

Major General Simon de Waal, 'the Hero of Tarakan' and Territorial Commander of Central Java

a study on the role of one of the most important Dutch commanders in the Indonesian war
of independence 1945-1949



Utrecht University

Name: Wibren Matthijs van der Sprong

Student number: 3539946

Email address: w.m.vandersprong@students.uu.nl

Course: International Relations in Historical Perspective

Thesis supervisor: dr. F.P.L. Gerits

Date: 23/01/2018

Word count: 14.943

Table of contents

Abstract	3
1. Introduction and methodology	4
2. Historiography	10
3. Major General De Waal and the KNIL	14
4.1 Major General de Waal, ‘the Hero of Tarakan’	20
4.2 The nomination of Simon de Waal for the <i>Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse</i>	21
4.3 De Waals’ own testimony with regard to his nomination for the M.W.O.	22
4.4 Other testimonies about De Waal’s actions during the Battle of Tarakan	24
4.5 Conclusion	26
5.1 De Waal and his relationship with General Spoor	28
5.2 Conclusion	31
6.1 Major General De Waal and his experiences of the first police actions	33
6.2 Lessons learned from the first phase: the actual police actions	34
6.3 Lessons learned from the second phase: the pacification phase	36
6.4 Lessons learned from the third phase	37
6.5 Conclusion	39
7.1 The Treaty of Linggadjati and the alleged coup d’état	40
7.2 Conclusion	42
8. Conclusion and discussion	43
Literature	46

Abstract

This paper studies the role of the Dutch commander Major General Simon de Waal in the decolonization war between the Netherlands and Indonesia that lasted between 1945 and 1949. Research into the role of individuals is lacking in the existing literature, while the main focus is laid on structural arguments. Primary sources with regard to the actions of De Waal during the Second World War at the battle of Tarakan (January 1942) are used to get a better understanding of the man, his motives and his actions. Also primary sources with regard to experiences of the first police actions at Java (21 July – 5 August 1947) in the Dutch Indies provide a better understanding of this man. In combination with secondary literature this paper aims to contribute to the existing debate with regard to the reasons for waging this war and the course of direction the war took. The paper argues that individual commanders on key positions in the Dutch Indies could have heavily influenced the direction of the war and argues that more attention should be paid on the role of other individual commanders in this war. In the case of De Waal, he was able to act on his own behalf due to the respect he received from his men and the respect his superiors had for his stature. In the end structural causes and agency can be seen a choral symphony, sometimes playing out of tune and seemingly contradiction each other, but without each other the war could not have happened the way it did.

Key words: Major General Simon de Waal, decolonization war 1945-1949, Dutch Indies, General Spoor, police actions.

1. Introduction and methodology

In mid-1947, after numerous incidents of excessive use of violence, the top of the military of The Netherlands once again ordered the commanders in the Dutch Indies to be reluctant with the use of violence against their opponents.¹ This, however, did not withhold Major General Simon de Waal, commander of the B-division and territorial commander of Central Java, to conduct another series of airstrikes on November 4 1947.² The target was the headquarters of the Indonesian National Army in Bandjarnegara (Central Java), located on the Republican side of the demarcation line.³ This made the attack controversial, since the grounds for fighting the war were seriously questioned, both nationally and internationally.⁴ According to Dutch intelligence services and Indonesian intercepted reports, the attack by six P-40 fighter planes resulted in five deadly victims, left four people seriously injured and caused significant material damage to houses and locomotives.⁵

The attack was part of a broader colonial war between the Netherlands and Indonesia that lasted from August 1945 to December 1949. It started after the nationalist leaders of Indonesia, Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta, declared the Indonesian independence on August 7, 1945.⁶ The order of De Waal to attack the headquarters of the Indonesian National Army was against the direct order of the supreme commander of the Dutch military in the Dutch Indies, General S.H. Spoor. This incident in which a commander ignored a direct order from its superior was not unique. Several other commanders in the Indonesian war of independence also acted on their own behalf.⁷ Colonel F. Mollinger reportedly crowned himself 'King of southern Sumatra', although he later denied this statement after being confronted by General Spoor.⁸ In addition to other examples, it suggests that commanders in the Dutch Indies did not always obey orders given by their

¹ R. Limpach, *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* (Den Haag 2016) 404-407.

² More information about the structure of the B-division can be found in the archives of the *Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie*: NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 763, samenstelling der B. Divisie op 31 maart 1947.

³ The demarcation line was a border between areas controlled by the Netherlands and areas controlled by the Republic of Indonesia.

⁴ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 406-407, 673-674.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 406-407.

⁶ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 19. ; B. Luttikhuis and A.D. Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence* (New York 2014) 11. ; G. Oostindie, *Soldaat in Indonesië 1945-1950. Getuigenissen van een oorlog aan de verkeerde kant van de geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2015) 18.

⁷ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 671-682. ; R. Limpach, 'Extreem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', *De Militaire Spectator* 185 (2016) 10, 416-429, 421-423.

⁸ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 675.

military and civil superiors.⁹

From this example the question emerges to what extent the military leadership had control over their division commanders, their brigade commanders and their troops. The historian Rémy Limpach argues in his study *'De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor'* that the leadership could not, and might not have wanted to micromanage their subordinates. This contributed to a situation in which the control over these commanders and their troops was insufficient. Limpach furthermore argues that several commanders operated consciously against given orders to fight counterinsurgencies. The central objective of this paper is connected with this notion of Limpach, as the paper aims to provide more insight in one of the most important commanders during the Indonesian war of independence: Major General Simon de Waal. The central question this paper aims to answer is: Who was Major General Simon de Waal, what drove him and what can his appearances say with regard to the decolonization war 1945-1949, his role in this war and the hierarchy within the Dutch army? More insight into De Waal leads to more insight in regard to De Waal's relationship with the chief commander General Spoor and how orders were given during this war. This will illustrate that the line of communication between these two figures did not always ran smoothly and that the hierarchical lines within the army were not always clearly demarked. In theory, Spoor was the highest military commander, but in practice, Major General De Waal largely determined the policy in one of the most important areas in the former colony. This notion is highly remarkable and needs further exploration. A description of the situation reflects one facet of the complexity that existed during this war. Responsibilities of exercising systematic violence are difficult to deduce when even at the highest level commanders acted independently and deliberately ignored orders given by their superiors. When hierarchical lines are not strictly followed and discipline is lacking, a difficult workable situation arises.

Directly after the Second World War it was thought that it was relatively easy for the Netherlands to recover and restore the authority over its colony.¹⁰ These over-ambitious political strategic objectives, the troop and staff shortages and the lack of a coherent plan for controlling conquered areas caused structural problems that stimulated a high level of violence.¹¹ Furthermore, in western societies the general idea existed that "the West" had a duty to support underdeveloped countries in their process towards a full

⁹ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 671-678. ; Limpach, 'Extreem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', 21-24. ; J.A. de Moor, *Generaal Spoor. Triomf en tragiek van een legercommandant* (Amsterdam 2011) 297.

¹⁰ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 49-50.

¹¹ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 671. ; Limpach, 'Extreem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', 428-429.

state.¹² These theories, the so-called ‘white man's burden’, existed and were part of society. The feeling of superiority over Asian and African cultures, baked in the structures of Western societies, can be regarded as an important reason why these ideas were so predominant.¹³ Nevertheless, in recent studies, more attention is given to the role of individuals.¹⁴ The commander in the Dutch Indies, General Spoor, played an important role in the policymaking of the colony. The government in The Hague based their policymaking upon allegedly reliable information provided by the civil servants and military personnel present in Indonesia. The prime minister of the Netherlands at the time, Willem Drees, had expressed criticism with regard to the provision of information. He argued that the Governor General of the Dutch Indies Van Mook¹⁵ and Spoor had given the cabinet a far too optimistic view of the expected results and developments in advance of the police actions.¹⁶ On the other hand, politicians in The Hague made few attempts to gather more information from the colony on the development of the war and the use of structural violence, while there were serious indications that the control of this matter was inadequate.¹⁷ Only a handful of opposition members were publicly critical and argued that the information provided by government officials and commanders on the scene was insufficient.¹⁸ The relevance of looking into De Waal is that it illustrates how one single person can have significant impact on the policy implemented during the decolonization war. Despite the fact that certain ideas lived among the Dutch population and were prevalent in Dutch politics and that a certain strategy was mapped out by the highest civil and military authorities, individual commanders and soldiers had to interpret the given orders and make them workable. For this reason, individual commanders had direct influence on the implementation of the policy and course of the war. The personality of a single commander becomes very important for this reason: his personal motives to fight this war, his experiences during other war, his origins and his connection with the area are all factors to reckon with, that most likely have had an influence on his decision-making process during the war. The research on De Waal will

¹² J.A.A. van Doorn, *De laatste eeuw van Indië: ontwikkeling en ondergang van een koloniaal project* (Amsterdam 1993). 12. ; W.H. van Helsdingen, *Daar werd wat groots verricht. Nederlands-Indië in de x^x^e eeuw* (Amsterdam 1941) 528. ; Luttikhuis and Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence*, 9.

¹³ Luttikhuis and Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence*, 9.

¹⁴ In 2001 J.A. de Moor published a biography about Generaal Spoor: *Generaal Spoor: triomf en tragedie van een legercommandant* and also in the recent work of R. Limpach *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* more attention is given to individual commanders.

¹⁵ More information about van Mook can be found in the book: T. van den Berge, *H.J. van Mook 1894-1965. Een vrij en gelukkig Indonesië* (Bussum 2014).

¹⁶ J.A. de Moor, *Generaal Spoor. Triomf en tragedie van een legercommandant* (Amsterdam 2015) 283-287.

¹⁷ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 113-115.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 113-115.

shed light on this, emphasize the role of individuals during this war and will contribute to the larger debate between agency and structuralism which receive more attention in the next section.

Methodology

The overarching methodology to support the central notion of this paper is related to the debate between structuralism and agency. The historian Philip Pomper states in his article 'Historians and Individual Agency' that although many historians in their efforts to explain actions of dictators like Hitler and Stalin try to determine both the relative causal weight and mutual impact of individual agency and structure, but they do not necessarily give the concepts "agency" or structure a prominent position when they produce causal explanations. He argues that most historians tend to choose for structural classification to find causal explanations such as political, economic and social factors. The structural theory for describing historical developments tends to be dominant in history writing. The assumption that a single man can largely influence the path of history must be reduced to a minimum.¹⁹ To better understand the difference between agency and structuralism it is helpful to look into the definitions of structuralism and agency. Elements of structuralism are provided in Pomper's article in which he claims that structuralists tend to see individuals as tools of group projects or cultural tendencies and consciously or unconsciously are part of a bigger picture. In the modernization theory individuals are seen as instruments of historical change or continuity. In the end it is being thought that individuals have no control over the means to achieve a chosen end.²⁰ The definition of agency provided by the historians T. Dietz and R. Burns in their article 'Human Agency and the Evolutionary Dynamics of Culture' claims the opposite. Here they state that:

'Agency requires that actions be effective in changing material or cultural conditions, that they be intentional, sufficiently unconstrained that actions are not perfectly predictable and that the actor possesses the ability to observe the consequences of an action and to be reflexive in evaluating them.'²¹

According to this definition agency includes individuals 'willfully, actively, and rationally pursue their ends rather than react to the initiative of others'. This paper will use several unique primary sources directly linked to the person of Major General Simon de Waal. This paper will argue that agency played a major role in the Indonesian war of independence and

¹⁹ Philip Pomper, 'History and Individual Agency', *History and Theory* 35 (1996) 3, 281-308, 281-282.

²⁰ Ibidem, 287-288.

