Recent Dutch-Language Publications

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Henk Schulte Nordholt, *Een geschiedenis van Zuidoost-Azië*. Amsterdam: AUP, Amsterdam University Press, 2016, 377+16 pp. ISBN 9789462982536. Price: EUR 29.95 (hardback).

Henk Schulte Nordholt, Head of the KITLV Research Department, said yes when he was asked by the German Fischer Verlag to write the volume on the history of Southeast Asia in its prestigious *Neue Fischer Weltgeschichte*, which covers world history in 21 volumes. His manuscript, written in Dutch, is now in the process of translation. An excellent opportunity thus was available to prepare a Dutch edition. In fact Schulte Nordholt claims to have written the first comprehensive Dutch-language history of the region. He is right, but Jan Pluvier would have merited a reference as he was the first to write a number of general surveys on Southeast Asia concentrating on the twentieth century, culminating in his *Zuidoost-Azië. Een eeuw van onvervulde verwachtingen* (Pluvier 1999). Schulte Nordholt at that stage already devoted 180 pages to the pre-1900 era, to be followed by 150 pages to bring his history to the here and now. Thus, he has avoided a looming chronological bias.

The labor to write such a general survey is both hazardous and Herculean, and this applies in particular to Southeast Asia, comprising 4.5 million km² and 600 million inhabitants, now living in 11 nation states stretching from Himalayan Myanmar to West New Guinea. It was for many centuries a seemingly heterogeneous category stretching between China and India. The concept of Southeast Asia was only invented by the US during the Second World War, and US policy and scholarship produced the first comprehensive surveys of the region, as an abundance of publications attest to. Next to area studies, concentrating on a particular country, which revived after the war, general surveys tried to come to terms with transnational trends. The Cold War in general, and the Indochina War in particular, justified by the ominous domino theory, reinforced this general approach. Recently, known scholars such as Anthony Reid, Merle Ricklefs, Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Andaya,

have, again from the outside, presented their view on the region as a whole. It would be interesting to compare their books, including the Schulte Nordholt one.

Authors of general histories on Southeast Asia have to commence with a justification of their choice and identify the common features of the nations in the region from prehistory to the present. Schulte Nordholt cannot but acknowledge the diversity of the region, but also notes the small-scale and egalitarian rulership they have in common. The region was open and sea traffic introduced change—for instance, religion and culture from China and India. He especially notes the relatively autonomous position of women—but notes a number of significant exceptions.

Schulte Nordholt divides his narrative in four parts. Prehistory until 1400 meticulously collects the scarce data and these fragments lead to some provisional conclusions, as to the rise of early kingdoms. Early modern history (1400–1800), with trade and war until 1630 was thereafter characterized by crises and consolidation, and the appearance of European traders and military forces, especially in the coastal areas. The growing abundance of sources allows Schulte Nordholt to make his argument more fluent, as can be seen in Part III on the colonial period (1800–1942). The colonial powers strengthened their positions, established colonial states, and harvested after 1910 what they had sown—a mixture of modernity, resistance, conservatism, and crisis. Schulte Nordholt combines well political, economic, social, and religious factors—his subchapter on modernity, for instance, is a fine and succinct essay on the subject (pp. 207–217). The last part is on decolonization, nation states, authoritarian regimes, globalization and democratization, and trends of the period between 1940 and 2015. The separate nations followed different courses, but slowly became more aware of their common interests, as is shown in their cautious regional cooperation in ASEAN. However, differences between member states remain significant enough that even Schulte Nordholt's integrated account of the region breaks apart into separate area studies. But that seems inevitable.

The book is intended as a reference volume for a general audience. In that respect it lacks a list of abbreviations. More regrettable is the incomplete index that does not include the names of organizations. The book only has a limited number of footnotes—why these were included is unclear. It would have been better to omit them altogether and refer the reader to the 'further reading' at the end of the book.

Reference

Pluvier, Jan (1999). *Zuidoost-Azië. Een eeuw van on vervulde verwachtingen*. Breda: De Geus.

Ron Guleij and Gerrit Knaap (eds), *Het grote VOC boek*. Zwolle: W Books, 2017, 208 pp. ISBN 9789462581777. Price: EUR 34.95 (hardback).

Ron Guleij and Gerrit Knaap (eds), *The Dutch East India Company book*. Zwolle: W Books, 2017, 208 pp. ISBN 9789462581784. Price: EURO 34.95 (hardback).

The Dutch Nationaal Archief in The Hague celebrates the digitalization of the VOC archives it holds—1.2 km of documents—with an exhibition ‘De wereld van de VOC’ (The VOC World), open until January 2018. It contains a selection of maps, prints, and documents, mainly from the VOC archives itself, but supplemented with loans from dozens of other Dutch collections. These are for the greater part included in *Het grote VOC boek*, also in an English edition as *The Dutch East India Company Book*. The book is a feast for the eyes due to its extraordinary large format. This extraordinary book was so well received that a reprint was necessary within a few months. The organization of the text is somewhat complicated. Eleven chapters follow, after general information on the VOC and its predecessors, the VOC journey to the East, with information on South Africa, the Middle East, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan and China. Added are vignettes ‘Onderweg’ (On the way) about extraordinary VOC exploits, and stories based on particular episodes, with fictional elements, by writers Nelleke Noordervliet and Ramsey Nasr. Apart from the general information by the editors, twenty specialists write brief entries, also on the legacy of VOC today. In addition to amazement with its achievements, there are also criticisms of the VOC, especially regarding its violence and the slave trade, but these are brief. The overall result is a heterogeneous collection which may bewilder a novice to the subject. In this respect the lack of an index is a pity.

