social network including familial ties
5. Gender and marital status		5. Geo-political situation e.g. the Cold War

Irrespective of the Eurasians' decision to stay or to leave, they had to adapt to the new circumstances. If they stayed it meant distancing themselves from prejudices towards indigenous people, which had been cultivated for many decades, and separating themselves from their attachment to the mother country.[119] If they left for the mother country it meant adapting to the culture of the colonisers, and shedding their indigenous heritage.

1.10   Historiography

There is a wealth of literature on colonialism, post-colonialism and migration. Most of this literature overlooks the subject of the Eurasian Question, or simply assumes that all people with European ancestry left the former colonies after decolonisation.[120]

In general works on colonialism, and the decolonisation process in South and South-East Asia, Eurasians usually formed a small part of the picture painted of a colonial world in transition. Well-known examples of such studies are the standard works by Lou de Jong, Frederic Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, and a more recent study edited by M. Bandeira Jerónimo and A. Costa Pinto.[121] Some of these studies take a comparative perspective, encompassing the whole Asian region such as the ones by Paul Kratoska and Milton Osborne.[122] Their approach has yielded a more complete picture of the commonalities between the histories of all Asian colonies. Other studies describe

the colonial history of one particular colony, and in these studies the authors usually referred to the Eurasians in passing.[123] Furthermore, there are some works that deal exclusively with the colonial history of the separate Eurasian groups from a national perspective.[124] In several of these studies, the authors have highlighted the radical changes with regard to sharper boundaries between population groups and the disapproval of miscegenation, which the arrival of European women brought about in all three colonies.[125] Ulbe Bosma, however, emphasised continuity, especially in European elite society, which was more oriented towards Europe than Asia throughout the nineteenth century.[126]

Some pioneering studies did compare Eurasian groups on a specific topic such as studies on fictional literature, the myth of the lazy native,[127] or children of mixed ancestry. David Pomfret's publications exemplify these types of studies.[128] Other rare examples focused on one empire or two empires in comparative perspective, with specific subgroups of Eurasians as a theme, such as children.[129] These particular publications have shown the additional value of comparing Eurasians in more colonies.

In addition, there are works related to aspects of the late colonial period leading up to decolonisation, the aftermath of decolonisation and the role of Eurasians in that period in one overarching framework.[130] These works have analysed a wide range of topics. Some of them were written from a transnational perspective such as the study by Andrea Smith about several groups of postcolonial migrants in Europe, and the volume edited by Els Bogaerts and Remco Raben about aspects of the decolonisation process in several African and Asian colonies. Similar works were written from a 'memory building perspective' and were related to the colonial legacies and traces that were still visible in contemporary times, contributing to an emerging postcolonial debate that came about at different moments in all three countries. They took a longitudinal perspective incorporating colonial and postcolonial times. Examples are books by Gert Oostindie, Maura Kathryn Edwards and Elizabeth Buettner.[131] Buettner took a broad comparative perspective incorporating the colonial heritage of five former European empires: Belgium, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, France and Portugal.[132] Recently, some studies in English have appeared about French colonialism and decolonisation in Indochina, but in French colonial studies the focus remained on Algeria and the decolonisation war, its aftermath and the memory thereof in France.[133]

This book adds to the literature in two important ways. Firstly, it analyses how discourses and policies affected a hybrid group (like the Eurasians) at a moment of dramatic power change. The Eurasian group was never created as a separate legal category in any of the three Asian colonies. People moved in and out of the Eurasian category and therefore people who belonged to the category were repeatedly renamed, and re-categorised. They also redefined themselves in the process of claiming either a European or an indigenous identity and a concomitant place to live.

By focusing on this hybridity as something policy makers and the people living in the colonies used, I show the complex interplay between governments and Eurasians and their associations. I explain the outcomes of the decision-making process of and for Eurasians as resulting from the changing margins within which they made their decisions between staying and leaving.

Second, the process of choosing and labelling in a (post) colonial context has not

been studied from a comparative perspective. Most studies focus on one country (France, the Netherlands, or the United Kingdom) and its colony, while there are strong indications that authorities did look towards each other in their attempts to resolve 'the Eurasian Question'.[134] Ideas about the problem of colonial miscegenation were not as distinct or original as national studies seem to imply. The idea that the (post) colonial history of people of mixed ancestry must be examined from an overarching comparative perspective has been suggested earlier, but so far it has not been carried out.[135] In the 1990s, there were two conferences in Aix-en-Provence on the differences and similarities between French and British decolonisation.[136] An important difference was that the French version of colonialism was more ideologically motivated on republican terms than the British equivalent which was of a more pragmatic nature, but the case of the Dutch East Indies was not included in these conferences.[137]

