War-bands on Java

Military labour markets described in VOC sources

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Acknowledgments: Never mind, always wonder.

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British English
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Ein Javan.

Ich liebe Tapferkeit und bin von starcken kräften,

Mein Hollandt braucht mich wohl, in allerleij geschäften

Ich fechte für sein heil mit schwerden kries und schild

Biß Java ruhig steht und füs sein Zulist [list] gestillt.

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Casper Schmalkalden

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Picture 1 Seventeenth century VOC map of Java and Madura. While drawn in 1695, the East Javanese hinterland data suggests it to be derived from sketches made in the late 1670s.²

² Maps prior to Hurd’s campaign tend to only give details on the Pasisir; Hurdt was the first to march inlands. Isaac de Graaff, “Kaart van het Eiland Java en Madura, met de verdeeling in districten en bezette posten in de Mataram.” In Atlas Amsterdam, ed. Isaac de Graaff (Amsterdam: De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, circa 1695, completed in 1705). Nationaal Archief, VEL1157 (accessed via http://proxy.handle.net/10648/af9922d2-d0b4-102d-bcf8-003048976d84, on 24-03-2014).
Picture 2 Map of coastal Central- and Eastern Java, including the tip of Madura: from Semarang to Surabaya. Made around 1695, but likely based on the campaigns in the late 1670s. 

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1. Introduction: Walis, warrior charismas, and mandalas

This thesis concerns hallowed men like Trunajaya. To introduce him, I will narrate his death. After bringing the great Javanese realm of Mataram to its knees and enmeshing the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in a bloody four-year conflict, he perished on the mountaintop now bearing his name.4 A witch-hunt of many months preceded his capture, during which most former allies abandoned him. His demise in 1679 was almost as rapid as his rise in 1675. After chasing him from stronghold to stronghold, the VOC had finally left the warrior on his last legs.5

But while stepping out of his hiding place on the mountain’s crown, the persona that had attracted so many to fight along his side still stood tall and proud. Like “the holiest of priests”, he appeared in his “Portuguese garment of black satin, a black turban with golden rings on his head and a long black staff in his hand”.6 Dressed in black, the warlord embodied the mythical “young conqueror” that he proclaimed to be five years earlier. Yet, all he conquered was lost and soon merely his legacy would remain. He could only point the finger at himself: “itu betah punya salah”; it was his own fault.7

Indeed he built the hierarchy of insurgents, and he led it crumble. The remnant of his power was the very personality that he still portrayed, or lived for that matter. An amalgam of Walisanga legends, Majapahit roots, Madurese nobility and multiple conquests, his myth had propelled people of many backgrounds to join the uprising against the ruler or Sunan of Mataram. Now, the Sunan had his opponent on his kris’ end; caught between him and the VOC as shown on the cover. But even while he tore Trunajaya’s body apart and fed it to his servants, the man’s mystical impact would not perish.8

Above and beyond all else, this impact was one of a socio-religious identification among martial gangs. My aim is to examine how the VOC sources described and comprehended these fraternizations. Men can fight for glory, gain and nation. But often they are chiefly stirred by

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6 The quotes are translated from “allerheyligsten priester” and “Portugees gewaat van swart sattyn, een swarte tulbant  om zyn hooft met goude bantjes en een zwarte lange stock  zyn handt.” See Briel, “Letter LXV”: 289-293 and De Graaf, “Gevangenneming”: 299-300
7 As will be clarified later, Trunajaya means “young conqueror”; the name of birth of Trunajaya was likely Nila Prawata. His statement was made in Malay: “Itoe beta ponja sala, dat bet syn eygen schult was”, literary ‘this stand [capture], [I] have fault’. Trunajaya does explain he sought agreement with the Sunan before, and wanted to return the stolen regalia. See Briel, “Letter LXV”: 291.
8 This depiction of Trunajaya’s death relies on the Babad Tanah Jawi and the Serat Kanda. He was first stabbed by the Sunan, after which bupatis (local governors) and servants cut him further. Then, subordinates ate Trunajaya’s liver and the Surabayan brothers Jangrana and Angga-Jaja were forced to smear the blood over their faces. The body’s head was cut off and all female servants wiped their feet on it before going to sleep. Bruised and battered, the head was pulverized on a rice-block the day after. De Graaf, “Gevangenneming”: 304. Notice that Walsanga is written without a space between; as is done in Indonesian too and Susuhunan is shortened to Sunan for convenience.
something different. Groups of warriors tend to constitute a cult centering around leading figures, usually of a saintly character. Fighters hurdled along chieftains, appealed by both their worldly and mythical allure.

The symbolic unity this brings to bands of warfare commonly forms the backbone of any larger institution of martial power; be it armies or realms. As such, the socio-religious identification within war-bands is not only key to understanding war itself, but the society in which it is fought too. Fighting men do not merely seek social glories; they equally shape and define them through the most fundamental martial ties. Even up to the point that preserving the war-band itself becomes the reason to fight. The warlord stood on top of these fraternizations and can be defined as ‘a territorial ruler, aristocrat or town representative raising troops he can allocate to military enterprisers’. On their turn, war-bands can be seen as groups of warriors abiding to such lords, however partially it may be.

The war-bands investigated here roamed Central and East Java between 1677 and 1679. Those two years were chaotic and bloody; stirred up by contested successions and insurgence. A mixed group of warriors were involved; originating from Makassar, Madura, Ambon, Java itself, and varying regions of Western Europe. Even though I draw a heuristic line between the indigenous warriors (pejuang) and the European ones, there never existed two clearly defined opposite camps during these tumultuous times. Smaller war-bands could easily shift from one side to the other. Attempts to muster these itinerant troops resulted in a complicated military labour market. To win a war, attracting most soldiers was crucial.

Earlier work has stressed the difficulties of doing so within the divided Javanese society. Courtly intrigues limited the degree to which the kraton’s war force could be counted on. Charney claims these prajurits or court soldiers were even less reliable than mercenaries from outside Java. Some limited means were available to demand obedience from local war forces. Anderson, Moertono and Wolters, for instance, describe a spiritual and material ‘Cult of Glory’ surrounding...
warlords and Sunans. Yet, monopolies on sacred power did not exist and cults could easily fall apart. 13 Musterings men was a dynamic process with constant shifts in demand and supply.

Although Charney and Moertono touch on some issues of military exchange, there is much more to tell about the Javanese war business. 14 Fraternizations, myths and warrior charismas are marginalized within Charney’s account and simplified as a ‘theatre state’ in Moertono’s one. 15 The notion of a ‘military labour market’ can be extended to tackle these topics more convincingly. For Java this has never been fully attempted, but for the Indian subcontinent it has. Therefore, I like to draw a parallel across the Indian Ocean, taking the historiography on Mughal warfare as a starting point. State-formation in both areas has been described in strikingly similar terms, so setting their way of warring side by side is only called for. 16

On the Indian subcontinent, Mughal emperors could achieve dominance over large spans of land by gradually controlling the warriors in outer regions. 17 Dirk Kolff’s work has been seminal in explaining this process; showing how this type of market generated socio-religious identities on its own terms. A gap persisted between identification within the aristocratic lineage hierarchies of the court and the heterogeneous, meritocratic order on the battle lines. The open distribution of loot and agrarian profits of the latter went beyond ethnic and religious boundaries; enabling the


14 Charney describes these Southeast Asian—not Javanese specifically—courtly intrigues as part of “complex organizations in which labor and land, the bases of power, were internally divided among competing elites, and among whom the ruler was often simply the primus inter pares. (…) It was for this reason that the great warrior kings of the region emerged during interregnums, when governing or social institutions had broken down or weakened sufficiently to release large supplies of manpower now available to be harnessed by a warrior-cum-king”. Calling for mercenaries could thus avoid such fleeting supplies of manpower. Yet, mercenary practices were intervened by the naval power of the VOC that limited the ability of the Sunan to ship in warriors from other islands. Besides these statements, Charney never made the attempt to investigate “many of the inner workings of political and social institutions and their organization of manpower”. This will be done in this thesis. Moertono also noticed how “the base characteristic of the army lay (...) in the closely knit cores of trusted followers of the commander”. A ‘Cult of Glory’ was abided to that both had a material and a spiritual side. Most rebels seemed to have aimed for solidifying these close ties as “the purpose of an uprising seemed almost always to set up an independent government, complete with all ceremonial paraphernalia and a full set of dignitaries”. See M. Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare 1300-1900 (Michigan: The University of Michigan, 2004): 130, 213, and 224; Moertono, State and Statecraft: 72, 79, 89; C.W. Wolters, History, Culture, 18-19, 93-95; and L. Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch Tiger: The Dutch East Indies Company and the Northeast Coast of Java, 1680-1743 (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1996): 36-37.


16 This is not to claim an encompassing history of ‘Indian’ or ‘Indianized’ civilizations. Rather, it is to propose a more flexible outlook on the manner in which the armed events laid the foundation of the larger Javanese kingdoms or mandalas, as that of Mataram or Majapahit. The history of these realms has paralleled that of ‘Indian’ ones. As Subrahmanyan observed: “historiographically at least, state formation in Southeast Asia and India appears to be portrayed in startlingly similar terms. In the Southeast Asian case, the static and cyclical notions of the state are to be encountered as much as in pre-colonial India (...). He mainly refers to the stress put on charismas rather than institutions. Sanjay Subrahmanyan, “State Formation and Transformation in Early Modern India and Southeast Asia,” In India and Indonesia during the Ancient Regime , eds. P.J. Marshall, R. Van Niel et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1989): 91-109.

17 Be it ghazis, Naukar, Raiputs or Sepoys.
attraction of a mingled and diverse crowd.¹⁸ When successful, warlords assembled a large amount of soldiers, thereby threatening the power-base of the official state.¹⁹

Both conscription and ascription were resorted to; troops could be forced into military service for a longer time or mustered for temporary projects. Unlike expected, the temporary troops still attributed statuses to their group. Even when jumping from one fight to another, a strong socio-religious group identity persisted.²⁰ Market competition was at the core of identification. The constant attempt to attract the most warriors and thereby establish political dominance created a ‘tussle’ in which religion could become a central tool for military rivals.²¹

Perhaps the most dominant notion in this regard is the ideal of the frontier-warrior: the Ghazi. The legend of the Ghazis is one describing warriors of faith offering their services for the holy war. Yet, in many pre-modern contexts, ghazis are commonly referred to as charismatic chiefs of war-bands wandering in search of booty rather than sanctity. What is more, the concept of the ghazi warrior often subscribes to “an eclectic image” feared by the more “orthodox strands” of religion.²²

The intricacies of the image varied, however. Linda Darling conducted an encompassing survey on the Ghazi throughout the Muslim world and discovered that the definition of the term differed among the communities of the frontier societies. The notion comprised anything from tribal looters, orthodox theorists to antinomian Sufis.²³ Conflicting contents were thus given to a single term, allowing opposite ideologies to apply the same name. From this viewpoint, the ghazi frontier-warriors were many, not one.