Leonard Blussé and Jaap de Moor (eds), *Een Zwitsers leven in de tropen. De lotgevallen van Elie Ripon in dienst van de VOC (1618–1626)*. Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2016, 304 pp. ISBN 9789035145061. Price EUR 24.95 (paperback).

Leonard Blussé en Jaap de Moor, two veteran experts on VOC history, present with *Een Zwitsers leven in de tropen* the astonishing memoirs of Elie Ripon as

a VOC mercenary during the early years of VOC efforts to secure itself a strong position in Asia, extending from Persia to China and Japan. Ripon's background was in Lausanne—and that is all that is known of his years before signing with the VOC. The same goes for his years after VOC service. He returns to Lausanne and vanishes without a trace. Miraculously his memoirs survived and were found in 1865 in the attic of an old house, and were hence saved in the Regional Library of Fribourg. It was only in 1990 that Yves Giroud published it in a printed edition. Now, thanks to Blussé and De Moor, this French edition was translated, introduced (30 pp.) and edited (253 notes) in Dutch to become an exemplary edition. It is remarkable that the text hardly needed editing, as Ripon relates his experiences in a lively and direct manner, and often adds a personal note to his story. If compared with the many other travel accounts that were published by VOC sailors and soldiers this certainly distinguishes him from his colleagues in writing style, as well as in his frankness. This particularly applies to his military ventures. Ripon was an able soldier, who soon earned a promotion from sergeant to captain, and liked his trade. He enjoyed battle. He hardly had scruples about the bloody outcome of it. He was involved in almost all the battles the VOC fought in his years—on Java, Batavia in particular, in the Moluccas, where he participated in the notorious Banda Massacre, and he was also in China, Macao and Formosa. Striking again is the extreme violence that was applied by friend and foe alike. Not only did battle result in a lot of casualties, but opponents—whether indigenous or European—were more often butchered than taken prisoner. Discipline among the VOC troops was tight. For even minor offenses the death penalty was meted out. Ripon relates it all in detail and as a matter of fact. Ripon also makes many other observations about indigenous societies, with a special interest in the amorous intents of exotic women. Reading his account and the numerous casualties he reports, it is remarkable how the VOC succeeded in replenishing his European sailors and soldiers, and did not succumb due to the sheer lack of personnel. Moreover, in his years only a military force of a thousand was employed, and as Ripon notes, for lack of employment at one time three hundred military men were sent back to Holland—trade and profit always limited costly military deployment.

Thijs Weststeijn and Menno Jonker (eds), *Barbaren & wijsgeren. Het beeld van China in de Gouden Eeuw*. Nijmegen: Vantilt, Haarlem: Frans Hals Museum/De Hallen, 2017, 96 pp. ISBN 9789460043192. Price: EUR 19.95 (paperback).

This book accompanies an exhibition in the Frans Hals Museum in Haarlem, which runs from March until August 2017. It is not an exhibition catalogue, but

a collection of ten short essays by ten authors, profusely illustrated, on the first cultural contacts between China and Europe from the late sixteenth century on. The Dutch Republic played a central role in this, along with the Jesuit priests from Portugal who combined missionary zeal with a mutual exchange of knowledge. Johan Nieuwhof's illustrated account of his visit to the Chinese emperor in 1655–1657, published in 1665, was especially pathbreaking. The 150 illustrations helped to set the popular (and stereotypical) image of China and Chinese people. Ironically, these illustrations were untrustworthy adaptations of the sketches made on the spot. (Interestingly, this adaptation was not noted in *Het grote VOC boek*, reviewed above.) None of this presented an obstacle to intensifying the relationship, which soon led to mass trade of porcelain, mediated by the VOC. Porcelain produced according to Dutch specifications flooded the Dutch markets, and even became an item in the households of common people. The essays in their few pages touch upon aspects of the relationship between two societies that hardly could be more different. They are part of an ongoing scholarly project, 'The Chinese Impact', at Utrecht University.

Nizaar Makdoembaks, *Wegwerpvrouwen. Het verholde slavernijverleden van het Nederlandse koloniale leger, 1620–1920*. Zierikzee: De Woordenwinkel, 2017, 450 pp. ISBN 9789076286266. Price: EUR 29.29 (paperback).