At a conference in Cologne, in 2008, the role of colonial elites, including a considerable number of Eurasians, was identified as a key aspect in explaining the transition from colonial to postcolonial times.[138] It was a call for more research on the role of Eurasians during decolonisation. This was the period during which ex-colonial authorities and the new rulers had to design special policies for Eurasians, especially regarding their citizenship. These policies of the former imperial powers have probably influenced contemporary immigration policies and accompanying debates.[139] However, so far, this call has not been properly answered. In my view, Eurasians need to be studied over a longer period before, during and after decolonisation and from a comparative perspective. After all, decolonisation did not mean a clear break but can be better understood as a 'blurred' period. As Simon Gikandi pointed out:

> The argument that colonialism has been transcended is patently false, but so is the insistence that, in the former colonies, the culture of colonialism continues to have the same power and presence it had before decolonisation.[140]

Thus, my research, in contrast to earlier publications, compares the decision-making process of the diverse group of Eurasians in three former colonies from an international perspective going beyond the conventional national level in (post) colonial studies. A national perspective makes it difficult to discern similarities and differences between colonies. An international perspective can provide a broader, more nuanced and complete view of Eurasians in colonial and postcolonial societies.

My study covers the period before and after decolonisation in order to incorporate the more indirect reasons for the decisions Eurasians made since I am convinced that the exact moment of formal decolonisation was not such a clear watershed as previous historians have often presented it. The framework of policies accorded to Eurasians as a hybrid group was rooted in the colonial period. As noted, in most of the literature it appears that all Eurasians left the (former) colony. By studying the role of Eurasians in the decolonisation period, I highlight a key feature of the transition from colonial to postcolonial times, since without a European colonial project there would never have been a Eurasian population in the colonies.

1.11 Method

The method of this book is comparative. The clear benefit of comparing these three case studies is to discover whether Anglo-Indians, Indo-Europeans and *Métis* when faced with the same process – decolonisation – reacted in the same way (leaving/staying) as this will tell us a lot about the British, Dutch and French colonial regimes and the new independent states established in India, Indonesia and Vietnam. According to Jürgen Kocka, the interrelations between cases (also called 'entangled history' or 'histoire croisée') are part of a comparative framework which can help analyse factors that led to similarities or differences between cases.[141] Theda Skocpol and Margaret Somers described three methods of comparative history in macrosocial enquiry. In one of them, 'comparative history as the contrast of contexts', they have pointed out that it is important to analytically separate the cases that are compared.[142] This method has much in common with the comparative approach I use in this book. However, the imperative to choose analytically completely different cases is the most difficult part of this method. I look at three Eurasian groups, and although the contexts were different, these groups were similar and there are clear connections between the cases. Hence, it is fruitful to take a comparative perspective while acknowledging the overall room that Eurasians had to manoeuvre after decolonisation.

In this study, I make a double comparison: I compare and contrast the positions of and possibilities for the Eurasians in British India, the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina before and after decolonisation. This enables me to show, on the one hand, the specificities of the different cases, and on the other hand common patterns and traits more clearly than would have been possible with a study on a national level. As Nancy Green has pointed out, comparing cases is an important tool for going beyond national categories. In addition, it helps us to understand the causes and origins of historical phenomena, in my case the effects of decolonisation for Eurasians. Furthermore, it helps to analyse the specificity and generality of these phenomena.[143] This study is not a comparison of one European country and its colony before and after independence. Instead, I have chosen a divergent model, comparing three Eurasian groups and their decisions to stay in the former colony or to leave.[144] It sheds new light on the similarities and differences among 'in-between' colonial groups in three colonial settings.

Irene Bloemraad has pointed out that migration studies do not make sense if the researcher does not identify non-migrants as a reference group.[145] Not all Eurasians migrated after decolonisation. They form my reference group. I compare the frameworks in which 'stayers' and 'leavers' in each of the colonial settings made their choices. The methodological approach I used, to reconstruct why people took certain decisions by means of various sources, has been done earlier for other places and time periods, but not for comparative studies about the decolonisation period from a longer-term perspective.[146]