²¹ T. Dietz and T. R. Burns, 'Human Agency and the Evolutionary Dynamics of Culture', *Acta Sociologica* 35 (1992) 3, 187-200, 194.

that the actions and views of Major General S. de Waal partly determined the course of the war. Even more, this paper aims to shed more light on the practices on the ground instead of the official messages from government channels in which the ‘iron discipline’ of the troops was constantly stressed and illustrates that disobedience and independent action were not only among the lower ranks frequently exercised.²² Besides the question of systematic versus incidental violence, which is frequently the subject of recent studies, one can also ask on who’s authority the violence was practiced. Henk Schulte Nordholt, specialized in the modern history of Indonesia, speaks about ‘patterns of violence’ and characterizes the Dutch colonial regime as based on ‘a state of violence’.²³ This paper moves the focus from structures towards agency. To date, almost no information is available about these individuals. In order to give the debate of structuralism versus agency more content, it is essential to study this subject more. Jacobus van Doorn and Willem Hendrix state in their study ‘*Ontsporing van geweld*’ that in guerilla warfare the organization of violence became delegated to lower levels of the hierarchy, leading to an increasing autonomy of individual platoons and commanders.²⁴ This study will try to shed some more light on one of the most important “sub commanders” of General Spoor, Major General Simon de Waal.

To answer the main question of this paper to create a more comprehensive picture of Major General S. de Waal, which contributes to a better understanding of the decolonization war, the difficulties with regard to the guilt question of carrying out acts of structural violence and the missing hierarchy and discipline within the Dutch army, primary sources and secondary literature will be used. In 1948, Major General De Waal was nominated for one of the highest military decorations in the Netherlands: *Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse*. Regarding this nomination, several primary sources have been preserved and kept safe in the *Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie* in The Hague. These documents will provide interesting background information about the personality of De Waal and will shed light on how his men perceived him and his actions and how the General saw himself. Even more, on February 23, 1948, Major General Simon de Waal wrote the introduction and signed the bundling of experiences written down resulting from experiences of the first police actions, that took place between 21 July and 5 August 1947 in which the Netherlands tried to settle the Indonesian war of independence in Dutch favor. These experiences can illustrate De Waal’s views on the implementation of these police

²² Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 420-422.

²³ B. Lutikhuis and A.D. Moses, ‘Introduction: colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence: the Dutch empire in Indonesia’, in B. Lutikhuis and A.D. Moses, *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence, The Dutch Empire in Indonesia* (London 2014) 1-24, 10-11.

²⁴ Lutikhuis and Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence*, 8-9.

actions. Primary sources and additional secondary literature will provide a more comprehensive picture with regard to the relationship between De Waal and Spoor. Secondary literature regarding the Indonesian war of independence will also support this paper, such as *'De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor'* by R. Limpach, J.A. de Moor's *'Generaal Spoor. Triomf en tragiek van een legercommandant'*, *'De ontsporing van geweld'* written by J.A.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix and Gert Oostindie's *'Soldaat in Indonesië'*.²⁵

In the second chapter of this paper, the historiography, the existing literature will be discussed and the role of this study in the broader debate will be elucidated. The third chapter will be about Major General De Waal and his relation with the KNIL. Providing background information about De Waal will contribute to a better understanding of this important commander and the context in which he acted. In the fourth chapter a small case study will be conducted into De Waal his experiences during the Second World War and the high military decoration he received following his brave actions during the battle of Tarakan in 1942. In the fifth chapter the relationship between De Waal and the highest military commander of the Indies, General Spoor will be discussed. The main point of this chapter will be to elaborate the difficult relation between the two commanders and the difficulties that can bring to official hierarchical lines. De Waal enjoyed so much respect from his men and his superiors that he regularly ignored direct orders from his civil and military superiors. In the sixth chapter another case study will be conducted into the experiences De Waal ordered to write down with regard to the first police actions that lasted from 17 July until 5 August 1947. During the time of the first police actions which focused on Sumatra and Java, De Waal was the territorial commander of Central Java. This experiences provide valuable information about the way De Waal approached and perceived this violent period in the decolonization war. In the final chapter the role of De Waal in the alleged coup d'état around 1947 in the Netherlands will receive considerable attention. The alleged involvement of De Waal in this coup attempt will accentuate him further as a person. All the chapters combined should provide a better understanding of De Waal, his actions and his motives. More insight into De Waal, will provide more information about the role and influence individual commanders could have in this war. In the conclusion and discussion section the most important findings of this paper will be summarized and suggestions for further research will be mentioned.

²⁵ A more comprehensive overview of the consulted literature can be found at the end of this paper.

2. Historiography

In the decade between 1940 and 1950 two major wars occurred in which the Netherlands was involved. The first was the Second World War, that officially lasted for the Netherlands from the 10th of May 1940 to the 5th of May 1945. This period received an important place in the Dutch society and its self-understanding. The remembrance of the Second World War and the history writing needed to fit into the picture of a moral nation struggling to overthrow a brutal occupier.²⁶ Just after the Netherlands was liberated from the German occupation, the nation engaged in another war, the Indonesian war of independence. In fact, this war was the biggest fighting mission the Netherlands ever got involved in.²⁷ Compared to the Second World War, the Indonesian war of independence received considerably less attention, especially in the decennia after the war. The image of a country desperately trying to prevent its colony from becoming independent and not shunning to use brutal force to achieve this objective did not really fit into the picture of a five-year long oppressed nation with high moral standards.

For this reason, history writing surrounding the decolonization war occurred relatively late. Important game changers were the revelations of the Dutch Indie Veteran Joop Hueting on national television in January 1969 in the television show '*Achter het Nieuws*'. In the interview Hueting spoke, as the first person in the public domain to do so, about the structural character of violence committed by the Dutch military during the decolonization war.²⁸ The confession of Hueting caused a stir in the Netherlands and established a new image of the war and the role structural violence played in it.

This event forced the Dutch government to conduct an official investigation into the structural use of violence of the Dutch army. This research led to the *Excessennota* that was presented in June 1969.²⁹ The outcome of the report, in which the name 'excess' already reflects the content, was that overall the behavior of the Dutch army was correct, but that so-called special forces and branches of the intelligence services possibly committed

²⁶ Luttikhuis and Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence*, 16.

²⁷ Limpach, 'Extrem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', 416.

²⁸ Kester Freriks, 'Na zijn betekenis kantelde het beeld over Indië'

<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/01/20/na-zijn-bekentenis-kantelde-het-beeld-over-indie-1581945-a968474> (20 January 2016).; R. Limpach, *Business as usual: Dutch mass violence in the Indonesian war of independence 1945-1949* in B. Luttikhuis and A.D. Moses, *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence, The Dutch Empire in Indonesia* (London 2014) 64-90, 64-65.

²⁹ On the following website one can find the *excessennota*:

<https://start7mei.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/excessennota.pdf>.

atrocities. However, according to the report this did not happen systematically nor did it happen on a large scale.³⁰

The first book about the decolonization war was written by the historian L. de Jong in 1988. As part of a larger work about the history of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, De Jong wrote an epilogue about the decolonization period between 1945-1950. His judgement was harsh with regard to the extreme violence used by Dutch soldiers, but under the pressure of several veterans he downscaled the content of the epilogue.³¹

P.M.H. Groen's *Marsroutes en dwaalsporen. Het Nederlands militaire-strategisch beleid in Indonesië* (1992) was the first systematic, in-depth investigation, in which the policy of the army and its leaders (especially General Spoor), the political demands and the military performance are discussed in the conflict. The conclusions also analyze the causes of failure, including the underestimation of the guerrilla opponent and overestimating the Dutch own capacities. This turned out to become a structural problem throughout the entire war, in which obsolete tactics were maintained and in which the enemy was underestimated.

Thereafter J.A.A. van Doorn wrote the book *De laatste eeuw van Indië. Ontwikkeling en ondergang van een koloniaal project* (1994) in which he describes the inability of the Dutch government to recognize the signals of failure to recover the colony in time and resume efforts to restore old colonial authority.

In 2014 Rémy Limpach contributed to a collection of articles about the decolonization period compiled by B. Luttikhuis and A. Dirk Moses named *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence* (2014), stressing the structural character of violence, not only performed by special units, but also by regular units of the army.³² Besides Limpach other leading researchers on the subject of the decolonization period contributed to this volume, such as Petra Groen's *Colonial warfare and military ethics in the Netherlands East Indies, 1816-1941*, Peter Romijn's *Learning on 'the job': Dutch war volunteers entering the Indonesian war of independence*. Stef Scagliola wrote *Cleo's 'unfinished business': coming to terms with Dutch war crimes in Indonesia's war of independence*, in which she claims that 'both politicians and historians have 'neutralized' the violent past by sometimes deliberately silencing it, but more often discussing it in apologetic terms (excesses), whether intentionally or unintentionally, and by prioritizing extremely detailed source study over critical reflection.'³³

³⁰ Limpach, *Business as usual*, 65.

³¹ L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Deel 12 a. Nederlands Indië* (Amsterdam 1988) 710-1106.

³² Limpach, *Business as usual*, 64-90.

³³ Luttikhuis and Moses, *Colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence*, 16.

The most recent book that appeared with regard to the decolonization war is *‘De brandende kampjongs van Generaal Spoor’* (2016) by Limpach. Instead of speaking about excesses, which is still the official Dutch government point of view, Limpach suggests - after a very comprehensive study - that the violence had a systematic character and that the Dutch civil and military authorities were aware that this occurred. To support his thesis Limpach used several primary sources such as the 885 letters Dutch Indies veterans send to the Dutch television broadcasting station the VARA in 1969 in which many veterans revealed the structural violence they had witnessed or had participated in first hand. He also used (unpublished) memoirs of veterans, newspapers articles, interviews with eyewitnesses, official government archive documents as well as documents from personal archives. The conclusions presented by Limpach arising from seven large case studies and hundreds examples of other acts of extreme violence, led to the beginning of a new official investigation, ordered by the Dutch government on December 2016, on this allegedly systematic application of violence by the Netherlands.³⁴

The published literature so far put the emphasis on the political aspect of the decolonization war. Much remains unclear of the role of individual commanders and the way they have influenced the course of the war. Apart from J.A. de Moor’s *‘Generaal Spoor: triomf en tragiek van een legercommandant,’* which is a biographical work of Spoor, no study has been published about other important commanders and their role and influence in the course of the war, the application of structural violence or their possible actions against it. In this biography J.A. de Moor describes Spoor as exceptional, gifted with a quick mind, a sharp intellect, a leader of men, energetic, vigorous and full of optimism. According to De Moor, Spoor wanted to preserve the colony as it was before the start of the Second World War. This positive appreciation of General Spoor by De Moor, makes the study into De Waal even more interesting, because besides the fact that Spoor was beloved and extremely skilled, De Waal dared to challenge Spoor’s authority and did not face serious reprimands by doing so, which implicates the level of respect appreciation Spoor had for De Waal.

This paper addresses this knowledge gap in scientific literature by conducting research into a single commander. The aim is to gain better understanding of the complexity and dynamics of the decolonization war. Linking the overarching theory of agency versus structural with the study into a single commander has not been done before and will add a new perspective to existing literature. In addition, as this study is conducted

³⁴ Annemarie Kas, ‘Onderzoek naar geweld in ‘Indië’ ’<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2016/12/02/onderzoek-naar-geweld-in-indie-5620457-a1534866> (2 december 2016) and Natalie Righton, ‘Kabinet akkoord met groot onderzoek naar geweld Indië’ <https://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/kabinet-akkoord-met-groot-onderzoek-naar-geweld-indie~a4426593> (2 december 2016).

in English, the research contributes to international accessibility of research on the decolonization war since the large majority of the existing literature is published in Dutch. This paper will contribute to the argument that individual commanders knew about the violence committed by their men and their tendency to disguise this misbehavior. It will argue that one commander had the ability to largely steer the course of the war, at least in the area he commanded. This paper will shed light on where this tendency came from by conducting research into Major General S. de Waal.