Medical practitioner Makdoembaks (1948) is the prolific author of a series of books on the dark and 'forgotten' sides of Dutch colonialism in the West Indies (he was born in Suriname) and the East Indies, as well as racism and discrimination in post-colonial Netherlands. His activist approach and emotional involvement sometimes come at the cost of balanced content and conclusions. In *Wegwerpvrouwen* he tells the story of the slaves (*njai*) who were kept as concubines. The shortage of women made this a common practice during the era of the East Indies Company VOC, with all its excesses. The system became institutionalized when the Dutch government, now the ruler of the Indies, had great trouble to keep an army ready to act. A great part of the military were not able to fight due to venereal diseases and alcoholism. The solution was found in the admission of concubines to the military barracks. The author calls it the sex paradox. It raised fighting power and morale, but at the detriment of the *njai*—who were sexually abused, lost freedom of movement, and whose fate was met with contempt and indifference. These women had no rights, and they and their children could be evicted from the barracks without compensation, in which cases prostitution was often the only option for

survival. Their mixed-race children roamed the streets and became paupers, the subject of worried governmental studies. According to Makdoembaks they numbered around 100,000. Sometimes children were legitimated, often with a separation, for good, of mother and child. The system was maintained and defended as a cheap means to boost morale until the 1920s. Only then, and slowly, was the concubinage system phased out, until its final dissolution in 1928. Makdoembaks overviews the historical development of the *njai*, from the VOC years until the introduction of the system in the KNIL, where the practice of the indigenous military was successfully copied. He follows the discussion between governments in The Hague, Batavia, and the Colonial Army by quoting at length—adding up to a few hundred pages—from the National Archives, also often included in facsimile, sometimes in difficult-to-read handwriting. The author in quite a few instances sidetracks to, for instance, violent KNIL expeditions or the Kartini efforts to better education for the Javanese children. However, he has succeeded in his main objective, namely, to make public a scandal that was concealed, went unnoticed, or was explained away. There have been serious publications on the *njai* before, but according to Makdoembaks these are not critical enough.

Geert Banck, *Van de Javaanse suikercultuur naar de Nederlandse elitecultuur. Twee generaties in de 19e eeuw. Johann Erich Banck en John Eric Banck*. Diemen: AMB, 2016, 89 pp. ISBN 9789079700868. Price: EUR 17.50 (paperback).

Geert Banck (1937) is a retired professor of the anthropology of Brazil, who was attracted to investigate the life history of two namesakes, who made some impact in nineteenth century Netherlands and Netherlands Indies. These two men—Johann Erich Banck (1797–1857) and his son John Eric Banck (1833–1902)—turned out to be no relatives of Geert Banck, but were interesting enough to him to continue his quest to write their biographies. He delved deep in archives and contemporary publications, as 191 footnotes testify, and unearthed many unknown details. The oldest Banck, of Danish descent, was a successful entrepreneur in Surabaya (1820–1838) and made a fortune as the owner of sugar factories. He benefited from the network of Dutch, Javanese, and Chinese that he was a part of. Good relations with the colonial officials also helped. When back in the Netherlands he became involved in a corruption case, dating back to his Surabaya years. It took years before he was absolved and his good name restored. The story of his son, a Leiden-trained lawyer who tried to obtain the first railway concession in Java, is related in detail. In 1863 he and his partners lost—their competitors were more influential and had better relations

with the government and with parliament. These two cases—of father and son—are related in detail, and include long enumerations that serve to clarify the essential function of personal networks.

Charles F.C.G. Boissevain, *Zeilvaart op Nederlands-Indië: Boissevain & Co (1836–1882)*. Zutphen: WalburgPers, 2015, 144 pp. ISBN 9789057303302. Price: EUR 24.95 (hardback).

Boissevain & Co was a shipping company, of moderate size, which operated from 1836 until 1882 with twelve wooden sailing-vessels, for the most part between the Netherlands and the Indies. It was discontinued when steamers proved more profitable. It was founded in Amsterdam by Gideon Boissevain (1796–1875), when, after a long political and economic crisis, the Netherlands experienced a recovery. Ship-owner and merchant Boissevain profited from government subsidies and guarantees of the Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij as to the sale of cargo and transportation costs. The author concentrates on identifying the financial basis of the shipping, which was brought together by individuals taking shares. They were recruited from the small circle of well-to-do citizens, of which Boissevain was a part. They are all listed and categorized as relatives, suppliers, acquaintances, and other ship-owners, all part of the elite network. Thus, new information on entrepreneurial organization is furnished. Moreover, this lavishly illustrated book tells a lot about the organization of the shipping of the time on the Indies route such as to shipyards, specific requirements, cargo, navigation and crew. It is also a contribution to the Boissevain family history by a descendant.

Griselda Molemans, *De vergeten krijgers. De onvoorwaardelijke trouw van de Indo-Afrikaanse gemeenschap aan de Nederlandse vlag*. N.p.: Quasar Books, 2016, 144 pp. ISBN 9789082373912. Price: EUR 16.95 (paperback).

