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**A cross-temporal analysis of Dutch colonial violent conflict in Indonesia between 1609 and 1949. Understanding the causes for Dutch colonial violent conflict, using four different case studies in a comparative perspective.**

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# A cross-temporal analysis of Dutch colonial violent conflict in Indonesia between 1609 and 1949.

Understanding the causes for Dutch colonial violent conflict, using four different case studies in a comparative perspective.

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# Introduction

The Netherlands has had a long history of colonization in Indonesia, starting with the VOC (Dutch East India Company) in 1602 and technically ending with the war of Indonesian independence, with an intermission during the Napoleonic Wars when Britain took over the colony.<sup>1</sup> Colonization in Indonesia was, generally speaking, profitable for the Netherlands, then called the Republic of the United Seven Provinces. Part of this was due to the VOC, which grew out to be a huge corporation and contributed significantly to the wealth of the Netherlands.<sup>2</sup> The *cultuurstelsel*, introduced in 1830, was a type of tax system imposed by the Netherlands, which forced Indonesians to use at least a fifth of their land to cultivate export products for the Dutch Government.<sup>3</sup> However, these Dutch exploits were also accompanied by violent conflict.

This violent conflict has recently become a subject of public debate, especially concerning statues that depict figures who contributed to this particularly brutal aspect of Dutch colonization. One of the most well-known examples is the statue of Jan Pieterszoon Coen in Hoorn. While he contributed to the Dutch economy during the seventeenth century by helping to establish the trading empire of the VOC, he did so through violence and often instigated violent conflict, resulting in the deaths of many native people. The most notorious instance was the genocide in Banda in 1621, where he murdered approximately 15.000 Bandanese.<sup>4</sup> This has sparked controversy around the statue in Hoorn, as it puts a murderer on a pedestal. Although the engraving has been modified to provide a more nuanced view of Jan Pieterszoon Coen's actions, there are still people who oppose the presence of this statue.<sup>5</sup> The controversy surrounding his statue highlights the particular significance of Dutch colonial violence in current society.

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<sup>1</sup> M.C. Ricklefs, *A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200* (Basingstoke 2008) 137.

<sup>2</sup> Oscar Gelderblom, Abe de Jong, and Joost Jonker, 'The Formative Years of the Modern Corporation: The Dutch East India Company VOC, 1602–1623', *The Journal of Economic History* 73:4 (2013) 1050-1076, there 1050–51. doi: 10.1017/S0022050713000879.

<sup>3</sup> NIOD Instituut voor Oorlogs- Holocaust- en Genocidestudies, Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal- Land- en Volkenkunde (KITLV) and Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie (NIMH), *Over de grens. Nederlands extreem geweld in de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog, 1945-1949* (Amsterdam 2022) 37.

<sup>4</sup> Ian Burnet, *Spice Islands*. (Dural 2013) 67.

<sup>5</sup> Eric Molenaar, 'Discussie barst los over toekomst standbeeld JP Coen in Hoorn: 'held' of massamoordenaar', *Noordhollands Dagblad* (11 June 2020), [https://www.noordhollandsdagblad.nl/cnt/dmf20200611\\_28834853?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=organic](https://www.noordhollandsdagblad.nl/cnt/dmf20200611_28834853?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic).

While recent attention has been given to the violent colonial conflicts in the history of the Netherlands in Indonesia, the focus has primarily been on separate colonial wars and instances of colonial power. When discussing the colonial violent conflicts this is done in two separate time frames, the first period encompassing the VOC period, with the end of the VOC in 1799 as a separation point, often with a slight gap in the historiography until the formation of the *Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* in 1815. The second period began after 1815, when the Netherlands directly controlled the colonies.

This division is evident in the literature, particularly in books that center around the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia. The VOC period is discussed in multiple works, such as the bundle *The Dutch and English East India Companies* and the book *Dutch overseas empire between 1600 and 1800*.<sup>6</sup> The colonial period after the VOC is treated as a separate subject, with the violent conflicts during this period primarily discussed individually. For example, in the book *Banda*, written by Marjolein van Pagee, only the genocide in Banda is discussed.<sup>7</sup> This separation is also visible in other works about colonialism in general. Petra Groen's *Krijgsgeweld en kolonie. Opkomst en ondergang van Nederland als koloniale mogendheid 1816-2010*.<sup>89</sup> specifically starts the rise of the Netherlands as a colonial power after the VOC period, more specifically after the Batavian Republic and Napoleonic Wars, treating it in a sense as a different time period.

This separation between these two subjects is also apparent in the introduction of *over de grens*, a book that was written after extensive research about the Indonesian Independence War. It states that only with the formation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (1813-1815) did a period begin of military and administrative subjugation.<sup>10</sup> Thus separating this period from the previous colonial years, which encompassed the VOC years and the years the Netherlands were under French rule.

However, there are a few works that put these two time frames in the same book. These are more general books about the history of Indonesia which, although not specifically focussing on the violence by the Netherlands, do include instances of violence due to the influence the Netherlands had in Indonesia. One of these books is *A History of Modern Indonesia Since c.1200* by M.C. Ricklefs. It covers the history of pre-colonial Indonesia in

<sup>6</sup> Adam Clulow and Tristan Mostert, *The Dutch and English East India Companies* (Amsterdam 2018), doi: 10.2307/j.ctv9hvf2.

<sup>7</sup> Marjolein van Pagee, *Banda: de genocide van Jan Pieterszoon Coen* (Utrecht 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Petra Groen, e.a., *Krijgsgeweld en kolonie, opkomst en ondergang van Nederland als koloniale mogendheid, 1816-2010* (Amsterdam 2021).

<sup>9</sup> This translates approximately to: Martial violence and colony. The rise and fall of the Netherlands as a colonial power 1816-2010.

<sup>10</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 36.

1200 to modern Indonesia in 2004.<sup>11</sup> In these general books, however, there is never a direct comparison made between the different conflicts, as they aim to cover the entire history of Indonesia.

The subject of colonial violent conflict itself is very broad. When examining the literature about colonial violent conflict in Indonesia, it becomes clear that there is very little written about the causes of colonial violent conflict. Most of the works are focused on describing these conflicts and brush over the causes of them.

### *Research question and explanation of terms and periodisation*

As a result, the main question of the master thesis will be: How did the causes for colonial violent conflict by the Dutch in Indonesia change between 1609 and 1949? This will be done using four case studies in a comparative perspective. The four case studies that will be used are: The Bandanese Genocide (1621), the Third Javanese War of Succession (1749-57), The Java War (1825-1830) and the War of Independence (1945-1949). These case studies thus also influence the time periodisation of the main question, as the main reasons for the genocide in Banda started in 1609 and the war of Independence ended in 1949.

These case studies have been chosen due to their separation in time and because they represent certain points in history. The Bandanese Genocide represents the start by the VOC in Indonesia, The Javanese Wars of Succession the later stage of the VOC in Indonesia, the Java War the Netherlands as colonial power without the VOC and the War of Independence the decolonisation of Indonesia. For each of these case studies there will be a certain structure. First there will be a brief summary of the conflict and the colonial situation of the time, followed by the most likely reason for the conflict, followed by the reason for the violent conflict according to the Netherlands or the VOC. This distinction was made based on a continuity in the historiography regarding the reason for colonial violent conflicts. When looking at all the historiography that went over the reason for violent conflicts it became apparent that there was a separation between two types of reasons, the most likely reasons for the colonial violent conflict and the reasons according to the Dutch. For example, *Over de grens* does this briefly in the introduction by stating the most important reasons and the reasons the Dutch offered to the public.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ricklefs, *A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200*.

<sup>12</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 25.

Before going into the historiography about this subject, two of the terms that are used in this research question need to be explained further.

In this thesis the term colonial violent conflicts needs to be discussed and defined before going into the historiography of the research question itself. The term colonial violence, which is a part of colonial violent conflicts, is a much discussed term in the historiography. Primarily what violent colonial conflict was, and why this colonial violence should be a separate category.

Dierk Walter, in his book *Colonial violence*, emphasizes that colonial violence uses more brutal tactics compared to large-scale wars in the west, due to Western powers fighting against racially distinct enemies who did not have equal rights. Therefore, he attributes the difference of violence and colonial violence to the racial difference between the parties.<sup>13</sup> This is also done in, *Britain, Germany and colonial violence in South-West Africa from 1884-1919 The Herero and Nama Genocide*. This book states that a central facet of colonial violence is the pervasive element of racism.<sup>14</sup> In *Empire's violent end* the authors go into how some historians have also argued that colonial warfare was more brutal, due to the colonized living in a constant state of fear, which incentivized colonizers to use exemplary force.<sup>15</sup>

In this thesis the definitive definition of 'colonial violent conflicts' will be explained in separate components before giving the overall definition.

The term 'colonial' in this thesis is defined as there being a difference in political and military power, where one nation has or had very recently, more political and military power over the other, this being the colonizer. The other nation is or was very recently under the rule of the colonizer because of the difference in political and military power, this being the colonized. This is accompanied by racial prejudice or racism involved between the colonizer and the colonized. Violence in this thesis is defined as involving physical force that is intended to hurt or kill somebody, including inflicting destruction of property and livelihood. A conflict in this thesis is defined as a dispute between two parties with opposing interests and perspectives.

Therefore, the definition that will be used of 'colonial violent conflict' in this thesis, is a dispute between two parties with opposing interests and perspectives, involving physical force with the intention to hurt or kill somebody, including destruction of property and

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<sup>13</sup> Dierck Walter, *Colonial Violence: European Empires and the Use of Force* (New York 2017).

<sup>14</sup> Mads Bomholt Nielsen, *Britain, Germany and colonial violence in South-West Africa from 1884-1919 The herero and Nama Genocide* (Cham 2022) 16.

<sup>15</sup> Thijs Brocades Zaalberg and Bart Lutikhuis, *Empire's Violent End* (Ithaca 2022) 17.

livelihood, where there is a colonizer and colonized, as described above, paired with racial prejudice or racism.

The second term that needs to be clarified is Indonesia. Indonesia has officially only become an official country in 1949, but when this thesis refers to Indonesia it refers to the land mass that is called Indonesia as of 2023.

### *Historiography, Methodology and primary sources*

When examining the historiography on the reason for colonial conflicts, especially comparative perspectives, it becomes apparent that there is relatively little historiography just focused on the reason for colonial conflicts. Usually the historiography goes into the conflicts as a whole rather than the reason for them. However, this does not mean that there are no books comparing the violent conflicts in Indonesia, which can be used for this thesis. First the broader books in this historiography will be mentioned and then the historiography on the VOC period and on the post-VOC period, the respective historiography of the case studies will be further expanded upon at the beginning of every chapter.

The book *Colonial violence* by Dierk Walter approaches the topic of colonial violence very broadly and gives an account of how Europeans employed violence to conquer, coerce and police when pursuing imperialism and colonial settlement. This work includes parts about the reasons the Europeans had to pursue imperialism and colonial settlement, often by using violence or violent conflict. This book is broader both in subject and geography than the research done for this paper, but it offers information on colonial violence in a broader perspective.<sup>16</sup>

The article *On genocide and mass violence in colonial Indonesia* by Remco Raben, provides a clear understanding of the current historiography on violence in colonial Indonesia and highlights the subjects where more research is needed. One of these areas is drawing and connecting lines through the various phases of conflict. With this he means the different conflicts over time, especially the episodes of large-scale violence in the more distant past compared to the conflicts in Indonesia that took place earlier.<sup>17</sup>

Moving on to the books about the VOC period. The broader historiography surrounding the VOC and comparative perspectives of the VOC utilized in this thesis are less

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<sup>16</sup> Walter, *Colonial Violence*.

<sup>17</sup> Remco Raben, 'On genocide and mass violence in colonial indonesia, journal of genocide research' *Journal of Genocide Research* 14:3-4 (2012) 485-502, there 485.



focused on colonial violence and instead focus on the VOC in general. However, Some of the books do discuss the violence by the VOC and describe the more general situation in Indonesia surrounding the VOC period. For instance, *The Dutch and English East India Companies*, is a comparative book that divides its findings in three categories: diplomacy, trade and violence. Especially the introduction, the part about violence and the epilogue, offer insights of how the VOC acted overseas using violence and how the VOC could be used in a comparative perspective, though being a very different kind of comparison than this thesis. The book, *The Dutch Overseas Empire, 1600–1800*, is divided into three parts, each consisting of three chapters. The third part focusses on Monsoon Asia, with the seventh chapter giving a more general understanding of the VOC in Indonesia. The introduction also provides information by describing how the VOC traded and colonized.<sup>18</sup>

Books concerning the post VOC period delve more into (the reason for) colonial conflicts and colonial violence rather than giving a general overview. However, the books usually have a narrower timeline than the VOC books. For example *Racial difference and the colonial wars of 19th century Southeast Asia*, goes into how racial difference was a crucial reason in many of the wars in Southeast Asia between 1800 and 1900. This book explores the racial reasons for these wars.<sup>19</sup> This reason will be used in the last two chapters, especially because this reason has received less attention in other works.