A study of all three contexts enables us also to see more clearly the connections between colonies. Colonial authorities in French Indochina, British India and the Dutch East Indies shared ideas and knowledge about how to rule their colonies in general and about Eurasian Question specifically. Imperial administrators carefully studied each other's strengths and weaknesses. French and Dutch orientalists, for instance,

exchanged scholarly findings about Eastern religious traditions.[147] J.S. Furnivall, a member of the British Indian civil service, carried out research into the Dutch colonial system in the Netherlands Indies in the 1930s. For French Indochina, a colonial administrator – Joseph Chailley-Bert – conducted research in the Dutch East Indies in the years 1901 and 1902.[148] Numerous others saw the benefit of this exchange of information. The French author Bousquet wrote in 1940 that investigations in the Dutch East Indies could benefit the French empire. He also suggested that for Dutch colonisers, it would be highly advantageous to visit the French overseas possessions, in order to share views and to assess each other's practices.[149] Exchange of information also took place at colonial exhibitions, such as the large one that took place in 1931 in the Bois de Vincennes in Paris (to be discussed in chapter 2). I assume that the exchange of ideas continued after decolonisation, which may have resulted in similar policies in the three former colonies especially with regard to their Eurasian populations. In 1938 Henri Bonvicini found in his comparative study that many Indo-Europeans reached high positions in governmental circles and married European women.[150] In 1954, the French Lieutenant Roue wrote a report about the Eurasian problem in which he claimed that the French colonial authorities could learn a lot from the Dutch policy on Indo-Europeans in the Dutch East Indies.[151]

1.12 Material

This book is based on a large variety of sources. Most important among these were the archival sources from several governmental agencies. For the British Indian case, I used sources from the *British Library*, which included material about the British Nationality Act, the British Cabinet mission and memoranda of the All India Anglo-Indian Association. These were sent to the Statutory Commission, who had to prepare the last Government of India Act in 1935 which turned out to be a predecessor of the first constitution of independent India. Additionally, I found documents about the orphanage and boarding school of *St. Andrews colonial homes* at Kalimpong in Darjeeling.[152] Material about 'the plight of the Anglo-Indians' from the late 1950s and early 1960s, which I found in the *UK National Archives* at Kew Gardens in London, formed an important addition to the sources from the British Library.[153]

For the Dutch East Indies case, I used material from the *National Archives* in The Hague which included files of the archive of the High Commissionership. This was an agency that continued to arrange practical issues for Dutch people who still lived in Indonesia after decolonisation. It was the first agency to which Indo-European people sent requests if they wanted to leave for the Netherlands. I linked data from this archive to files of the same families and persons in the archive of the *NASSI*-movement (*Comité Nationale Actie Steunt Spijtoptanten Indonesië*; Committee National Action Supporting 'Regretting Optants' from Indonesia). *NASSI* wanted to rescue ex-Dutch Indo-European people who had first chosen Indonesian citizenship but later regretted their choice. By linking these two files I could follow the trajectory and the decisions of families and individual persons, and through that I could identify decisive factors for either leaving or staying. Furthermore, I found documents of the

Council of Social Affairs (*Raad voor Sociale Aangelegenheden*) about Indo-Europeans and the advantages and disadvantages of Indonesian citizenship, documents of the Ministry of Social Work that were related to the deterioration in life circumstances of Indo-Europeans, and lastly documents about Dutch education in postcolonial Indonesia in the Dutch National Archives.[154]

I also used material from the special collections at the University Library in Leiden, including the periodical of the Indo-European interest organisation of the Dutch East Indies, *Indo-Europeesch Verbond* (IEV), named *Onze Stem* (Our Voice). The IEV published this magazine from its foundation in 1919 until the 'Indonesianisation' of the League in 1956. Furthermore, I used the more general monthly magazine of the Indies community in the period 1956-1965. It was originally called *Onze Brug* (Our Bridge). After 1958, it was renamed *TongTong,* and from 1978 onwards it was known as *Moesson*[155] – and is still printed under that name in the Netherlands. The primary goal of the magazine was to raise awareness among Indo-Europeans for their own specific culture and to prevent that identity from disappearing in the process of assimilation into the new country.[156]

Other archival material I drew upon from the special collections department of the Leiden University Library included documents of the youth protection organisation *Pro Juventute,* and documents of orphanages in which Indo-European children lived, such as the famous *Oranje Nassau* institution of Johannes 'Pa' van der Steur. I also utilised the archive of the *Centraal Comité van kerkelijk en particulier initiatief voor sociale zorg ten behoeve van gerepatrieerden* (CCKP, 'Central Committee of clerical and particular initiative for social care for the benefit of repatriates') including the *Stichting Helpt Onze Mensen in Indonesië* (SHOMI, 'Foundation helps our people in Indonesia') which I found in the *Utrecht Municipal archive*.[157] Lastly, in the *Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie* (NIOD, Dutch Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide studies), I found documents with statements about the status of Eurasians around independence in the Dutch East Indies and British India, written from the perspective of Indo-Europeans.[158]