3. Major General De Waal and the KNIL

Simon de Waal was born in Breda on the 21th of April 1896 and was trained at a young age to become an army officer. Instead of being trained at the elitist Royal Military Academy (Koninklijke Militaire Academie; KMA) in Breda, Simon de Waal was trained at the instruction course battalion in Kampen. This suggests that De Waal did not necessarily come from the elite or did not consider it to be important. By a royal decree on September 25, 1917, De Waal was appointed second Lieutenant at the infantry of the Royal Dutch-Indies Army (Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger; KNIL).³⁵ The KNIL was founded in 1830 and was essential for the Netherlands to preserve and expand their sphere of influence in the Dutch Indies.³⁶ By the time De Waal was born, the Netherlands controlled large parts of territories overseas. Among these territories were the Dutch Indies, the current Republic of Indonesia. The story of the Dutch Indies starts in 1596 when four Dutch merchant ships reached the shores of Indonesia. Among them was Cornelis de Houtman, chief merchant and explorer.³⁷ The discovery of Indonesia marked the beginning of a centuries-long presence of the Netherlands in the archipelago. Initially, the Dutch presence was exclusively about trade activities and economic gain, but this gradually changed into territorial motives. This change from ‘commercialism’ to ‘colonialism’ resulted into the Dutch state occupying this area in 1798.³⁸ Until that date, the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.) controlled the trading activities in the Indies, but the V.O.C. was unable to fulfil the role of territorial occupation power. From 1798 on, the security of the Dutch merchants and landlords was executed by an active army, which broke the power of the indigenous nobility and the Islamic masses in a series of wars and expeditions and brought the outback under direct control of the Dutch authorities.³⁹

Around 1850, the strength of the KNIL was estimated at a total of 27,000 men, of whom about 10,000 were European. Just before the beginning of the First World War (1914-1918), eighty percent of the KNIL consisted of native soldiers.⁴⁰ During the nineteenth century various riots, disturbances and uprisings had to be controlled by the

³⁵ S. van der Zee, *Harer Majesteits loyaalste onderdaan. François van 't Sant 1883-1966* (Amsterdam 2015) 300.

³⁶ C.A. Heshusius, *Het KNIL van tempo doeloe* (Amsterdam 1988) 9-10. ; Meel, *Gedenkschrift*, 14. ; Oostindie, *Soldaat in Indonesië*, 18.

³⁷ More information about C. Houtman can be found on the website of Historiek: <https://historiek.net/cornelis-de-houtman-ca-1565-1599/4143>.

³⁸ P. van Meel, *Gedenkschrift Koninklijk Nederlands-Indisch Leger 1830-1950* (Dordrecht 1990) 15.

³⁹ J.A.A. van Doorn and W.J. Hendrix, *Ontsporing van geweld*, 21-22.

⁴⁰ Meel, *Gedenkschrift*, 17.

KNIL, so it was necessary to send expeditions of greater strength to the archipelago. In this turbulent period almost no year passed without the KNIL having to intervene in parts of the Dutch Indies, often in different areas at the same time. This illustrates the extent of violence seen and war experience gained by the KNIL. The rise of nationalism in Indonesia during the twentieth century caused a lot of conflict, uprisings and skirmishes in which the Netherlands felt compelled to act.

The arisen Indonesian nationalism, which originated from centuries of oppression, was increasingly reduced to and addressed as a police/military issue by the Dutch policymakers.⁴¹ The colonial regime was seriously challenged and chose violence as the answer. This simplistic view of a much more complex problem included the idea that the underdeveloped Indonesians would only understand the language of violence in the event of rebellion. This idea could be used again by the colonial power to legitimize its own outwardly suppressed extreme violence.⁴² Because of this idea, the people of Indonesia had to deal with centuries of oppression and exploitation by the Dutch and violence was ingrained in daily life. This has had a clear impact on the desire to achieve independence. However, it also worked the other way around. The Dutch military had to deal with rebellion, uprisings and unrest for centuries so violence became 'normal' as a means to react against rebellion. The atmosphere in which the Indonesian population had to be educated by the Dutch through violence in order to achieve a better life was infused and propagated by the Dutch government for centuries, so it naturally became part of the mindset of civilians, policymakers and soldiers.

The German invasion of the Netherlands on May 10th 1940 ushered a five year long occupation of the Netherlands. As part of this broader world war the Netherlands declared war upon Japan on December 7th 1941.⁴³ As a result of this war, Japan invaded Menado and Celebes (both parts of the former Dutch Indies) in the night of 10 to 11 January 1942. The island of Tarakan also became part of the battle scene. The KNIL could not offer serious resistance because they were outnumbered, had outdated equipment and had to deal with native elements with little loyalty to the Dutch cause. This resulted in Dutch capitulation within two days.⁴⁴ The relative quick capitulation of the KNIL

⁴¹ Van Doorn and Hendrix, *Ontsporing van geweld*, 30.

⁴² Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 49.

⁴³ L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der De brandende kampongs Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Deel 5. Nederlands Indië* (Den Haag 1974) 202-221.

⁴⁴ Nederlands Instituut voor militaire historie (NIMH) & Stichting het Veteraneninstituut, *Het Nederlandse militaire optreden in Nederlands-Indië/Indonesië 1945-1950. Een bibliografisch overzicht* (Den Haag 2015) 10. ; Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 63-75.

contributed to the loss of respect and prestige in the eyes of the native population. It also resulted in a total of 42,000 prisoners of war including Major General De Waal.

Until this Japanese invasion, it was clear to almost all Dutch civilians that the Indies were inextricably linked to the Netherlands. Teachers taught their pupils at school that the Indies should be regarded as Dutch territory. The Dutch Indies took an important part of the Dutch self-awareness for a long time. The Japanese invasion and occupation clearly changed this.⁴⁵ When the battle against the Indonesian insurgents begun from 1945 onwards, it was thus about much more than solely economic interests, even though economic doom images were spread as result of a possible loss of the colony; the so-called ‘Indies lost, calamity born’.⁴⁶ The relation with the Indies with its varied culture and exotic flora and fauna not only gave prestige, but also meant a broadening of the horizon for many inhabitants of the Netherlands and an attractive opportunity to make a career. Therefore, the Dutch Indies were a part of the national unity and pride.⁴⁷ The widespread pride for its “development project” in the Indies was also accompanied by a superiority towards the native population. The Netherlands saw proof of their own abilities and, above all, their own indispensability in every factory, every hospital and every railway bridge in the Indies.

On the other hand, the Japanese occupation of the Dutch Indies and the humiliation that the Dutch endured by being removed from daily life and being locked up in internment camps had serious effect on the appearance the Dutch had towards the Indonesian population.⁴⁸ The following quote from an Indonesian youngster clearly illustrates this:

‘The former, in the eyes of the people, superior blandas (Dutch) no longer exist for the Indonesian people. The tough Dutch army (KNIL) was defeated and humiliated by the Nippon army (Japanese army) without a struggle. Dutch colonialism has been dismissed for good.’⁴⁹

In the eyes of the Indonesian population and especially among the youth, the superior Netherlands had fallen off its pedestal. However, this did not result in a ‘wait-and-see’ attitude from the Dutch government perspective and on February 24, 1946, the first war volunteers arrived at Java. Because there were little soldiers available in the Netherlands, the government used KNIL soldiers, most of them just released from Japanese internment

⁴⁵ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 49.

⁴⁶ More information about this mindset can be found in: F. Glissenaar, *Indië verloren, rampspoed geboren* (Hilversum 2003).

⁴⁷ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 49-50.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 50-52.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 51.

camps, for this task. Too little attention was paid to the extent of traumatic experiences these men might have endured and the physical and psychological impact that these experiences could have had. Many of them were tortured and humiliated, which found its resonance later during the Indonesian war of independence, where frequent acts of revenge for previously experienced humiliations were witnessed. Even more, the liberation of these prisoners of war took months in some cases, as they were seriously threatened by the Indonesian nationalists during the 'Bersiap' (translation: be ready) and the feeling grew of being forgotten by the Dutch government.⁵⁰ During the so-called Bersiap in the first months of the war, Indonesian nationalists of various origins and criminal groups who operated under the banner of independence hunted in the cities for any real or allegedly pro-Dutch groups. According to the latest and most independent estimates, twenty-five to thirty thousand Dutch, Indo-European and Ambonese civilians were killed in this massacre, usually in a gruesome manner.⁵¹ The proclamation of the Republic after the Japanese capitulation and the violence against Dutch civilians caused a 'warlike' mood in the Netherlands. As a result of this, the negotiations with political leaders of the Republic were seen by parts of the population as betrayal. At the same time, the violence of the Bersiap was not an "unfavorable" development for the right-wing in the Dutch military and in government circles that argued for military solution to this conflict.⁵²

Since the beginning of the decolonization war, Simon de Waal was active in the Dutch Indies. On the 29th of May, 1946, De Waal was promoted to Major General of the KNIL, commander of the B-division Bandung. From August 1947, he became territorial commander of central Java. This made him one of the most influential commanders in the Dutch Indies, on the central island of Java.⁵³ A small book, published in 1948 and compiled by Captain C.J. Luesen, offers a glimpse of how De Waal was perceived by his men under his command. The book consists of a series of photographs, which serve as a way of informing the Dutch public about the development of the war. In 1948, when the book was published, it already became clear that it was not a realistic scenario to assume that the Indies would be brought back in Dutch spheres of influence at all, or at least not any time soon. However, in the introduction Luesen propagates a more optimistic view:

⁵⁰ More information about the Bersiap can be found in: H.T. Bussemaker, *Bersiap! : opstand in het paradijs op Java en Sumatra 1945-1946* (Zutphen 2005).

⁵¹ Van Doorn and Hendrix, *Ontsporing van geweld*, 126-128. ; Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 128-179. ; W.H. Frederick, 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's national revolution (1945-49): a 'brief genocide' reconsidered', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 359-380.

⁵² Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 52-53.

⁵³ Nieuwe Courant, 'Benoemingen. Kolonel S. de Waal. Bevorderd tot Generaal-Majoor', 31 mei 1946, <http://bit.ly/2C0dfg7>.

*'This book will give you an idea of reality, of the cheerfulness with which our task is carried out and of the material to be worked with. On the one hand it gives a glimpse of the hardships that must be endured and on the other hand it shows the attractive side that staying in the tropics under the current circumstances can bring.'*⁵⁴

The words picked by Luesen denote strong propaganda, since the morale of the soldiers was declining during the course of the war when it became clear that the guerrilla tactics of the enemy were difficult to combat and the Indonesian population was less enthusiastic about the Dutch interference than initially was assumed by many soldiers.⁵⁵ The international pressure - especially from the United States - on western powers to give up their colonies grew every day and the outcome in which Indies remained a part of the Netherlands became increasingly unrealistic.⁵⁶ Yet the book, meant for the Dutch internal market sketched a positive image about the course of the war and activities of the Dutch soldiers. The book consists of photographs of patrols, of the construction of a bridge, of fighting situations with the heading 'we like them (raw)', pictures of captured enemies with the textual support 'we got them', in which a strong "we/them" opposition is created, images of a liberated civil population and images on which soldiers sought relaxation. The introduction of this book is written by Major General De Waal himself in which he explicitly states that this small work is not meant as propaganda, because according to De Waal, the KNIL does not need propaganda; their actions speak for themselves. De Waal claims that this book only provides the truth and facts. Although this book is small in size, with a dozen photographs and limited textual content, De Waal apparently attached enough value to it to write the introduction. The very innocent character of a small book like this had the potential to influence how the war was perceived by Dutch civilians. De Waal was a strong proponent of the preservation of the Indies as a colony of the Netherlands so it was important to move people in the same direction. The first photograph of the book (underneath this text see figure 1) also says something important about the way the author

⁵⁴ C.J. Luesen, *De intieme oorlog. Onze jongens in Indië* (Bandoeng 1948) page numbering is missing.

⁵⁵ Limpach, 'Extreem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', 416-427.

⁵⁶ De Jong, *De terugtocht*, 10-12.

saw the General. De Waal can be seen surrounded by his soldiers. It remains uncertain when this photograph is taken, because a date is lacking. Since the book was published in 1948 and taking into account the small size of the book one can assume that the photograph is taken around the same period. The photo is accompanied with the following words: 'The army commander visits his boys'.⁵⁷ In particular, the fact that the soldiers who served under him were referred to as 'his boys' fits in with the image that arises during this paper about De Waal as an army commander who fought next to his men, who would walk through fire for them and protected them numerous times in front of his superiors after they had crossed another line. After all, it were *his* boys.



Figure 1. Photograph of General De Waal surrounded by soldiers.