The second book is the *Empire's violent end*, which aims to compare the Dutch, British and French wars of decolonization. This book discusses colonial violence, especially the causes of extreme violence, by using case studies. One of these case studies is used in this thesis, the Indonesian War of Independence..<sup>20</sup>

Other historiographical works will be discussed in the chapters that are tied to the specific case studies. However, it is noteworthy that in all these more general historiographical works and the historiography about the case studies, that there is almost no work that is focused on the causes of colonial violent conflict. Let alone one that uses a comparative perspective. The only exception is Peter Carey, who focuses on the reasons for the Java War and especially how the leader of this war played a role in this. But this will be further discussed in the third chapter.

The methodology of this thesis can be divided into different parts due to the methodology being very different in every case study. However, before going into the

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<sup>18</sup> Pieter Emmer and Jos Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire, 1600–1800* (Cambridge 2020).

<sup>19</sup> Farish Ahmad-Noor and Peter-Brian Ramsay Carey, *Racial Difference and the Colonial Wars of 19th Century Southeast Asia* (Amsterdam 2021).

<sup>20</sup> Brocades Zaalberg e.a., *Empire's Violent End*.

methodology of every case study separately, the methodology of the comparison will be explained.

This thesis will consist of four different case studies that will be compared. There are various ways comparison can be done, within the historiography there are three prominent approaches: going by subject, going by region or going by case study. For example, *The Dutch and English East India Companies* organized by subject.<sup>21</sup> *The Dutch overseas empire 1600-1800*, arranges its chapters by region.<sup>22</sup> *Empire's violent end*, sorts its chapters by case studies.<sup>23</sup> Chapters sorted by region are not very useful for this topic as this thesis is focussed on one land and not comparisons between different regions. The chapters could be sorted on the different subjects or types of the reasons, but because this thesis wants there to be enough context and continuity regarding the different conflicts and wants the reader to retain this context, therefore, the decision was made to sort the chapters by case study.

The first case study, the reason for the Bandanese Genocide, will be researched through the VOC documents in the national archives in The Hague, already transcribed sources of Jan Pieterszoon Coen and a transcribed version of *The journael ende verhael* in the book *de reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar azie*. The *Journael ende verhael* is a journal written by Lefebvre about the trip made by the ship of Pieter Willemsz. Verhoeff, including the trip to the Banda islands where a conflict preceding the Bandanese Genocide occurred, which was partially used as reason for the Bandanese Genocide. This journal was likely written mostly during the events, but completed by Lefebvre in 1629.<sup>24</sup> The primary sources that were looked for are letters that were written between 1609 and 1622 about Banda, from Jan Pieterszoon Coen but also from other VOC members.<sup>25</sup> Additionally a pamphlet from 1622 called: *VVaerachtich verhael van t' gheene inde Eylanden van Banda in oost-Indien inden jaere sestien hondert eenentwintig, ende te Vooren is ghepasseert*. Will be used, wherein the reasons for the Bandanese Genocide are described.

The second case study, the Third Javanese Succession War, will be based on a primary source found in the Leiden library titled: *Kort verhaal van den Oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog en het gelukkig Einde daarvan*. This source was written in 1755 at the end

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<sup>21</sup> Clulow e.a., *The Dutch and English East India Companies*; Emmer e.a., *The Dutch Overseas Empire*.

<sup>22</sup> Emmer e.a., *The Dutch Overseas Empire*.

<sup>23</sup> Brocades Zaalberg e.a., *Empire's Violent End*.

<sup>24</sup> Margaretha Elisabeth van Opstall, Jan de Moelre and Jacques Lefebvre, *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612* ('s-Gravenhage 1972) XIV.

<sup>25</sup> Nationaal Archief,

[https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/index/nt00348?activeTab=nt&searchTerm=%20van%20bergel&sortering=ove\\_vestiging&volgorde=asc](https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/index/nt00348?activeTab=nt&searchTerm=%20van%20bergel&sortering=ove_vestiging&volgorde=asc) (accessed 17 March 2023).

of the Third Javanese Succession War by Nicolaas Hartingh, a representative for the VOC. This is a written document which has not been digitized yet. This source has not been used in the literature that could be found, which makes it interesting as it gives more information on the reason for the Third Javanese Succession War than most of the historical literature does. This is probably because the literature is focussed on the conflict, instead of the origins.<sup>26</sup>

The third case study, The Java War, will rely on multiple primary sources as well as transcriptions and translations of Javanese sources. The translation from the *Babad Dipanagara*, the autobiography of the leader of the Javanese rebellion, which he published two years after the end of the Java War.<sup>27</sup> While this is not a translation of the original version, it is not possible for me to read the original version as this is written in Javanese and is not translated into Dutch or English. This version is a translation of the Sakura court version, the notable thing about this version is that it is shorter than most other versions of the Babad Dipanegara.<sup>28</sup> Another source that was used is the *Staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indië*, this was a paper wherein the declarations of the Dutch were registered yearly. This newspaper gives a good insight into what the Dutch were doing preceding the conflict, which may have aggravated the Javanese.<sup>29</sup> For research about the view of the Dutch towards the Javanese, two books written around the Java War period, which were also used in the research of the thesis of Peter Carey, were used. These books are *History of the Indian archipelago* containing an account of the manners, arts, languages etc. of its inhabitants and a book from 1820 written by the English, which includes their perception on what the Dutch thought about the Indonesians.<sup>30</sup> The other book is: *Gedenkschrift van den oorlog op Java, van 1825 tot 1830*, A book about the war in Java written in 1847. While this book was not written with the intent of describing how the Dutch perceived the Javanese, it does mention this.<sup>31</sup>

While the National Archives in the Hague were used, the documents in the archive of the 'Ministerie of Koloniën', said very little about the origin of the Java War. Most of the

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<sup>26</sup> Universitaire Bibliotheek Leiden, special collections, inv.nr. DH141C, 'Kort verhaal van den Oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog en het gelukkig Einde daarvan by Nicolaas Hartingh' (1755).

<sup>27</sup> Peter Carey, *Babad dipanagara: an account of the outbreak of the Java War (1825-30): the surakarta court version of the babad dipanagara* (Kuala Lumpur 1981).

<sup>28</sup> Carey, *Babad Dipanagara*.

<sup>29</sup> Secretaris generaal e.a., *Staatsbladen Nederlandsch Indie van 1816-1845 met register* (Zaltbommel 1847) 44.

<sup>30</sup> John Crawfurd, *History of the Indian archipelago containing an account of the manners, arts, languages etc. Of its inhabitants* (Edinburgh 1820) 1.

<sup>31</sup> Jhr. Francois Vincent Antoine Ridder de Stuers, *Gedenkschrift van den oorlog op Java, van 1825 tot 1830*, vert. H.M. Lange (Amsterdam 1847) 21.

documents focussed on the tactics of the Javanese and the different battles that were fought as this was of more use to the Dutch at that time.

For the fourth case study, the Indonesian War of Independence, multiple articles from Dutch newspapers were used to examine the reasons given by the Dutch for their participation in the conflict. This is due to the many newspapers made during the Indonesian War of Independence being readily available for this period in time (1945-1949). These newspapers reflect what the general population got told about the Indonesian War of Independence. These newspapers were found via Delpher, a database of digitized texts, including books and newspapers.<sup>32</sup>

### *Structure of the Thesis*

The structure of this thesis will be organized around the different case studies, with each case study getting its own chapter and then comparing these case studies in the conclusion to see what connections, differences and developments can be found between them. As previously stated the chapters will start with a concise summary of the conflict followed by the most likely reasons for the conflict and ending with the reasons and justifications as told by the Dutch and the VOC.

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<sup>32</sup> Delpher, <https://www.delpher.nl/> ( geraadpleegd 2 Juni 2023).

# Chapter 1 the genocide in Banda

In March 1621, Jan Pieterszoon Coen gathered an army of over 1,500 men and a fleet of thirteen vessels to ‘take revenge’ on the Bandanese.<sup>33</sup> Following provocations from both sides, he carried out in the next month what is now known as the Bandanese Genocide. First he destroyed many native villages, leading many people to hide in the mountains. The Dutch then proceeded to block their mountain hideouts, leading to many Bandanese starving to death.<sup>34</sup> How many people were killed and enslaved exactly is challenging, as even the estimate of people living there, which was 15,000 citizens, was an approximation made years after the genocide.<sup>35</sup> However, in a letter it also becomes clear that some Bandanese were able to flee Banda.<sup>36</sup>

## *Background information*

This event did not happen suddenly. But before discussing this, background information about the Banda islands from the time that the Dutch arrived and about the colonial situation of the time will be given.

The Banda islands consist of ten small volcanic islands in the Indonesian archipelago.<sup>37</sup> They were of great (economic) importance to the Dutch during the seventeenth century.<sup>38</sup> The Dutch first arrived in Banda in 1599, even before the establishment of the VOC. At the time, there was no centralized leadership in Banda that held all the political power and therefore, the power over nutmeg and mace, which were the main crops that grew on Banda.<sup>39</sup> These spices were traded in the local trading network in exchange for food and other necessities.<sup>40</sup> Even outside their local trading network, other European nations were also interested in buying these spices.<sup>41</sup> Because of the economic importance of this crop, the Bandanese were used to selling to the highest bidder.<sup>42</sup> Shortly after the arrival of the Dutch,

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<sup>33</sup> Ian Burnet, *Spice Islands*, 163.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

<sup>36</sup> National Archives The Hague, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 1074, f. 88, V. Second book in 1622 a letter by Jan Pieterszoon Coen, 17 juli 1621.

<sup>37</sup> Van Pagee, *Banda, de genocide van Jan Pieterszoon Coen*, 16.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 18.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 40.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid*, 39.

<sup>42</sup> Van Opstall e.a., *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612*, 91.

the English arrived on the Banda islands. The rights to trade with the Bandanese caused frequent friction between the two parties over the next forty years.

At this point the VOC had been managing all of the trading and contact with Indonesia, and, therefore, also Banda, for the Netherlands. The VOC had only just started forming contacts as the VOC was only recently created in 1602. At this time their main goal was to gain monopolies and establish trading forts to gain more trading power and when needed this power was established with violence. It was, however, not their intention to rule over Indonesia.<sup>43</sup>

### *Historiography*

When examining the historiography for the reasons for colonial violent conflict in Banda it becomes evident that there are no specific works on the reasons for the Banda Genocide. Most of the books discussing Banda are about Jan Pieterszoon Coen instead of the Banda Genocide.<sup>44</sup> However, there are several useful works about the Banda genocide. The dominance of Jan Pieterszoon Coen in the literature has also been noted by Marjolein van Pagee, the author of the book *Banda*. She states that there should be more focus on the violence and the act of the Bandanese Genocide, instead of just Jan Pieterszoon Coen. *Banda* is a book about the Bandanese Genocide, including, though not focusing, on the reasons for the Bandanese Genocide.<sup>45</sup> Another book relevant to the historiography about the reasons for the Bandanese Genocide is '*De reis van de vloot*' This book puts a primary source into context by using other primary sources and transcribes the primary source which is partially about the journey of a captain who was murdered by the Bandanese.<sup>46</sup> The murder of this captain and a few of his allies are often used and referred to in the literature and primary sources about Banda.

Having established this, why did the Bandanese Genocide occur? First the essay will go into what the most likely reason is why they performed a genocide on Banda and then it will examine how the Dutch justified the genocide on Banda.

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<sup>43</sup> Emmer e.a., *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 1.

<sup>44</sup> See for example: Willard A. Hanna, *Indonesian Banda colonialism and its aftermath in the nutmeg islands* (Philadelphia 1980).

<sup>45</sup> Van Pagee, *Banda, de genocide van Jan Pieterszoon Coen*.

<sup>46</sup> Van Opstall e.a., *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612*.

### *The most likely reasons*

The most likely reason for the genocide to have occurred was to obtain the monopoly on nutmeg and mace. While it is claimed by the sources that a monopoly was established, there are a few factors which made it difficult to create and enforce a legal monopoly for nutmeg and mace in Banda. As mentioned before, in Banda there was no designated leader who held all power. There were Orang-Kayas, who held most of the power in Banda. However, there were multiple and they were spread across the islands, so if one person agreed to a monopoly, this was hardly a binding contract.<sup>47</sup> This fact, however, was something that the Dutch either did not know or chose to ignore as there would be multiple instances where the Dutch claimed to have arranged a monopoly.<sup>48</sup> One instance is registered in *Journael ende verhael by den heer admirael Wybrant Schram*, literally translating to the journal and story of the east-indian journey made by the gentleman admiral Wybrant Schram. This is a journal which was partially written during the events but was most likely completed in 1629. In this journal there are multiple instances where it seems that not all of Banda was involved with every step of the monopoly, or that it is unclear if even every Orang-Kaya was present. For example when Verhoeff was killed, the only Bandanese that would negotiate the contract were the Bandanese from Banda Neira, the main island. It is also incredibly challenging to check if all Orang-Kayas were present when the Dutch presented the request to build on Banda Neira, which they did on Lontor, another island.

In 1616 the Dutch attempted to establish a monopoly once again, this is one of the monopolies that the booklet *VVaerachtich verhael van t' gheene inde Eylanden van Banda in oost-Indien inden jaere sestien hondert eenentwintig, ende te Vooren is ghepasseert*, discusses. However, when looking at the contract that was established it only concerned five of the islands in Banda. And while stated in the document that the Orang-Kayas of those five islands were present and signed the contract, this is hard to verify as few written documents remain from the Bandanese point of view.<sup>49</sup>

Even when the Dutch tried to establish a monopoly, this monopoly was not in the favor of the Bandanese, as in all of the monopoly contracts a constant price was established. Force was often used to try and establish this monopoly instead of other ways to convince the

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<sup>47</sup> Van Pagee, *Banda, de genocide van Jan Pieterszoon Coen*, 41.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 46.