The African Gold Coast, now Ghana, was a Dutch colony until 1872. Not a minor function of the territory was as a place of recruitment for the colonial Indies army KNIL, which always suffered from a shortage of soldiers. After 1831 more than three thousand registered, and these 'Belanda Hitam' were highly valued by their superiors. After their terms about 450 chose to stay in the Indies. They married with indigenous women. An Indo-African community thus came into being. It concentrated in small quarters in a few Java cities, keeping up a military tradition and a great loyalty towards the Netherlands. The Indo-African

story is told here by means of the biography of Daan Cordus (born 1922), whose life was upset by the Japanese occupation, the decolonization war and the subsequent departure from Indonesia to the Netherlands, of which he legally was a citizen. Daan fought against the Japanese, was a convict in Burma and Japan and a KNIL soldier against the Indonesian Republic. Two of his brothers did not survive the turmoil of the forties. In the Netherlands he and his family were received coolly, like most of the evacuees from Indonesia. In the Netherlands interest in their background, so full of enigmas, slowly grew. But only in this century was the full story of the *Belanda Hitam* a subject of serious research. Ineke van Kessel and Arthur Japin published *Zwarte Hollanders: Afrikaanse soldaten in Nederlands-Indië* (2005) and Griselda Molemans, who started archival research in 2003, wrote three titles on the subject. This one is based on interviews with 70 informants, and world wide archival research, accounted for in 128 notes. A forgotten history, one the most curious legacies of Dutch colonialism and decolonization, is thus put on record.

Reference

Kessel, Ineke van Kessel and Arthur Japin (2005). *Zwarte Hollanders. Afrikaanse soldaten in Nederlands-Indië*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers.

Petra Boudewijn, *Warm bloed. De representatie van Indo-Europeanen in de Indisch-Nederlandse letterkunde (1860-heden)*. Hilversum: Verloren, 2016, 428 pp. ISBN 9789087045982. Price: EURO 38 (paperback).

This solid PhD is the result of painstaking and systematic analysis on the representation of Indo-Europeans in a body of forty novels. These comprise a balanced selection of one title each from well-known authors of their time. Twenty-five were written during colonial times (before 1942), fifteen are post-colonial. The author's choice of these forty, out of almost a thousand titles, is of course open to criticism—it is arbitrary, but looks balanced as well. The main argument would probably not have differed much with another selection.

The position of Eurasians has always been a subject of hot debate in colonial society in the Indies and in the Netherlands. White Europeans generally held negative views of them. The Eurasians, although having the legal status of Europeans, experienced discrimination and their social status was low. In the literature on the Indies, Indo-Europeans abound, but their representation

has never been the subject of systematic research. Boudewijn now looks for the underlying ideological notions in the literature and how these relate to the contemporary cultural-historical context. She searches for a possible difference between the representations of white European and Eurasian authors, and whether these last authors join in the negative imagery. Her approach is a discourse-analytical one, with concepts used in post-colonial studies, and applying 'Orientalist' approaches. An important distinction is made between authors with a 'Eurocentric' and those with an 'Indocentric' view. Theory and method are amply discussed, as well as history and sociology of the Eurasians in the Indies. The Europeans looked at the Eurasians in a supposedly biogenetic way. The perceived results of this miscegenation would be degeneration, with racial purity, European civilization, and colonial supremacy at stake. These dangers became more immanent in the last decades of the colonial Indies. Boudewijn devotes seven chapters to a close reading of her body of texts on the main characteristics ascribed to Eurasians: sensuality, 'going Indies' (*verindischen*), purity, mixed marriages, mediocracy, beastliness, all in a negative sense, and with emancipation as a sole but not undiluted positive trait. Exceptions are few, but Melati van Java is one of them. Post-colonial literature on Eurasians differs greatly from the colonial one. In a general introduction the chilly arrival in the Netherlands is analyzed, and the debate on assimilation and emancipation, with Tjalie Robinson in a leading part. Old prejudice is still there, but abating. Second Generation authors set the tone. Eurasian culture, remembrance of the war past, recognition, and other themes now create a many-sided and hybrid picture of the Eurasian community in the Netherlands. It is not that long ago that it found its place in a multicultural Dutch society. The post-colonial titles are Eurocentric, and very critical towards Dutch society. As with almost all Indies literature it has to be read not only for its literary merits, but also for its social perspective. Bouwewijn has written an innovative study, which, for instance, questions the approach of the 'Indische Letteren' community. Her close reading leads to new insights in the paradoxical position of the Eurasian community through the ages.

Vilan van de Loo, *Melati van Java (1853–1927). Dochter van Indië. Biografie*. Den Haag: Stichting Tong Tong, 2016, 222 pp. ISBN 9789078847007. Price: EURO 19.90 (paperback).

Vilan van de Loo has a commendable record in saving female authors of Indies novels from oblivion. Mainstream literary criticism, such as that by Rob Nieuwenhuys, has little appreciation for these authors, heaped together as the