During his whole career, De Waal was active as an officer of the KNIL, where he experienced the riots, uprisings and violence. De Waal was known for originating from the ordinary class and was seen as a straightforward officer, not afraid to actively participate in combat situations.⁵⁸ In 1948, De Waal was replaced by Colonel Meyer, who took over control of central Java. After returning to the Netherlands, De Waal was honourably dismissed in 1949 on his own request. After a life in the lee, the General passed away on the 1st of April 1970 at the age of 74. According to a newspaper article in the 'Tong Tong' published on June 24, 1970, written by J.F. v.d. Lee, who spent time in captivity in a Japanese internment camp, it was De Waal's expressed wish to be taken to his final resting place quietly without ceremonial display.⁵⁹ During his career, De Waal received the *Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse*, the highest decoration in the Dutch army for his actions in the Battle of Tarakan in 1942. During this battle he showed acts of courage, tact and loyalty. The reasons for this high military decoration will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

⁵⁷ Luesen, *De intieme oorlog*.

⁵⁸ He originated from the "ordinary" people.

⁵⁹ Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie (NIMH), Den Haag, 508, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, inventarisnummer 147, artikel uit Tong Tong no. 24 van 30 juni 1970.

4.1 Major General De Waal, ‘the Hero of Tarakan’

On January 11th 1942, over 6000 Japanese soldiers of the Sakagoetsji-Brigade landed on three different points of the east coast of the island of Tarakan. This battle is of significance for this paper, since the leading Dutch commander during this battle was lieutenant colonel Simon de Waal, the later Major General. De Waal was strongly outnumbered and had only 1300 soldiers at his disposal and the availability of a large amount of machine guns. The only problem with these so-called batteries (of machine guns) was that they were not very mobile. Moreover, the east coast of Tarakan was three times less protected against invasions compared to the west coast, because it was thought that an invasion at the east side of the Island was not realistic since the west was more suitable for amphibious landings.⁶⁰ However, the opposite turned out to become reality and the Japanese fleet successfully landed their soldiers on the shores of the east side of Tarakan.⁶¹ Despite the poor access roads, the Japanese soldiers managed to make quick progress. In the second night KNIL soldiers were surprised in their sleep and many soldiers were killed by the Japanese. The ones who were able to escape the Japanese slaughter were highly demoralized and De Waal only had an incomplete company of reservists left that he could use to fight off the Japanese invaders. Knowing this would not be enough to fight and ultimately defeat the enemy, De Waal decided to capitulate. Within two days, the Japanese military force defeated the Dutch garrison.

The island of Tarakan was of major importance because of the large amounts of oil that could be produced here. This made Tarakan important for the Netherlands, but also made it one of the top priorities of Japan.⁶² Many of the oilfields were destroyed by the Dutch forces to prevent the Japanese to exploit them.⁶³ However, the Japanese were capable to quickly recover them. The soldiers of the KNIL who survived the fierce fighting were captured after the capitulation and remained prisoner of war until the war ended.

Even though the battle was lost against a four-to-five times bigger Japanese force, the soldiers of the KNIL managed to maintain fighting for a relatively long period of time. After the war, the lieutenant colonel received the nickname the ‘Hero of Tarakan’ because of some brave maneuverers, and in 1948 De Waal received the *Militaire Willemorde 4e klasse*, one of the highest military decorations in the Netherlands. But what happened in Tarakan

⁶⁰ Amphibious landings are operations conducted using ship's boats as the primary method of delivering troops to shore.

⁶¹ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, 717.

⁶² *Ibidem*, 740, 815.

⁶³ *Ibidem*, 817.

that was so brave? And what does this say about De Waal? Have these experiences shaped the man in such a way that it has influenced the choices he made during the Indonesian war of independence?

4.2 The nomination of Simon de Waal for the *Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse*

On the 22nd of October 1947 the committee of decorations nominated lieutenant-colonel De Waal for the royal decoration the *Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse*. According to the committee, De Waal distinguished himself during the war with Japan, in the Battle of Tarakan on January 11, 1942. De Waal, commander of the troops stationed on Tarakan, distinguished himself by acts of courage, policy and loyalty. For example, the committee argued that after an intensive practice and skillful preparation for the defense of Tarakan, the Japanese forces carried out the massive attack with a twentyfold larger army. According to the committee, De Waal gave his orders in a calm, pragmatic and clear manner and due to his inspiring example and great enthusiasm the battle against the Japanese invader became less hopeless.

The recommendation is full of compliments and is in fact one big hymn. The recommendation states that in the middle of the hostile fire De Waal ventured his life to steer his men. His fearlessness and confidence-inspiring actions led to fierce heroic fighting on all fronts. His proud, correct and self-assured attitude towards the Japanese during the capitulation, as well as later in captivity, did not fail to enforce respect from the Japanese military authorities to this courageous Dutch commander.⁶⁴

Although De Waal has undoubtedly been extremely heroic, one should be critical of the words used by the committee. Such recommendations also served another goal, namely as a way to communicate to the population in the Netherlands that the Dutch soldiers fought bravely during the Second World War. This kept the narrative of a brave, small and oppressed country that fought heroically for the freedom of its subjects alive.⁶⁵

Yet, the nomination was not without serious objections and concerns. On the 21st of September 1948 the chair of the commission of decorations, colonel J.H. Cox, wrote a letter to General Spoor in which he refers to a previous order of the General to stop the nomination of Major General De Waal for the *Militaire Willemsorde 4e klasse*, based on an investigation that started to examine De Waal's behavior after the Second World War

⁶⁴ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger Kabinet Legercommandant Commissie Onderscheidingen.

⁶⁵ Ibidem.

during the Indonesian war of independence. In the letter, colonel Cox asks if it is still the case that the nomination of De Waal for the military decoration must be put on hold. A personal notion on the letter from, most certainly, General Spoor, states:

‘The motivation for this is still grounded without prejudice, because the investigation on the subject of these allegations is progressing slowly. On the other hand, the holding of the nomination cannot be kept to infinitum either. We will therefore accept the risk, because I foresee a very long-lasting aftermath of this affair.’⁶⁶

This illustrates that serious concerns were raised and reservations were made with regard to the nomination of De Waal for the M.W.O., because of his behavior after the war. In other words, his behavior during the Indonesian war of independence. This comment must be taken seriously and can provide some valuable information on the way Spoor perceived De Waal. Apparently Spoor thought De Waal's actions were questionable and would in all probability lead to problems. Despite these reservations Spoor decided to proceed with the decoration of De Waal, so apparently the objections did not weigh up against the arguments to appoint De Waal as a knight. This can on the one hand say something about the respect and admiration Spoor had for De Waal, and on the other hand it can say something about the authority of De Waal himself: a powerful commander beloved by his men.

4.3 De Waal's own testimony with regard to his nomination for the M.W.O.

The statement of De Waal characterizes him as down-to-earth, modest and very businesslike. He starts his statement with the recognition that the report of the Battle of Tarakan, signed up by Captain G.L. Reinderhoff, was correct, but that the fringe surrounding the project can be labeled as propaganda.⁶⁷ It is remarkable that the positive words of Reinderhoff were dismissed by De Waal as propaganda. De Waal was obviously not charmed by the adulation of his actions. Another explanation may be that he did not want to draw too much attention to his own person. There are several reasons for this. First, De Waal was involved in an attempt to carry out a coup, as will become clear later in this paper. Secondly, De Waal regularly acted independently without the authorization of his superiors. A royal decoration placed a magnifying glass on his actions and possibly

⁶⁶ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger Kabinet Legercommandant Commissie Onderscheidingen.

⁶⁷ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Verklaring afgelegd door de Generaal-Majoor van het K.N.I.L. S. de Waal, destijds Luitenant-Kolonel, Troepencommandant van Tarakan, in de vergadering der Commissie Militaire Onderscheidingen d.d. 15 November 1948.

meant a limitation in his freedom of movement.

De Waal stated that during the day of the attack he visited the north and the center of the island to check on his men. He also personally led the way for thirty soldiers who doubted to move forwards. While inspecting the terrain he personally drove with an empty truck 150 meters up front to check on the approaching enemies. While carrying out this maneuver, De Waal ended up in the firing line of Japanese machine guns. De Waal got away unharmed, but two of his soldiers got injured. After De Waal returned at base camp he claimed to have installed two machine guns to fight of the approaching enemy. De Waal expected that the Japanese main attack would be centered around a landing side at the west side of the island combined with a large number of parachutists.⁶⁸ Thus, De Waal positioned his troops mainly at the west side of the Island. Instead, the attack was solely executed from the sea and from the east side. Therefore he had to regroup his men, which was unfeasible.

After two days of fierce battle De Waal decided he had to capitulate and told the Japanese commander that all of the troops under his command capitulated with him. Because the communication line between De Waal and some of his troops was damaged, he could not reach all of his troops and they were therefore unaware of the capitulation. Instead of surrendering, some troops kept on fighting the Japanese enemy. Major General De Waal offered the Japanese commander that he would visit these troops to inform them about the agreed surrender. The agreement included that after the surrender both parties would no longer use violence, but was violated by the Japanese Navy. When six Japanese ships navigated through waters where the Dutch ship *Prins van Oranje* placed several mines, two ships got damaged and sunk.⁶⁹ The Japanese shipwrecked were then attacked by the KNIL battery. De Waal convinced the soldiers involved to surrender. A week later, all 215 soldiers were handcuffed and thrown off a ship on the same location where the two Japanese ships had sunk. All of the 215 soldiers tragically died. Given his responsible character with fatherly features, De Waal must have taken this tragedy personally.⁷⁰

Furthermore, De Waal weakens the claims that machine gun fire had eliminated 800

⁶⁸ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Verklaring afgelegd door de Generaal-Majoor van het K.N.I.L. S. de Waal, destijds Luitenant-Kolonel, Troepencommandant van Tarakan, in de vergadering der Commissie Militaire Onderscheidingen d.d. 15 November 1948.

⁶⁹ A short eyewitness report of this event can be found in the archives of the NIMH: NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, statement of E. Joosten former cannonier of the coastal artillery Karoengan, 1941-1942.

⁷⁰ De Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, 818.

Japanese soldiers. Also the alleged twentyfold Japanese superiority is denied by De Waal. According to the Major General the Japanese possessed “only” three times the amount of soldiers the Dutch had.

De Waal also personally contributed to the nomination of lieutenant Van de Belt for a royal decoration. However, he made an objection based on the fact that he could only give judgment of the actions of his sub commanders, the officers corps, and stated that this could be unfair with regard of the actions of the regular soldier. To remove these objections De Waal suggested to propose to the chief commander, General Spoor, to impose a new separate decoration for everyone who participated in the Battle of Tarakan. This once again underlined his character. He wanted that his men, the ordinary soldiers, also received recognition for their actions during the Battle of Tarakan, and not only the highest responsible officers.⁷¹

De Waal’s statement provides interesting first hand insights in his character. De Waal lists the events in a pragmatic, cold-blooded, almost negligent manner. Reports with in his view exaggerated statements are dismissed as propaganda. De Waal was by no means chasing personal fame nor was he trying to create a personal cult for himself. But why was he seen as the ‘Hero of Tarakan’ and later received the highest military decoration for it? The view of De Waal showed differences with other testimonies of men who served under him. These testimonies can provide more insights to answer that question.

4.4 Other testimonies about De Waal’s actions during the Battle of Tarakan

The head of the air protection service of the Dutch army in Tarakan, J. van Dulst, had regular contact with De Waal. Van Dulst praised De Waal’s calm mind and pragmatic worldview.⁷² According to Van Dulst, De Waal knew that the amount of soldiers at his disposal was insufficient to stop the Japanese invasion, but was still determined to fight and to protect the island. This determination was an example for his men, so when the time came to fight, the soldiers were – according to Van Dulst – relatively calm. Even when the situation seemed hopeless, De Waal opened a new front where the Japanese soldiers were fought and even pushed back for a short period of time. In the afternoon of the first day of

⁷¹ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, voordracht Koninklijke onderscheiding luitenant v.d. Belt.