<sup>49</sup> National Archive The Hague, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 1063, f. 498, Copy contract bij commandeur Jan Dircksz. Lam met de vijf eijlanden van Banda, Nera, Poelwaj, Poderon ende Rossengijn in dato 3 Meij 1616 [identiek aan 210 - 211], 3 May 1616.

Bandanese, this is visible in the *Journal ende Verhael* as well. The Dutch often sent troops when asking to sign or negotiate the contract. They dispatched 250 troops when requesting to sign the contract and when starting to build the fort they sent 700 troops, most likely to intimidate the Bandanese.<sup>50</sup>

This monopoly was forced on the Bandanese and was not profitable for them, as they were very dependent on the trade with other countries for their food supply. Because of this the Bandanese did not follow the contract that was made with the Dutch. Even when a lot of violence was used before, Jan Dirckz. Lam even goes as far as to claim that five of the islands were rightfully subjugated by the Dutch in 1616. By removing most of the Bandanese from the island and enslaving the rest it would be nearly impossible for the Bandanese to oppose the monopoly that the Dutch tried to establish.

Often used as a reason throughout the sources are murders of the Dutch by the Bandanese, which I will address more when writing about the justifications, but while they were an emotional loss, the VOC itself would most likely put more emphasis on the economic losses which had been made due to the monopoly being impossible to establish. Therefore, it is hard to say to what extent this was actually regarded as a reason for the genocide.

#### *The reasons and justifications according to the Dutch*

There were several different justifications that were used for why the genocide on Banda took place. This can be noticed in a pamphlet or booklet called: *VVaerachtich verhael van t' gheene inde Eylanden van Banda in oost-Indien inden jaere sestien hondert eenentwintig, ende te Vooren is ghepasseert*. This translates to the true story of what happened on the Banda Islands in East-India in the year 1621 and what happened before this. In which the reasons for the killing of the Bandanese are summarized in the beginning of the booklet, of which one is the killing of the Dutch by the Bandanese.<sup>51</sup> The killing of the Dutch by the Bandanese had occurred several times, mostly they were individual killings or of a few soldiers. For example, in a letter by Fredrick Houtman, it was said that barbarians killed a skipper on the 15th of May. However, one instance in particular was more severe. This was

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<sup>50</sup> For the *Journal ende verhael*, the transcription of the document in *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612* has been used. Margaretha Elisabeth van Opstall e.a., *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612*.

<sup>51</sup> S.n., *VVaerachtig verhael, van 'tegeneis inde eylanden van Banda, in Oost-Indien, inden jaren sesthien-hondert eenentwintich, ende te vooren is ghepaseert* (1622).



on the 22nd of may in 1609, which is when Pieter Willemsz. Verhoeff and two of his advisors, Van Groenewegen and Jan Bruyn were killed, followed by more killings by the Bandanese.<sup>52</sup> This is well documented in the *Journael ende verhael van de Oost-Indische reyse*. In this journal it becomes clear that Verhoeff and the rest of his crew came to Banda with two objectives: To establish a monopoly and to establish a Dutch fort.<sup>53</sup> However, the Bandanese had already expressed their discontent about the building of a fort early on.

Regarding the monopoly, the Dutch handed the Orang-Kayas the request to gain a monopoly and build the fort on Banda on the 19th of April 1609. After this the Orang-Kayas requested three more days to deliberate this request. While not wanting to agree at first, they eventually accepted, as they were afraid violence would otherwise follow. Because of the uncertainty of the Orang-Kayas agreeing with building the fort initially, the Dutch built it with a total of 700 armed men, which probably was not regarded as friendly. On May 22nd, the Bandanese requested to come together to create a definitive accord regarding what price they would sell their spices to the Dutch and to make it definitive that the Dutch had the sole right to buy the spices. After exchanging hostages they were supposed to meet later that day, though when meeting, the Bandanese expressed discomfort due to the soldiers that were present. They then asked if Verhoeff and his advisors could follow them somewhere else without the soldiers. Verhoeff agreed, but found that they were surrounded. While the source claims that at least thirty Dutch people died, *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie* states that it was most likely only Verhoeff, Van Groenewegen and Jan Bruyn that were killed, but that later on more people were murdered by the Bandanese.<sup>54</sup> After this display the Dutch were slightly vengeful, this can be seen in a letter sent by van Hoen, the replacement of Verhoeff, wherein he says that the Bandanese's "*Verraedelijcke gemoet ende moordaedighen aert mede aen sullen betonen.*" Approximately translating to: The betraying soul and murderous character of the Bandanese was shown with this deed. He then goes on to say that: '*de Bandanesen sullen metter tyt der hollanders seer en gemoet beter leeren kennen (tot haer groot naerdeel soo wij verhoopen)*' Approximately translating to: That the Bandanese would get to know the Dutch (In her disadvantage we hope), sounding vengeful towards the Bandanese after they among others, killed his predecessor.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Van Opstall e.a., *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612*, 98.

<sup>53</sup> Van Opstall e.a., *De reis van de vloot van Pieter Willemsz Verhoeff naar Azie 1607-1612*, 264.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> National Archive The Hague, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 552, Minute-missive van Hoen aan de gevangen Nederlanders op Pulau Ai, 7 June 1609.

That killing the Dutch led to Jan Pieterszoon Coen, the leader of the genocide in Banda, wanting revenge becomes clear in a letter written by Coen on the 29th of September, 1618. It becomes apparent that violence against the Dutch was used more often to justify killings or ‘punishment’ as he remarks that the VOC should enact violence against Maccassar and Japara due to multiple Dutch people also being killed there.<sup>56</sup>

Another justification that was used was the breaking of a contract between the Dutch and the Bandanese. This is very noticeable in the previously mentioned booklet *VVaerachtich verhael van t'gheene inde Eylanden van Banda in oost-Indien inden jaere sestien hondert eenentwintig, ende te Vooren is ghepasseert*. In this booklet, written in 1622, an attempt was made to explain and justify what happened in Banda in 1621. This booklet begins with explaining the contract between the Dutch and the Orang-Kayas, some very influential figures on Banda, on the 13th of August 1609. In this contract the *Staten Generaal* promised to protect the Bandanese from the Portuguese and other enemies in exchange for exclusive spice trade to the Dutch at a stable and constant price. However, the booklet states that while the Bandanese kept to their contract for a while, the Bandanese broke the contract shortly after, despite contract renewals in 1616 and 1617.<sup>57</sup>

The booklet then explains what the Bandanese did to break this contract. According to the contract, the Bandanese helped the English by trading their spices with them, even though they promised to exclusively trade with the Dutch. The Bandanese were also accused of secretly selling to the ‘*Indiaensche natien*,’ most likely referring to the Indonesian nations, and even the Portuguese, who both the Bandanese and the Dutch used to consider enemies.<sup>58</sup> That contract violations, and more specifically monopoly violations, frustrated Jan Pieterszoon Coen becomes evident in a letter he wrote on the 29th of September in 1618 addressed to Batavia. He writes that there were acts performed against the VOC’s monopoly in Bantam and calls for the VOC to use violence against them.<sup>59</sup> It is thus not far-fetched that he would have similar feelings about Banda.

The Booklet ‘*VVaerachtig verhael*’ also accuses the Bandanese of conspiring with the English against the Dutch. The fear of the Bandanese plotting against the Dutch, can also be read in a letter by Fredrick Houtman on May 19th 1618 wherein he accuses the Bandanese of

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<sup>56</sup> Nationaal Archief Den Haag, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 1068, f. 268, Copy missive van [Jan Pieterszoon] Coen omtrent Jaccatra aen bewinthebberin in dato 29 September 1618.

<sup>57</sup> S.n., *VVaerachtich verhael, van t'gheene inde eylanden van Banda, in Oost-Indien, inden jaere sestien-hondert eenentwintich, ende te vooren is ghepasseert* (1622) 1.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>59</sup> National Archive The Hague, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 1068, f. 268, Copie missive van [Jan Pieterszoon] Coen omtrent Jaccatra aen bewinthebberin in dato 29 September 1618.

conspiring with the Spanish. He then wrote that the VOC should send an armada to both prevent the Spanish from staying there and to control the Bandanese, as according to him the Bandanese were now the masters over the water.<sup>60</sup>

Other justifications in the booklet are more isolated. The booklet accuses the Bandanese of forcibly converting christians to the islam, destroying Dutch buildings and stealing from the dutch. However, these accusations have not been found in the other primary sources that were studied.<sup>61</sup>

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, the most likely reason for the Bandanese Genocide was the Dutch failing to get a monopoly from the Bandanese, primarily due to it being unprofitable for the Bandanese and the complexity of the governmental system. The Dutch then attempted to justify their actions in multiple ways, Firstly the Bandanese killings of the Dutch, often referencing the murder of Pieter Willemsz. Verhoeff and some of his assistants. Secondly by referencing the contract that was broken which was, according to the Dutch, agreed upon by the leaders of the whole of Banda. The Dutch also accused the Bandanese of going against them, either by trading with other nations or by plotting against the Dutch with other nations. The limited historiography on the topic has not before mentioned this last justification, which is probably due to the focus on Jan Pieterszoon Coen as this information was obtained by reading a pamphlet that did not have any connection to Jan Pieterszoon Coen.

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<sup>60</sup> National Archive The Hague, VOC Archief (1.04.02), inv.nr. 1071, f. 247, Copy missive van Fredrick Houtman uijt 't Fort Nassouw in Banda aen den gouverneur generaal in dato 19 Meij 1620, 19 May 1620.

<sup>61</sup> S.n., Vvaerachtich verhael, van 'tgeene inde eylanden van Banda, in Oost-Indien, inden jaere sesthien-hondert eenentwintich, ende te vooren is ghepasseert (1622) 1.

## Chapter 2: Third Javanese Succession War.

Between 1746 and 1757 a conflict about the succession of the Javanese throne occurred, resulting in Java splitting into three territories governed by different rulers. Conflict in Java and more specifically, succession wars in Java, were not unprecedented. In Java there were previously two other succession wars, the first war taking place from 1704 to 1708 and the second succession war from 1719 to 1722. In these succession wars the VOC had also aided one of the sides involved.

### *Background information*

While the last chapter was set during the start of the VOC trade, there is a gap of approximately 120 years. Due to this the state of affairs during this time need to be addressed. While in the last chapter the VOC had only approximately 20 years of experience and was growing, The VOC's profits were now starting to decline. This is particularly clear in the general missives of the VOC, these are yearly letters between governor general and the councils of the VOC. In these letters it is frequently questioned if the VOC should continue trading in certain places as they had not been making profits from these places.<sup>62</sup> Another notable difference was that while the VOC used to only focus on trading and controlling the monopolies, the VOC was now starting to take more interest in territorial control rather than just focusing on trade.<sup>63</sup> This shift becomes evident when looking at a transcription of the peace treaty of the Javanese-Chinese War created on the 11th of november 1743 it is mentioned that the '*raaden van India*' asked for forgiveness for multiple hostilities that occurred between 1741 and 1743. One of the articles in this peace treaty states that the '*Soesoehoenang*', literally meaning the supreme ruler, gives the island Madura to the VOC.<sup>64</sup> Later on in the treaty (in the tenth part) it is stated that the Soesoehoenang gave the power that he held over certain lands to the VOC because of the help he received for

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<sup>62</sup> W.P. Coolhaas, *Generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan Heren XVII der verenigde oostindische compagnie, deel 11* ('s Gravenhage 1960), [https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/generalemissiven/#page=373&accessor=search\\_in\\_text&source=11&accessor\\_href=https%3A%2F%2Fresources.huygens.knaw.nl%2Fretroboeken%2Fgeneralemissiven%2Fsearch\\_in\\_text%2Findex\\_html%3Fpage%3D27%26source%3D11%26id%3Dsearch\\_in\\_text](https://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/retroboeken/generalemissiven/#page=373&accessor=search_in_text&source=11&accessor_href=https%3A%2F%2Fresources.huygens.knaw.nl%2Fretroboeken%2Fgeneralemissiven%2Fsearch_in_text%2Findex_html%3Fpage%3D27%26source%3D11%26id%3Dsearch_in_text), 457.

<sup>63</sup> Coolhaas, *Generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan Heren XVII*, 363.