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¹⁸ As is shown by authors as D. Kolff and J. Gommans, South Asian war-bands could attract warriors of different backgrounds and hurdle them together under the martial banner. Even when warring was only a seasonal activity by peasants after having harvested their crops, regional affinities could easily submerge in the heat of battle and while roaming the lands. J. Gommans, Mughal Warfare: Indian Frontiers and Highroads to Empire 1500-1700 (London: Routledge, 2002); and Dirk Kolff, Naukar, Rajput, and Sepoy: The Ethnohistory of the Military Labour Market of Hindustan, 1450-1850 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 42-56, especially 44 and 47. On the Raiputs it is said that “the act of leaving their fields and families behind was also a religious expression of social dissociation, coming very near to the Hindu ideal of the world-renouncing sannyasi”. On the ghazis it is stated how “their camaraderie stemmed from a togetherness of deeds sealed in various plundering expeditions and raids”.

¹⁹ Kolff aims “to place the market for peasant soldiers itself at the centre of my enquiry” can be said to show the genealogy of several communities. Notice that the demand and supply effect could go in both ways. The demand from the court was determined by the total amount (‘supply’) of active war-bands. Among other reasons, war-bands started roaming because of unfulfilled demands for (agricultural) sustenance which in some cases could be due to misguided state politics. Kolff’s indications of such processes van be found in Kolff, Naukar, Rajput: 169 and 191. See also ibid.: 58, 127, and 195.

²⁰ It should be remembered, however, that “[n]o single identity covered all aspects of a man’s life. (…) As no identity covered all fields of action or all spheres of life, it had to be complemented by others.” Moreover, “these identities were chosen, not acquired by birth or ascribed”. See ibid.: 58, 65, 67, 121, 132, 148, 153, 182, 194-195.

²¹ Everything depended on the shifts in the balance of power between the parties and the unending negotiating process that from time to time reformulated ‘the terms of the alliance’. Frequent were the frictions between the landholding and service parties and the crown prince versus the ‘rebel son’. See ibid.: 123 and 126.

²² Notice the use of capitals to distinguish the Ghazi myth from the ghazi warrior. Within the Mughal Empire, they can be contrasted with the mirza or Rajput who were settled and tied to the palaces. Still, the empire also needed “to accommodate as many as possible of these migratory, armed bands”. They had wide-ranging connections through extensive business relations, potentiating them as effective stooges. These relations could, however, also be employed by the Mughal’s opponents. This made it vital to attract them to one’s side, yet this was troubled by the ascetic Ghazi faith stressing renunciation. See Gommans, Mughal Warfare: 40, 43, 49-51 67 and 88.

²³ She also stresses finding a balance between the agency of the historical figure studied and the legacies dedicated to him or her. Anooshar himself states that “those who are interested in how Darling’s ‘tribal looters, orthodox theorist and antinomian Sufis’ became ghazis may wish to apply the findings and methodology of this [my] book if they find it appropriate or useful”. See A. Anooshar, The Ghazi Sultans and the Frontiers of Islam: A Comparative Study of the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2008): 10; and L. Darling, “Contested Territories: Ottoman Holy War in Comparative Context.” Studia Islamica 91 (2000): 133-163.
On the other hand, imitation of legends did tie these mystical warriors together. Normally, art and literature were intrinsic to the self-conception and identification of the fighters. A ‘cosmopolis’ of a preferred warrior charisma existed. Discourses of sacred kingship and charismatic sainthood were abundant in it, be it produced contemporary or in hindsight. For instance, the myth of the millennial sovereign – relying on astrology, divine intercession and magic- marked the rule of both Safavid Iran and Mughal India. Similar warrior charismas endured on large stretches of land.24 They built on rites and were rooted in cults. Rituals and myths have been portrayed as temporary means to prepare for battle. Yet, cults were much more long-lasting than that. They crafted a mystical world of mingled religions and magnificent magic. The warlords heading the cults conducted such spiritual powers into an itinerant force desired by Mughal rulers. Bearing titles referring to saints and legends, they led ascetic lifestyles centred on mercenarism as much as praying. Their world renunciation went hand in hand with armed expertise.25

Colonialism and institutionalization gradually turned warrior ascetics into ascetic soldiers, a process recalling Weber’s contrast between personality and ‘institutionalized life orders’. The mystic warrior was a child of its time; essential to a world filled with religious sects and lacking the regulatory impact of structured hierarchies.26 But areas counted as much as eras. To use charisma effectively entailed an appropriation to local circumstances. It demanded an eclectic mix of religion and locality.27 Those mixtures also occurred on Java.

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24 Sacred kingship could be constructed by subsequent generations and could equally substantiate spiritual power despite lacking physical one. Context thus matters a lot, for “sacred authority must be understood by paying close attention to its social dimension”. The concept of cosmopolis can be used to see how different contexts overlapped. The concept is based on Pollock’s work; it can be taken as constituted through a discourse of Ghazis and sacred kingship spread by the widely-used languages of Arabic and Persian. Both leave a uniformising impression on the societies they pass through and are adapted in; the implement similar narratives in different vernaculars. Thereby a linguistic pattern causes social parallels; for the ideal warrior will at some point shape the battles of real wars. Anooshar, The Ghazi Sultans: 3-4, 9-11, and 165; and A. Moin, The Millennial Sovereign: Sacred Kingship and Sainthood in Islam (New York: Columbia UP, 2012): 8, 14, 24, and 225.


26 Turner perceives “important parallels between Max Weber’s account of the routinization of charisma in military bureaucracies and Elias’ analysis of the decline of militarized feudalism”. He criticizes Elias’ Civilizing Process to ignore “the historical and comparative importance of religious cultures and institutions” in military conflicts and social violence. Rather, he opts that warrior charisma “is conceptually part of an analytical framework that understands the dynamics of large-scale changes in religious institutions and the foundations of authority as outcomes of the violent impact of the sacred on the profane”. See Pinch, Warrior Ascetics; and Bryan S. Turner, “Weber and Elias on religion and violence: warrior charisma and the civilizing process.” In The Sociology of Norbert Elias, eds S. Loyal and S. Quillely (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 2004) 257 – 276.

27 Take, for instance, Bayly who writes on “recently sedentarized ex-pastoralists and martial predator groups” in the South Indian hinterlands who crafted a “mixed and volatile cultural order in which traditions that would now be identified as those of formal Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity were all being formed, received and transmitted at the same time”. Moin equally debates the ideas of a “vernacular Islam” and “syncretism”, a hibernation of religion and locality, when treating Timur’s influence in the Safavid Empire. S. Bayly, “Cult saints, heroes, and warrior kings: South Asian Islam in the making”, In Religion and Public Culture , eds. K. E. Yandell & J. J. Paul (London: Routledge/Curzon, 2000): 194-196, 200, 201-202 and 206; and Moin, The Millennial Sovereign: 26, 56-60, and 90.
On the island, the most salient legend is that of the Walisanga or nine saints. Continuous adaptation of the myth was crucial in applying it to construct martial cults. As such, Javanese authors over time and space have persistently altered the composition of the holy men. Each new polity, dynasty or warlord could thereby underline the saints with whom they associated genealogically, geographically or historically. Three walis have been particularly popular in the late seventeenth century: Sunan Giri, Sunan Kudus and Sunan Kalijaga. Two others played a central role in the court chronicle of Mataram, the Babad Tanah Jawi: Sunan Bayat and Sunan Ampel Denta.28

In general, the Walisanga are perceived as Islamic harbingers, the ones who converted the island. But some hints are given on their actual lives too. Sunan Giri set up an Islamic school, the Giri Kedaton, that would turn into a centre of resistance over the next two centuries. Sunan Kudus was known for attacking Majapahit, conquering a Hindu state in Pajang and was supposedly related to Jaka Tingkir; the progenitor of Mataram. Sunan Kalijaga influenced Jaka Tingkir directly and is remembered for the two mosques he built.29 Yet, their true significance comes from their legacies and the authority their descendants could achieve.

Even the esteemed titles of Pangéran and Susuhunan were first coined for these holy men. It took decades before a secular connotation became attached to the designations. But when it did, nobles immediately erased the religious sides of them. The power it casted over the titleholder was to be reserved for the royals. Wali descendants who still dared to call themselves Pangéran were ridiculed; showing how the new generation of political actors had replaced the religious harbingers. But outside of the court, the Wali legend was still beloved and honoured. The Giri saints thwarted Mataram, and Sunan Bayat’s grave site in Tembayat remained a locus of insurgence.30 At the same time, the kraton resorted to the Wali lore to stabilize their authority in the periphery of their realm.


30 As Moedjanto has stressed, entitlements were an essential feature of constituting rojal rule and genealogy. The use of the saintly titles was hence a way to construct a powerful mandala though increasing the statuses of central rulers. As De Graaf writes: “Het ligt daarom voor de hand, dat na de islamisering de pas omhoog gekomen vorsten, die aanvankelijk allen pati genoemd werden, hun aanzien hebben trachten te verhogen door de verwerving van geestelijke titels”. These titles never constituted a separate warrior caste, however, as Houben and Kolff observed. The label of Sénapati Ingalaga or ‘honourable commander in battle’ does come closest to a martial class. It was carried by multiple warlords among whom Sultan Agung prior to getting his Sultan title. See H.J. De Graaf, *“Titels en namen van Javaanse...*
In the seventeenth century, courtly interests and Wali legends thus both clashed and complemented each other. Evident parallels can thus be drawn to the Ghazis on the Indian subcontinent. This stresses once more that the era under concern was primarily one of Late “Islamization”, rather than Early Modernity. All around the Indian Ocean, religious motivations to escape the grudge of central capitals persisted. Adopting these Islamic convictions at the court, could transform potential enemies into partners. Sultan Agung -the most renowned ruler of Mataram (r. 1613-1645)- succeeded in doing so when visiting the holy graveyard Tembayat and Amangkurat II assigned a descendant of the Walisanga to bless his inauguration and edit the court chronicles. Both sought to turn religious rebellion in support and thereby increase their status as divine lords or wahyu kaprabon.

That rulers turned to Islam to bring their subjects to obedience is almost natural in the realms they governed. Both in Java and northern India, hierarchies were limited and fragile. Wolter’s mandalas can be both applied to the Mughal Empire and Mataram. Unlike states, mandalas are not defined by their rigid borders, but rather by their strong centres. The periphery was instead ambiguous and could consist out of numerous tributary polities with relative autonomous local leaders. The ties between these leaders and the overlord were personal not administrative, and
hence likely to shift. Wink stresses how the governmental relations were weakened by fitna; a drive to secession and upheaval.35

The continuous courtly incorporation of local elites usually led to many compromises. Over time, “regional élites grew excessively powerful economically, and asserted themselves vis-à-vis the central power”. A process of fitna would then easily break the realm apart. For men like Ibn Khaldun or Emperor Jahangir, fitna forced alliances opposing the leaders of polities; as to prevent all-dominating rulers and realms. 36 Besides testing the faith of individual believers, fitna was thus also perceived as a check on authoritarianism. Still, central rulers could resort to nepotism, warfare and myth to prolong their rule and quiet down the secessionist urges of their subordinate courtiers and elites.

Gaining the upper hand in the military labour market was crucial to reach this aim; for control was not only lacking over the outer areas, but also over the warriors residing or roaming there. A complicated ‘war business’ developed in which political networks, geographical frontiers and warrior charismas could tip the scales. For this reason, it is worth investigating to what degree the zamindari landlords can be juxtaposed to the Pangérans, how the Central Javanese-East Javanese-Pasisir relations were similar to those of arid and monsoon India, and how both Ghazis and Walisanga were able to mould ethnic and religious identities.37 With this purpose in mind, some particularities of Java need to be mentioned.

