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The Decline of the Chinese Council of Batavia

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The Decline of the Chinese Council of Batavia: The Loss of Prestige and Authority of the Traditional Elite amongst the Chinese Community from the End of the Nineteenth Century until 1942

1. Chinese settlement in Batavia and its environs was in effect a colonial creation of the Dutch.
2. The position of the Dutch East Indies Chinese in colonial society was closely linked to the vagaries of the colonial administrators and subsequent changes in colonial policy. Therefore, Dutch colonial policy towards the Chinese was inconsistent and ambivalent, and usually made with Dutch interests at heart.
3. Although *Sin Po* emerged as a powerful force in Batavia to tie the Indies Chinese to their ancestral country, it was especially in this city where *Sin Po*'s efforts failed bitterly.
4. With a significant number of Chinese officers among the founding fathers of the Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan, the Chinese officers in effect started the modern Chinese movement.
5. The emancipation of non-European populations in the Dutch East Indies started simultaneously but developed in quite an opposite manner: Chinese emancipation was initially aimed at joining all the *peranakans* and *totoks* together, whereas early indigenous emancipatory movements were organised according to ethnicity, culture, social standing, and religion.
6. For most *peranakan* Chinese, Chinese nationalism was an experiment: as much interested they were in their ancestral land, they realised that their survival depended on adaption to local realities in the Dutch East Indies. Hence, they could not respond easily to stirring calls from faraway China.
7. The decision of the Dutch to stay aloof from the internal affairs of the Chinese community resulted in their inability of solving the problems in Chinese administration in the early twentieth century.
8. The attempt of the colonial government to introduce more equality in administration among its Asian subjects failed because of its '*apartheid*' policy for years on end.
9. Although the Chinese and Indonesian nationalists ultimately had different goals, they shared the same ideas on imperialism and advocated a united Asian block against colonial regimes, which resulted in their close cooperation.
10. It is very important for the Indonesian Chinese to know their history based on hard facts rather than on retrospective reasoning in order to understand their position in Indonesian society today.
11. Doing research is like making a puzzle; piecing every information together requires a lot of attention and patience.
12. Discovering and reading through a bundle of archives is a great joy and opens new perspectives, but sorting everything out and deciding which parts to use in what context are real challenges.

