



The Blue-Eyed Enemy: Japan against the West in Java and Luzon, 1942-1945 (Princeton Legacy Library)

Theodore Friend

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The Blue-Eyed Enemy is a comprehensive account of the interwoven histories of the three major archipelago-nations of the West Pacific during the years of the Second World War. Theodore Friend examines Japanese colonialism in Indonesia and the Philippines as an example of recurring patterns of domination and repression in that region. He depicts Japanese rule in Greater East Asia as expressive of the folly of the general who exhorted his troops "to annihilate the blue-eyed enemy and their black slaves." At the same time he clearly shows where the return of Western power aimed at new links between conqueror and conquered, or lords and bondsmen. Throughout the work one encounters an infectious sympathy for those afflicted by imperialism and racism from whatever source, at whatever time.

The book is based on documentary research in Japan, Indonesia, and the Philippines, as well as in the United States and the Netherlands, and on over one hundred interviews with major actors and key observers of the era. The analysis balances an eclectic use of social science perspectives with a humanistic concreteness, and leads to new understanding of leaders like Sukarno and Hatta, Jose P. Laurel and Benigno Aquino, Sr., and Generals Yamashita and MacArthur. As comparative tropical history, it elucidates the contrasting cultural traditions and political psychologies of Indonesia and the Philippines and explains why 1945 was a year of dramatic contrast: "reoccupation" and revolution for the first country, and "liberation" and restoration for the latter.

Originally published in 1988.

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