In comparison with South Asia, Houben and Kolff have stressed the limited immigrant élite on Java. 38 Nonetheless, mobility certainly impacted the island and the warfare on it. Two factors were of specific influence on the Javanese military labour network: the infrastructure and the

35 Like Wink has stressed, fitna functioned as a “normal political mechanism of state-formation or annexation and, as it were, the negative basis of universal dominion”. The last clause refers to the Hindu belief in an ideal dharma crossing over ethnic identities and establishing universal dominion. The dharma realm was considered unachievable, however. In its counter-world of the here and now, such homogenizations were to be upset by successions and ethnic divisions to oppose monopolies of power. Alliances in and outside the mandala kept political balance, preventing certain polities to gain the upper hand. In fact; “objectively, fitna implies no more than the forging of alliances, it is thus (...) not primarily determined by the use of military power”. Even though, Wink can be easily criticized for asserting a constant vision on insurgence throughout many ages-a common sin of Orientalism- his effort to limelight the religious motives of political resistance is very informative. See A. Wink, “Sovereignty and universal dominion in South Asia.” Indian Economic Social History Review 21 (1984): 270, 274, 279, and 282.
37 Careful attention needs to be paid here to the role of heredity, however. The Central Javanese-Pasisir relations reveal crucial aspects of the influence rebellious turmoil had on the religious ideology created at the court. Carey indicated the cultural (ranging from architecture to music) and political ties between the centre and periphery of the empire. His survey shows large progressive influences of the latter on the former, which brings to question how the shifting relations between these regions changed the cultural and religious expressions of the ‘Asabiyyah’ sought for by the Sunan. See P. Carey, “Civilization on Loan: The Making of an Upstart Polity: Mataram and its Successors, 1600-1830.” Modern Asian Studies 31, no. 3 (1997): 711-734; idem., “Core and Periphery, 1600-1830: The Pasisir Origins of Central Javanese “High Court” Culture.” in Regions and Regional Developments in the Malay-Indonesian World, ed. Bernhard Dahm (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1992); and Gommans, Mughal Warfare: 68-69, 90-91, and 96-97.
38 They claim: “[w]hereas in Java the ruling élite, though from different parts of the island, was almost exclusively Javanese, in most of India the aristocracy was made up of various religious and ethnic elements.”Houben and Kolff, “Between Empire Building”: 171-183.
demographic spread. The first was largely limited to the larger rivers, roads and northern coastal waters. Inland mobility was restricted by volcanoes, mountains, jungles and flooding. At the same time, villages tended to be rather isolated. The three to four million Javanese were “clustered in pockets of population” across hundreds of kilometres. Moving from one place to another would often be an adventurous pursuit. Still, many did move.

The motivations for migration contrasted. Inhabitants could be attracted to pilgrimage, assisting a rebel leader, or could be imposed to attend a kraton gathering. Quite often, however, the decisions were stirred by the dynamics of the military market. Determining where to move usually involved an acceptance of either the state hierarchy or the forces fighting against it. Individuals travelled in different directions, and war-bands marched to the beat of different drummers and gamelan sets. The reasons of lesser notables to “endorse or reject royal authority” thus explain more than just the “political history” of Java. The trends in mobility were equally shaped by it. A martial history of Java should therefore attend to marches as much as battles and courtly intrigues.

In this light, the movements from the coast or deep woods to the royal hinterlands were particularly important. Compared to Demak and even Prajat, Mataram was located far inlands. Although secure from hostile maritime forces, the control of the Pasisir and Eastern Java was equally limited. Amangkurat I made several attempts to subdue the coastal areas through disposal of bupatis and the introduction of new taxes. But the Sunan was never the “natural” ruler of the north coast. Nor was he of the thick forest east of the Brantas. Rivalries between these areas never faded out. As a consequence, particular cultural and political interactions developed between the core and periphery of Mataram, or -to use the Javanese division- the nigaragung (core-regions), the mancanagara (outer-regions) and the pasisir (coastal regions).

Beyond the nigaragung, local rulers or bupati needed to be employed. Nepotism was involved, since many of them tended to be ex-courtiers and thus affiliated with the kraton. But even when friends and family were send to the periphery, autocracy was in vain. The wide-spread belief in

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39 Some readers might be reminded of Schrieke’s “primary factors” of the “Javanese people” and the “Javanese landscape”. Notice, however, that Schrieke emphasizes immobility rather than mobility. My statement should, moreover, not be taken to assert a changeless society, these characteristics instead were two main axes through which change occurred. Mobility and infrastructure, often propelled by military events, made Java very dynamic indeed. For Schrieke’s division see Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. 2: 99-101.
40 One major difference between the Mughal mandala and the Mataramese one is the sheer population size. For the Mughal mandala this could be estimated at 150 million in 1700. Indications for Java are harder to get, but Reid has estimated that the total population of the entire island must have been around four million in 1600 and five million two centuries later. Ricklefs even suggests these numbers to be too high. It can hence be deduced that Mataram had about two percent of the Mughal population. See J. F. Richards, “The Mughals and their Contemporaries.” In The New Cambridge history of India: The Mughal Empire, Gordon Johnson, ed. C. A. Bayly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 1, 190; Ricklefs, A History: 139. Ricklefs, A History: 19, idem., Mystic Synthesis in Java: A History of Islamization from the Fourteenth to the Early Nineteenth Centuries (Norwalk : East Bridge Signature Books, 2006); 3, 36; idem., War, Culture, and Economy in Java, 1677-1726: Asian and European Imperialism in the Early Kartasura Period (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1993); 3, 7; and Schrieke, Studies vol 2: 139.
41 The most noticeable kraton gatherings were the Garebegs. See Ricklefs, War, Culture: 9.
sacred power did not entail acceptance of the Sunan’s authority. The Sunan was not the supreme leader the VOC men sometimes assumed he was. In fact, “the mobilisation of economic or manpower resources” could only be achieved through persuading, pressuring or threatening local rulers “with more direct control of resources”. Albeit several means were available to the Sunan, one was specifically resorted to; military power. Military marches to and fro the periphery at times resembled religious processions in an aggressive search for supporters.  

In the vein of Ricklefs; “at bottom, what held this state together was force or the threat of force”. The Javanese army consisted of both professional soldiers and peasants. The former were closely tied to the court and well equipped. The latter wandered around, changing from one side to another and drafted temporarily by different warlords. What is more, they heavily outnumbered the soldiers. The Sunan’s force can be expected to have been around 300,000 in normal times. But underneath this number hides a motley crew. Conscribing these men required tactics that had to take account of the dominant trends in martial supply and demand. Active persuasion and local presence were needed to compete with other armed forces.

All in all, the most salient characteristics of this labour market did remain the same in the seventeenth century. Ricklefs and De Graaf, for instance, noticed central locations repetitively used for rebellions as well as a consistent courtly inability to control border areas. The frictions between the coast and the inlands kept returning. And so did the reliance upon religiously tinted identifications, which in this century were largely steered by Islam. Most importantly, the hierarchical social structures propelling the martial demand were essentially left unchanged. It is rather the social mobility within them that was facilitated by continuous insurgence. That very mobility became a feature of the hierarchy and accomplished opportunities within the military labour market. New fights entailed desertions but also fresh vacancies.

43 Houben and Kolff noticed a stronger tendency for local control in Java: “in Java the local power base of the priyayi was essential to the functioning of the realm, whereas in Mughal India the umara lacked such a power base.” But what they conclude from this is less convincing: “[t]he military corollary of these structural differences was that in Java feudal levies and native armies were of primary importance, while in India the central phenomena were mercenaries and a relatively open military labour market”. As this thesis shows, migrating war-bands certainly played a key role in Javanese military affairs. See Anderson, “The Idea of Power”: 19, 25; Bertrand, État Colonial: 86-90; Houben and Kolff, “Between Empire Building”: 179-180, and 183; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 36-39; W. Remmelink, “De Worsteling om Java.” In De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie, eds. Gerrit Knap en Ger Teitler (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002): 342; idem., The Chinese War and the collapse of the Javanese state, 1725–1743 (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1994): 12-31; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 8.

44 That is about a third of what the VOC delegate Van Goens suggested. See Ricklefs, War, Culture: 8 and 13-14.

45 The social structures propelling the martial demand were characterized by rebelling peripheries. As Ricklefs states on regional rulers: “outside of the capital city, regional families were often powerful”. Specific locations were especially prone to counteract central power; chiefly at the Central-Eastern coast (Pasisir) and in East Java (Blambangan, contemporary Banyuwangi, formally this is part of the Pasisir too). Not coincidentally, these regions also harboured many migrant communities. What is more, Blambangan was the place Islam and Hinduism clashed most violently after the sixteenth century. Margana and Kwee found similar patterns among the migrant communities found in this area during the first half of the eighteenth century. Schrieke underlines a similar potential for mobility throughout the early modern times. This explains continuity in infrastructure and demarcations of provincial borders. See Houben and Kolff, “Between Empire Building”; 181; K. H. Kian, The Political Economy of Java’s Northeast Coast, c. 1740-1800 : Elite Synergy (Leiden : Brill, 2006); S. Margana, Java’s last frontier; the struggle for hegemony of Blambangan c.1763-1813 (Leiden; Leiden University, 2007); Ricklefs, War, culture: 3, 6, 7, 226; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 102-120.
Insurgences, in this sense, were indirectly fuelling a motor that kept the mandala running. A look at the organization of the Amangkurat II’s war-bands evidences the market’s durability. The Sunan was constantly in search for supporters. He seemed to have used a clear strategy to gather them. This particularly comes forward when he adjusted the VOC war plans for attacking Kediri. During negotiations on 29 October 1677 between the Sunan and the lower lords, Speelman laid out his strategy for a direct attack from Surabaya. The Sunan urged to start the campaign inlands instead, leaving more opportunities for achieving new coalitions.46

The VOC’s interference thus did not alter the fundamental scheme of campaigning. It mainly exerted influence on minor tactical concerns. Not only were European clothes and drilling methods partly adapted; technologies equally transmitted.47 Conversely, the close operations with Asian war-bands and the pre-eminence of these soldiers certainly did shape Dutch warfare as well. In fact, one cannot escape the relevance of the “Javanese military labour market” for the Dutch inland offensives.

The Company and the Sunan shared aims. FromRicklef’s viewpoint, both parties had a similar “culture of war” and a comparable quest to instil a “stable new order in Java”.48 Even though the notion of this order differed, the means used to fight for it could overlap. An overarching question emerges on the mutual understanding between the two parties on conducting war and attracting alliances. Were similar tactics used to gather mobile warriors to one’s side and was the appreciation of fraternization akin?

Since the VOC entered a labour market unlike European ones, misinterpretations were commonplace. At times, the Company men were left whistling in the dark. In this thesis, I consider what their sources still reveal about war-bands and the mandala plus military labour markets in which they operated. I discuss how they framed the martial activities of warlords like Trunajaya or Amangkurat II and, indirectly, the Company itself. For this purpose, I take a closer look at the VOC sources written in the midst of conflict.