Ladies Compartment (as in a second class car on a train). Van de Loo turned this rather denigrating term into a name of honor. Among Ladies Compartment travelers, Melati van Java was one of the most prominent. Van de Loo has now collected her research and former publications on Melati van Java in a full-fledged biography, that also served as her PhD. Melati van Java was the flourishing pseudonym of Marie Sloot (1853–1927). She was born in Semarang, the daughter of a white Dutch teacher and an Indies mother, whose mother was a Javanese Chinese. Her parents were devout Roman Catholics, who raised their children in a Dutch and Catholic environment, in which influences from the Indies and Javanese society was excluded and rejected. In 1871 Marie and her parents repatriated to the Netherlands. Her formative years were over, and shaped her frame of mind. Van de Loo aptly divides her book into gender, ethnicity, and religion. Marie Sloot chose to follow an independent career, in which there was no place for a marriage and a subordinate role. She hoped to earn her living as an author, and since 1871 a stunning output and wide readership guaranteed her well-being. In her work—twelve ‘Indies’ titles—ethnic issues were continuously addressed, and invariably Indies descent was described in positive terms, different from the general picture in those times. Van de Loo circumscribes her work as ‘idealized realism’. However her work is classified, Melati van Java was a popular author of bestsellers, reprinted many times, translated, and one book was even turned into a movie. Her Catholic background resulted in novels and a great number of short stories and essays, under the pseudonym Mathilde. As Max van Ravestein, a pseudonym never disclosed during her lifetime, she published five novels. Moreover, in her later years, she was closely involved in early Catholic women’s organizations.

Van de Loo gives a chronological account of Marie Sloot’s life and does so in just over 200 pages and with 673 notes. It makes pleasant reading and illuminates the hitherto unknown careers of Marie Sloot/Melati van Java/Mathilde/Max van Ravestein. Against many odds she succeeded in occupying her own place in the Dutch cultural world, although it was not a lasting place. Van de Loo has in her earlier publications shown a lot of sympathy for Marie Sloot and her sisters in literature, something the reader may keep in mind. However, it does not interfere with the fair judgement she makes. Her conclusion that Marie Sloot (and her female colleagues) deserve a reappraisal, and from more angles than a strict literary one can heartily be supported.

Graa Boomsma, *Leven op de rand. Biografie van A. Alberts*. Amsterdam: Van Oorschoot, 2017, 461 + 16 pp. ISBN 9789028242241. Price: EUR 34.99 (hardback).

A. Alberts (1911–1995) was acknowledged as one of the most prominent authors of his time. In 1995 he received the most prestigious Dutch price for his corpus of writings. The inspiration for many of his novels and short stories was deeply rooted in his experiences in Indonesia. He studied Indology at Utrecht University, and graduated in 1936. He next worked on his PhD on colonial politics during the 1840s and 1850s, and was tutored by Professor F.C. Gerretson. In 1939 Dr. Alberts left for the Indies as a colonial civil servant. He was posted on the quiet island of Madura where he adapted to a daily routine, in which there was no room for nationalist agitation or doubts about the colonial rule. What Alberts probably experienced was an uneasiness about his presence in a leading role in a alien society, about which he knew little. The Japanese occupation drastically changed his idyllic life. He was interned in four camps; in Tjimahi the Japanese surrender saved him from starvation. His camp past left scars, and plagued him in his later years. Alberts was back in the Netherlands in 1946, convinced that the Netherlands had nothing to look for anymore in Indonesia. He refused to return to Indonesia as a civil servant—the only one to refuse—and was discharged. He then combined a dull office job with writing—fiction as well as a growing number of articles in the leftist weekly ‘De Groene’. In it he wrote at length on Indonesia, criticizing Dutch policies to maintain its influence. His early fiction was drenched in a non-sentimental nostalgia. His first collection *De eilanden* (1952) was at once acknowledged as excellent. His style, sparing with a lot left implicit, was uniquely Alberts’. He became an editor of ‘De Groene’, a lonely liberal among its leftist editors and contributors, and wrote thousands of articles until he became a high-ranking civil servant at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1965. His fiction was for the most part based on personal experiences, which he adapted to suit his literary purposes. Alberts was the prolific author of memoirs, novels, historical studies, translations, and journalistic articles. He was unassuming, an outsider, and was happy to be so. Graa Boomsma, himself the author of novels on Indonesia, has produced a fine biography that enlightens this seemingly unobtrusive life. His approach is mainly chronological, with thematic excursions. He discusses at length Alberts’ fiction, with summaries and a quest for the events and persons that inspired him. It is all very expertly done, and related in a way that makes smooth reading. Unfortunately, a number of Indonesian terms, names, and places are misspelt.

Mieke Melief, *'Hier in het Oosten alles wel'. Een Amsterdamse familie in China*. Doetinchem: Het Boekenschap, 2016, 415 pp. ISBN 9789490085841. Price: EUR 29.95 (hardback) (to order from www.hierinhetoostenalleswel.nl or bol.com).

In 1919 the well-educated Frans de Jongh (1895–1972), from a large impoverished Catholic family, took up a job with the Holland China Handelscompagnie (HCHC), and was posted in Shanghai as a bookkeeper. HCHC, which later became part of trade firm Internatio, also had branches in Hong Kong, Tientsin, and Canton. De Jongh was to stay in China until 1946, interrupted by four furloughs. In 1929 he married a Dutch and Catholic wife, who bore him six children. They all spent their childhood in China. Another relative, Mieke Melief, has reconstructed this family's fate in a country in turmoil using a wide range of sources, including the numerous letters De Jongh sent to his relatives, the reminiscences of eldest daughter Anneke (1930), and notes made by De Jongh himself in 1969–1970. In 1926 De Jongh was moved to Tientsin to become head of the office in this northern harbor town. It was one of the sixteen treaty ports, where western countries and Japan had forced the weak Chinese government to grant them extraterritorial rights, altogether relinquishing its sovereignty. Thus, Tientsin at one time was divided among eight foreign powers. Notwithstanding the civil war in China, and the expansionist aims and actions of Japan trade went well. De Jongh was successful. He and his family lived a comfortable and cosmopolitan life, in colonial surroundings similar to these of the Indies. De Jongh's letters are mostly about family matters—and of these there were many, as there were a lot of kin—which are accurately summarized by editor Melief. The book might have profited from the omission of parts of these rather trivial reports.