For the French Indochina case, I used material from the *Bibliotheque Nationale de France* (BNF) in Paris, the archive of the *Service historique de défense* in the Chateau de Vincennes in Paris, the *Archives diplomatiques de ministère des affaires étrangères* in Nantes and the *Archives Nationales d'Outre-Mer* (ANOM) in Aix-en-Provence, France. The latter archive held material from the archive of the colonial private interest organisation *Fédération des oeuvres de l'enfance Française d'Indochine* (FOEFI, Federation of Eurasian children protection organisations of Indochina). The series of reports of the annual general meetings of this central organisation of orphanages were especially interesting. They contained discussions about the criteria for the admittance of Eurasian children to the institutions, the measures taken during the French colonial war (1946-1954) and the policies implemented when the French withdrew from Indochina in 1954.[159] These reports also contained information about the *Convention sur la Nationalité*, criteria for French citizenship implemented in 1955. The FOEFI was connected to the *École d'Enfants de Troupe Eurasiens*, and in the archive of the *Service Historique de Défense* in the Chateau de Vincennes in Paris I found documents which discussed the desirability of such an institution.[160]

Lastly, in Vietnam I visited the *Vietnamese National Archives no.1* in Hanoi, the *Vietnamese National Archives no.3* in Ho Chi Minh city and the *Vietnamese National Archives no.4* in Dalat in the central highlands of Vietnam and these archives provided further information on the foundation of the predecessor of the FOEFI, *the Fondation Brévié*, and a survey completed by the commission led by Sir Guernut on the *Métis* problem and correspondents who reported on *Métis* children who were still living in the indigenous villages in the countryside.[161]

I also incorporated articles from newspapers and periodicals into my research (Appendix I lists the articles that are quoted, and provides an overview of the journals that I used for my searches). I searched for specific terms like 'Indo-Europeans', 'Anglo-Indian' and '*Métis*' around key moments and issues. For the Dutch case the key moments were independence on 27 December 1949 and the choice of Indonesian citizenship and the anti-Dutch actions on 5 December 1957 (*Zwarte Sinterklaas*). For the French case, I first tried to use the same strategy and searched for 'métis' around the French defeat at Dien Bien Phu in April 1954. That did not return any results so I extended the period to incorporate the first half of the twentieth century. For the British case, I searched using the term 'Anglo-Indian' around the independence of India on 15 August 1947 and the ban on Anglo-Indian schools in Bombay in January 1954.

In addition, I analysed 20 novels (see Appendix 2) in which Eurasians were the protagonists. The novels were all published after 1900, because from that period onwards, Eurasians formed a clearly demarcated group in all three colonial contexts.[162] They were written either by Eurasians or by Europeans who were familiar with the colony. The novels were an emic source of information because they contained information about self-identified as well as ascribed features of Eurasians. Some of them were not written by Eurasians but by Europeans who lived or had lived in the colonies.

Colonial and postcolonial novels are an important and recognised literary genre, which provided information about the colony to audiences in the mother country and in the colony. Moreover, literary texts were pre-eminently used to either legitimise or oppose the colonial project. Thus, colonial and postcolonial fiction was rooted in the colonial experience, and critically engaged with (former) colonial relationships.[163] Since the sixteenth century in the case of the Dutch East Indies and British India, and since the nineteenth century in the case of Indochina, works of fiction communicated information about the colonies to readers in the European mother countries. Later, they were also read in the colonies themselves. For example, prospective British settlers and colonial officials considered 'Raj Fiction' as a source of information about the British colony.[164] Novels about interracial romances formed a sub-genre. In essence, they were never primarily about India but about the racialisation of romance. Therefore, the genre could not exist without the colonial order. When that ended, the Anglo-Indian romance genre also went into decline.[165]

The following example from the famous colonial novel *A Passage to India,* published in 1924, illustrates the value of novels as a historical source. It describes the Anglo-Indian chauffeur, Mr. Harris, in stereotypical terms that were quite normal for British people in British India:

> Trying to look and feel like a European, the chauffeur interposed aggressively. He still wore a topi, despite the darkness, and his face, to which the Ruling Race had contributed little beyond bad teeth, peered out of it pathetically, and seemed to say, 'What's it all about? Don't worry me so, you blacks and whites. Here I am, stuck in damn India same as you, and you got to fit me in better than this'.[166]