When it comes down to it, the conflict of the late 1670’s was also one between two martial cultures. Therefore, I set off my inquiry by contrasting the Javanese and VOC ways of warring (chapter 2). Secondly, I describe how those contrasts were highlighted within different historiographical strands (chapter 3). Thirdly, I reflect on the elaborate reports of two VOC admirals to consider how they bridged the gap between their conscribed and controlled Batavian troops and the spontaneous alliances with ‘indigenous’ warriors or pejuang. Questions will be asked on their

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46 De Graaf, *De Expeditie Hurdt*: 18 and 41.
47 To what extent they did is a much more controversial issue that led to debates on technological development avant la lettre; before the so-called first-, second and third world nations were categorized in a developmentalist sense. Although it is useful to map out military technologies to gain an impression of military potential, entering in discussions on innovation levels and development stages will be as deceiving as developmentalism was halfway the twentieth century. SeeRicklef, *War, Culture*: 223-228.
48 Ibid., 226.
background, concerns and preconceptions (chapter 4). Subsequently, the epistemic character of their writings is judged upon in the conclusion. Having found the limits of the VOC’s scope, I analyse the clues of a larger Javanese military endeavour that was not fully understood by the Dutch, yet indicated in their writings.
2. **Ways to War: The chaos between 1677 and 1679**

   a. **War on Java**

   The Javanese calendar took the start of the seventeenth century to spell disaster. A centurial downfall would bring an overhaul of hierarchies, a turn of power. Volcano eruptions, famines and a lunar eclipse increased anxieties about a looming destruction and made hay for prophets of doom. That Trunajaya was ravishing East Java can only have brought expectations from bad to worse. And indeed the Mataram kraton did fall that very year. For the Javanese year 1600 is the Gregorian 1677.49

   The disaster striking Central Java was rooted in the disputes over Madura. This island is separated from Java by a small strait, small enough to allow continuous Javanese influences from at least the 10th century on. Mataram got its grip on it when Sultan Agung conquered the island around 1624. He ousted the only remaining Madurese lord and confined him to the kraton with the title Cakraningrat I. After years in exile, his grandchild was born: Nila Prawata, as Trunajaya originally was called. When Nila Prawata reached his twenties he returned to his homeland; not to rule but to rebel.50

   And so it happened that five decades after Agung’s victorious march to Madura, a just as devastating one was charging at the Mataramese capital from the other direction. Trunajaya employed tactics similar to those bringing triumph to the Javanese subordinator of his family. While traversing the lands he attracted warlords and troops. They were aroused by oaths and rituals, armed with spears, shields, krisses and guns and helped him block provision lines, fight skirmishes and siege towns. A military pattern lays bare that can be judged characteristic for the area. Partly, this is one of warrior charismas: where Agung craved his lineage, so did Trunajaya combine the Islamic influence of his warlord Raden Kajoran with more secular appraisals of personality.

   As Andaya proved for the Bugis and the Makassarese, a “holistic conception of warfare” tended to prevail in the Indonesian archipelago. Concepts of state, solidarity and honour intertwined with those of war tactics and weaponry. Sulawesian documents stressed how martial conflicts served “the maintainance of proper relationships within the human community and between states”. The VOC, on the other hand, “were principally concerned with demonstrating the effectiveness of their

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49 More precisely, the AJ 1600 started in March of AD 1677. Schrieke observes “messianic expectations” at work here. Ricklefs even claims the “populace at large almost certainly expected major changes”. Yet, only hints can be found of this. In the light of Moin’s observations on Millennial Sovereignty on the Indian subcontinent, large-scale influences of cosmological prophecies can certainly be expected. As for the cosmological court traditions, see M.C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi 1749-1792: a history of the division of Java* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974): 420-1 and 176. Similar predictions occurred for other Sunans too in different times: Bertrand, *État Colonial*: 98-100. Next to these, see Ricklefs, *War, Culture and Economy*: 33, 41; and Schrieke, *Sociological Studies* vol. II: 94-95.

50 This royal family turned out much less faithful than the Sultan might have expected. Notice that no absolute certainty remains about Trunajaya’s original name; but Nila Prawata is the most likely one. See K. Van Dijk, H. de Jonge, and E. Touwen-Bouwsm, “Introduction.” In *Across Madura Strait: the dynamics of an insular society*, eds. van Dijk et al. (Leiden:KITLV Press, 1995): 1-6; and H.J. De Graaf, “De opkomst van raden Truna-Djaja.” *Djawa* XX, no. 1 (1940): 56-87.
military campaigns against local kingdoms”. Their way of war centred on “cost and effectiveness”; the efficient operations, the profitable contract signed and “light losses among the European soldiers” due to the “native allies” backing up the army.51 It nearly appears these allies were cannon fodder.

To show that “native allies” or pejuang troops did come to serve similar purposes in both archipelagic and European armies, this chapter will study how both armies engaged in battles. A threat connecting the ‘Asian and European’ textual traditions can be found in the manner wars were fought in the late 1670s. Both documented similar military actions. Therefore, I will start by unravelling the conventional side of warfare; that of ‘blood and iron’. Adaptations to local war tactics indirectly exposed the broader connotations warfare had in the Indonesian archipelago. This will show how the Company’s interest in “native allies” went beyond mere concerns of cost efficiency.

Demand and supply, be it the Sunan asking for the VOC or the VOC asking for warlords, created intricate networks of martial associations. Armies overlapped; leaving the Company to enter the holistic world of which the pejuang forces were part. Hence, an overview is required to see how Trunajaya fought and was fought against, as well as how those battles were organized and prepared for. At first sight, a clear pattern of engagement is visible. Certain conventional ideas on fixed battle formations were seemingly abided to. They were based on Indian models that had spread around the Indian Ocean. Mataram, for instance, was stated to use the Makara array at the start of battles.52

![Picture 3 Makara Vyuha, a battle formation used in Java and recorded by Raffles in 1817. The numbers inside the battle formation refer to the type of elite warriors and units of troops used.](image)

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53 Ibid.
Nonetheless, despite the mention of Makara in Javanese chronicles and European accounts alike, the military activities appeared chiefly characterized by improvisation and chaos rather than order and organization. Warriors sooner ran amuck than charge in array. These very battle formations served more as ideals than applied practices. Military command consisted out of noblemen appointed ad hoc during times of distress. Favoured courtiers and royals thus took charge on an arbitrary basis and sometimes without any relevant tactical knowledge. Moreover, distrust usually led to a constant shuffling of positions to avoid subordinates from accumulating power.

And in certain cases shuffling meant death. Potentially hostile warlords were eliminated. Trunajaya murdered Makassarese traitors and Sultan Agung appears to have assassinated his failing commanders during the first siege of Batavia in 1628. At some points, Mataram ran in trouble because few competent and trusted Javanese commanders remained. Hence, Amangkurat II also approached non-Javanese warlords as the Makassarese; who had shipped to Java after the fall of Makassar a few years earlier. After contacting Karaeng Galesong -the most powerful Makassarese warlord on Java- in writing, the latter suddenly gained the royal title of Prabu Jayalelana. The Sunan had high hopes for Galesong conquering Kediri.

Amangkurat II’s preferences even mattered for the selection of VOC officers. During the initial negotiations in the late 1677's, the Sunan made clear he only wanted the Company’s support when their Ambonese captain Jonker would join. He equally sought Speelman to enlist, but the latter could not. Subsequently, Tunenggung Suranata and others were called on to gather troops for an offence that would not start till the next Northeast monsoon. Dissatisfaction on the available commanders seemingly delayed Amangkurat’s campaigns. For insurgents as Trunajaya, the inconsistent supply of warlords led to even more uncertainty. No regular officer class thus existed; only local armies brought together by temporary figureheads. This left Speelman to lament even the “most experienced of the inexperienced Javanese commanders”.

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54 In itself, running amuck was a very effective tactic. Yet, by its very nature, it was not one conducted in an organized matter. It’s power is shown by the attack Panembahan Mas of Giri launched in 1680 against the VOC and Mataram forces: “(…) they did not bother with shooting or wounding in the struggle but, at the constant cry amokan (stab them to death) of the aged Panembahan, who personally gave out his commands on every side, they fell upon our men from all sides at once, with such violence that after the loss of six Europeans and ten Javanese of the Susuhunan fell into so much confusion that they grew panicky and took flight, thereby at the same time completely disorganizing two of our white companies and putting a third to flight (…)”. See Supreme Government of Batavia, “2 June 1680.” Daghregister gehouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts-india Anno 1680, ed F. De Haan (The Hague: Matinus Nijhoff, 1912): 321-332.

55 Nagtegaal makes a similar observation, stating: “[t]he fluid nature of the Javanese state promoted social mobility. Wartime in particular was a period in which existing rulers would vanish and others would seize their opportunity. When regents were being appointed, aristocratic origins would appear to have been less important than being on good terms with the new Susuhunan. Again, we see the key role played in the Javanese state by personal relations.” See Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 44; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol.II: 132-133.

56 Bertrand, L’Histoire à Parts: 426-428; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 55.

57 The Sunan sent the letter after possibly being advised to do so by Tunenggung Martalaja. This title was worn by a Balinese commander too: Tunenggung Dja-Jela-Lelana. Amangkurat II instructed the lords of Madiun and Wira-Saba (Madja-Agung) to join the Makassarese. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 22 and 68.

Consequently, elaborate plans for the battle grounds were rare. Similarly, the armies on Java seemed more like clustered groups of war-bands rather than uniform companies of troops. Each commander could call his own shots and pick his own routes; with his followers trailing behind. Consequently, massive field battles were rare compared to the skirmishes of one warlord versus another. In rage, small groups faced each other. Nagtegaal goes as far as claiming the leaders and nobles were the only ones motivated to fight: “when the leader died or surrendered the battle was almost always over, and everyone went home”. Besides some scarce references to Hurdt’s campaign, however, his conclusion seems without foundation. And even if command could quickly evaporate in battle, intricate unions and hierarchies did exist during its prologue. The extensive exercise of mustering and moving troops evidence this.

In fact, battlegrounds were not all that important to begin with. Sieging towns was what really mattered. Once a larger settlement was captured, the surrounding region could often be claimed too. Aiming to conquer the enclosing fields would be a task burdened by “an evaporating rural population” - fleeing to the forest before the first shots were fired- and requiring more manpower than warlords could grant. When victorious, aggressors seized and subjected a town by capturing or resettling some of the inhabitants, installing new leaders and even tearing down its

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60 Remmelink gives an analysis on these arbitrary assignments in his account on chaos leading to the Chinese War. See Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 59 and 63; and Remmelink, Chinese War: 20-21.
walls. Fortification was crucial to avoid this or achieve a stronger position to negotiate terms of surrender.\(^{61}\)

The Javanese had a long tradition of constructing defences, one that Ricklefs would not judge inferior to that of the Europeans. Towns with brick walls, wooden fortifications, temporary stockades, trench works, moats and stakes existed for a long time on the island. The forts (benteng) generally had palisades or mud walls and several outworks; usually palisaded areas (pagor). The stronger European firearms did urge adaptations of course, but minor alterations in the defence works usually sufficed.\(^{62}\) Constructing fortifications was demanding, however, and needed to be schemed out by leaders.