De Jongh is rather brief on the political situation, and generally does not rise above the clichés on China and Japan that dominated the times. Melief does well to include extensive surveys on the political developments, on the fascinating urban society of Shanghai, and on lesser-known Tientsin. Although weakened by low volumes of trade, HCHC managed to function until World War II broke out. In December 1941, with the attack on Pearl Harbor, the ever increasing Japanese presence lead to an occupation of Tientsin and its foreign concessions. Citizens of enemy countries were left undisturbed, but subjected to town arrest. In March 1943 they were all—more than 2,000 men, women and children—interned in Weih sien (Shantung), 350 km from Tientsin, one of the twenty-five internment camps for enemy citizens in China. Melief's account of the experiences of the De Jongh family during their two and a half years in Weih sien is one of the rare reports about internment of Dutchmen in China.

Based on the available Anglo-Saxon sources and Anneke's memories, a comprehensive picture emerges. Compared with the Indonesian camps differences are obvious: no separation of men and women, no harsh treatment, no vexation, and the freedom to organize camp matters as the internees wished. Still the camp was overcrowded, facilities were poor, and with the lapse of time the general lack of food led to illnesses, with a shortage of medicines and medical facilities. This is similar to the Indonesian circumstances, but on top of this the China internees had to cope with extreme cold and heat. After being liberated in 1945 by the US army, it was soon clear that pre-war trade could not be restored. De Jongh's family repatriated. Their unique China years are timely recorded, thanks to painstaking research.

Anne Doedens and Lieke Mulder, *Slag in de Java Zee. Oorlog tussen Nederland en Japan, 1941–1942*. Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2017, 208 pp. ISBN 9789462491380. Price: EUR 21.50 (paperback).

On 8 December 1941 the Dutch Governor-General of the Netherlands Indies declared war on Japan, after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. On 8 March 1942 the Dutch surrendered after a rather inglorious defense on Java, where the main KNIL forces were quickly overrun by the invading Japanese army. The naval resistance culminated in the Battle of the Java Sea, in which the Allied Squadron, the Combined Striking Force of 14 ships confronted the Japanese invasion fleet of 18 ships on 27 February and 1 March. The Allies stood no chance, and their actions might even be called suicidal. The Dutch Commander Karel Doorman went down with two thousand navy men. He became legendary for his supposed last words 'I attack, follow me'. However, these words were never transmitted, but they later served to boost morale in Allied circles, where the general picture was all too grim. Karel Doorman had advised against the action, and opted for withdrawal to Ceylon or Australia. His highest superior Vice Admiral C.E.L. Helfrich was of another opinion and sent the ships to a certain defeat. Doorman obeyed. Doorman's squadron lacked air and submarine support. Moreover, the Dutch resistance was weakened by decisions of the Allied command, dominated by British and American officers, which deployed Dutch submarines, ships, and aircraft in its own war arena, to the detriment of the Dutch war effort in the Indies. The Navy burden was a heavy one—1653 men died during the three months of war. The difference with the 896 KNIL victims is striking.

The authors do not restrict themselves to an account of the Java Sea battle. The first chapters fill in the background—the Dutch colonial rule and the rise of

Japan from an isolationist outsider to an aggressive militarist power. From the beginning of the century Japan strove for dominance in East Asia, expanding after 1939 with the desire to control the resources of Southeast Asia, especially those of the Indies. The unstoppable advance of the Japanese forces from December 1941 on is sketched in detail. The text is interspersed with separate entries devoted to the main protagonists on both sides. A list of relevant museums and websites is added, as well as 32 pages of illustrations. The authors have succeeded in writing a balanced volume, based on the available sources, for a wider audience, on the Japanese onslaught of the Indies, culminating in the Battle of the Java Sea.

Caspar Dullemond (ed.), *De Javazee-campagne na 75 jaar. Sporen van de strijd van de Koninklijke Marine tegen Japan, december 1941-maart 1942*. Zwolle: Markt en Missie, 2016, 172 pp. ISBN 9789082636505. Price: EUR 19,50 (hardback).