<sup>64</sup> G.W. Van Imhoff, 'Reis van den Gouverneur-Generaal Van Imhoff, Over Java, in het Jaar 1746', *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch-Indië*, 1:3.(1853) 291-440, there 294. [https://brill.com/view/journals/bki/1/1/article-p291\\_17.xml?language=en](https://brill.com/view/journals/bki/1/1/article-p291_17.xml?language=en).

reinstating him on the throne. The lands that are mentioned are the east of Java and 600 roeden (a measurement of length) land that borders the sea of Java and 600 roeden land that borders the rivers of Java.<sup>65</sup> It then becomes clear that these pieces of land were viewed as a means to repay the costs that the VOC had to make to aid them in a previous conflict. While the lands that specifically bordered the seas and rivers were, most likely, primarily for trade, it is still remarkable that the VOC did not specifically ask for monopoly rights instead of the land. In the General missives it becomes clear that the VOC acquired more land and was also profiting from this land by requesting rent from the people using this land.<sup>66</sup>

### *Historiography*

There is very little written about the Third Javanese Succession War, particularly regarding the causes of the Third Javanese Succession War. Most of the existing literature has been written at the end of the eighteenth and the nineteenth century and in these documents there is little written on the reasons for the Third Javanese Succession War. There are two recent works that discuss the Third Javanese Succession War, though both discuss the reason for the Javanese Succession War very little. These are: *A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200*. and *Soul Catcher: Java's Fiery Prince Mangkunagara I, 1726-1795* both by M.C. Ricklefs.<sup>67</sup> However, there is a document written in 1755, the year of the ending of the Third Javanese Succession War, which gives more context than the current literature about the causes of the Third Javanese Succession War. This book is titled: *Kort verhaal van den Oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog en het gelukkig Einde daarvan door den algemeenen vrede* by Nicolaas Hartingh, the governor of Java's east coast. This document focuses on the origins of the war, the only problem is that this document deems the Javanese-Chinese conflict, which preceded the Third Javanese Succession War, to be the same conflict and thus starts the conflict in 1741 instead of 1746. This document paired with the general missives will form the main sources for this chapter. This chapter will be shorter than the others, as there were fewer sources on this conflict. However, this chapter will be needed in the comparison.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Van Imhoff, 'Reis van den Gouverneur-Generaal Van Imhoff', 296.

<sup>66</sup> Coolhaas, *Generale missiven van gouveneurs-generaal en raden aan Heren XVII*, 363, 377.

<sup>67</sup> Ricklefs, *A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200*; M. C. Ricklefs, *Soul Catcher: Java's Fiery Prince Mangkunagara I, 1726-1795* (Singapore 2018).

<sup>68</sup> UB Leiden, 'Kort verhaal van den oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog'.

### *The most likely reasons*

There are two reasons as to why the Third Javanese Succession War started. Firstly, as mentioned in Nicolaas Hatingh's document, the Javanese succession was a subject that often caused conflict. However, what was not mentioned is the involvement the VOC usually had in these conflicts. For example during the First Javanese war of succession there was a conflict between the current Sultan Amangkurat III of Mataram and his uncle Pangeran Puger. The VOC supported the uncle of the Sultan because they believed him to be more reliable. In this way they, however, contributed to the unrest by aiding the side which was more convenient for them. This could in turn show that staging an uprising could be effective, especially when the VOC was on your side.<sup>69</sup>

The second reason is that Mangkubumi, the person who is viewed as the main leader of the Java War, was aggravated by Van Imhoff, but it was not as simple as stated in the document of Nicolaas Hatingh. Mangkubumi was aggravated that the VOC could rent the northern coast of Java for a mere 20.000 reals (a unit of currency used in Spain at the time), as he deemed this too little. Van Imhoff then persuaded someone to cancel the grant of a fief to Mangkubumi, in turn he turned on the VOC and the reigning Sultan.<sup>70</sup>

There is also one possible reason that might have contributed to the conflict. In the General missives it becomes evident that there were bad harvests in 1746, this might have contributed to the normal population going against the Sultan as this could have caused there to be anger and dissatisfaction within the population against the current ruling party.

### *Why did the VOC involve themselves any further in these conflicts?*

The VOC usually aimed to de-escalate conflicts due to them being dangerous for profits and when the VOC inserted themselves in conflicts they often hoped to gain trading concessions in exchange for their military aid. That the trade was suffering and also how the trade would rise again when the conflicts were over, becomes apparent in the Generale missives, wherein the state of every trading port was registered every few months. When the General missives describe Batavia at the end of the Javanese-Chinese war, just before the Third Javanese Succession War, the missives mention that due to the end of the war and the reconstruction,

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<sup>69</sup> Ricklefs, *A history of modern Indonesia since c. 1200*, 119.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

the trade in building materials and tools would rise.<sup>71</sup> However there were also concerns if trade somewhere would still be profitable due to either conflict or due to other measures. This was particularly noticeable during the start of the third Javanese war.<sup>72</sup>

The problem was that not only did conflict stop trade, war itself is also costly in other ways. In the beginning of 1747 more soldiers were needed, which cost money due to the salary costs. However, the war also caused problems with rent collection, as all their men were required for the war instead.<sup>73</sup>

### *The reasons and justifications according to the Dutch*

According to Nicolaas Hatingh, the governor of Java's east coast, this war was instigated by multiple conspiring princes, who due to particular circumstances, stood up to the ruler and sought power to become the 'gamemaster' instead of complying with the Dutch, which humiliated the Dutch. In this last part Hatingh is most likely trying to justify why the VOC interfered in this war.<sup>74</sup> He then states that multiple princes were feeling insulted when their *beste paard van stal* (literally meaning their best horse, though probably a symbolic reference to their most valuable possession) and their prettiest wife was taken by the emperor, this while the people of the island considered this a significant source of their happiness. This gave them a direct motive to plan an attack and also assured them to enact the pre-existing plan.<sup>75</sup> Additionally, Nicolaas Hatingh mentions that one of the reasons the conflicts in Java often occur is due to the rules about the succession. During the life of the ruler a crown prince is named, however, this was not a purely inherited position as this position was dependent on the 'randomness of the ruler,' who due to hate or love could choose to assign someone as the crown prince who was not his first born. This created a sense of entitlement among certain people, which could easily start a conflict. He then mentions that these conflicts often were disadvantageous for both the VOC and the general population.

Hatingh then mentions Mangkubumi, he describes him as having done some wrong things before instigating the war, specifically mentioning how he pretended to have been sent from the Sultan while this was not the case. He is then described as having the delusion of being the gamemaster and ascending to the throne of Java, due to this he refused anything

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<sup>71</sup> Coolhaas, *generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan Heren XVII*, 16.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 457 and 459.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 454.

<sup>74</sup> UB Leiden, 'Kort verhaal van den oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog', 1.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

from the Sultan and the VOC.<sup>76</sup> Nicolaas Hatingh then describes how Van Imhoff visits Mangkubumi to make amends between the VOC and him, but unfortunately Van Imhoff aggravated Mangkubumi while trying to make amends. Mangkubumi started having and further pursuing power over the lands called Soekemattie, as he felt he had the right to do so. Mangkubumi then formed alliances with rebels to go against the sultan. What exactly aggravated Mangkubumi remains very unclear in the text, except for his feelings of being insulted.<sup>77</sup>

### *Conclusion*

According to the Dutch perspective, the conflict had two main causes. The first reason and the reason for many other conflicts on Java, is the lack of rules about the succession of the Sultan. The ruling sultan had the power of assigning the crown prince instead of it being decided by heritage. This could cause other people to feel entitled to the right of becoming crown prince, even when the sultan did not assign them this title.

The second reason given was the involvement of multiple conspiring princes who stood up to the ruler to gain (some of) his power. Specifically mentioning Mangkubumi, putting him in a bad light, after which he describes that Mangkubumi was aggravated by Van Imhoff when Van Imhoff was trying to make amends. Mangkubumi then started pursuing more power as he felt he had the right to do so, after which he made connections with rebels and declared war against the Sultan.

When examining why this conflict most likely started there are two reasons emerge, which are very similar to the reasons given in the document written by Nicolaas Hatingh. The first reason was the Javanese succession, where due to the assigning of power there was often conflict when someone felt entitled to the position of crown prince or Sultan. However, what is not mentioned by the Dutch is that the VOC has often chosen sides to gain benefits from one side and thus interfered by aiding one side, usually militarily. This could contribute to unrest and prolong unrest when one party continues to receive resources from the VOC and it could show that staging an uprising could be effective, as long as you had the VOC on your side.

The second reason is that Mangkubumi, who was already very aggravated by the VOC who could rent the northern coast of Java for an extremely small sum, was aggravated by Van

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<sup>76</sup> UB Leiden, 'Kort verhaal van den oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog', 36

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.



Imhoff persuading the cancelation of the grant of a fief to Mangkubumi, which lead him to turn against the VOC and the reigning Sultan.

Additionally, it is possible that bad harvests contributed to people going against the Sultan, leading them to join Mangkubumi.

Compared to the historiography, this thesis attempts to expand on the reasons for why the Javanese Succession War has occurred as there is very little literature on the topic. The aforementioned source, *Kort verhaal*, has also as far as I know not been used in these works.<sup>78</sup> This while this source is very focused on the origin of the Third Javanese Succession War. The only reason that has been mentioned in the literature as being a cause of the Third Javanese Succession War is Mangkubumi being offended by the VOC and Van Imhoff, and this is usually only discussed in a couple of sentences.

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<sup>78</sup> UB Leiden, 'Kort verhaal van den oorsprong van den laasten Javasche Oorlog', 36

## Chapter 3 The Java War

Between 1825 and 1830, the Java War took place, marking one of the largest conflicts that the Dutch experienced in the Indonesian archipelago thus far. 200.000 Javanese were killed and 8000 Dutch soldiers and 7000 native soldiers were killed on the Dutch side.<sup>79</sup> The end of the war would confirm the Dutch control of Java.

The Java War was started by a rebellion, led by Pangeran Dipanagara, who was a bastard prince of the Yogyakarta Sultanate,<sup>80</sup> who wanted to wage a holy war against the Europeans.<sup>81</sup> The reason for which the Java War was started and the reasons for why the Dutch fought the Java War will be discussed in this chapter. This will be done by going into the reason for the Java War according to the Dutch, the Javanese and then addressing what the most likely reasons are for the start of the Java War. However, before going into these reasons some background information about the situation on Java is provided as the thirty years before the war were filled with turmoil. Additionally, more context about the historiography will be given.

### *Background information*

In 1798, the VOC went bankrupt, partially because of the Fourth Anglo-Dutch war, which took place from 1780 to 1784, and were politically destroyed by the French taking over the Netherlands.<sup>82</sup> As a result their assets were taken over by the Batavian Republic, which at the time was essentially a puppet state of the French.<sup>83</sup> The British, wanting to do something about the French puppet state in 1811, defeated the Dutch and took over Java. However, the British only ruled until 1815, as they returned Java to the Dutch as part of the Vienna Agreement.

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<sup>79</sup> Munif Prasojo e.a., 'Total war of the past in indonesia, case study, Java/Diponegoro war', *international journal of arts and social science*, 4:3 (May-June 2021) 13-44, there 15.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 13.

<sup>81</sup> Peter Carey, *The Power of Prophecy, Prince Dipanagara and the end of an old order in Java, 1785-1855* (Leiden 2008) XVI.

<sup>82</sup> Peter Carey, 'Towards the Great Divide' in: *Racial Difference and the Colonial Wars of 19th Century Southeast Asia* (Amsterdam 2021) 35.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

## *Historiography*

The causes for the violence during the Java War has been less written about in recent historiography. Most of the literature is focused around Pangeran Dipanagara or is from the late 19th and early 20th century, which have a lot of prejudices about the Indonesians. However, the more recent literature about the Java War is more often about the Java War rather than the cause. But, there is one exception, the works of Peter Carey. Peter Carey has focused on the Java War and Pangeran Dipanagara with a focus on the reason for the Java War in relation to Pangeran Dipanagara. He has written a thesis called *Pangeran Dipanagara and the making of the Java War*. This thesis is one of the first and only published works on the origins of the Java War in the past 40 years. In his thesis he attributes the Java War primarily to Daendels, a former governor general, being able to establish rules around ceremony and etiquette.<sup>84</sup>

In another article written by Carey, titled *The origins of the Java War (1825-30)*, he builds upon his thesis and attributes the war to the conclusion of the Javanese Succession War.<sup>85</sup> This allowed the Dutch to gain more influence, which eventually led to Daendels being able to establish rules around ceremony and etiquette. This radically altered the position of the Dutch representatives at the courts and struck at the basis of division of the land, which was established at the end of the Javanese Succession War. This caused the Dutch to have more influence. Carey has also written several other works on Pangeran Dipanagara, the leader of the rebellion that started the Java War.

There are a few articles that mention the origins of the Java War. The article that does this the most extensive is: *Total war of the past in Indonesia, case study: Java/diponegoro war*; is one of the most recent articles that partially deals with the origins of the Java War. The article states in the introduction, in one sentence, that the Java War was motivated by the hatred of the Javanese people against the Dutch for the oppression in Java. After this statement the writers go into the actions of the Dutch that caused this. First off, The ceremony and etiquette changes that were done by Marshal Daendels, a governor general of the Netherlands between 1808 and 1811. This caused hatred on the part of the Javanese Palace. Secondly, Several policies made by the Dutch colonial government. Lastly, the construction of a road going through Pangeran Dipanagaras ancestral land. The historiography thus

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<sup>84</sup> Peter Carey, *Pangeran Dipanagara and the making of the Java War* (British Thesis Service, Thesis Oxford University, 1975).