The attack on strongholds had its methods too. Charney recognizes two common ways of assaulting a besieged fortification: a noisy and a quiet one. If confidence grew high, the army “would announce their impending assault with cannonades, yelling, the beating of drums, gongs” as to “terrorize the enemy into submission or weaken their resolve in their defence”. The quiet one instead attested fear and involved careful approaches usually mantled by night or thunderstorms.\(^{63}\) But for truly understanding the assault, you need to look beyond the siege itself.

There is a preamble that greatly affected the anticipations of any army. That is, the transport and march towards the enemy. In bad times, half of the army could perish before any offence occurred. Keeping up provision lines was thus crucial. Carriers made up a large part of the warforce, and soldiers could not do without carts, oxen and buffalos.\(^{64}\) Both helped carry food, cannons and ammunition; a task requiring no particular training as it was similar to agricultural work. Only the heavy artillery could be tricky to transport; demanding robust carts and healthy draught animals.

The speed of carts pulled by buffalos, or pedati, can be judged around 3.22 kilometres an hour and sixteen kilometres a day. Lagging carriers were thus a common issue, exposing them to attacks. To stay safe, moving as part of a caravan was critical. Without any shared protection, the baggage train would turn into a sauntering target for bandits and hostile warriors.\(^{65}\) The restricted amount of routes made ambushes easy to arrange. Warlords thus needed to give careful thought on the arrangements of transportation.

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\(^{61}\) When strong fortifications would prolong a siege for a long time, chances were that the monsoon and sickness would scatter the enemy. Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*: 73 and 78.

\(^{62}\) Such alterations also included the protected positions for firing the muskets of the besieged themselves. See Nagtegaal, *Riding the Dutch*: 65-67; and Ricklefs, *War, Economy*: 131.

\(^{63}\) I do not argue for a common Southeast Asian way of warfare here, but these observations were largely based on Javanese cases. Charney stresses how “the Javanese launched [the noisy] kind of assault against Batavia in 1628 and 1629, as well as at Kediri in 1678 and against the Makassarese in 1679”. See Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*: 101; and Schrieke, *Sociological Studies* vol II: 135-139.

\(^{64}\) Sultan Agung, for instance, used eight thousand carts for his 1624 campaign. The carts tended to be slow wheeled and entirely made out of organic materials. See Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*: 207-210; and Schrieke, *Sociological Studies* vol II, 131 and 139

\(^{65}\) Charney, *Southeast Asian Warfare*: 207 and 211; and Schrieke, *Sociological Studies* vol II: 128 and 130.
On Java, certain roads and waterways were used time after time and became the main arteries of military mobility. The lack of bridges and the limited mountain passages restricted the itineraries. Blocking these routes by felling trees was an effective way to obstruct the opponent’s baggage train. Cutting crops and damming rivers were tactics too. Sultan Agung, for instance, ordered thousands of men to “to destroy the crops and produce in the fields and to despoil the land” of Surabaya. But the despoilers needed to be careful not to cut their own resources as well. In dire straits, wasted fields could have served their own needs. For both sides were often vulnerable to famines, particularly during the rainy season.

Avoiding the monsoon was hence crucial to keep the supplies running and the army marching. The rain season was capable of bringing the most persistent troops to a standstill. Mobility and communication were hardly possible in the mud, floods and erosion that heavy downfalls would bring. Not to mention the inevitable desertion when farmers felt the urge to plough and sow rather than kill and conquer. War campaigns were therefore planned in the dry months, usually from March till June, and September till December. In addition, larger armies favoured camping during the night to avoid nocturnal dangers like wild animals and obscure trails. Military advances were thus equally a fight against time and for nutrition. Trunajaya only truly caved in when scarcity obligated him to request food from his enemy.

At first sight, Mataram had a more efficient distribution system offered basic food and apparel supplies. But even the Sunan’s provisions frequently ran out. In those cases, soldiers were to live off the land. Both food and women were hunted for; foreign auxiliaries were especially notorious for their raids. During the 1670s, fear spread among Javanese peasants for the Balinese, Bugis, Madurese and Makassarese warriors serving either the VOC and the Sunan or Trunajaya. Robbing and burning down villages almost became a habit for them. Naturally, this tendency spelled disaster for many villagers. Houses were demolished, fields pillaged and families torn apart. The destruction in the shadow of marching armies was in itself an important component of drafting new forces. Desperate farmers and peasants could opt for the military as a final resort.

In fact, setting out the routes traveled by certain war-bands will offer an important understanding of regional associations and abilities to attract troops from different places. As Schrieke understands it, the Javanese landscape offered similar geographical obstacles for most centuries before the technological revolutions of the modern age. Bridges, for example, were seemingly absent; ferries being likely used to cross rivers. In his perspective, this contributed to a “repetitative history” which does not “of course imply uniformity, as influences from outside have varied in both intensity and nature”. Roads could be “specially prepared beforehand” if the occasion called for it, making it easier to convey carriers. See Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 100, 102-120, 132, 134-135, 146-147 and 153-229.


Notice that during the eighteenth century, Mataram was no longer paying its indigenous warriors directly. See Remmelink, The Chinese War: 19.

Schrieke asserted that “war on any appreciable scale was for the Javanese an economic catastrophe”. See Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare: 190, 214, and 216-221; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 60; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 129-130 and 143.
Local leaders could incite them to do so. Indeed, rousing ones people to war would usually establish the community leader as a warlord. But only few warlords had access to skilled soldiers; most subjects were porters instead. For Mataram, the military workforce can divided between the service, free and royal service populations. The first tended to be subjected to local rulers, the second less so and the latter were primarily accountable to the court and often provided restricted knowledge on weaponry and tactics. To bring such men under a single martial banner did require leadership skills that Nagtegaal overlooks when merely considering events on the battleground.

The most valued warriors could be found among the royal service populations. Due to the high court demand for them, they were enabled to get thoroughly involved with politics. To fight was their most striking task, nonetheless. In fact, success on the battlefield usually was a chief requirement for achieving titles and courtly positions. Amidst the royal servicemen were the true prajurit or soldiers; disciplined, trained and experienced. The elite guards consisted out of these men. Not only did they protect the Sunan or central warlord, they equally were the core fighting force during battles; the ones engaging first and often exclusively.

Yet, nobles outside the capital were able to retract such skilled royal servicemen, decreasing the court’s revenue base and disturbing the balance of power. The same went for peasant levies; most of whom belonged “to noble-men or rich merchants” prior to Sultan Agung’s conquest. But even during the rule of Agung’s son and grandson, peasants still needed to be forcefully pulled from the farming fields onto those of battles. Thereby, the personal resources of local rulers were tapped into and seriously damaged in case of heavy losses. Hence, resistance against conscription as well as sudden desertion was common.

To hinder the nobles from detracting forces, rudimentary censuses and service lists were introduced to conscribe peasant levies. Amangkurat I composed one in 1651, for instance. Large parts of the population were drafted in this matter, even when the chaos of war disrupted the administration. Sultan Agung is stated to have armed ninety percent of his subjects against Batavia in 1621. Halfway the century, Mataram’s army levelled between 150.000 and 300.000 men, and was claimed by Van Goens to potentially assemble 920.000. Such exaggerations illustrate how European

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70 This of course depended on whether the leader himself would take soldiers to battle.
71 Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare: 214-216.
72 Bertrand, État Colonial: 73.
73 Given their leading role in engagements the elite guards were the only soldiers that did wear a uniform. Military parades in modern Yogyakarta and Surakarta still give an impression of how these clothes looked like. See J. Groneman, De Garebeg’s te Ngajogykarta (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1895). See further Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch Tiger: 61; and Remmelink, The Chinese War: 20.
74 Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare: 214-216, 220, and 20; Remmelink, The Chinese War: 19; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 128 and 147.
75 See Rickles for a background on Amangkurat I’s census, which has now unfortunately been lost. These surveys were also conducted for gathering taxes; hence taxation units of cacahs, consisting out of a certain number of household, were used. See M.C. Rickles, “Some Statistical Evidence on Javanese. Social, Economic and Demographic. History in the Later Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.” Modern Asia Studies 20, no.1 (1986): 1-32; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 46-50, and 59-64; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 129 and 138-139.
observers tended to overestimate the size of Asian armies. As Charney shows, however, Southeast Asian leaders themselves equally spread hyperboles to increase their status or decrease the one of a competitor.76 The fact remains that the Javanese peasant warriors far outnumbered the VOC soldiers.

Charney calls the high amount of these “low value” peasant warriors “a major problem facing early modern Southeast Asian courts”. In his mind, they would suffice best as porters, and indeed that was their chief function on Java. Moreover, they boosted military power by their mere presence, for the “rule of the thumb” was: “the larger the size of the army, as opposed to training or other factors, the greater the likelihood of a successful outcome of a military campaign”. But when relying on peasant conscripts, sizes could easily fluctuate. Desertion and looting notoriously hindered Javanese armies and the arms and training provided to peasants by a ruler could easily turn against him when alliances shifted.77

Mercenaries tended to be more trustworthy, and better trained plus equipped at that. Dutch, British, Portuguese, Turkish, Malabari, Acehnese, Bugis, Balinese, Madurese, and Makassarese soldiers or captives were all made use of. As uniforms were not worn in this era, the ethnic markers of these groups functioned as the means to distinguish them. Being foreigners, they were not entangled in court politics, and thus no direct competitors to Javanese rule. At the same time, a rebel leader would have fewer fears for them claiming the lands he tried to conquer. In most cases, looting appeared more important than dominating to these outsiders. At the same time, they had no compulsion to pay due respects to leaders other than receiving their payment. Conversely, the ruler could get financially indebted since the expenses of mercenaries far outweighed those of peasant levies.78

No matter the wages, all warriors were exposed to elaborate oaths and rituals used to ensure their loyalty. As Raffles tells, even the summoning of ancestor spirits was resorted to.79 Equally important was boosting bravery. Especially the elite warriors were expected to fight till death follows. To make sure they would, banners, spells of invulnerability or –equally effective- opium were of great use. Attacking with ‘iron’ to spill ‘blood’ involved mystical instigation; and battle tactics thus had a spiritual coating. All these stimulants were noticed and described by the Dutch.

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76 He also claims that “from the 1630s, however, as Europeans became more knowledgeable about Southeast Asia and its demographic resources and as the intense warfare of the sixteenth century gave way to a more docile period, estimates of Southeast Asian armies became more modest” (p.217). Naturally, he refers mainly to the Iberian forces here. See M. Charney, “A Reassessment of Hyperbolic Military Statistics in Some Early Modern Burmese Texts.” Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient 46, no. 2 (2003): 193-214; and idem., Southeast Asian Warfare: 217.
77 Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare: 218-220; Remmelink, The Chinese War: 19 and 118; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 124.
79 Charney claims: “[p]rior to the rise of nationalism in Southeast Asia, Southeast Asians generally fought either in the interests of their village or for their patron, either a local lord or the king. The oath was a means of emphasizing these bonds before entering battle.” See Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare, 9; and Raffles, The History of Java vol. II: clxxxv and 817.
Trunajaya was said to have a banner depicting “a strange figure regarding whom he had misled his people with many fabulous stories”. It contained “an ancient flag, on which (...) was depicted a strange human form with strange limbs, standing with an uprooted tree in his hand, the which is explained by some experienced natives as representing the first conqueror of this island of Java. According to information procured, Trunajaya has some time since audaciously claimed this honour for himself, hence his adaptation of such a flag”.80

But these flags not only boosted the ego of the warlord; they equally uplifted his followers. Almost all troops the VOC encountered -Makassarese, Mataramese, Madurese- carried them. Spells served a similar purpose. Sultan Agung was even said to have seven thousand men “impervious to shot or thrust” among the army of thirty thousand he gathered in 1624.81 Chants like these made sure warriors would stick to the fight despite the absence of strict battle orders. In the heat of the encounter, command appeared given by the senses as much as overseers; running amok was desired over standing in line.