⁷² NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, getuigenis van J. van Dulst, Hoofd Luchtbeschermingsdienst Tarakan-Tjilatjap.

the Japanese attack, De Waal personally started a counter attack which made the position of the Dutch army significantly better. His visible presence and encouraging words restored shocked confidence. Many soldiers died during this battle, among them the sub commanders Treffers and Bakker, whose names arose more often in the battle reports, to illustrate the serious characters of the battle. Van Dulst ends his testimony with:

‘In all circumstances in which I saw him, he was himself. All of his orders were accepted by his men because they knew what he ordered was thought through. If everyone had been as brave and polite as De Waal, the Japanese would have been even more damaged. He risked his life repeatedly and he has been in action continuously. He did what he could to harm the enemy as much as possible.’⁷³

The words of Van Dulst are endorsed by the reservist officer J. Bierdrager. Bierdrager stated that before the Battle of Tarakan began, lieutenant-colonel De Waal received ‘full support, respect and popularity’ among his troops. The preparedness to resist was raised by his appearance. During the battle Bierdrager saw that De Waal - with some of his officers and troops - passed by the hospital in an empty truck, to recon the situation on the ground. While doing this De Waal was within shooting range of the Japanese artillery and thus risking his life with this maneuver. This testimony corresponds with the statement of De Waal himself in which he claimed to have explored the forecourt close to the enemies position. That this action was not without danger became clear after several men got injured, including a sergeant. After the war ended, during imprisonment in Japanese interments camps, many conversations were about the Battle of Tarakan and the role played by De Waal, according to Bierdrager. The soldiers were unanimously positive about De Waal’s leadership skills and described him as unique, it was regarded as an honor to have served him.⁷⁴ Despite the fact that soldiers work in military structures and are not likely to speak bad about their superiors in public, the words chosen are extremely positive, from which the appreciation for De Waal comes to the fore. Being obedient is different from praising the commander you serve.

The last testimony available in the archives is of M. de Bruin, a sergeant-major of the infantry, who was present at the battle of Tarakan. De Bruin stated that the assigned

⁷³ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Strijd om Tarakan 1942, getuigenis van J. van Dulst, Hoofd Luchtbeschermingsdienst Tarakan-Tjilatjap.

⁷⁴ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Strijd om Tarakan 1942, getuigenis van J. Bierdrager, geneesheer KNIL.

task could only be carried out according to the expectations, when examples were given of courage and determination, by someone who executed his task in complete remorse and awareness. De Bruin describes that during the execution of the task, troop commander De Waal joined the men and himself and after informing them about the intention of the maneuver, personally went in front of the troops to temporarily take charge. His orders were short and clear and when necessary he stopped. Where the terrain conditions required other formations, they were formed. De Bruin stated that he had the greatest difficulty to keep the same speed as the commander, who proceeded without any cover for enemy fire and calmly kept the middle of the road at a normal pace. According to De Bruin one should not assume that this was a form of recklessness: on the contrary, the circumstances made it necessary. It was necessary to proceed and guide the way in a calm and cold-blooded way. Determination was crucial, because even the appearance of hesitation or fear could have dire consequences for the well-being of his men.⁷⁵

4.5 Conclusion

The Battle of Tarakan and the aftermath - the nomination of De Waal for one of the highest military decorations - provide valuable insights about his personality. It is clear that he regarded his own actions as just his duty and did not regard them as heroic. On the other hand, his subjects were lyrical about the bravery and the leadership of the commander. Moreover, the committee in charge of the distribution of the decorations was also extremely positive regarding the actions of De Waal. However, one must be critical towards the testimonies since they are limited in number and possibly biased, written down by men in favor of De Waal, who might have still worked in a strong hierarchical setting. Also the committee strongly exaggerated the number of enemies fighting the Dutch forces, making it seem the enemy was larger than it actually was. Despite these reservations, something remarkable must have happened on the Island of Tarakan, which was at the same time tragical. Many of De Waal's men died during the battle and in the aftermath 215 KNIL soldiers were thrown off a Japanese ship in open sea after being instructed by De Waal to surrender to the Japanese commander. It is very likely that this had a considerable impact on De Waal's person in future decision-making during his career in the decolonization war. Furthermore, the objections raised by General Spoor with regard to the nomination of De Waal for the *Militaire Willemsorde* show that the relationship between these two men was

⁷⁵ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Strijd om Tarakan 1942, getuigenis van M. de Bruin, voormalig Sergeant-majoor der artillerie.

problematic. On the one hand there was respect for De Waal's performance during the Battle of Tarakan and his General functioning, on the other hand De Waal's independent actions frustrated Spoor, which caused many problems with his civilian superiors. The next chapter will elaborate more on this problematic relationship between the two Generals.

5.1 De Waal and his relationship with General Spoor

On September 30, 1943, General Spoor drew up a document regarding the functioning of his sub commanders. In this so-called ‘judgment and conviction’ Spoor sometimes made harsh judgements with regard to the functioning of several highly ranked officers. He argued about lieutenant-General H. ter Poorten that he was a moving and emotional figure with genius thoughts, though mentally instable, not powerful enough to lead his men and not adequately controlling himself. The judgment on Major General R. Bakkers was even more severe. Bakkers was, according to Spoor, an intellectual and friendly on a personal level, but the attitude of Bakkers was weak, he never inspired his men and was not decisive. These harsh words illustrate that Spoor was not afraid to give his honest opinion about the highest ranks within the military, who were active in the Dutch Indies. While Spoor used many words for most commanders, the judgment of De Waal was remarkable short. The length of the judgment consisted of only one sentence in which he called De Waal: ‘the defender of Tarakan, a remarkably calm and skilled commander, whose skills were highly recognized by all.’⁷⁶ The fact that Spoor referred to Tarakan means that his actions there were taken very seriously and weighed heavily. Although the circumstances might have changed in the years between 1943 and the start of the decolonization war, De Waal got one of the best appreciations of all the commanders of the officer corps.

Despite these positive remarks De Waal was one of the commanders who most often came into conflict with General Spoor during the Indonesian war of independence although he was never seriously held accountable nor were there serious sanctions imposed on him. His fame gained at the Battle of Tarakan, the respect he received from his men and Spoor, made it apparently difficult to give him serious reprimands. De Waal acted repeatedly on his own behalf and even ignored orders from Spoor himself. This chapter will elaborate more on the difficult relationship between Spoor and De Waal and will discuss what this says about the hierarchy and discipline within the Dutch army. The degree of control of the military leadership over their commanders was not always a given fact, let alone the control over individual soldiers conducting structural and systematic violence.

⁷⁶ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 1182, rapport opgesteld door majoor der Generale Staf KNIL S.H. Spoor betreffende beoordelingen van officieren: luitenant-generaal H. ter Poorten, generaal-majoor R. Bakkers, R. Bakkers, kolonel W.P. van Veen Luitenant-kolonel P.G. Mantel, kapitein Buurman van Vreede, kapitein De Vries, generaal J.H. Uhl, majoor jhr. J.M.R. Sandberg, luitenant-kolonel P. Droog, luitenant-kolonel J. van Eenennaam, majoor . van der Eem, kapitein D.J. ter Haar, officier van gezondheid dr. Simons, luitenant-kolonel R.B. van Rijken, majoor P. Gerssen, reservekapitein Zimmerman, generaal-majoor Schilling, generaal-majoor Pesman, luitenant-kolonel Reemer, luitenant-kolonel Van den Hoogenband, kolonel Vooren, luitenant-kolonel S. de Waal, kapitein M. Kooistra, luitenant-kolonel Vogelsang, Halkema, Mars, Kapitz, majoors H.H.L. Tieland, Giebel en Boester en kapitein De Riemer.

In mid-1946 the KNIL-sergeant Kaihatu, part of the military police, was known for his violent behavior. Despite numerous violent acts, among which the mistreatment of prisoners in which Kaihatu played a central role, Kaihatu only received a single warning and was not arrested, seriously corrected, degraded, transferred or suspended for this. Both General Spoor as well as Major General De Waal were aware of the systematic use of violence of this sergeant, but no action was taken. The pragmatic character and knowledge of Kaihatu clearly outweighed the applied violence.⁷⁷

Another event of violence in which De Waal was involved at least as leading officer was against the minority of Chinese civilians in the archipelago. On the 25th of February 1946 the Chinese Committee for Assisting Preservation of Law and Order filed a complaint at the civil authorities in Batavia with regard to violence used against Chinese civilians by Dutch soldiers.⁷⁸ Beside the violations the Chinese population had to endure, there were also racist treatments by the KNIL with respect to the Chinese soldiers serving under the Dutch flag. A Netherlands Forces Intelligence Service (NEFIS) report dated from June 1946 states that the morale under the Chinese part of the KNIL worsened because of the contemptuous racist way the Chinese were treated by the Dutch. Major General De Waal weakened the accusations against his men, stating that he never received a single notification of the mistreatment of Chinese elements in the KNIL and additionally stated that the effort of the Chinese soldiers could count on enormous appreciation.⁷⁹

The attack authorized by De Waal on the 4th of November 1947 on an Indonesian National Army headquarters is an example in which De Waal himself crossed several lines. The attack caused a lot of political turmoil in Netherlands because it was unauthorized and on the Republican side of the demarcation line. Despite all these facts it only lead to an insignificant reprimand for De Waal. This gentle treatment for serious disobedience is illustrative for De Waal's freedom of action during the war. Despite several "reprimands" no serious action was taken against De Waal to correct him.⁸⁰ Air attacks like that of November 4th 1947 were sometimes also initiated by the pilots of these fighter planes. The historian Judith Lizé argues that during offensive reconnaissance flights pilots independently sought for targets to attack, while sometimes no hostile activities were seen in the kampongs. This was reinforced by independent acting commanders as De Waal who did countless requests for air support during their unauthorized actions. Limpach argues that the top of the military did nothing to regulate these requests and did not actively try to

⁷⁷ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 214.

⁷⁸ *Ibidem*, 215.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*, 222.

⁸⁰ *Ibidem*, 406-407.

reduce civilian casualties. In an internal note De Waal admitted that the coordinates of the enemy on the ground were often inaccurate, resulting in a situation in which the pilots had to pick the targets themselves. This fact did not result in a stop of air support requests, therefore the commanders accepted the civilian casualties as collateral damage.⁸¹ In addition, the many civilian casualties caused by the air attacks were counterproductive for the political negotiations with the Republic and for the support of the local population. Foremost, these attacks were used as a reprisal measure intended to punish the population and to force them to choose the Dutch side.

Beside the use of systematic violence, looting was also a serious problem. Although one can say this is less severe than the application of violence, it does explain the underlying problem in which violence and independent actions can prosper: a serious lack of discipline. General Spoor considered looting highly counterproductive for winning the trust of the local population. In an internal message, the General manifested his discontentment with regard to looting even more times than about the use of excessive violence. In the communication with civilians and politicians in the Netherlands, Spoor deliberately did not speak about this aspect, so a misplaced image of reality arose. Spoor expressed fierce criticism towards the commanders, especially De Waal during the first police actions. On July 30th 1947 Spoor sent De Waal a telegram in which he stated that he had heard from various sources about the looting of a radio station and various warehouses. There would have also been acts of unnecessary vandalism and reportedly the KNIL used a lot of violence while there was no resistance and the local population had been benevolent with the Dutch troops.⁸² These accusations were supported by Vervloet, prosecutor and auditor at the KNIL. Spoor was shocked by the fact that Vervloet argued that the officers were directly involved in the looting and that the commanders consciously looked the other way.⁸³ Spoor ended his telegram with the summation to end undisciplined behavior with force and demanded that De Waal took stand against these practices and maintained the strict firing discipline set by him and his superiors.

De Waal was the highest commander addressed by Spoor and his reaction to Spoor's telegram might not have the one Spoor had expected. Instead of accepting the words of Spoor, De Waal denied the accusations of the General. De Waal said he had taken note of the 'exaggerated, tendentious, at points even incorrect and misleading' accusations of Vervloet 'with some detriment'.⁸⁴ He defended his sub commanders Meijer, Beumont and

⁸¹ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 413-414.

⁸² *Ibidem*, 420-422.

⁸³ *Ibidem*, 425-427.

⁸⁴ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 426.