Mr. Harris was a typical example of a Eurasian, growing particularly self-conscious when English and Indians were both present, 'because he did not know to whom he belonged. For a little he was vexed by opposite currents in his blood, then they blended, and he belonged to no one but himself.'[167] At the same time, colonial and some postcolonial novels cherished European hegemony by legitimising the colonial project.[168] In the postcolonial period readers were those people who had lived in the former colony for a longer or shorter period or just those interested in the colonial past and well-written fiction. According to Edward Said, novels were 'immensely important in the formation of imperial attitudes, references and experiences.' Furthermore, they enabled colonised people 'to assert their own identity and the existence of their own history.'[169]

All (post) colonial novels addressed the colonial relationship critically and some went a step further and deliberately tried to undercut the discourse that supported the colonial project.[170] The colonial novels provided a stereotypical picture of the former colonial status of Eurasians. The portrayal of Eurasians in the novels had performative power.[171] Authors used images from colonial discourse in their novels, and these images influenced and reinforced stereotypes in colonial and postcolonial reality by means of intertextuality with other sources such as newspapers and governmental documents.[172] For example, in the justification of the criteria for admission to the mother country after decolonisation, arguments were used that drew upon the colonial discourse, also expressed in the novels. Eurasians were discouraged from moving to Europe because they would not find a job there as policy makers and authorities found their pace of work to be too 'slow' and too 'eastern'.[173] These images would have influenced policy makers and others in their responses to the Eurasian Question.

Overall, the colonial discourse in these sources was not a finite set of ideas; it was a series of several colonising discourses, each belonging to a specific historical context, but having important features in common.[174] Colonial discourse influenced the legal legislation in the colonies and through that eventually also the concrete policies that the authorities implemented for Eurasians.[175] The different sources are not isolated pieces of evidence but they are connected by intertextuality between various forms of text as they used similar images and ideas, derived from the same colonial discourse. They complement each other and strengthen the general arguments and findings. The material provided the pieces for the same puzzle which described the margins within which Eurasians made their choices to stay or leave. All the sources that were used were produced by the colonisers, and by the Eurasians. The local people who were colonised were not part of this discourse. It is possible that there was a rather separate discourse in the colonial settings in which the voice of the colonised on the Eurasian Question was reflected. Reconstructing that voice merits a different research project.[176] Most of the material I used was produced by authorities to justify the colonising project, and by Eurasians to make claims.

Oral history has been used as a source in the Dutch, British and French colonial and postcolonial historiography on the Dutch East Indies, British India and French Indochina.[177] However, I did not interview people of mixed ancestry for this book because my research was focused on the margins within which Eurasians took their decisions at the time and not on later memories and reflections. Furthermore, there are only a few people still living who made the choices as adults.

This is not a study about the individual considerations of each person, but about the margins, or 'the room to manoeuvre', within which Eurasians made their decisions. My sources provide information about this room to manoeuvre and much less about individual motives. The room to manoeuvre was created by both Eurasians themselves, through their self-identification, how others regarded them, their ascribed motives and the regulations they faced for admission to the mother country and European citizenship. Thus, newspaper articles, magazine articles and documents in governmental archives indicated the attitudes others had vis-à-vis the Eurasians, while the archives of organisations, ego documents and testimonies in other sources represented their self-identification and therefore an emic perspective.

1.13   Structure

This study is structured chronologically, with some thematic elaborations, especially in the part on the late colonial period. Within each chapter I first look at British India, since this was the colony where all the major social changes happened first. Indeed, the authorities in the Dutch East Indies and French Indochina looked at developments in British India as an example to follow. The structure of this book follows the heuristic framework presented in table 2. Chapter 2 gives an overview of the history of the three colonies. Chapter 3 describes the legal position of the Eurasians in the colonies, and the categorisations that were used. Chapter 4 looks at their socio-economic position before 1900. Around 1900 the discourse on the Eurasians changed, as is described in chapter 5. This change affected and was part of a change in their socio-economic position, as described in chapter 6. Authorities in the three colonial settings increasingly started to look at each other. In all three colonies attempts were made to rescue, save and educate the Eurasian children. The attempts to save the children were a key part of the process in which the Eurasians became more visible. They emancipated and organised, as described in chapter 7. The period of decolonisation led to chaos, as described in chapter 8. Chapter 9 describes formal decolonisation, while chapter 10 looks at the consequences for the Eurasians. The Eurasians feared there would be no future for them in the former colonies, but emigration to elsewhere proved difficult. They started to make plans for a common homeland for all Eurasians in New Guinea. The plan showed that the Eurasians had developed a pan-Asian collective identity. Chapter 11 looks at the immediate postcolonial years, and chapter 12 at the measures that were put into place for the protection of the Eurasians, and their reactions to it. Chapter 13 looks at those who stayed. Finally in chapter 14 the conclusions are presented and a connection is made to the larger debates presented above.