This book commemorates the Battle of the Java Sea, and other actions by the Dutch Navy against Japan. It was published by the Karel Doorman Foundation, established in 1944, to support Navy men and their relatives when in need. It is also active to keep alive the memory of Navy deployment in military action. *De Javazee-campagne na 75 jaar* collects 19 contributions by 12 authors. The authors are mainly active and retired Navy men, a number with a scholarly record in maritime history. It does not result in a coherent narrative on the Battle, as in the Doedens and Mulder title (see above). Two articles briefly sketch the general background, and draw the lessons from the defeat (Anselm van der Peet and Kees Boelema Robertus). Criticism mirrors that of Doedens and Mulder, with the exception of the role of Helfrich, whose order to Doorman to engage in a hopeless battle is not mentioned. The other articles are on the war experiences of Navy men, also of survivors who became forced laborers of Japan, even as far as Nagasaki. The actions of submarines, the naval air force, mine-layers, mine-sweepers, and the Marine battalion in 1942 are all told. This is a valuable contribution on the experiences of veterans, and on government policies regarding this group, which range from negligence to generous acknowledgement. A few articles describe the efforts to locate the position of the three big ships and four submarines that were sunk in 1942. They were all successfully identified, and became memory sites, where the sacrifice of so many Navy men were remembered and wreaths were let down onto the waves. It was shocking to discover in October–November 2016 that the three shipwrecks has disappeared, due to disrespectful piracy. The journal of the diving expedition is included in this book, that notwithstanding its lack

of coherence has drawn such a number of readers, that it had to be reprinted within a few months. It includes many illustrations in full color.

Buck Goudriaan, *Eerst Nederland bevrijden, dan Indonesië. Indonesische studenten in Leiden tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog*. Leiden: De Nieuwe Vaart, 2017, 84 pp. ISBN 9789080271708. Price: EUR 9.50 (to order from the publisher, Van Vollenhovenplein 91, 2313 EE Leiden) (paperback).

The fate of Indonesian students in the Netherlands during the German occupation has recently attracted new attention, resulting in books by Lodewijk Kallenberg on resistance fighter Irawan Soejono, who was shot death by the Germans in Leiden in January 1945, and Buck Goudriaan, who describes the activities of Leiden students, estimated to be a hundred. Both build on Harry Poeze's *In het land van de overheerser* (1986), and succeed in supplementing this pioneer account with new and relevant detail. In his chronological review documented in 153 notes, Goudriaan concentrates on the resistance activities, which involve quite a number of Indonesians, mostly members of Perhimpoean Indonesia (PI). They were even training to engage in armed action in a student section of the Binnenlandse Strijdkrachten (Home Guards). Goudriaan includes a list of Leiden students who perished, obituaries, and some PI statements after the war about the new relation that should be established between the Netherlands and an independent Indonesia.

References

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Poeze, Harry (1986). *In het land van de overheerser 1. Indonesiërs in Nederland 1600–1950*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Stan Meuwese, *Twee eeuwen dienstplicht, discipline, dienstweigering en desertie*. Oisterwijk: Wolf Legal Publishers, 2017, vii+932 pp. ISBN 9789462403635. Price: EUR 49.50 (hardback).

In more than 900 pages of small print with 3158 footnotes, Meuwese (1945) presents the first exhaustive study of conscription in the Netherlands in legal-

historical perspective, starting in 1811 during the Napoleonic era. It looks at its formulation in the juridical framework of public law, how it was maintained and sanctioned, and how the evasion of military service (staying away) and desertion (going away) were dealt with. A separate chapter, 'A Colonial War in the Emerald Girdle, 1945–1950' (pp. 455–518, with an addendum on the New Guinea conflict, 1950–1962 (pp. 529–533)), collects and orders an impressive amount of information on conscription in the extraordinary post-1945 circumstances. Meuwese first summarizes the data on the often forgotten conscription of Dutch citizens in the Indies, imposed for the KNIL since 1917. To restore Dutch sovereignty in 1945 the available military forces in Indonesia—former KNIL units—were inadequate. Soon it became clear that reinforcement with volunteers from the Netherlands would not be sufficient. The deployment of conscripts, however, was expressly forbidden in the Dutch Constitution. In hurried procedures, often on the brink of legality, but condoned by parliament, the advisory body Raad van State, and the judiciary, the legislation was laid down. Meuwese, who gives his candid and often harsh opinion whenever he deems it appropriate, calls the whole procedure unconstitutional, and the resort to emergency law misplaced. On this shaky basis 95,000 conscripts were sent to Indonesia, and became comrades-in-arms with 65,000 KNIL soldiers, 35,000 volunteers and 10,000 navy men. To maintain discipline courts-martial were established for the Army, KNIL, and Navy. These produced almost 7,500 sentences. Matters concerning evasion and desertion were mostly handled in the Netherlands. Of 4,000 deserters 2,500 were brought to court, and severe sentences were pronounced. As to conscientious objectors, official understanding was rare. Objectors for political reasons were not acknowledged. A number had communist sympathies, and were given longer sentences and experienced worse treatment in jail than other objectors. Meuwese concludes his illuminating account with a number of short biographies of young men who evaded or deserted.

Natasza Tardio, *Francien de Zeeuw. Van verzetsheldin tot eerste vrouwelijke militair*. Alkmaar: Pepper Books, 2017, 287+8 pp. ISBN 9789020608458. Price: EUR 19.99 (paperback).