Wierma and gave Spoor the urgent advice to check the reliability of his sources: a rather rude and remarkable answer to his superior. He continued his statement by arguing that Spoor should consider to redraw his 'very hurtful and perhaps impulsively sent' telegram.⁸⁵ This illustrates once again the rebellious character of De Waal. He ignored an order of his superior and moreover he insisted on a revision of Spoor's telegram. Limpach argues in his book *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor* that this internal messaging reveals that there was a tendency in the army of obfuscation and trivialisation with regard to the use of violence and other unacceptable practices such as looting; in this case officers who cover the crimes of their men and even participated in them.

5.2 Conclusion

Admonitions from the highest commander in the Dutch Indies Spoor in the direction of De Waal resulted in little effect. The fact that Spoor is described in J.A. de Moor's book about the General as exceptional, gifted with a quick mind, a sharp intellect, a leader of men, energetic, vigorous and full of optimism indirectly says something about the stature of De Waal. The fact that De Waal argued with Spoor and was not afraid to (publicly) disobey Spoor, illustrates that De Waal saw himself as the right authority to do so. The fact that De Waal got away without serious reprimands confirms the status De Waal had among the highest military authorities. De Waal was the only commander who did not lose during the Second World War, because his actions at Tarakan were seen as a victory, which gave him more leverage to make objections to Spoor. He was much respected and followed by his sub commanders and soldiers. It becomes increasingly clear that De Waal had no intention of following Spoor and more than once he had his own set of values on which he acted. These examples show that there was a serious lack of discipline in the army. This could have made the use of systematic excessive violence possible, especially when commanders tend to downplay this phenomenon and prefer to protect their men from sanctions and prosecutions. This chapter, as well as previous chapters, even more supports the argument that during this war agency played a major part in the course of actions. De Waal 'willfully, actively, and rationally' pursued his ends rather than react to the initiative of others (Spoor). His person cannot be seen a tool of group projects or part of the government policy, because he actively and willingly disobeyed orders given by his superiors. The choices and actions of one single man, that of Major General De Waal, partly decided the direction of the war. The disagreement between the two commanders in itself illustrates furthermore that two

⁸⁵ Ibidem, 426.

individuals were of major importance when it comes to the implementation of policy, instead of abstract structures. This underlines the importance of agency in this war.

6.1 Major General De Waal and his experiences of the first police actions

On July 21st 1947 the first police actions against the Indonesian military and civil population started. To the surprise of the international community, who regularly criticized the Dutch actions in the Indies, General Spoor ordered his troops to attack, mainly because of the unsuccessful negotiations between the Netherlands and the Republic. Another reason was the non-compliance with the Linggadjati agreement⁸⁶, since both parties maintained their own interpretation of the agreement.⁸⁷ The attack, however, only lasted until August 5th 1947, when the government in The Hague decided to put an end to it. This decision was for a large part caused by international pressure.⁸⁸ This caused great dissatisfaction among Spoor and Van Mook and they even threatened with resignation if the attack could not proceed. Eventually, Spoor and Van Mook accepted the decision made in The Hague. This illustrates that despite the fact that General Spoor saw more benefits in the military track, eventually the authority of the government seated in The Hague was accepted and acted upon.

The initiated police actions served three main objectives. During the first phase, the operation phase, it was expected that the military-technical superiority would bring the Dutch the strategic important positions at Java and Sumatra. It was thought that after taking control of these strategic points, the enemy would be disorganized and demoralized, so that the areas could be “purified” from the guerrilla groups in the second phase, the so-called pacification phase. The first phase was successful. From a military point of view, the Indonesian National Army was not capable to offer serious resistance, so the operation phase went according to plan determined by Spoor. The second phase, the pacification phase encountered significant more difficulties. The Indonesian National Army and the independent acting rebel groups avoided large scale battle, knowing that they could not win those kind of battles. Instead they focused on guerrilla tactics such as small-scale attacks on military posts and patrols and the destruction of roads and bridges. The mountainous area and the fact that these groups had more knowledge of the terrain on which they fought, made the guerrilla tactics very successful.⁸⁹ For this reason the third phase, in which stability, order and peace should prevail, never actually became reality.

Despite the fact that the first police actions only lasted for sixteen days, they were

⁸⁶ Limpach, *De brandende kampongs*, 87, 120.

⁸⁷ NIMH & Stichting het Veteraneninstituut, *Het Nederlandse militaire optreden in Nederlands-Indië/Indonesië 1945-1950*, 14.

⁸⁸ After the first police actions the United Nations took the lead at the renewed peace negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia.

⁸⁹ NIMH & Stichting het Veteraneninstituut, *Het Nederlandse militaire optreden in Nederlands-Indië/Indonesië 1945-1950*, 15.

highly violent. Major General De Waal was in charge of the police actions in Central Java. The experiences of the first police actions are documented and commissioned by De Waal himself in a so-called bundling of experiences. De Waal pointed out that he regarded the documentation of memories to be highly important in order to draw lessons from it. This could prevent possible errors in the future. In addition, deficiencies and imperfections in the organization and the way of approaching battles could be improved.⁹⁰ This in itself already illustrates several things. Foremost it illustrates that De Waal believed more of these actions would follow or at least that he was a proponent for that and that the presence of the Netherlands in the Dutch Indies would be long lasting, otherwise no lessons would be drawn for future undertakings. Secondly, it illustrates De Waal took these actions very seriously by drafting a thorough evaluation of more than a hundred pages. Thirdly, De Waal recognized that mistakes were made.

The gained experiences are divided in three different categories: technical lessons, organizational lessons and tactical lessons. In this chapter experiences will be analyzed in the light of what is known about the first police actions according to secondary literature and will draw conclusions from the way De Waal perceived these police actions. This can provide us with more insight in the views of the Major General with regard to the enemy, his own forces and his own position. The focus lies primarily on the experiences with regard to *tactical action* of the troops at Central Java, as the technical lessons go into too much technical detail and do not provide significant information about the person and the train of thought of De Waal. The same goes for the organizational lessons, since these are very factual and in particular concern the classification of the size of certain units. The bundling of experiences are signed and dated by Major General De Waal on February 23rd 1948, in between the first and second police actions.

6.2 Lessons learned from the first phase: the actual police actions

In the preparation phase of the first police actions it already became clear that operating according to Western standards, the conventional way of waging war with large divisions, was unsuitable for the situation at central Java.⁹¹ The brigades had to operate independently, split into small units to be able to occupy an area as large as possible within the Dutch military capabilities and to secure economic objects.

Furthermore, only in the preparation phase the division staff (the higher ranked

⁹⁰ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 775, Inleiding, Inhoudsopgave & Hoofdstuk I – Luchtstrijdkrachten.

⁹¹ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 2.

officers) could have an influence with regard to the planning of attacks. In the execution phase the influence of the division staff was reduced to a minimum: the power and decision-making primarily rested on the shoulders of lower ranked executive officers, mainly due to the speed of the developments in the heat of battle. Sending extra troops when needed was not a realistic option, as these troops would arrive too late, also partly due to outdated communication systems. How the battle unfolded was foremost in the hands of the executing officers; the smaller brigades were self-supporting. After reaching the objectives of the police actions, the operational units became “static” ones. In order to secure law and order in the best way possible, De Waal thought it necessary to grant the troop commanders far reaching power.⁹²

The experiences of De Waal confirm the fact that the guerrilla tactics of the enemy forced the Dutch military to form smaller units in order to fight the insurgents. The only negative outcome mentioned in this document was that the fragmentation of the troops led to difficulties in the ‘administrative command relationships’. What is meant by these administrative command relationships is that sub commanders tended to act on their own behalf and that the communication of the sub commanders to the higher command was insufficient, stating:

‘They (the sub commanders) often failed to send nil messages or position statements.’⁹³

However, at the same time De Waal defended the attitude of his sub commanders while the experiences underline the importance of speed during the police actions, in procedures as well as in the decision-making process. A lot depended on the judgment and immediate personal intervention of the commanders in the front of the battle, if the commanders wanted to be able to take full advantage of unexpected developments. The experiences stated that the sub commanders should not be worried about the use of snipers by the enemy. The troop commanders should be able to make the correct judgments and inform their superiors. De Waal argued that it always had to be kept in mind that once an action is initiated, there is in fact no way back, considering the bad shape of the roads and the risk of being lured into an ambush.⁹⁴ This once again is a glimpse of the fearlessness that was seen at De Waal during the Battle of Tarakan. Also during this war, he was of the opinion that several hostile snipers, should not withhold the troops from advancing.

⁹² NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 6.

⁹³ Ibidem, 6.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, 7.

6.3 Lessons learned from the second phase: the pacification phase

After reaching the objectives determined for the first phase the conquered areas had to be kept under the control of the Dutch military by patrolling intensively. To ensure the occupation of the renewed conquered territory was lasting, night patrols also had to be enforced and ambushes had to be put in place in order to stop the advancing enemy. Securing their own outposts came last. These ‘offensive’ defensive thoughts were not just simply accepted by the sub commanders and the experiences claim it took a lot of effort to convince several sub commanders of these offensive and quite risky tactics.⁹⁵ The fact that De Waal managed to convince his sub commanders confirms the respect and prestige he received under his men and the persuasiveness the General possessed.

Another striking aspect of this section is the very formal language used for matters that later entered the history books as extreme and excessive violence. Terms as ‘combing, wiping and stripping’ are used for what was actually fighting a harsh war. On the one hand it can be explained in the tradition of military documents in which formal language and vague terminology are no rarity. On the other hand this document fits perfectly in the pragmatic and down-to-earth character of Major General De Waal. Also, the term ‘purification’ is frequently used in this document. This is in line with the official language used by the government officials and other secondary literature. However, a comment with regard to the use of this terminology is justified. When government officials and high ranking officers use all kinds of cumbersome words, one is deliberately trying to sketch a false picture of reality and is trying to influence the public opinion. Combing, wiping, stripping and purification come down to own single matter: fighting a war and killing the enemy, just as police actions tried to mask reality as being an internal matter, but in fact it was a bitter war.

According to De Waal a purification action had to be followed by a permanent occupation. When the Dutch army did not occupy renewed conquered territory, the enemy could return to his position and would terrorize the local population. Furthermore, De Waal believed that a voluntarily retreat would be seen – by both the enemy as well as at home - as a failure of the Dutch forces. The republicans could use this in their propaganda to claim that they had deterred the Dutch and chased them away. This would result in a morale boost for the enemy forces and for this reason voluntarily retreats were undesirable at all times.⁹⁶ In fact, retreating from the Indies was not an option in the mindset of De Waal.

⁹⁵ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 8.

⁹⁶ Ibidem, 9.

Purification and occupying new territories illustrate the expansionist drive of the Major General.

The air force also took a prominent role in the experiences of De Waal during the second phase. De Waal stated that air support could only be successful when the coordinates of the targets on the ground were known precisely. Without accuracy, these air attacks were pointless and would even work in favour of the enemy when civilians became the victim of such attacks. However, this seems contradictory with the message De Waal had sent internally in which he expressed the concern that he was not always sure about the right coordinates, which resulted in single-handed action from the pilots.⁹⁷ Despite these objections De Waal repeatedly made an appeal on his pilots. This illustrates that De Waal, like Spoor, had two different faces. In the experiences not a single word is stressed about these doubts and reservations.

With regard to civilians, De Waal stated that their effort is essential for the repair activities, for example the reconstruction of roads. Furthermore, he stated that the overall maintenance of the roads must be transferred to the civil authorities. Despite the fact that De Waal was a strong proponent for keeping the colony under Dutch authority, this does not mean that he did not foresee a prominent and important role for the civil population. The document stressed the importance of the civil population repeatedly, stating that:

'The creation of a state of law and order can never occur without the cooperation of the local population and certainly not in the populous areas such as those found on Java.'⁹⁸

6.4 Lessons learned from the third phase

The strict separation that had been made between the various phases was mainly of a military point of view and remained in a way theoretical. De Waal himself described the difference between the second and the third phase as follows:

'However, a distinction between the two phases is desirable because our action in the second phase can still be regarded as military, while in the third phase the 'political' character is most prominent.'⁹⁹

The fact that De Waal called the actions clearly military is remarkable, as the Dutch government tends to speak about police actions. It should be noted that in the third phase

⁹⁷ Limpach, *De brandende Kampongs*,

⁹⁸ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 8.