<sup>85</sup> Peter Carey, 'The origins of the Java War,' *The English Historical Review* 91:358 (1976) 52-78.

primarily attributes the Java War to Daendels actions and more generally Dutch actions, but focuses on political decisions.<sup>86</sup>

### *The most likely reasons*

The reasons for the Java War to have occurred are diverse, first of: The aspects of the political involvement of the Europeans and especially the Dutch in Java, this was a big reason which consisted of multiple factors. First of, the Dutch were involved in the politics of Java. This becomes evident when looking at the *staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indie*, wherein all the decrees are published which the Dutch made for the Indies, including Java. These *staatsbladen* were relatively long, averaging approximately 30 pages a year. However, the Dutch were not the only European powers that involved themselves with the politics of Java.<sup>87</sup> The English had involved themselves when taking over Java from the Netherlands in 1812, while doing this they dethroned the Sultan. It can be read in the newspaper that the British government deemed the Sultan unfit as he violated the treaty and showed himself unworthy of confidence. After this the British government tries to justify themselves by putting the Sultan in a bad light.<sup>88</sup> Opinions about European involvement can also be found in the Babad Dipanagara, this is a translated Javanese source which discusses why and how the Javanese and particularly Pangeran Dipanagara, started the Javanese war. In this source the chaos in the government is criticized, often accusing the involvement of the Europeans and especially the Dutch, of being the reason for the government becoming so chaotic.<sup>89</sup>

Another reason for the Java War was the taxation by the Dutch on the islanders for various products. This, again, becomes particularly clear in the *staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indie*. In this paper there are multiple mentions of the taxes, either because they became higher or because they needed to adjust the descriptions of the taxes, because they were unclear. While these taxes were generally relatively low, this still meant that someone profited from the local people, without giving much in return.

The Dutch and other Europeans also rented land from the Javanese, because of this, much of the land was, albeit not legally, under European control as the Dutch often asked or demanded more favorable conditions. For example on March 9, 1818, the Dutch had multiple

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<sup>86</sup> Munif Prasojo e.a., 'Total war of the past in Indonesia, case study, Java/Diponegoro. war,' *International Journal of Arts and Social Science* 4:3 (2021) 13-44.

<sup>87</sup> Secretaris generaal e.d., *Staatsbladen Nederlandsch Indie van 1816-1845 met register* (Zaltbommel 1847), 44.

<sup>88</sup> 'proclamation', *Java government Gazette* (June 20, 1812).

<sup>89</sup> Carey, *Babad Dipanagara*, 5.

announcements about the regulation of rent, one of the statements implied that they would negotiate the rent, and with the amount of military power behind the Netherlands, the chances of these negotiations having been fair is small.<sup>90</sup> Renting out land also caused other issues. While the land was rented out to the Europeans, there were still people residing on the land which was rented. In a proclamation on may 6, 1823, it became clear that, up to this point, the Europeans charged the people rent on the property they owned and sometimes even asked for it upfront. This was possible because they had the most power over the land and the people would otherwise have to find a home elsewhere.<sup>91</sup> In *Diepo Negoro 'hoofd der muitelingen'* It is made evident that the Javanese were not happy that they did not receive any compensation for this situation after it was deemed illegal, and they were expected to be thankful of the Dutch for fixing some of the problems that had occurred.<sup>92</sup>

While the food shortages were not directly the fault of the Europeans, The Dutch promoted inedible foods to be produced. This can be observed throughout the staatsblad, wherein the Dutch try to improve the conditions to encourage people to farm Coffee and to have laws in place to force the Javanese to farm Coffee on certain pieces of land. Because of this promotion of inedible foods, which made it less favorable to grow edible foods, it is probable that some of the blame would be put on the Dutch for the food shortage.<sup>93</sup>

The Dutch also controlled the trade to and from Java. In August 1818, the Dutch declared that although they recognized the importance of free trade, this trade could hinder (the profits of) the Dutch trade. As a result, they put rules into place to ensure that the Dutch trade was not obstructed.<sup>94</sup> Consequently, the Javanese did not have full control over their trade.

More recently, Peter Carey has also suggested that one of the reasons that the Java War occurred was not just because of the involvement of the Dutch but because the Dutch, and Europeans in general, regarded them as inferior. The Europeans at this point held the belief that other ethnicities held different characteristics and they often put negative labels on non-European ethnicities. This perception of the Javanese as inferior can be read in two different books that were also used in the research of Peter Carey's book, *Racial difference and the colonial wars of 19th century southeast asia*.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Secretaris generaal e.d., *Staatsbladen Nederlandsch Indie*, 44.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid*, 219.

<sup>92</sup> Jhr. Francois Vincent Antoine Ridder de Stuers, *Diepo Negoro, hoofd der muitelingen 1831* (Amsterdam 1830).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid*, 54.

<sup>94</sup> Secretaris generaal e.d., *Staatsbladen Nederlandsch Indie van 1816-1845*, 53.

<sup>95</sup> Ahmad-Noor, *Racial difference and the colonial wars of 19th century southeast asia*, 21.

The first book, *Gedenkschrift van den oorlog op Java, van 1825 tot 1830*, while written 20 years after the Java War, gives a good example of how the Dutch viewed the Javanese in the part about the possible reasons for the outbreak of the Java War. The writer describes some of the characteristics of the Javanese, claiming they are simple, don't have life force and are very childlike compared to other nations. They would even want to be subservient to other people, which causes them to follow their chiefs without question. The chiefs are then characterized by their carelessness. The writer even tries to explain that the European intervention is needed as without it the people would destroy themselves, he states this by trying to refer to the Third Succession War, wherein the VOC intervened.<sup>96</sup> The book later on translates a French source wherein it is stated that the Javanese are controlled by their passions and fancies, which is deemed as a reason for their dislike of the Europeans, and that the Javanese are very proud and are very fixated on money.<sup>97</sup>

This was not the only book that held these beliefs. Another book written earlier, *History of the Indian Archipelago Containing an Account of the Manners, Arts, Languages Etc....* Addressed the character, arts, progress in science and agriculture of the Indonesian people. This book was written closer to the date of the start of the Javanese war, as it is written in 1820, but this book is not written by a Dutchman but by an Englishman. This book is solely focused on describing the Character of the Inhabitants very extensively, from their physical form to the games and amusements that they partake in. That the writer regards the people living in the archipelago as being inferior is established from the start with this opening sentence in the introduction: 'That great region of the globe, which European geographers have distinguished by the name of the Indian Archipelago, became well known to the more civilized portion of mankind, and was first frequented by them much about the same time that they discovered and knew America.'<sup>98</sup> After the introduction he goes on, explaining how the Javanese are different on a physical level, primarily describing their skin tone.<sup>99</sup> The writer also tries to attribute certain diseases to the ethnicities in Indonesia and the specific climate.<sup>100</sup> The writer then describes the character of the Indonesian people, For the Javanese specifically he describes them as slow, but useful and industrious and, when treated with kindness, docile and easily governed. He, however, states that: 'the Dutch have been fond of comparing the Javanese to their own favorite animal the buffalo, and denounce them

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<sup>96</sup> De Stuers, *Gedenkschrift van den oorlog op Java*, 21.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, 32-33.

<sup>98</sup> Crawford, *History of the Indian archipelago containing an account*, 1.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, 20.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid*, 32.

as dull, sluggish, and perverse.’ While this might give us insight into how the Dutch treated the Javanese, it is unclear if the Dutch truly deemed them as such as the English had only recently given the Netherlands back their Indonesian territories, which they conquered when the French used the Netherlands as a puppet state. This might have left some resentment towards the Dutch. He then compares them to the ‘civilized nations of Europe’ and deems them as far short regarding quickness, acuteness and comprehensiveness of understanding, compared to them.<sup>101</sup> The other manner in which the Indonesian are perceived as lesser is their belief in sorcery and superstition.<sup>102</sup>

There are also more personal reasons for Dipanegara, mentioned in the Babad Dipanegara. The direct motive that is given in the translation of the Babad Dipanegara, is that the Dutch were placing markers for a road to be built on Dipanegara’s land. After Dipanegara noticed this, Dipanegara ordered for the markers to be removed.<sup>103</sup> The Dutch then perceived the removal of the markers as a sign of the beginning of an opposition.<sup>104</sup>

Lastly, the spiritualistic and religious reasons. The Islam and a prophecy, which said that after a period of decline a just king would arise, played a huge role in the Babad Dipanegara. Herein Dipanegara is portrayed as the just king, who would push back all the non-islamic people.<sup>105</sup> According to Peter Carey, some versions of this prophecy associated the coming of this just king with various natural occurrences and disasters. An eruption of a nearby volcano and a pandemic of cholera, which was also mentioned in the Babad Dipanegara, were seen as such signs.<sup>106</sup> It is likely that this was of less importance to the ‘normal’ citizens, who were focussed on making their lives more bearable. However, it is very probable that the Holy War image, created by Dipanegara paired with Dipanegara being charismatic and the prophecy, were the last pushes that the Javanese needed to express their displeasure.<sup>107</sup>

#### *The reasons and justifications according to the Dutch*

The Dutch presented a very different portrayal of the events, this becomes clear when looking at a dutch book from 1831 and a book from 1854. The first book from 1831 is ‘*Diepo*

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<sup>101</sup> Crawford, *History of the Indian archipelago containing an account*, 46.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 57.

<sup>103</sup> Peter Carey, *Babad dipanagara*, 15.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Carey, *Pangeran Dipanagara and the making of the Java War*, 325.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

*Negoro, hoofd der muitelingen*’, roughly translating to the Dipanagara, head of the mutineers, the title itself reflecting the disdain the Dutch had towards Pangeran Dipanegara. The book begins by describing Java as an island of perfect peace and tranquility, which was disturbed when in July 1825 Pangeran Dipanegara ‘unexpectedly and wholly out of personal reasons, caused there to be an insurrection. This had the ‘horrible consequence’ of the population taking up arms against the ‘lawful government’ and threatening the Dutch governance in Indonesia with its demise.<sup>108</sup> They also tried to portray Dipanegara and his main followers as evil, by stating that they were against Christians and that they would attempt to instill this disdain in their followers.<sup>109</sup>

In a book from 1854, 24 years after the Java War, the Dutch authors attempt to determine what could have been the reason for the Java War. In this book a few possible reasons are mentioned, the first being the character of the Javanese, this ranged from the manner in which the Javanese would be obsessed with money and them not regarding land as being of importance, to the Javanese being childlike and simple, and without any life force.<sup>110</sup> The second reason was the Javanese ingratitude, that while changes were already being made to make the lives of the Javanese better, they wanted more. The third and most important reason, according to this book, was that the Java War was caused by the ‘*dweepzieke heerschzucht*’, approximately translating to the bigoted power hunger, of Dipanegara and his close allies, who due to unfortunate circumstances could rally a big group of Javanese. However, they also admitted that a few Europeans did not behave themselves properly.<sup>111</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The Dutch portrayal of the conflict attributes the war to Dipanegara’s self interest. However, the most likely reasons are more diverse, most of which are mentioned in passing in the Babad Dipanegara. The direct reason given is the placing of road markers on Dipanegara’s land. But, the most prominent reason was the involvement of the Europeans in Java, primarily the Dutch. Their actions contributed to the chaos in government by dethroning a Sultan, renting land in huge amounts, forcibly altering the traditions and contributing to the food shortages. Another reason that is connected to the Europeans is the discriminatory treatment of the Javanese. In two books it becomes evident that the Europeans treated them as

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<sup>108</sup> De Stuers, *Diepo Negoro, hoofd der muitelingen*, 1.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, 7.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid*, 21.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 44.



inferior to Europeans as they were described as slow and many of their traditions were described as being baseless and were ridiculed. The food shortage and the recent epidemics, which affected the population, most likely fueled their anger. These reasons will most likely have contributed to Dipanegara gaining a following. However, it did help that he was generally described as charismatic, that a prophecy aligned with the war and that it was put in a religious frame, which was probably the last push his followers needed.

The literature about the reasons for the starting of the Java War is primarily focussed on the reasons associated with the political measures made by the Dutch and the personal reasons of Dipanegara, as most of the literature about the reasons for the starting of the Java War focusses on him. Compared to most of the literature, this thesis has described more broadly how the Dutch were connected to the starting of the Java War, including the food shortage and, although mentioned in two works, the renting of the land. This thesis also attempts to expand further Peter Carey's statement, that the treatment of the Indonesians by the Europeans also contributed to the starting of the Java War by showing the views of the Europeans by using two works, from approximately the Java War period, that try to describe the Indian archipelago, or the population in general.

## Chapter 4: The independence war of Indonesia

Between 1945 and 1949, Indonesians fought against the Netherlands in their struggle to obtain and defend their independence, which they proclaimed on August 17, 1945, two days after Japan's surrender during the second world war which announced the departure of the Japanese occupying forces after three and a half years of occupation. The Dutch opposed this immediate independence, this was because prior to Japan occupying Indonesia the Netherlands had controlled most of Indonesia. The Dutch tried to oppose this independence by framing the war as a need for order and peace to return after the Japanese occupation of Indonesia.

### *Background information*

However, before delving into the causes of the Indonesian Independence War, a lot transpired in between the Java War and the Indonesian war of independence. The Java War enabled the Dutch to use the '*cultuurstelsel*,' which allowed them to economically exploit Java by demanding the Javanese to use 20 percent of their farmland for specific commercial products and paired with this '*cultuurstelsel*' was a lot of forced labor, this went on until approximately 1870. This system caused the profits to be very one sided, this was paired with inequality between the Indonesians and the Dutch. This economic and social inequality eventually caused there to be a feeling of uneasiness for a part of the Dutch population, which led them to reorganize their colonial system using the '*ethische politiek*,' literally translating to ethical politics, starting around 1900. This was said to be focussed on improving the well being of the population of Indonesia, but in practice this did not stop the exploitation. The ethical politics were applied to Indonesia (then called the Dutch-east indies) until the Japanese invasion in 1942.