Vicious bloodshed was aroused among the elite soldiers; a fact not always recognized by the European observers. Foreigners “frequently underestimated” the violent nature of the ‘indigenous warfare’. In contrast to the “labour-scarcity” argument of Reid -supposing limited casualties due to a general anxiety on the lack of population- Charney poses “killing and death” stood at the core of all Southeast Asian warfare.82 The term ‘Southeast Asian warfare’ is controversial, but the the degree to which bloodletting occurred on Java needs to be considered. The weapons and tactics –implicit as they might be- used tell much about the ways in which warlords could put their men and preparations to mortal use, or conversely avoid fatal encounters.

Two sorts of weaponry can be distinguished; that belonging to individual soldiers, and that monopolized by the state. The former often consisted out of tools equally used in times of peace. Most non-gunpowder weaponry was accessible to a larger audience. Spears, pikes and lances were most common. Pires already observed in 1515 that “every man in Java, rich or poor” had a lance in his house.83 They were primarily used in hand-to-hand fighting rather than throwing. The javelin did serve that purpose. For protection, light leather shields seemed to be popular, although elite soldiers often wore chainmail or bronze armour. Trunajaya’s cavalry at Kediri was, for instance, armoured in these meshes of small metal rings.84

81 The quote is from Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 125-127 and113-133. See also Raffles, History of Java vol. II: 298.
82 Charney, Southeast Asian Warfare: 18 and 21.
84 There is unclearity about the armour, since they appeared to be used fighting neighbours more than European companies, hence accounts on them are scarce. Bows and arrows were not used in the seventeenth century Java. For an impression of these weapons consult Raffles, who made illustrations of them from the early nineteenth century: Raffles, History of Java. See L. Andaya, The Heritage of
Most famous is of course the kris, which was an object of honour. All Javanese were expected to carry one. Pires wrote “every man in Java, whether he is rich or poor, must have a kris in his house, (...) and no man between the ages of twelve and eighty may go out of doors without a kris in his belt”. A married man was even required to wear three of them: as tokens of kinship, ancestry, and family-in-law. Nobles, moreover, limited elaborate decorations of sheath and weapon to their class. Even though widely spread, the kris thus still indicated status differences.  

Firearms were most exclusive, however. China being the birth ground of gunpowder, merchants had already introduced guns long before the seventeenth century. Cannons had become the symbol of mystical power, often being constructed -not even casted- with impractical large sizes. But the blasts or mere appearance of these enormous cannons could shiver the enemy to retreat. Small arms equally served claims to rule; gunfire marking special religious celebrations, ascendance to the throne, or salutes to honoured visitors. Sometimes they were even considered lingam: a phallic symbol of manly capabilities.

The distribution of guns among Trunajaya’s troops seems to have been arranged by every warlord separately. But within Mataram, firearms were centrally circulated. They were stored in the royal arsenals, to be taken out in times of war. The size of the armouries must have been extensive. In 1624, Mataram armed more than four thousand musketeers. Halfway the century, about thirteen percent of the army operated guns. Limiting the availability of firearms to soldiers on campaign did discourage the training of marksmanship. In times of peace, no shots could be practiced. This led some staff members of the VOC to doubt their “dexterity in the use of Muskets”.

Dexterity was certainly not lacking when it came to using animals. The handling of elephants and horses left outsiders impressed. Yet, the former was gradually abandoned in the seventeenth century; wild elephant herds apparently becoming rarer and rarer on the island. The associations with royal power did remain; Amangkurat II even appeared to have considered his lost elephant as some kind of regalia. Horses enjoyed an elevated status too. War, hunting and tournaments were their domain, not agriculture.

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The European matchlock technology was quickly adapted in local foundries, although accustomation slowed down in the course of the seventeenth century. European captives were also used to gather instructions on artillery. See Charney, Southeast Asia: 42, 51-56; C.A. Gibson-Hill “Notes on the Old Cannon found in Malaya, and Known to be of Dutch Origin.” Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society 26.1 (1953): 152-153; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 124.


Unlike tigers, leopards and buffalos, the elephant was no longer used in the tournaments at the kraton either. The few remaining boars were more or less turned into curiosities, heavily decorated and valued. Amangkurat II requested his brother Puger to give back his elephant. Peter Boomgaard, Frontiers of Fear: Tigers and People In the Malay World, 1600-1950 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001): 3, 111,115, 146-147, 151, 152, and 162; and J.J. Briel, De Expeditie van Anthonio Hurdt, Raad van Indië, als Admiraal en Superintendent
Horsemanship was a noble trait and reserved for elite guards. Etiquettes existed; allowing skills and bravery to shine through and determine victory. Such unwritten rules led to a great deception when facing the VOC, who could not care less about them. But the Europeans were left in awe from time to time. One VOC man convinced himself the Javanese only fought on horseback. Others were just overwhelmed by the sheer number of them. During the campaign of the late 1670s, large units of cavalry were often encountered. Trunajaya used hundreds of riders during the siege of Kediri.89

The horses available in the archipelago were not ideal for war. The prime stocks of them were of Tibetan, Mongol and similar breeds; resulting in short ponies rather than combative stallions. Other types of horses were highly requested. Van Goens experienced the pronounced demand for Persian stocks first-hand when the Sunan suggested sending some of his courtiers to pick out ‘proper’ ones.90 The indigenous ponies were put to good use too, however. First, they were valuable for communication and intelligence gathering. But most importantly, they were skilfully put to fight.

When it came down to it, Javanese horses could be just as lethal as Persian ones. An eyewitness tells us how these “fine horsemen (...) have both hands at their disposal, as they guide the horse with their knees and body. Around their waists they wear a girdle on the front part which is fixed a copper hook, in which they fasten the rein, so that they keep both hands free, manipulating the long pike ... so cleverly that anyone who had never seen it before would be astonished”. When put to charge, great damage could be done by these riders. If fortunate, a deadly strike of confusion, velocity and mobility bashed through infantry, tearing soldiers and porters apart and chasing the men in retreat.91

Naval warfare was conducted as well. And halfway the 1670s, Mataram did order one large warship for every one-thousand coastal residents. These ships could be used to transport armies or block ports. Nonetheless, the realm’s rule over the waves was insignificant. Mataram was an insular power not an archipelagic one. Even in 1615, Mataram was claimed to have “no power at sea. [The ruler] is very mighty on land and has excellent means and materials for constructing fine galleys, but he lacks seamen”. Sultan Agung’s bloody campaigns in the Pasisir would only have decreased the
amount of competent sailors further by its heavy tolls on sailors. Large scale naval actions halted completely after 1676, leaving the deep waters to European hegemony.92

92 The quote derives from Coen. See ibid.: 139-141.
93 Notice that archery came back after the seventeenth century, as is evident from Raffles’s drawings. “Gevecht tussen de sousouhounan van Mataram en zijn vijanden” In Oost-Indische Voyagie: Vervattende voorname voorvallen en bloedige zee- en land gevechten tegen de
b. VOC warfare
While the VOC was mighty on the waves, it could not dominate the Javanese hinterland. Therefore, it needed to adapt to the patterns of warfare discussed above. It partly had to become an “Asian Company”, depending on the “brawn and loyalty of men and women with an Asian descent”. Similar to the Asian warlords, huddling manpower proved important for the VOC. But, it took a while before a firm base of alliances was built up. First, the VOC systemized its own pool of warriors under contract. Secondly, a reputation needed to be established to access a stable flow of allies and mercenaries. Only the former warforce was truly impelled by conscription and resembled the privatized armies in early modern Europe.  

These conscribed warriors inclined to be non-Javanese. Common monikers included Ambonese, Balinese, Buginese plus the ambiguous ‘Mardijkers’ and ‘Malayans’. Raben suggests they tended to be lured from enemy troops around the archipelago. Everyone was welcome, although at times certain groups like the ‘Buginese’ were refused entry. The divergent body of warriors became settled in Batavia and formed a single Asian legion of the VOC army; a pattern no different from other “Asian cities”. No strict segregation between these groups existed. Formally, the kampongs or quarters near Batavia were assigned to residents with homogenous backgrounds, but they soon became ethnically mixed. It appears personal attraction of commanders motivated individual soldiers to assemble in their quarters. The administrative ethnic classifiers used for these troops and their commanders were hiding their hybrid nature. The Bugis mingled with the Ambonese, the Makassarese with the Balinese and so on.

Portugeezen en Makassaren 1658-1665 Derde Boeck, Wouter Schouten (Amsterdam: Jacob Meurs, 1676): 142. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-47-479 .

94 Anthony van Diemen was influential in constituting this Asian legion. Raben “roughly” categorizes three types of Asian troops: the regular VOC soldiers (i.e. The Asian legion), the warriors of allies, and the gangs that joined during the campaigns. The difference between the second and third is very ambiguous, however. Raben claims the allies to mingle more with VOC troops than the gangs. But this overlooks that the troops of the allies were often constituted out of these gangs; some of them simply entered later during the campaign. Moreover, his statements suggest a growing administrative control over the alliances; “Geheel eigen aan het rationele doel van haar expansie, poogde de Compagnie na verloop van tijd om het aanbod van reservetroepen te systematiseren”. He overlooks, however, the increasing dependence on rather autonomous troops outside Batavia. See D. De longh, Het Krijgswezen onder de Oostindische Compagnie (The Hague: W.P. van Stockum, 1950): 53- 56 and 61-78; and R. Raben, “Het Aziaatich legioen Huurlingen, bondgenoten en reservisten in het geweer voor de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie.” In De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie, eds. Gerrit Knaap en Ger Tettler (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002): 181, 185, and 197. For the “public-private partnerships” shaping early modern European armies, see Parrott, The Business of War.

95 ‘Papangers’ or papanggo was also used to refer to Mardijkers, a group that might only have existed in an administrative sense. It is to be questioned whether a community of Mardijkers was ever formed at all. Instead, it could have been fragmented in groups like the papanggo. De longh claims the Malayans to primarily come from Gedong and Panjang. See De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 77; and Parakitri Tahi Simbolon, Menjadi Indonesia (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2007): 462.