⁹⁹ Ibidem, 12.

the guerrilla warfare of the enemy unabatedly continued, so the strict distinction between the several phases had a more symbolic character. The main objective of the third phase was to prepare the conquered areas for newly established civil political management accompanied by their own police organizations. The organized form of resistance can be considered broken in this phase, the most active violent organizations are diminished or have left the area. There are only a few active 'gangs' left in the outskirts which are terrorizing the local population. In this scenario it was thought that the elimination of the leadership of the rebel groups and the military defeat of these groups went hand in hand with the removal of nationalistic sentiment among the population. This old-fashioned way of thinking was permeated by the old guard of KNIL officers and civil authorities in the Netherlands. The rebel groups, however, who were in fact armed militias, received support from large parts of the population. Especially the youth was very resolute in their desire for independence and was not prepared to make any concessions on this matter. Some military successes from the Netherlands could not change this fact.

De Waal had two main objectives on which he based his policy during the third phase. First he placed detachments of soldiers in the border areas close to the enemy. These detachments had the task to fight the enemy when they were attacked, but in particular to carry out patrols during day and nighttime. The main purposes of these patrols were to maintain law and order and ensure the safety of the local population and to protect them from 'gangs and terrorists'.¹⁰⁰ Once again, the strong sentiment that lived among the Dutch became visible. The people of Indonesia had to be protected from several threats coming from the insurgents. That these people may have supported the insurgents and perceived the Dutch as their enemy is not mentioned anywhere. The second important goal was to show power to the enemy just by patrolling and being present in certain areas. Irregular patrols would be the best option, so that the enemy could not anticipate on it. In areas that contained a larger surface multiple-day patrols had to be performed. In doing so, De Waal ignored the fact that there was a structural shortage of personnel and that the material was also inadequate in many cases. The fragmented deployment of the troops resulted in a weakening of their strength. Apart from the purely military measures, the third phase also entailed the preparations for the deployment of police and security forces, so that these organizations could take over the tasks of the Dutch military. This illustrates that there were concrete plans to hand over power in areas conquered on the 'rebels' to native elements. The downside, however, was that these so-called general police squads only had

¹⁰⁰ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 12.

access to one machine gun for every ten police officers. As a result, the police lacked strength and remained dependent on the soldiers of the KNIL. The desired dependency relationship was maintained that way.

6.5 Conclusion

During the different phases of the police actions, the participation of the population became increasingly important. In the first phase, the contribution of the population consisted of supply of labour to restore bridges and damaged roads. In the second phase the part increased due to the permanent occupation, the increasing trust in the Dutch army and the willingness to provide essential intelligence. The third phase is characterized by the direct participation of the local population in police and security forces. However, the employment of the civilian populations also has a clear self-interest. According to the experiences, the use of natives resulted in a saving of the own troops and reduced the risk of material and personal losses.¹⁰¹ At the same time, it is stressed that a permanent control by the Dutch forces over natives in several security initiatives is essential. This reaffirms the image of a dependent and needy country that will not be able to make the necessary steps to more autonomy without the guidance of the superior Netherlands. The confidence that Indonesians could independently make this work was lacking. This corresponds with the prevailing mindset in the Netherlands of the white man's burden and the modernization theory. The experiences of the first police actions confirm the influence De Waal had on the implemented policy. Although the overall strategy was decided by Spoor, De Waal in fact determined the execution of it on the ground. He was willing to provide more authority and power to his sub commanders in case the speed of the attacks demanded this and he was a strong proponent occupying new territories after purifying them, even against the orders of Spoor. Even more important, he also determined what was written down in the bundling of experiences which might have been used as reference work at times of the second police actions. This once again strengthens the presumption that one single man could have a major influence in the implemented policy and how these experiences were memorized by controlling the process of the bundling of experiences. This strengthens the argument of the power of agency during the decolonization war.

¹⁰¹ NIMH, Den Haag, 509, Dekolonisatie van Nederlands-Indië (1945-1950), inventarisnummer 785, ervaringen politionele actie, 1-16, 15.

7.1 The Treaty of Linggadjadi and the alleged coup d'état

On the 15th of November 1946 the commission general, on behalf of the Dutch government, and the leadership of the proclaimed Republic of Indonesia initialed the draft agreement of the Treaty of Linggadjadi.¹⁰² This rapprochement caused a major storm of criticism in the Netherlands and eventually led to the planning of a coup involving Major General De Waal. The Treaty of Linggadjadi was a political agreement, which included the recognition of the authority of the Republic over the areas Java, Madoera and Sumatra. Together with the federal states Borneo and East-Indonesia they would form the United States of Indonesia. The United States of Indonesia, the Netherlands and the Netherlands Antilles would in turn form the Dutch-Indonesian Union under the guidance of the Dutch Crown, which should be established on January 1st 1949.¹⁰³ The Dutch cabinet-Beel I was divided with regard to the agreement. The ministers of the *Partij van de Arbeid* supported it but those of the *Katholieke Volkspartij* (KVP) objected to the symbolic role and the non-committal nature of the Dutch-Indonesian Union to be established. The agreement was also called the 'double accord of Linggadjadi', due to the fact that for each party it meant something different. For the Dutch, the agreement made sure that Indonesia stayed connected to the Netherlands. The Indonesian people viewed the agreement as the first step towards independence.

Besides the objections of the KVP there was even more fierce resistance of right wing parties and organizations led by Pieter Sjoerds Gerbrandy, the former prime minister of the Netherlands during the Second World War. The former resistance movement active during the Second World War, consisting of Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema - the most famous Dutch person of the resistance movement - and Gerbrandy, wanted to overthrow the government of Louis Beel on the 24th of April 1947.¹⁰⁴ The dissatisfaction of Gerbrandy with the government's policy, giving more and more freedom to the leadership of Indonesia which would gradually lead to its independence, was seen as an act of betrayal by this movement and could not be tolerated. Moreover, the commander of the Royal Naval Forces, Admiral C.E.L. Helfrich, and the chief General staff of the Royal Netherlands Army, General Kruls, protested and expressed their reservations towards the agreement. Both commanders also wrote an extensive letter to prime minister Beel, the minister of War and the minister of Naval Affairs expressing their serious concerns about the 'mutilation of the kingdom'.¹⁰⁵ Both men claimed that they could no longer fulfill their duty to the best of their knowledge, unless the government would decide not to submit Linggadjadi's

¹⁰² Van der Zee, *Harer Majesteits loyaalste onderdaan*, 295.

¹⁰³ Ibidem, 296.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem, 296-302.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem, 296.

agreement to the House of Representatives.¹⁰⁶ This can be seen as serious threats in the direction of those in power.

On December 2nd 1946 Gerbrandy spoke directly to the population of the Netherlands during a radio speech. In this speech, he called the Treaty of Linggadjati a betrayal and called for a policy change, because he wanted to keep the Dutch Indies as part of the Netherlands. This can be explained in the light that many people saw the Dutch Indies as a part of the Dutch history and pride. The protest movement received considerable support among the Dutch population and within two weeks 300,000 people signed the petition against the Treaty of Linggadjati.¹⁰⁷ This led to the foundation of the National Committee Enforcement Government Unity with among the founders prominent figures like former minister Welter and members of the 'Raad van State' Van Angeren and J.W. Meijer Ranneft. The tone became even darker when word got out that the government intended to sign the agreement on March 25th, 1947.¹⁰⁸ Gerbrandy changed his gaze and discussed with the professor of Colonial History F. Gerretson to what extent a *coup d'état* was justified. In a radio speech on the 14th of April, Gerbrandy pointed out that the committee would not let its protest consist solely out of words and that they would hold those who were accountable for 'the betrayal' responsible.¹⁰⁹

The ones who planned the coup wanted to communicate with the population by means of placard, radio messages and newspapers when they had the government in custody. The formerly mentioned Helfrich and Kruls would take care of law and order in the nation. The plan of the coup was told to François van 't Sant, one of the most trusted advisors of the Royal family. Van 't Sant wrote in a letter towards the Queen Wilhelmina the following remarkable words with regard to the leadership of the Dutch Indies:

*'That at the same time the army in the Indies will act under General De Waal, NOT under General Spoor; that De Waal is aware of everything and is already involved in the plan referred to here.'*¹¹⁰

This shows that De Waal was involved in the attempt to overthrow the government, because of the disagreement of the course of action in the Dutch Indies. De Waal was prepared to take extreme measures in order to preserve the Dutch Indies as a colony of the Netherlands. Furthermore, it illustrates that Gerbrandy, Helrich and Kruls had more trust in De Waal than in General Spoor. On several occasions Gerbrandy had described Spoor as

¹⁰⁶ Van der Zee, *Harer Majesteits loyaalste onderdaan*, 297.

¹⁰⁷ Ibidem, 297.

¹⁰⁸ Limapch, *De brandende kampongs*, 54, 120.

¹⁰⁹ Van der Zee, *Harer Majesteits loyaalste onderdaan*, 299-300.

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, 300.

'too political'. Spoor had also shown, during his military career, that although he might disagree with the political decision makers in The Hague and Batavia, at the end of the day he remained loyal. This did not apply to De Waal, he was willing to overthrow the government and his own supreme commander in order to keep the pre-war ideal alive.

7.2 Conclusion

The alleged coup d'état in which De Waal was involved illustrates that De Waal saw himself as the potential military leader of the Dutch Indies. This affair accentuates De Waal as a person. During the Indonesian war of independence De Waal acted on his own behalf on multiple occasions and ignored orders given by his military and civil superiors several times. This case shows that he might have thought that he had no superiors, that he, Simon de Waal, commander and loved under his men because he was one of them, the hero of Tarakan, could have been the supreme commander of the Dutch Indies. In any case, it shows that hierarchical lines and his loyalty to his superiors were not unconditional. His loyalty was with his men, with the Dutch East Indies and with his home. According to the Treaty of Linggadjati, Java would become part of the Republic of Indonesia. Java, the place where De Waal was territorial commander, where many of his men died defending it. Losing this did not seem to be an option. The plans of the coup were initiated by only a handful individuals who could have changed the course of history only that they could not keep the plans secret enough, so they had to call of the coup. Despite the fact that the coup was a failure, this story indicates that De Waal made his own plan, pursued his own ideals, consciously and actively wanted to determine the course of history.

8. Conclusion and discussion

The Indonesian war of independence plays an important role in understanding the Dutch colonial past. Because of sensitivities around the subject, research into the role of Dutch soldiers, leading commanders and the Dutch government remained underexposed for a long period of time. Directly after the Second World War, in which the Netherlands and Europe suffered from a brutal German occupier, the Netherlands itself became an occupying power. In the four year lasting war with the Republic of Indonesia between 1945 and 1949 it is estimated that 150,000 people lost their lives, including innocent civilians. This logically leaves traces on both societies. Afraid of being thwarted by hundreds of thousands of veterans, the Dutch government has neglected to investigate the role of the Dutch government in the war and the allegations made in the direction of Dutch soldiers about the use of structural and systematic violence. The recent published study of the historian Rémy Limpach brought a change in this and has brought the discussion to a further acceleration. His findings about the structural and systematic use of violence by the Dutch army ensured that the Dutch government officially commissioned an investigation into the decolonization war with regard to this alleged structural application of violence and the role of the government in this.