### *Historiography*

The war of independence in Indonesia has been covered in multiple books, with two recent works being particularly noteworthy for this research. These books were based on the outcome of a big research project financed by the Dutch government in 2016. This research

has also created more documents, which created a big increase in works and books about the war of independence in Indonesia.

One of the notable books summarizes their main findings, *Over de grens, nederlands extreem geweld in de indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949* by the NIOD, the KITLV and the NIMH. The other book, titled *Empire's violent end*, puts the war of independence in a comparative perspective with other European 'decolonization' wars.<sup>112</sup> Both these books are focussed on the war itself and not solely its reasons, though in both books the reasons are touched upon. Another book, titled *Marsroutes en dwaalsporen. Het Nederlands militair-strategisch beleid in Indonesië 1945-1950*, tells more about the strategy of the Dutch military, but more importantly for this research, about the reasons and justifications the Netherlands gave for their involvement in the independence war. However, this is done relatively briefly.<sup>113</sup>

#### *The most likely reasons*

There are multiple reasons for the war of independence to have occurred, colonialism was initially led by economic and geopolitical reasons and these reasons were still the main interests for the Netherlands to keep Indonesia.<sup>114</sup> The economic interest of the Netherlands played a big role, as the Netherlands had profited from Indonesia since the beginning of the VOC. While more income went towards Indonesia from 1870 onwards, there was still a lot of money going towards the Netherlands, instead of it being reinvested into Indonesia.<sup>115</sup> Furthermore, the Netherlands had just fought in the second world war and this caused significant losses and costs. Not only did they receive money directly from Indonesia, many Dutch businesses held privileged pre-war economic positions, and they wanted to have these restored as soon as they came back to Indonesia. Rebuilding the Dutch economy would thus be even more challenging if one of their streams of revenue got cut off by Indonesian independence.

If Indonesia would gain independence the Dutch also saw their geopolitical position worsening. They saw Indonesia as their most important colony and felt as though they would not be as significant geopolitically if they were to remove themselves from Indonesia.

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<sup>112</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens.*; Brocades Zaalberg e.a., *Empire's Violent End*.

<sup>113</sup> P.M.H. Groen, *Marsroutes en Dwaalsporen. Het Nederlands militair-strategisch beleid in Indonesië 1945-1950* (Leiden 1991)

<sup>114</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 38.

<sup>115</sup> Angus Maddison, 'Dutch Income in and from Indonesia 1700-1938', *Modern asian studies*, 23:4 (1989) 645-670, there 654.

Another frequently mentioned reason was the paternalistic reason that they could still be of assistance to the Indonesians and that they should help the Indonesians rebuild after the Japanese occupation. The Dutch often viewed the Indonesians as not yet fully capable, this was attributed to many reasons, but mainly because they were not ready after being excluded from participation and the influence of Japanese rule.<sup>116</sup>

Simultaneously, the Indonesians wanted to gain control of their own country, resources and decision-making without being dependent on the Netherlands. When looking at a table in the article 'Dutch income in and from Indonesia between 1700 and 1938' it becomes evident that the number of Europeans in the Dutch civil administration was 15 times higher than in India.<sup>117</sup> An article in 1946 reveals that the Indonesians resistance to Dutch troops in Indonesia and their opposition to the Dutch influencing their trade.<sup>118</sup>

However, There were more reasons as to why the Indonesians wanted independence from the Netherlands. As could already be determined when looking at the number of Europeans in the Dutch civil administration, The Indonesians were treated differently from the Dutch in Indonesia. Before the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, Indonesian society was essentially split up into three categories: the (Indo) Europeans, who only made up a half percent of the population of indonesia; the '*Vreemde Oosterlingen*' referring to Chinese immigrants and Arabs, constituting a few percent of the population; and the largest segment, the native population, most of who were at the bottom of the societal ladder.<sup>119</sup> The fact that the native indonesians were treated as lesser was visible in the newspaper. When looking at an article in *Het vrije volk*, the newspaper puts a big emphasis on the Indonesians needing to be treated as equals once they retake Indonesia, this already indicates that in 1946 there used to be, or there was, inequality between the Europeans and the Indonesians.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> 'Partis kommunist Indonesia in de Indonesische republiek', *De waarheid* (July 12, 1946), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=ddd:010851628:mpeg21:a0069&resultsidentifier=ddd:010851628:mpeg21:a0069&rowid=10](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=ddd:010851628:mpeg21:a0069&resultsidentifier=ddd:010851628:mpeg21:a0069&rowid=10).

<sup>117</sup> Maddison, 'Dutch Income in and from Indonesia 1700-1938', 656.

<sup>118</sup> 'geen wapenstilstand', *Algemeen handelsblad* (September 26, 1946), ([https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&page=2&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=KBNRC01:000046106:mpeg21:a0006&resultsidentifier=KBNRC01:000046106:mpeg21:a0006&rowid=7](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&page=2&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=KBNRC01:000046106:mpeg21:a0006&resultsidentifier=KBNRC01:000046106:mpeg21:a0006&rowid=7)).

<sup>119</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 39.

<sup>120</sup> 'Indie's toestand is ernstig', *Het vrije volk* (Augustus 9, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=42&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=MMNIOD05:000169307:mpeg21:a0004&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000169307:mpeg21:a0004&rowid=4](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=42&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=MMNIOD05:000169307:mpeg21:a0004&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000169307:mpeg21:a0004&rowid=4).

When discussing the reasons for the Indonesian Independence War, it is also important to note that there were already independence movements before the Japanese invaded. Throughout the years that the Dutch colonized Indonesia, the Indonesians had often shown resistance. However, the ideas of independence were now more widely spread and less centralized on the elite, though these ideas were likely more widespread among educated individuals. Unlike before, multiple movements were not limited to a region, instead the sentiment spread on a national level. Therefore, the movements got a more national and idealistic character.<sup>121</sup> The ideas of how this would be accomplished and what type of government was needed were, however, very variable. There were variations in how national the movements were, how important religion should be and what political ideology was followed.<sup>122</sup> There were multiple uprisings before the Indonesian Independence War, but they were on a relatively small scale and very diffused. These groups most likely only needed a push in the back to start an uprising and they got this when the Japanese promised them they would gain independence. When the Japanese were about to capitulate, they started to become more concrete and stimulated people to announce an Indonesian republic.<sup>123</sup>

Not only can the Indonesians' Involvement be attributed to wanting an Indonesian republic as soon as possible, it can also be attributed to the Dutch vagueness on their view on the Indonesian republic. In the papers it was often stated that the Dutch wanted the Indonesian republic to gain their independence eventually. However, as to when this was, was very ambiguous. Although they often tried to set an amount of years, it was often changed. Even in their initial agreement, they stated the republic of Indonesia would be independent on the first of January 1949, but they eventually went back on their promise as they felt the Indonesians did not keep to the federative promises of the Linggadjati agreement.<sup>124 125</sup> Meanwhile, Soekarno and his followers declared that they want a complete separation from the Netherlands as soon as possible.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 39.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, 44.

<sup>124</sup> T. Bouma, *Naar een federaal Indonesië: de geschiedenis van de totstandkoming van de republiek der verenigde staten van Indonesië en de bijdrage van federale indonesische nationalisten aan de Indonesische onafhankelijkheid 1917-1949* (PHD, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2020), <https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/naar-een-federaal-indonesi%C3%AB-de-geschiedenis-van-de-toestandkoming>.

<sup>125</sup> Tweede Kamer Schouten e.a., 'Ontwerp overeenkomst van Linggadjati' (19 december 1946) [https://www.parlement.com/9291000/d/motie\\_romme\\_goes.pdf](https://www.parlement.com/9291000/d/motie_romme_goes.pdf).

<sup>126</sup> 'Indonesische republiek van soekarno-stakingen in Australië', *Keesings Historisch Archief* (September 28, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=1&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2214-01-19](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=1&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2214-01-19)

### *The reasons and justifications according to the Dutch*

The Netherlands provided multiple reasons for the independence war in Indonesia, though not called that by the Netherlands. The reasons the Netherlands gave are all visible in the newspapers published at the time.

Initially the Dutch portrayed the goal of the war to liberate the Indonesians from the Japanese. In an article published on February 19, 1945, the Dutch already made clear that the Netherlands intended to reconquer and rebuild the Dutch-Indies.<sup>127</sup> The Dutch portrayed themselves as one of the heroes who would free Indonesia from the remaining Japanese and Japanese loyalists. This would be done with the assistance of the allied forces. In an article on the first of August 1945. They claimed to be ready to resume their duties on the Dutch-Indies and anticipated that they would be welcomed by the United Nations, as they were the most liberal colonizers and they promised that the islands would eventually become independent. However, it was acknowledged that independence would not come into effect immediately due to a long transition period that was needed for this to be realized, as the Japanese would have done much damage to society. The newspapers then portrayed it as though they do this to aid them, as they end the article with the statement that: The Netherlands have become as irreplaceable for the Dutch-Indies as the Dutch-Indies have become for the Netherlands.<sup>128</sup>

After the official Japanese capitulation on the 15th of August, the Dutch newspapers stated they needed to ‘clean up’ remaining resistance groups, referring to groups that were affiliated with the Japanese. According to the Netherlands, these groups were either Japanese or Indonesians who would be loyal to the Japanese.<sup>129</sup> In an article of *De vrije stemmen van*

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48%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=ddd:010813377:mpeg21:a0005&resultsidentifier=ddd:010813377:mpeg21:a0005&rowid=9.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Veel animo voor Oost-Indië’, *amigoe di Curaçao* (February 19, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=Nederlands+indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e\\_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1945%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e\\_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1946%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e\\_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1947%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e\\_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1948%7C&page=10&identifier=KBDDD02:000210229:mpeg21:a0013&resultsidentifier=KBDDD02:000210229:mpeg21:a0013&rowid=5](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=Nederlands+indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1945%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1946%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1947%7C&facets%5Bperiode%5D%5B%5D=2%7C20e_eeuw%7C1940-1949%7C1948%7C&page=10&identifier=KBDDD02:000210229:mpeg21:a0013&resultsidentifier=KBDDD02:000210229:mpeg21:a0013&rowid=5).

<sup>128</sup> ‘Terugkeer der Nederlanders in Indië’, *nieuwe Leidsche Courant* (August 1, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=indie&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD05:000129020:mpeg21:a0030&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000129020:mpeg21:a0030&rowid=4](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=indie&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD05:000129020:mpeg21:a0030&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000129020:mpeg21:a0030&rowid=4).

<sup>129</sup> ‘Nieuwe geest in het nieuwe leger: weet te dienen!’, *Het Parool* (August 4, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&page=20&](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&page=20&)

*Schouwen Duiveland*, it becomes clear that most newspapers again didn't expect any problems with the Dutch returning to the Dutch-Indies, as the Japanese had done terrible things and because of this the inhabitants would long for how it used to be when the Netherlands ruled them.<sup>130</sup>

However, it soon became apparent that the groups regarded as being affiliated with Japan would be broad. One of these groups that were affiliated with Japan according to the newspapers were the people longing for independence in Indonesia. The first instance of this being in the papers is in *De Volkskrant*, where it is stated on August 8, that there was word of Japan making preparations for the Indonesians to become independent and that Japan by doing this attempted to sever the link between the Dutch and Indonesia.<sup>131</sup> This immediately linked the Japanese to the independence movement. Soon after this the Dutch newspapers were portraying the Republic of Indonesia as a Japanese construct that needed to be destroyed.<sup>132</sup> The papers then put the republic in an even worse light by stating that the announcement of the creation of the republic was not allowed to be made as it went against regulations to ensure public order. Even this was then attributed to the Japanese aiming to disrupt public order. In the newspaper they further attempted to show that the Indonesian republic was connected to 'the enemy,' referring to the Japanese. This was made clear by stating that during a speech, done by the people who wanted to instate this republic, there was requested multiple times to destroy the British, American and Australians. Furthermore they referenced that Mohammed Hatta, one of the leaders of the Indonesian republic, had received an award from the Japanese for collaboration with the Japanese military government in 1943.<sup>133</sup>

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edirect=true&identifier=MMNIOD05:000147283:mpeg21:a0001&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000147283:mpeg21:a0001&rowid=3.

<sup>130</sup> 'Nederlandsch Indie in de branding', *De vrije stemmen van schouwen-duiveland* (August 7, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&page=31&edirect=true&identifier=ddd:010903262:mpeg21:a0009&resultsidentifier=ddd:010903262:mpeg21:a0009&rowid=8](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&coll=ddd&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&page=31&edirect=true&identifier=ddd:010903262:mpeg21:a0009&resultsidentifier=ddd:010903262:mpeg21:a0009&rowid=8).

<sup>131</sup> 'Japan belooft Indie onafhankelijkheid', *Volkskrant* (August 8, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=34&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&edirect=true&identifier=ABCD0010842866:mpeg21:a0004&resultsidentifier=ABCD0010842866:mpeg21:a0004&rowid=6](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=34&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&edirect=true&identifier=ABCD0010842866:mpeg21:a0004&resultsidentifier=ABCD0010842866:mpeg21:a0004&rowid=6).