97 Raben underlines the organization needed to operate the Asian legion: “[h]oe eenvoudig het ook lijkt, het vergde een aanzienlijke organisatie om duizenden reservesoldaten paraat te houden om op ieder gewenst ogenblik naar het strijdtondeel op welke plaats in Azië dan ook te zenden. De VOC liet ook hier zien dat zij de heersende omstandigheden naar haar hand kon zetten”. A decree was made in 1688 to pen down the system; the simplified ethnic classification was strongly present in it. De longh had a different view on the homogenizing effect of VOC policies. See De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 65-68; and Raben, Het Aziaatich legioen: 184-185 and 192-196.
During campaigns, the Supreme Government of Batavia purposefully mixed troops abiding to different warlords and with different ethnicities. This was to avoid dominant single-minded army sections that could resist European rule. Furthermore, combining warriors with different skills under separate warlords increased the overall military strength. In due time, the VOC relied more on the Asian martial power than that of their European soldiers. While essential to the Company’s troops, the Asian legion still held an inferior position. There usually got lower wages and were put under temporary contracts. Therefore, they needed to work the Batavian lands in times of peace. However victorious a campaign might have been, on return the soldiers were left plowing to put bread on their tables and a shelter over their head.98

This increased the tension within a community that was already upset by war traumas. In fact, Raben is not surprised by the amount of thugs, gangs and jagos springing from the legion.99 Besides wages, training was also lacking. The VOC hardly provided firearms to its Asian troops, let alone gunpowder to practice with. Moreover, Maurice of Nassau’s famous armament and drill were not applied to these warriors. The Asian and European troops therefore remained in “separate worlds” and kept operating differently. The former were storm-troops used for “hit and run” attacks, usually operating from the flanks. Their tactical use was mainly due to their “manoeuvrability and fanatical effort”.100

It was only halfway the eighteenth century that modernization of the military management occurred. At that point, the Company finally made efforts to integrate its Asian army section and thereby increase its efficiency and discipline. However, the European soldiers also needed fixing. In the previous one and a half century their low quality had often been stressed by VOC officials. Their clothing, obedience and skills were all complained about. Military clothes -not uniforms- had to be brought along, or bought in the expensive VOC store. Under such conditions, soldiers marching shoeless were not uncommon. Provision was very scarce too; consisting of rice and kanjang. Order did not always prevail and desertion occurred frequently.101

Worst of all, however, the European soldiers were not known as good marksmen either and at times lacked up to date equipment. What is more, their battle tactics were not adapted to dense

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100 Ibid.: 183, and 197-199; and Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 67-68.
101 Desertion did seem to be much rarer among European company troops. Nagtegaal asserts their chances of survival would have been very low; unlike the Javanese they did not enjoy any family protection. See De Iongh, Het Krijgswezen: 80-88; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 68; and Raben, Het Aziatisch: 183-184 and 202-204.
forests, but open fields. European soldiers were even judged invincible by the Javanese at some points. Remmelink seemingly agrees with this, pointing at a superior European tradition of soldiery based on fighting oneself to death. The ‘primitive warfare’ of Javanese ‘warriors’ was instead centred on fleeing and therefore deemed to suffer defeat. Be this as it may, the Company’s military service came into high demand by the Sunans, his subordinates and his opponents.

While signing alliance with the VOC, Amangkurat I addresses them as “those who have many weapons, that are feared by their enemies”. Those weapons went beyond guns, cannons and swords; it was a style of warring adapted to local circumstances. Not only were the Europeans drilled better, they were equally familiar with crucial tactics in Javanese warfare as sieges. Moreover, after the 1650s they increasingly tried to regulate their Asian alliances through control over indigenous troops outside the Asian legion; to incorporate sections of pejuang effectively. Their reputation allowed access to a ‘stable flow’ of war-bands in Java, Timor, Sulawesi and the Moluccas. Due to these factors, the VOC-servants have been depicted as “ultimate arbiters of insoluble disputes”.

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102 See for instance the complaints on the Makassarese hit and run techniques in and out of forests, while the VOC could not leave their turf. Concerning the equipment: flintlocks were introduced relatively late for instance. See Speelman, “Letter XXI”: 121; and De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 88-96.

103 Volley fire developed in the Dutch Republic in the early seventeenth century and replaced the tercio lines; a square formation using both pikemen and musketeers. Gustavus Adolphus used it brilliantly during the Battle of Breitenfeld in 1631 by letting his lines fire together, rousing a lot of fear among his opponent. This tactic slowly found its way to Java, where it was more difficult to apply due to the limited amount of open field battles and lacking availability of flintlocks. See De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 15, 22, and 114; and G. Parker, The Thirty Years’ War (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984).

104 Remmelink not only distinguishes the European soldiers from the Javanese peasants, but equally from the Asian mercenaries and the skilled royal prajurit warriors. Soldiers and warriors are essentially different, he states. He suggests soldiery to be a European tradition going back to the “Greek phalanx and the Roman legion” and based on “hand-to-hand combat, the final battle, and fighting till the last man stands”. The prajurit instead derives from what Keegan calls “primitive warfare” centring on natural barriers or fortifications which left plenty of room for escape. Fighting oneself to death was not expected. The only tradition I can recognize here is one of Orientalism affecting the Dutch historian, not one of European or Javanese soldiery. See De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 114; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 67; Raben, Het Aziatisch: 183-184, and 202-204; Remmelink, De Worsteling om Java: 339; and M.C. Ricklefs, “De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de Gewelddadige Wereld van het Vroegmoderne Azië.” In De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: Tussen Oorlog en Diplomatie, eds. Gerrit Knaap en Ger Teitler (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2002): 370-373.


106 As De longh claims: “[n]og steeds culmineerde het krigsgebeuren dier dagen in het al of niet bezit van en den strijd om versterkte steden en plaatsen. Zou het wel in Europa en zoo zien wij het dan ook in Oost-Azië.” The inclination to caravans appears similar to the Javanese one too: the Babad Tanah Jawi describes how the Company’s troops marched in step (sapangkat-pangkat). In other words; they had a snail’s pace likely due to pulling many carts with them. See De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 12; and W.L. Olthof, Babad Tanah Jawi vol. II (Leiden: KITLV, 1941): 191.


The Javanese, however, sooner perceived them as mercenaries than arbiters. Mataram remained the sovereign seat of power, be it one crumbling apart. For the Sunan, relying on Europeans proved a double-edged sword; the dependence on foreign troops to settle inland issues raised questions on the legitimacy of the Sunan. It equally undermined his divide and rule politics; including the bestowal of office or local ruling positions. Indirectly, calling in the VOC summoned new conflicts in itself.109

Yet, the Company was blind to the catalysing effects of their own interventions. In Nagtegaal’s opinion, the eventual failure to reap benefits from these campaigns had to do with the unreasonable expectation that the Sunan could easily step back to power. The Oriental stereotype of a “powerful Eastern despot” fed the misperception of a temporary chaos. Trunajaya was taken as just an unruly vassal to be put to check. This mind-set changed when the Madurese managed to muster many forces a month after the VOC interference started. The Mataramese periphery gave way much easier than the Company expected. In consequence, the extensive authority of the Sunan was put to doubt and neutrality became aimed for.110

According to Nagtegaal, this simply resulted in a denunciation of the Susuhunan’s personality rather than recognition of the decentralized nature of the realm. He goes even further, however. The patih or bupati, i.e. the central administrators and regents, of the king supposedly came to be considered as the cunning and dangerous stooges of the Sunan. Unlike their leader they were capable of hindering the Company. All in all, this made the court a despised place; “an attitude that stemmed from the widespread distaste for monarchies in the Republic”.111

Nagtegaal overlooks the varying perceptions on courtiers and regents. They both differed from one VOC servant to the other and while considering distinct Javanese rulers. The author makes the routine mistake of assuming an all-prevalent Orientalism among the European outsiders, thereby stereotyping the ‘stereotypers’. Based on a handful of letters he draws conclusions that do not seem granted for. The Batavian governors viewed matters differently from their men in the field. As will be shown in chapter four, careful analysis of individual VOC-servants shows opinions to be not so much settled a priori as to develop during interactions with the Javanese.112

111 Note that Nagtegaal starts his book with a discussion on the period directly after Trunajaya’s revolt and only later turns to the eighteenth century. His statements do thus certainly concern the period treated here, he writes: “[t]he VOC saw the Susuhunan as surrounded by bad counselors, minions, Moorish ‘priests’ and other disreputable characters. In such company the sovereign could not possibly arrive at the measured decisions that were needed” (p.22). The resulting vision is claimed to affect the current historiographical view on the Javanese state. See ibid.: 22 and 28-30.
112 A similar error is made when stating that “[t]he Dutch were only too aware of the impossibility of gaining any military victories on their own. Without sufficient Javanese allies they would not even venture into inland regions.” It remains to be wondered who ‘the Dutch’ and ‘Javanese’ referred to are in this case. See ibid.: 67.
But even the Batavian Supreme Government did not hold a single perspective. Larger shifts in policy determined how the Sunan and his mandala would be framed. Clashes with the Company abounded. The treaties signed between these different parties were a source of misunderstanding. The VOC approached them as contracts; rigid and binding. For the Javanese, Madurese or Sulawesian signees, the interpretation differed. Ricklefs suggest it was perceived as “a means to reach agreement in martial matters, so the battles could be ended, but the details of the text were in themselves of less importance”. The degree to which treaties could still be rectified, led the VOC to separate its trading area into three categories.

The three cut divide was made in the Generale Instructie of 1650. First, were the areas of “own conquest”, like the Banda islands. Secondly, were those regions where exclusive contracts had been reached, as happened in Ternate and Amboina. Thirdly, those lands where the Company was on equal footing with the Asian lords, and needed to deal “as made possible by signed contacts”. Mataram clearly belonged to this category, and constant negotiations were required to settle business. At stake were not only profits, but basic stuffs of survival like wood and rice.

Still, to the Lords XVII -who defined the general VOC policy from the Dutch Republic- lingering talks appeared a less costly option than warfare and colonization. In the early seventeenth century, only men like Jan Pietersoon Coen and Anthony van Diemen would opt otherwise. Coen expressed himself clearly: “trade cannot be maintained without war nor war without trade”. Under Maetsuycker’s governor-generalship (1653-1678) almost the opposite motto was abided to. Costly wars were to be avoided as much as possible to maximize profits. “No desire” existed “to gain possession of any more towns or estates in the kingdom of Mataram”. They would demand upkeep and only destabilize the region. This policy certainly reflected on the embassies and campaigns of Speelman and Van Goens.

113 The original quote, albeit translated to Dutch by the editor, is: “weliswaar een middel waren om overeenstemming te bereiken inzake strijdlige belangen, zodat er een einde kon worden gemaakt aan de gevechten, maar dat de details van de tekst er op zich minder toe deden”. See Ricklefs, De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: 374. For the Sulawesians see Andaya, The Heritage of Palakka: 100-116.
115 Coen wrote this on the 27th of September 1614 to the Lords XVII: “per experientie behoorden de Heeren wel bekent te wesen, dat in Indiën de handel gedreven ende gemainteeneert moet worden onder beschuttinge ende faveur van U eigen wapenen ende dat de wapenen gevoert moeten worden van de proffijten die met den handel syjn genietende, invoje de dat de handelszonder d’oorloge noch d’ oorloge sonder den handel nyet gemaintineert zonnen werden”. See De Jongh, Het Krijgswezen: 38.
Maetsuycker’s instruction for the campaign against Trunajaya was to achieve armistice or break his movement through minor military interference. This was partly because of costs, and partly due to a looming attack from Banten. Quick solutions as the installation of new local chiefs or a partition between Amangkurat II and his brother Pangéran Puger were searched for. Some interference was unavoidable, however, with the lingering inland chaos and the threat of Makassarese pirates.