Although the decolonization war received the last decades considerably more attention the role of individuals remained underexposed. Apart from an extended biography from J.A. de Moor of the supreme commander in the Indies, General Spoor, the existing literature lacked other studies of important figures during this war. This paper tried to address this underexposed aspect of the history writing with regard to the decolonization war. Especially when the question of guilt is asked, an investigation into important commanders can be enlightening. While the war was being fought twelve thousand kilometres away from the capital of the Netherlands, the Dutch policymakers had to rely on the information provided by the highest military and civil authorities in Batavia and the rest of Indonesia. The personnel on these highest positions therefore had a powerful information position in influencing politicians and the public opinion back home. The character, the experiences and the personal history of these persons are essential in understanding the dynamics of the war. How was the hierarchy between the highest commanders and how was the discipline within the Dutch army? These are all important elements to take into consideration when one wants to analyse this war. Until now much attention has been paid to structural explanations: the sentiment among the Dutch government and population, the so-called 'Indies lost, calamity born', the colonial paradigm and the feeling of superiority

over other cultures are all used to explain the course of the war without considering the role of individuals sufficiently. For this reason, this paper took a closer look at the role of one of the most important commanders during the decolonization war, Major General Simon de Waal. The case study of De Waal illustrates strikingly how the personality of one person can have an impact and serious influence on the course and the direction of the war. The failure or success of the execution of an overarching strategy depends heavily on the executive commanders and their interpretations.

Through a better understanding of the personality of De Waal it became clear that individuals played an important role in this war and in the way the overarching strategy was implemented. De Waal was born in the Netherlands, but on a young age he already joined the KNIL where he became an officer. Instead of being trained at the elitist institute the *Koninklijke Militaire Academie* in Breda, De Waal was trained in Kampen at the main course of the instruction battalion. Thereafter he served as an officer of the KNIL in the Dutch Indies until his resignation in 1948. The Battle of Tarakan, in which De Waal was the territorial commander of Java, is essential to better understand the man and his later actions. During this battle, which occurred on the 11th of January 1942, a four times bigger Japanese enemy attacked the island, at the moment part of the Dutch Indies. The Japanese were allies of Germany, already the occupying force in the Netherlands. Within a few days the Dutch forces, under the guidance of De Waal, had to capitulate. Not only during the fighting De Waal lost a lot of his men, but also in the aftermath he lost 215 KNIL soldiers who put their trust in him when they surrendered themselves to the Japanese commanders. De Waal must, in some way, have felt responsible for the unfortunate death of his men. Finally, during his captivity De Waal lost several men to the brutal methods of the Japanese, so it is plausible that he was eager to protect his men after the war had ended.

It became clear that on several occasions De Waal's opinion differed greatly from that of General Spoor, leading to the ignoring of direct orders and ultimately the courage to challenge Spoor by contradicting him. This illustrates that the hierarchy within the Dutch army, especially within the KNIL, was not clearly divided and that a serious lack of discipline was witnessed. De Waal never received a serious reprimand for his unauthorized actions, which illustrates the authority and respect there existed for De Waal, even in the highest ranks of the military. If there was a lack of discipline between the highest commanders it is not hard to imagine that at the lower ranks the discipline might also not have been optimal. This could have resulted in inadmissible and excessive forms of violence. When De Waal was aware of violence committed by his men, he had the tendency to mitigate or to conceal it. This tendency or behaviour can partly be explained by the

experiences of De Waal during the Second World War where he lost many of his men who deeply trusted in him. It is striking, in any case, that he seems to have protected his men even when he knew or could have known their behaviour was unacceptable. De Waal was originated from the 'rank and file' and might have identified himself more with his men than with the civil and military superiors. This becomes even clearer when the case of the alleged coup d'état is studied. De Waal was willing to overthrow the government and his own supreme commander in order to keep the pre-war ideal alive. This illustrates that De Waal saw himself as the potential military leader of the Dutch Indies. De Waal had lived almost all his life in the Dutch Indies so it had become a part of him. Losing it did not seem to be an option. His personal interest in the Indies and his powerful position he acquired he used to keep on fighting the insurgents, trying to control more territory in order to perceive the colony. Throughout the paper it becomes clear that individuals like De Waal and Spoor had a big mark on the policy and that these individuals regularly conflicted.

However, only one study into the actions of De Waal is insufficient to draw firm conclusions for the broader situation in the Dutch Indies with regard to single acting commanders. Besides De Waal it is known that several other commanders also tended to ignore direct orders from their superiors and acted independently. For this reason it is important to conduct research in their persons such as Major General Engels, Major General Baay and colonel Meyer, the successor of De Waal as territorial commander at central Java, to underline the importance of the actions of individuals during this war.

More studies into these people strengthens the thesis that not only structural explanation should be sought why the war in the Dutch Indies was waged and lasted for a considerable amount of time and took a particular course, but that individual actors played an essential part in the course and the direction of the war. There are many half-truths and ambiguities, but there is no one truth. Structural causes and agency can be seen a choral symphony, sometimes playing out of tune and seemingly contradiction each other, but without each other the war could not have happened the way it did.

Literature

Ansems, H.J., *Een jaar 'W'-Brigade* (Tjiandjoer, 1947).

Berge, van den, T., *H.J. van Mook 1894-1965. Een vrij en gelukkig Indonesië* (Bussum 2014).

Bijl, P. 'Colonial memory and forgetting in the Netherlands and Indonesia', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 441-461.

Bussemaker, H.T., 'De geloofwaardigheid van de Indische defensie 1935-1941', *De Militaire Spectator* 154 (1985) 4, 163-180.

Bussemaker, H.T., *Bersiap! Opstand in het paradijs: de Bersiap-periode op Java en Sumatra 1945-1946* (Zutphen 2005).

Burns, T.R. and Dietz, T., 'Human Agency and the Evolutionary Dynamics of Culture', *Acta Sociologica* 35 (1992) 3, 187-200.

Couwenberg, S.W., *Kolonialisme en racisme: eens normaal, nu omstreden geraakt als politiek incorrect en moeizaam verwerkt Nederlands en Europees verleden* (Soesterberg 2016).

Doel, van den, H.W., *Afscheid van Indië: de val van het Nederlands imperium in Azië* (Amsterdam 2016).

Doorn, van, J.A.A., *De laatste eeuw van Indië: ontwikkeling en ondergang van een koloniaal project* (Amsterdam 1994).

Doorn, van, J.A.A., *Ontsporing van geweld: het Nederlands-Indonesisch conflict* (Zutphen 2012).

Drooglever, J., *De kolonie en dekolonisatie. Nederland, Nederlands-Indië en Indonesië* (The Hague 2006).

Frederick, W.H., 'The Killing of Dutch and Eurasians in Indonesia's national revolution (1945-49): a 'brief genocide' reconsidered', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 359-380.

Glissenaar, F., *Indië verloren, rampspoed geboren* (Hilversum 2003).

Groen, P.M.H., *Marsroutes en dwaalsporen: het Nederlands militair-strategisch beleid in Indonesië* (Leiden 1991).

Groen, P., 'Colonial warfare and military ethics in the Netherlands East Indies, 1816-1941', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 277-296.

Heidhues, M.S., 'Anti-Chinese violence in Java during the Indonesian Revolution, 1945-49', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 381-401.

Helsdingen, van, W.H., *Daar werd wat groots verricht. Nederlands-Indië in de xx^{ste} eeuw* (Amsterdam 1941).

Heshusius, C.A., *Het KNIL van tempo doeloe* (Amsterdam 1988).

Jong, de, J.J.P., *De terugtocht. Nederland en de dekolonisatie van Indonesië* (2015).

Jong, de, L., *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Deel 5. Nederlands Indië* (Den Haag 1974).

Jong, de, L., *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Deel 11a. Nederlands Indië* (Amsterdam 1984).

Jong, de, L., *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog. Deel 12a. Nederlands Indië* (Leiden 1988).

Limpach, R., 'Extreem Nederlands geweld tijdens de Indonesische onafhankelijkheidsoorlog 1945-1949', *De Militaire Spectator* 185 (2016) 10, 416-429.

Limpach, R., *De Brandende Kampongs van Generaal Spoor* (The Hague 2016).

Luesen, C.J., *De intieme oorlog. Onze jongens in Indië* (Bandoeng 1948).

Luttikhuis, B. and Moses, A.D., 'Introduction: colonial counterinsurgency and mass violence: the Dutch empire in Indonesia', in B. Luttikhuis and A.D. Moses, *Colonial Counterinsurgency and Mass Violence, The Dutch Empire in Indonesia* (London 2014) 1-24.

Maar, van der, R., *Herman van Rooijen, 1905-1991: een diplomaat van klasse* (Amsterdam 2013).

Meel, van, P., *Gedenkschrift Nederlands-Indisch Leger 1830-1950* (Dordrecht 1990).

Moor, de, J.A., *Generaal Spoor: triomfen en tragedie van een legercommandant* (Amsterdam 2011).

Nederlandsch-Indische Officiersvereniging, *K.N.I.L. Gedenkboek korps beroepsofficieren van het Nederlands-Indonesisch leger 1940-1950* (Amsterdam 1951).

Nederlands Instituut voor militaire historie (NIMH) & Stichting het Veteraneninstituut, *Het Nederlandse militaire optreden in Nederlands-Indië/Indonesië 1945-1950. Een bibliografisch overzicht* (Den Haag 2015).

Oostindie, G.J., *Soldaat in Indonesië. 1945-1950: getuigenissen van een oorlog aan de verkeerde kant van de geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2015).

Pomper, P., 'History and Individual Agency', *History and Theory* 35 (1996) 3, 281-308.

Romijn, P., 'Learning on 'the job': Dutch war volunteers entering the Indonesian war of independence, 1945-46', *Journal of Genocide Research* 14 (2012) 3-4, 317-336.

Zee, van der, S., *Harer Majesteits loyaalste onderdaan: François van 't Sant, 1883-1966* (Amsterdam 2015).

Consulted newspapers

- NRC Handelsblad
- De Volkskrant
- Nieuwe Courant

Consulted websites:

- <https://www.historiek.net>
- <https://www.archieven.nl>
- <https://www.delpher.nl>
- <https://www.gahetna.nl>
- <https://www.historiek.net>
- <https://www.museumbronbeek.nl>
- <https://www.nmm.nl>

Archives

- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Koninklijk Nederlands Indisch Leger Kabinet Legercommandant Commissie Onderscheidingen.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Verklaring afgelegd door de Generaal-Majoor van het K.N.I.L. S. de Waal, destijds Luitenant-Kolonel, Troepencommandant van Tarakan, in de vergadering der Commissie Militaire Onderscheidingen d.d. 15 November 1948.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, voordracht Koninklijke onderscheiding luitenant v.d. Belt.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, getuigenis van J. van Dulst, Hoofd Luchtbeschermingsdienst Tarakan-Tjilatjap.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Strijd om Tarakan 1942, getuigenis van J. Bierdrager, geneesheer KNIL.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 147, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, Strijd om Tarakan 1942, getuigenis van M. de Bruin, voormalig Sergeant-majoor der artillerie.

- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 1182, rapport opgesteld door majoor der Generale Staf KNIL S.H. Spoor betreffende beoordelingen van officieren: luitenant-generaal H. ter Poorten, generaal-majoor R. Bakkers, R. Bakkers, kolonel W.P. van Veen Luitenant-kolonel P.G. Mantel, kapitein Buurman van Vreede, kapitein De Vries, generaal J.H. Uhl, majoor jhr. J.M.R. Sandberg, luitenant-kolonel P. Droog, luitenant-kolonel J. van Eenennaam, majoor . van der Eem, kapitein D.J. ter Haar, officier van gezondheid dr. Simons, luitenant-kolonel R.B. van Rijken, majoor P. Gerssen, reservekapitein Zimmerman, generaal-majoor Schilling, generaal-majoor Pesman, luitenant-kolonel Reemer, luitenant-kolonel Van den Hoogenband, kolonel Vooren, luitenant-kolonel S. de Waal, kapitein M. Kooistra, luitenant-kolonels Vogelsang, Halkema, Mars, Kapitz, majoors H.H.L. Tieland, Giebel en Boester en kapitein De Riemer.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, Nederlands-Indië contra Japan, inventarisnummer 763, samenstelling der B.Divisie op 31 maart 1947.
- ❖ NIMH, Den Haag, 508, stukken betreffende de voordracht van generaal-majoor KNIL S. de Waal voor Ridder 4^e klasse der Militaire Willems-Orde inzake zijn gedrag als troepencommandant in de strijd om Tarakan, inventarisnummer 147, verklaring E. Joosten ex-kanonnier van de kust artillerie Karoengan, 1941-1942.