<sup>132</sup> 'De hulp aan Indonesië', *De Heerenveensche Koerier* (September 10, 1945), [https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&query=republiek+indonesie+&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=ddd:010728055:mpeg21:a0002&resultsidentifier=ddd:010728055:mpeg21:a0002&rowid=9](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&query=republiek+indonesie+&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=ddd:010728055:mpeg21:a0002&resultsidentifier=ddd:010728055:mpeg21:a0002&rowid=9).

<sup>133</sup> 'Indonesische republiek van Soekarno-stakingen in Australië', *Keesings Historisch Archief* (September 24, 1945), <https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=1&sortfield=date&>

The independence movement was not only linked to the Japanese, multiple Dutch newspapers then further linked these groups to facism, the political ideology that was associated with Hitler and other leaders that were perceived as dangerous. This connection was made by describing that during the last gathering, when Soekarno came on stage, the fascist salute was performed by the people a few times during this meeting. This while Europeans were barred from the racetrack where the gathering was, creating a sense of exclusion and secrecy.<sup>134</sup> However, the papers in the Netherlands frequently tried to reassure the reader by stating that this rebellious mentality, referring to the independence movement, only applied to a small part of the Indonesian population. When looking at *Marsroutes en dwaalsporen*, it becomes clear that this was believed to be true and that this was due to the scarce and barely verifiable information coming from Indonesia.<sup>135</sup>

Not only did the papers link the events in Indonesia to facism, they also linked them to communism. At this time the fear of communism was starting to become prevalent, with a strong focus on countries having communist groups, which caused there to be a fear of countries going towards communism, including Indonesia.<sup>136</sup> However, this was not the main manner in which the papers connected the communists to indonesia. The newspapers connected the communists to the Indonesian wish for independence by mentioning the strikes by the communists in Australia. These were in solidarity with the Indonesians by refusing to load the ships.<sup>137</sup> After this it is often mentioned that when trying to liberate Indonesia communists have tried to stop this, referring to the communists who contributed to the strike in Australia.<sup>138</sup> While the communists were portrayed as helping the independence movement

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<sup>134</sup> 'De houding van Soekarno', *Trouw* (September 24, 1945),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&query=republiek+indonesie+&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&page=2&identifier=MMNIOD05:000184290:mpeg21:a0002&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000184290:mpeg21:a0002&rowid=2](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&query=republiek+indonesie+&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&page=2&identifier=MMNIOD05:000184290:mpeg21:a0002&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000184290:mpeg21:a0002&rowid=2)

<sup>135</sup> Groen, *marsroutes en dwaalsporen*, 18.

<sup>136</sup> 'De wereld schuift naar het socialisme', *Het vrije volk* (August 8, 1945),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=37&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=MMNIOD05:000169306:mpeg21:a0012&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000169306:mpeg21:a0012&rowid=1](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=indie&page=37&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2201-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2215-09-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=MMNIOD05:000169306:mpeg21:a0012&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000169306:mpeg21:a0012&rowid=1)

<sup>137</sup> 'Soekarno heeft huisarrest', *De Tijd* (September 26, 1945),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=3&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2214-01-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=ddd:011237356:mpeg21:a0003&resultsidentifier=ddd:011237356:mpeg21:a0003&rowid=9](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=3&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2214-01-1948%22%29&coll=ddd&redirect=true&identifier=ddd:011237356:mpeg21:a0003&resultsidentifier=ddd:011237356:mpeg21:a0003&rowid=9)

<sup>138</sup> 'Oekraïne en Indie', *Amigoe di Curacao* (September 2, 1946),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2217-0](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?coll=ddd&query=%28Indonesische+republiek+communisme%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2217-0)



it is, however, also apparent in the newspapers that the Communist party was not the same party as the Indonesian republic by Soekarno.

The independence of Indonesia would then also be connected to democratic principles, specifically the fear that the independence movement of Indonesia would not be concerned with these democratic principles. These connections were partially made in the papers because of the involvement of other Western powers. Initially the Netherlands did not have enough military means to react to the Japanese and because of this they were reliant on the military might of their allies.<sup>139</sup> The Dutch tried using this as an argument as to why they should gradually make Indonesia independent, instead of giving them all the power at once. In *de Tijd* it was said that when the Dutch would regain power for a short amount of time and then give it back slowly to the Indonesians. Indonesia would be based on 'our' democratic principles and war criminals would be brought before a commission, where many Indonesians would have a position. They did this to show that the Indonesians would be involved from the beginning.<sup>140</sup>

The newspapers also portrayed the Indonesians as indoctrinated by the Japanese and that they, therefore, needed saving from themselves.<sup>141</sup> This is visible in the *Nieuwe courant* in 1948, it stated that it was their duty to protect Indonesia from totalitarianism and emphasized that everyone was equal and that the Netherlands should restore what the Japanese facism had destroyed.<sup>142</sup>

It is important to note that not every newspaper held the same opinion. While most newspapers strongly opposed the Indonesians independence, *Het vrije volk*, a democratic socialist paper, states that the Indonesians are primarily out on national self-determination. They even compare the Dutch striving to become free against Germany and the situation Indonesians were now in. However, they condemned Soekarno as a leader.<sup>143</sup>

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8-1949%22%29&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=ddd:010401977:mpeg21:a0049&resultsidentifier=ddd:010401977:mpeg21:a0049&rowid=4.

<sup>139</sup> Groen, *marsroutes en dwaalsporen*, 19.

<sup>140</sup> 'Soekarno heeft huisarrest,' *De Tijd*.

<sup>141</sup> 'Rust in Batavia en Bandoeng', *De patriot* (Oktober 19, 1945),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?qql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&query=Indonesische+republiek+facisme&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD05:000143668:mpeg21:a0001&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000143668:mpeg21:a0001&rowid=1](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?qql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&query=Indonesische+republiek+facisme&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD05:000143668:mpeg21:a0001&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD05:000143668:mpeg21:a0001&rowid=1).

<sup>142</sup> 'De doelstelling van de pardafi', *Nieuwe courant* (May 21, 1948),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?qql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&query=Indonesie+facisme&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD04:000094894:mpeg21:a0051&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD04:000094894:mpeg21:a0051&rowid=7](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?qql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2217-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2217-08-1949%22%29&query=Indonesie+facisme&coll=ddd&redirect=true&sortfield=date&identifier=MMNIOD04:000094894:mpeg21:a0051&resultsidentifier=MMNIOD04:000094894:mpeg21:a0051&rowid=7).

<sup>143</sup> 'Wijsheid gevraagd', *Het vrije volk* (September 28, 1945),

[https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=4&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_gte\\_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+\\_lte\\_+%2214-01-19](https://www.delpher.nl/nl/kranten/view?query=%28Indonesie+republiek%29&page=4&sortfield=date&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_gte_+%2215-08-1945%22%29&cql%5B%5D=%28date+_lte_+%2214-01-19)

## *Conclusion*

Concluding, the most likely reasons for the Indonesian Independence War were the economic interest of the Netherlands in Indonesia, the worsening geopolitical position of the Netherlands if they were to lose Indonesia as a colony, the Dutch conviction that aid was needed in Indonesia, Indonesia wanting to make their own decisions and controlling their own income, the inequality between the Indonesians and the Europeans, the previous independence movements and the vagueness of the Dutch. The Dutch also had their own reasons and justifications. The first was to free the Indonesians from the Japanese power and help Indonesia. This transformed into needing to clean up remaining resistance groups affiliated with Japan, which included the people that wanted Indonesian Independence. The Dutch also linked the movement to facism, communism and going against democracy in general. The Indonesians were also portrayed as being indoctrinated by the Japanese, which is why the Dutch needed to help them with the transition to Independence instead of immediately giving them Independence.

Compared to the historiography this research incorporates more newspaper articles, which show how the Dutch perceived the start of the Indonesian Independence and the reasons and justifications the Dutch gave. The justifications given by connecting the people wanting Indonesian Independence to Facism and Communism have also rarely been discussed. The linking of the Japanese to the people wanting Indonesian Independence is the only connection which has been discussed more widely.

## Conclusion

Now that all the case studies have been researched, a conclusion needs to be drawn on the main question: How did the causes for colonial violent conflict by the Dutch in Indonesia change or remain the same between 1609 and 1949? These causes were categorized into two different types: the most probable causes and the causes and justifications that the Dutch provided for these conflicts. This research was undertaken due to a lack of comparative research about colonial violent conflict in Indonesia between the pre-VOC period and the post-VOC period and a lack of research on the causes of colonial violent conflict, as most of the research centers around the duration of the conflict rather than the causes.

The conclusion will be structured as follows. First a conclusion on the reasons of every conflict will be given again separately, after which the patterns between them will be addressed, separating the most likely causes and the justifications and causes that the Dutch have provided. After this the conclusions will be compared to the historiography regarding whether the VOC period and the post-VOC periods should be handled separately in the historiography, as explained in the introduction.

### *The reasons of the colonial violent conflicts*

First off, the reasons for the Bandanese Genocide (1620). The most probable reason for the Bandanese Genocide to have occurred was that the Dutch wanted to obtain a monopoly on nutmeg and mace. Dutch deaths at the hand of the Bandanese were also often addressed as a reason for the Genocide, but to what extent this was a reason rather than a justification is questionable. This was because while this was an emotional loss, the VOC was primarily focussed on the economic losses.

However, the reasons and justifications according to the Dutch as to why the Bandanese Genocide occurred were a lot broader. The first, and most important reason according to the Dutch, was the Bandanese killing the Dutch, primarily referring to the killing of Pieter Willemsz. Verhoeff and his advisors, who were killed by multiple Bandanese in 1609. The second reason was the breach of contract between the Dutch and the Bandanese. The Dutch had made a contract with the Bandanese regarding the establishment of a monopoly for the Dutch on nutmeg and mace. While the Dutch had tried renewing the contract with the Bandanese the contracts were not followed. The third reason was the Bandanese plotting against the Dutch by conspiring with the English and Spanish, sometimes

also the Portuguese. The fourth reason was the Bandanese forcibly converting Christians to Islam and the fifth reason was the Bandanese destroying Dutch property and stealing from them. So, The Dutch put more emphasis on the more emotional side of the reasons such as the killing of the Dutch and breaching a contract rather than not being able to acquire a monopoly.

Secondly, the Third Javanese Succession War (1749-1757). There were two most likely reasons for this Javanese Succession War to have occurred. The first reason is the Javanese succession itself, where, due to the sultan selecting the candidate instead of the candidate being selected via birthright, there was often conflict about who the rightful crown prince or sultan was. The VOC, however, contributed to this by choosing sides and aiding the side that was most beneficial for them, which could prolong unrest and could show that staging an uprising could be effective as long as you had the VOC on your side. The second reason is that Mangkubumi, the leader of the war, was very aggravated by the VOC, who were allowed to rent a piece of land for a small sum and by Van Imhoff persuading someone to cancel the grant of a fief to Mangkubumi. Therefore, he turned on the VOC and instigated a conflict.

The justifications and reasons according to the Dutch also consisted of two reasons. The first reason was the lack of rules about the succession of the sultan. As stated before, the sultan assigned the crown prince and this caused other people to feel entitled to becoming the crown prince. The second reason given is that multiple princes were conspiring to stand up to the ruler to gain his power, Mangkubumi specifically was mentioned and was put in an unfavorable light to explain why he had been perceived as evil for some time. So, the Dutch tried to shift any responsibility they had for the war to their enemies by portraying their enemies as wrongful.

Thirdly, the reasons for the Java War (1825-1830). The most likely reasons as to why the Java War started are very diverse. Firstly, the political involvement of the Dutch and European powers in Java. The Europeans and especially the Dutch had significant influence over what happened in Java. Because of this they could also tax the Javanese on their own products. Secondly the Dutch and other Europeans rented land from the Javanese which caused the land to be under more direct Dutch or European control. Thirdly, the Dutch promoted the production of inedible foods, which were good for trade, this contributed to the food shortage which was going on at the time. The fourth reason was that Europeans regarded the Javanese as inferior and possessing less favorable characteristics compared to Europeans. The last

reason was the overall image surrounding Dipanagara. The Javanese believed in a prophecy about a charismatic leader who would rise up in times of trouble. The Javanese saw this prophecy in the situation and the person of Dipanagara. Additionally the battle was depicted as being done in the name of the Islam. This gave the Java War a 'noble' image. With the people being dissatisfied already, they were ready to take up arms.

There are three main reasons and justifications provided by the Dutch regarding the Java War. The first is that Dipanagara unexpectedly and because of personal reasons disturbed the peace by causing an uprising and that because of this he riled up the population. This would be caused by bigoted power hunger, partially being assigned to the Javanese as a trait. While giving this justification they also tried to paint Dipanagara and his close followers as being evil and against Christians. Secondly, the Dutch stated that the character of the Javanese was worse than the Europeans, as they were obsessed with money, did not regard land as important and were childlike. So, The Dutch tried to portray their enemies as inferior to justify their own involvement.