Francien de Zeeuw (1922–2015) grew up in Terneuzen, in the southern part of Zeeland province, and worked as a telephone operator. When Germany occupied the Netherlands she gradually became involved in the Dutch Underground movement. Her range of action was wide, and included extremely dangerous and risky operations, including armed attacks, to obtain food distribution

cards. She barely escaped arrest and worse. After Terneuzen was liberated, De Zeeuw went to England to become the first recruit of the Marine Vrouwen Afdeling (Marva), the newly founded—on 31 October 1944—woman's branch of the Navy. She was trained in England, along with the Women's Royal Naval Service, which had been active since 1939. The Marva tasks were to support the Navy in non-battle circumstances, to free the men for front service. She was sent, with about twenty colleagues, to Ceylon in November 1945. She worked there for almost a year, especially to support Dutch refugees from Indonesia, whose safety could not be guaranteed in Indonesia. In August 1946 she moved to Jakarta, where she was head of the Navy Postal Distribution Service. A year later she returned home. She resigned as she wanted to marry a common soldier, which was by regulation not allowed to officers. This biography devotes 75 pages (pp. 155–228) to De Zeeuw's Colombo and Batavia period. It concentrates on the personal circumstances and opinions of De Zeeuw, on the basis of notes she made and letters she wrote. Only a number of documents and observations on the First Military Action of 1947 go beyond these limits. There is no effort to give a more general view of the Marva activities, of their scope and effect. Thus, this book is mainly a personal biography of a remarkable woman, as the author intended it to be.

'*Onderzoek uitgelicht*', year 5, no. 2 (December 2016). Amsterdam: Nationaal Comite 4 en 5 mei, 44 pp. ISSN 2213-6177. Price: free, order from onderzoekuitgelicht@4en5mei.nl.

In a special issue on Indonesia the magazine '*Onderzoek uitgelicht*' brings together a number of articles that are directly or indirectly related to the recent publication of two texts that shed new light on the actions of Dutch military forces during the Decolonization War of 1945–1949: Rémy Limpach's *De brandende kampongs van Generaal Spoor*, and Gert Oostindie's *Soldaat in Indonesië 1945–1950*. Both titles have been instrumental in the Dutch government's decision to subsidize a thoroughgoing study on all aspects of the War, to give perspective on the systematic use of excessive violence as is documented in these two books. Nine articles deal with aspects related to the War. Step Vaessen writes on the impact of these years in present Indonesia. Anne-Lot Hoek analyzes the Dutch culture of remembrance, still one-sided. Marjolein van Pagee tells the stories by way of photographic portraits. The Rawagede compensations, and its impact, and the new cases as collected by Liesbeth Zegveld, are discussed by Ellen-Rose Kambel and Margaret Leidelmeijer. It is all informative and useful.

References

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Oostindie, Gert (2016). *Soldaat in Indonesië 1945–1950. Getuigenissen van een oorlog aan de verkeerde kant van de geschiedenis*. Amsterdam: Prometheus.

Marc van Berkel, *Welk verhaal telt? De oorlogen in Nederlands-Indië/Indonesië 1942–1949 in het geschiedenisonderwijs*. Amsterdam: Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei, 60 pp. ISBN 97890772294192. Price: free, order from onderzoekuitgelicht@4en5mei.nl.

Rémy Limpach, as in the last title, also prompted a report on the representation of Dutch colonialism, the Japanese occupation, and decolonization 1942–1949 in history text books for primary and secondary school. The Nationaal Comité 4 en 5 mei commissioned this report that reviews the curriculums and the most widely used textbooks. Of all its pages, these books devote 4.7% to Netherlands Indies/Indonesia, of which 0.4% refer to the Japanese occupation and 0.6% focus on decolonization. Alas, even this meagre attention is of poor quality, with a dominating Dutch bias, and the independence movement after August 1945 is not put in perspective. Clichés about the 'Police Actions' still abound, and military outrages are almost absent. Thus, historiography at school level in the Netherlands is as badly in need of revision and improvement as the stereotyped representations by Indonesian textbooks. Marc van Berkel comes up with sensible suggestions: room for the Indonesian perspective, decolonization in a broader context, reference to Dutch war violence, inclusion of the results of scholarly research, and refresher courses and conferences to professionalize history teachers.

Bart de Graaff, *Ik, Yzerbek*. Schiedam: Scriptum, 2016, 158 pp. ISBN 9789463-190312. Price: EUR 16.95 (paperback).

In 2015 and 2016 journalist/historian Bart de Graaff made long trips to South Africa and Namibia to map the presence of the original inhabitants of South Africa, the Khoi-Khon and Khoisan. They still comprise almost 10% of the population of South Africa and Namibia, a minority of whom are brown colored and Afrikaans speaking, with a tragic past and similarly bleak future. Their traditional leaders are now engaged in court and governmental procedures to

reclaim the land they once owned—with limited success. De Graaff occasionally relates the history of Khoi-Khon from 1652 on, when they were ousted from their lands in the Cape Colony, and gradually moved further to the north and the interior. His main occupation, however, was meeting with and interviewing the descendants of prominent Khoi-Khon, who lack their former glory. De Graaff has thus written an involved account of a forgotten part of South Africa's 'rainbow society'.