Fourth of all, the reasons for the Indonesian Independence War (1945-1949). The most likely reasons for the Indonesian Independence War occurring are also diverse. The main reasons for the Dutch were, however, economic and geopolitical. The Netherlands had profited from Indonesia for a long time, so giving Indonesia their independence meant losing a source of revenue and their economic privileges in Indonesia. Especially with the Second World War just having ended, the Netherlands could have benefited greatly from more income. Secondly, the geopolitical position of the Dutch would worsen, because Indonesia was regarded as their most important colony. The last reason the Dutch provided was the paternalistic view that the Dutch could still be of much use to the Indonesians and that they should help them to rebuild and thrive. However, to what extent this played a role is hard to determine. The main reasons for the Indonesians to wage this war were numerous. The Indonesians wanted to control their own country, put all their economic profits into their country instead of giving a part of it to the Netherlands, but also because the Indonesians were treated as inferior to the Europeans. It is also important to note that there were already uprisings about the Indonesian Independence before the Japanese domination. However, the Japanese promise of independence when they surrendered was the push in the back that was needed for the Indonesians to stand their ground. The Dutch also made it worse by being vague about their plans regarding the existence of the Indonesian Republic. They acknowledged that there should be an Indonesian

Republic, but this would only happen when they thought Indonesia was ready to become independent. This did not give the Indonesians a timeframe at all.

The Dutch justified the independence war in various ways as well. Firstly, they initially wanted to free the Indonesians from the Japanese and ‘fulfill their duty’, but their objective shifted when Japan surrendered to the Dutch needing to clean up the remaining Japanese and Japanese loyalists. However, the term Japanese loyalists became very broad and was eventually used as a reason to go against the independence movement, as the movement got connected to the Japanese, because the Japanese wanted to establish an Indonesian Republic when they capitulated. This was not the only ‘enemy’ the Dutch linked to the Indonesian independence movement. They also connected the Indonesian independence movement to facism and communism, which were two ideologies the Allies were generally against. They even linked them to not following democratic principles. The Dutch then also tried to show how they could still help Indonesia and how they would create Indonesia on the basis of democratic principles. They did this by arguing that the Indonesians were indoctrinated by the Japanese and that they needed help restoring what the Japanese had destroyed. So, the Dutch tried to justify their actions by connecting the Indonesian Republic to the enemies of their allies and portraying Indonesia as being very negatively affected by Japan.

Now after having concluded the chapters, the similarities and differences between the reasons will be discussed. First discussing the most likely reasons and then the reasons and justifications by the Dutch.

### *The similarities and differences between the violent colonial conflicts*

For the most likely reasons, there are three similarities that can be observed across the four case studies. The first similarity that can be found is that economic benefit was always the main reason for the Dutch to involve themselves with conflict. The Bandanese Genocide was enacted because the Dutch wanted a monopoly on mace and nutmeg, which would give the Dutch more economic power on the trade market and, therefore, bring in more money. The Third Javanese Succession War was waged in part due to Mangkubumi being aggravated by the VOC renting more land for very little money and the conflict was then fought by the VOC to ensure they kept as much (economic) control of Java as possible to ensure profits. The Java War was fought to ensure the Netherlands kept as much control of Java as possible

to guarantee they made a profit and to stop Dipanagara, who attempted to stop the Dutch and other Europeans from interfering with Java. This eventually even led to the Dutch gaining more control of Java. The Indonesian Independence War was waged by the Dutch for a part due to Indonesia bringing in profits before the Japanese invasion. This money and other financial benefits were, especially after the Second World War, again wanted by the Dutch.

Partially because of this the Dutch wanting (more) control in Indonesia always played a role in the violent colonial conflicts. The Bandanese Genocide was fought, because the Dutch wanted to control the Bandanese trade by getting a monopoly on mace and nutmeg. The Javanese succession war was fought, because the Dutch did not want to give control away to Mangkubumi. The Java War was fought, because the Dutch did not want to give control away to Dipanagara and the Dutch even (eventually) gained more control. The Indonesian Independence war was fought by the Dutch, because they wanted to control and have influence in Indonesia instead of the country gaining independence (immediately).

Furthermore, the reason for the Indonesian party to instigate violence was always in some part due to a lack of control or a disagreement of what was happening in Indonesia due to the Dutch. While the Bandanese Genocide did not allow the Bandanese for much defense, they initially tried to evade the monopoly by going against the Dutch by trading with other nations, as this benefitted them and, therefore, wanted to evade Dutch control. The Third Succession War was started due to Mangkubumi's disagreement with how little the Dutch had to pay for significant control over a piece of land and the Dutch denying him control of a small fief. The Java War was also partially fueled by the Javanese and Dipanagara disagreeing with the amount of control the Dutch had in Indonesia. The Dutch rented out a lot of land for Europeans, decided on the taxes, what crops should be planted and who in society was more powerful. The Indonesian Independence War was waged by the Indonesians to stop the Dutch from taking control of Indonesia and to be able to truly declare independence, even though this was already done.

However, there were also differences between the most likely reasons for the colonial violent conflicts. The Bandanese Genocide was waged by the Dutch with a monopoly in mind, while the other three conflicts were focussed on gaining or preserving control over land. The Third Javanese Succession War was waged by the Dutch to stop Mangkubumi from gaining control of (a part of) Java. The Dutch in the Java War aimed to stop Dipanagara from expelling the Europeans from Java and the Indonesian Independence War was waged by the Dutch to regain control of Indonesia and stop them from controlling themselves. So, the

Dutch always wanted more control, but the amount and manner in which they had control differed.

The other difference was that the Bandanese Genocide originated solely from the Dutch, while in the other violent conflicts the Indonesians had reason for partaking or even started the conflicts. With the Javanese Succession War being started by Macubumi, the Java War being started by Dipanagara and the Indonesians wanting their independence in the Indonesian Independence War. However, this probably also has to do with the type of violent conflict, as the genocide took less time and was an act which was hard for the Bandanese to react to, while the other three conflicts took a longer period of time.

In the reasons and justifications presented by the Dutch there are also similarities that can be found throughout the case studies. The first is that throughout the reasons and justifications, the Dutch attempted to make their opponents and their leaders be perceived as evil, playing into prejudices and the feelings of the people. With the Bandanese Genocide they did this by putting an emphasis on the Bandanese killing ‘innocent’ Dutch, something that would generally be viewed as bad to the European reader. With the Javanese Succession War, Mangkubumi was put in a bad light in the source by mentioning what ‘evil’ things he had done and by making him out to be a ‘conspiring prince’. For the Java War, Dipanegara was portrayed as someone who started a war out of selfishness and him and his close followers were portrayed as being against Christians, the most followed religion in western Europe at the time, and being power hungry. For the Indonesian Independence War, the Indonesian independence fighters were portrayed as followers of Japan, who were the enemy of the allied forces during the Second World War and portrayed as people who did not follow democratic principles. This was partially done by connecting them to facism and communism, which was a very sensitive subject for a lot of people in the West Bloc due to facism being the main ideology of many of the enemies during the Second World War and communism starting to be perceived as a threat.

The opponent was also made to be perceived as inferior and different from the Dutch or other Europeans. This is the least visible with the Bandanese Genocide, but it is visible when reading how the Dutch thought it was ‘barbaric’ how the Bandanese slaughtered the Dutch and were ‘shocked’ that the Bandanese did not keep to the contract, acting as if this would have been indecent. With the Third Javanese Succession War, the Javanese are described as being inferior and different by making the Javanese out to be easily insulted and to be happy about more ‘material’ things than Europeans, such as having the prettiest wife. With the Java War, the Javanese were assigned certain character traits such as being obsessed



with money, being childlike and being lazy and that this contributed, in part, to why they followed Diponegoro. With the Indonesian Independence War the Indonesians are perceived as being affected by the Japanese and not ready to rule, which is why they should be helped by the Dutch before creating an independent state.

However, there is also a difference that can be perceived in the justifications. This is that the justifications of the Indonesian Independence War are more internationally focussed compared to the other wars. The justifications for the Indonesian Independence War sought to affect the westerners, and primarily the USA and the Netherlands, by linking the Indonesian independence fighters to more general enemies and ideologies that the westerners were against, Japan, facism and communism. This while the justifications for the Bandanese Genocide were focussed on the killing of the Dutch and a breach of contract and the Third Javanese Succession War and the Java War were focussed on assigning the wrong doings to the leaders of the wars and the characteristics of the Javanese.

*Should there be a historiographical separation between the VOC period and the post VOC period?*

Now that the similarities and differences have been established, one of the questions mentioned in the historiographical section of the introduction needs to be answered: should there be a separation between the VOC period and the post VOC period or Colonial period on the grounds of the reasons for these conflicts? This separation is made very clearly in the literature, but should this separation be upheld?

In the book *over de grens*, the reason for this separation according to this book is the great scale of military and administrative submission after 1813 as the VOC did not have a lot of territorial authority. What exactly is meant with the phrase 'great scale' is, unfortunately, not explained, except for the fact that the VOC did not have or use this 'great scale'.<sup>144</sup> However, when looking at these conflicts it becomes clear that the VOC already had a lot of influence, because of their military power. The Bandanese Genocide was possible due to the military power the VOC had and when looking at the reasons for the Third Javanese Succession War it becomes clear that Macubumi was angry at the VOC for having controlled someone higher up to refuse to give Macubumi a fief and the VOC being able to rent a piece of land for a little amount of money. While there is not enough evidence to be sure, there is a

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<sup>144</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 36.

good chance that this last part was possible due to the VOC being able to threaten the rulers with their military power. While the VOC was not the official sovereign power in Java at the time, it is clear that they had a lot of control over what happened because of this military power. So to say that the VOC did not use a 'great scale' of military submission to obtain what they desired, would, according to my research, be incorrect. However, it is likely that the VOC could not, or did not want to, enforce as strict rulings as done later, as they did not formally control Java; this was, however, done in the later period. This did not take away that the VOC probably still had a lot of influence administratively due to their military power.

Another manner in which the VOC is often cut off from the rest of the Dutch colonial period is by emphasizing that the VOC was focussed on trade instead of acquiring land, while the period after the VOC the Netherlands was focussed on controlling their colonies and acquiring land.<sup>145</sup> The Bandanese Genocide was initiated because of the desire for a monopoly for the trade and not necessarily for conquering Banda. However, this did not take away that after the VOC wiped out the population they basically controlled Banda. When looking at the other conflict during the VOC time, it becomes clear that the VOC did control pieces of land. This was not only the result of renting the land for a low price, which contributed to the anger of Mangkubumi during the Third Javanese Succession War, but also because one of the sources of income for the VOC was rent that was paid to them. This contributed to them wanting the succession war to stop, as this made it hard for them to collect the rent. This does not take away the fact that after the VOC ended, and after a short break due to wars in Europe, the Netherlands accumulated more control in Indonesia. For example, in Java, which played a part in the emergence of the Java War. However, this did not happen within a fortnight, this took a longer amount of time, therefore, I would say that the transition from trade to obtaining land was more gradual and was not immediate. However, there was a break in between the periods due to conflict in Europe after the VOC ended. This transition is especially visible as the VOC already showed signs of being interested in obtaining land, as can be observed in the general missives, which consistently discuss the payment of rent by those who lived on VOC owned land.

Therefore, both these ways of cutting off the VOC period from the post-VOC period are not as clear cut when looking at this research as they are often made out to be. While the VOC may not have had as much direct control administratively compared to the period after, they could still influence the administration due to their military power. And while the VOC

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<sup>145</sup> Emmer e.a., *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 1.

was often focussed on trade, they also obtained land. The Bandanese Genocide ended with the VOC essentially controlling Banda and the Third Javanese Succession War was driven by Mangkubumi who disagreed with the control the VOC had. It is also significant to point out the similarity that was found in the research, that these colonial violent conflicts were all economically driven, either to protect their income or to gain more income. Their end goal was, therefore, to economically profit of a non-European country often by using military force.

Because of this similarity and the differences that are not as easily split as previously done, I would argue that it is not necessary to split the colonial period into two different periods when researching it. However, this does not take away that there are differences between the periods and that because of the change from the VOC controlling colonialism to the Netherlands controlling it and the break due to European wars in between them, it is relatively easy to split the timeframe here. However, the similarities make it possible to compare in between these periods and show that they are less separate and more connected than previously stated in the historiography. The Dutch-Indies, for example, did not just exist all of a sudden after the VOC period, but it took a longer period of time to take shape.

Comparing these periods could help show patterns between the time periods and, therefore, help historians in understanding other case studies. Because of this, we should not separate these periods as for example, *Over de grens* and *The Dutch overseas empire* have done.<sup>146</sup>

These separations have in fact already, partially, been removed in some of the British and German literature by, among others, Peter Cain, Ronald Robinson and Wolfgang Reinhard. In this literature they plead for a more continuous era of 500 years of European expansion, instead of separate periods.<sup>147</sup>

However, it should be taken into account that this research is done on a relatively small scale using four case studies, while discussing approximately 350 years. There were many more violent colonial conflicts in Indonesia in this time period and researching more of these violent colonial conflicts could give a different perspective on them. This research was also limited to the causes of violent colonial conflicts, this paired with the limited amount of case studies, can also give a distorted view on the conclusion about the separation of the VOC period and the post VOC period.

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<sup>146</sup> NIOD, KITLV and NIMH, *Over de grens*, 36, Emmer and Gommans, *The Dutch Overseas Empire*, 1.

<sup>147</sup> Walter, *Colonial violence*, 4.

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