After the havoc of Trunajaya’s uprising started, the Dutch meddled in several times. 1776 saw the commission of three expeditions: Jan Franszen Holsteyn, Christiaan Poleman and Cornelis Speelman were sent one after another to re-establish the central power of the kraton. Yet, Holsteyn and Poleman thought they only had to wipe the Makassarese from the coast and Speelman was strictly prohibited to march inlands by the Batavian Supreme Government. After Maetsuycker expired, his successor Van Goens decided the opposite and allowed hinterlands campaigns. Expectations were that Mataram would pay back the military expenses.

In hindsight, this proved to be an idle wish. Only a small proportion of the war debts were returned by the Mataram rulers. But the damage done had been great. Both sides lost much manpower and material resources. This did not keep the Company from intervening, however. After the hectic years of Trunajaya’s upsurge and downfall, the VOC appeared a much more attractive partner to many regional Javanese leaders, certainly those of the Pasisir. The military victory demonstrated competence, and the increased taxes to pay the war debts raised hostility towards Mataram.

After 1680, numerous requests were made by the Javanese elites to become vassals of the Company rather than Mataram. Batavia was very careful with such approaches, however; not wishing to destabilize the Sunan’s hierarchy. New chaos would merely bring more financial losses. Only over East Madura, Cirebon and Semarang did the Supreme Government take suzerainty. Even with men as Van Goens and Speelman calling the tune, the colonizing tendencies of the Company would thus still be restrained.

Beliefs in ‘powerful Eastern despots’ do not explain their self-limitation. Van Goens did write two distorted accounts of an absolutist rule after returning to the Republic. Yet, these appear political ammunition in internal Company debates. Both Van Goens and Speelman noticed plenty of fractions in the Mataram realm during their embassies and campaigns. What is more, they actively used them

117 Gaastra has even called the VOC a “reluctant imperialist” dragged into the hinterland conflicts against its own wish. F. Gaastra, The Dutch East India Company: Expansion and Decline (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2003): 60; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies vol. II: 18-19, and 141-142.
118 The Supreme Government did not want to continue the intervention in 1677 due to threat of the Bantenese and the Malays of Johor. Palakka was called to Batavia and not Kediri for that reason. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 6; Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch Tiger: 8 and 19-25; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 40.
119 Ricklefs, War, Culture: 223.
120 Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 41-43 and 46.
to their own benefit. Not so much a fear for weak Asian tyrants, but an awareness of the dependence on local alliances must have kept them from accepting the notion of obedient vassal states ruled by Mataram.

At first sight, the failing tyrant and the autonomous local rulers might seem two sides of the same coin. Still, the realization of needing local and regional assistance is clearly different from betting on the favoured royal horse, i.e. the Sunan, for a return of the war debts. Two contrasting kinds of intelligence lay behind both views. The latter is based on the formal reporting guidelines, the former on experiences of negotiation and fighting with and against a fragmented Javanese society. The formal guidelines were certainly not all-prevailing in the accounts of admirals like Hurdt and Speelman.

These guidelines were imposed since 1619, when the VOC gained an exclusive right on publishing and revealing all information gathered by its servants. The clearest request was made in the ‘Memorie voor de coopluyden en andere officieren’ as put on paper by Maetsuycker in 1670. Main themes of interest were: the locations visited by the delegates, the state system, trade and other means of survival, agriculture, hostile military forces, and the power and potential of the VOC within the area. Other common concerns were the sex distribution, households, possible alliances with the central leader, availability of arms, munitions and soldiers, location of forts, fighting of crime, ‘churches’ and religious figures.  

Although these themes are certainly treated, reports were not limited to them. What is more, the ‘Memorie voor de coopluyden’ was hardly applicable to military operations; after all, no separate directions were given specifically for admirals. Their descriptions appear largely shaped by the immediate issues they faced; most of all keeping their army together. The empiric impression of indigenous affairs and organizations unfolded the fractions stirring politics on Java. Fighting Trunajaya confronted the authors with mandalas and military labour markets. This deluged them with intelligence of a different kind. The immersion into the chaotic warfare around 1677, made the contracts between military cultures more evident than ever. The aspects of warrior charisma and shifting war-bands diverged most clearly.

3. **Describing Warfare:** Between events and actors

a. **Historiography**

War surprises. Right before the VOC attacked Trunajaya’s stronghold Kediri, their Makassarese allies suddenly vanished in the air. Hurdt, the admiral in charge, was counting on these hundreds of men. He requested their return, asking their warlord Galesong to “fulfil his promises” so he can “welcome them as good friends”. The “sudden change of retreating ones dispatched people” - Hurdt wrote to Galesong - must have been caused by “the malicious inductions of several vile men”. Likely, Hurdt knew the latter was not true. The Makassarese were reputed to jump from one army to another. Yet, the VOC admiral appeared baffled, uncertain why this pact was suddenly broken.\(^\text{122}\)

The VOC was often at a loss to find out how alliances formed among the pejuang. A scramble for intelligence came about to discover what was motivating warlords, who could be trusted and what could be done to end the costly war as soon as possible. However, being thrown into a conflict on foreign islands, the VOC men were frequently left grasping in the dark. Their acumen was hindered by the limited understanding of both royal and religious hierarchies and cults.\(^\text{123}\) As mentioned, I attend to these gaps of knowledge and reflect on what the Dutch can still tell us about the war-bands under concern.

It might surprise the reader that merely Dutch material is analysed. What remains of the Javanese perspective if their very sources are not given thorough attention? One practical reason for leaving them out of the main analysis is the sheer lack of time for writing a MA thesis. Moreover, only babads translated in English or Dutch could be consulted, since I cannot read Javanese. Yet, I am also convinced a careful evaluation of the VOC material yields new understandings of both their message and nature. Accordingly, it enables a more careful assessment of the information the sources contain on Javanese alliances, be it in times of peace or distress.

My hope for increasing awareness on the potential of the VOC materials will come across best through reflecting on the existing historiography. For that purpose, I will start by reviewing the work that has already been written using the same kind of sources for the same period. Especially worth describing are the larger tendencies and presumptions central in De Graaf’s and Ricklefs’ oeuvre. Looking at their works specifically will show how the writings of European traders functioned as building stones for a Javanese history.

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\(^{123}\) Betrand discusses this as a clash between two cultural perspectives. More will be said about this a few pages down. See Betrand, *L’Histoire à Parts.*
The upsurge of Trunajaya has been treated many times before. Receiving the title of ‘national hero’, Trunajaya has found his place in the curriculum of Indonesian history courses. In this chauvinistic niche he figures as the good guy fighting the deceptive Amangkurats and their kāfīr allies.\footnote{Kāfirs are unbelievers. See, for instance, R. S. Hadiwidjojo, *Raden Trunodjojo, Panembahan Madurutna pahlawan Indonesia* (Pamekasan: s.n., 1956).} Luckily, more scholarly work has been available for decades already to counter this simplistic view. Yet, even within the academic literature certain discursive choices have been made that characterize the work and the stories told. In this chapter, I will trace these tendencies to see how they can be expanded upon. Naturally, a central issue is the use of Dutch sources.

Halfway the twentieth century, debates raged over the significance of Dutch sources for writing a history of Java. Scholars like De Graaf and Pigeaud very much liked to pick descriptions from both Javanese and Dutch writings to know the ‘true historical events’ the best. Berg instead stressed how Javanese sources were a league on their own, and could only be interpreted through recognition of their mythic character. This debate on reconstructing events and interpreting the actor who described them has steamed ahead since then; with well-known historians as Ricklefs or Kumar tending to one side or the other.

To understand the current scholarly discords, awareness of the academic debates halfway the twentieth century seems all but vital. And there is a good reason for this. After all, it was in these times that the foundation was laid for a post-colonial history of Indonesia. Different questions came to be posed, and different research methods were sanctioned. This is not to claim that comparable scholarly approaches did not bud before. Authors like De Graaf and Berg were, after all, active in the 1920s already.\footnote{G. Nagelkerke, Bibliography H.J. de Graaf. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 141, no.2/3 (1985 Leiden): 201-214; and J. J. Ras: *In memoriam Professor C.C. Berg, 18-12-1900 tot 25-6-1990. Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 147, nr. 1 (1990): 1-11.} Yet, a new disciplinary discourse emerged that directed the research to come. No book demonstrates this better than Soedjatmoko’s *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*. Published in 1965, the work reflects the debates bustling since the 1950s. It was the awaited response against the “overly nationalistic” history writing that simply embellished on “the existing often Europe-centric body of Indonesian history”. Thereby, it pointed towards a route not stuck with “European narratives, chronologies, and categories of analysis”.\footnote{G. Kahin and M.L. Barnett, “In Memoriam: Soedjatmoko, 1922 – 1989”. *Indonesia* 49 (1990): 135.} Be it about the earliest Hindu empires or the high colonialism of the nineteenth century, a new style of research was called for.

Multiple contributing authors -young and old, Asian and European- expound their ideas to take the ‘Indonesian Historiography’ one step ahead. Practical concerns are expressed on archival materials, research facilities and seminars. More interesting to us, however, is the theoretical layer
supporting the preferred course of enquiry. As acknowledged by Soedjatmoko, theoretical perceptions on sources and methods determined the research questions posed.\textsuperscript{127}

Let me demonstrate the consequences of these assumptions for those contributors interested in applying Dutch materials to write a Javanese history; Hoesein Djajadiningrat, H.J. de Graaf, J. Noorduy, C.R. Boxer, and Graham Irwin. A dominant topic in their essays is the epistemic concern for connecting European sources to ‘indigenous’ views and reasoning. The preceding generations of historians are refuted for having failed to do so.

Most of the authors agree with Soedjatmoko’s statements that the “histoire réalité” needs to be distilled from the “histoire-récité”.\textsuperscript{128} Putting it differently; the ‘subjective’ Asian material is to be framed in factual ‘Western’ history as to provide an opportunity to truly perceive the real actions and motivations of the historical subjects. Hereby scholars can evade “inaccurate” mythological stories and use “relational objectivity”. Scholars can procure the objectivity of Asian sources through relating them to Western ones. This is done by contextualizing the deeds and thoughts of Asian actors through events described in objective, mainly Western, sources.\textsuperscript{128}

In this manner, a “universal history” can be written; contrasting and thereby transcending different regional historical traditions.\textsuperscript{129} The philosophical justification of this method is the notion of interpretationism propounded by Collingwood. As he stated: “the historian’s work may begin by discovering the outside of the event, but it can never end there; he must always remember that the event was an action, and that his main task is to think himself into this action, to discern the thought of its agent.” Thinking oneself into an action requires a truthful understanding of events. Basing interpretations on obscure myths will merely result in distorted depictions of the action underneath.\textsuperscript{130}

Interpretationist epistemological concerns are clearly addressed in the aforementioned essays. De Graaf argues European sources offer “a check on the historical references in the Babad” and Jayadiningrat finds comparisons with “regular history books” crucial for making any sense out of the Javanese chronicles.\textsuperscript{131} Irwin stresses how the “high degree of cultural and economic integration” between colony and metropolis makes Dutch sources “expert and exact”. Hence, they offer “checks


\textsuperscript{129} The stress on a ‘universal’ history reveals the notion of a singular truth in which all human beings, at all places and times, must have acted. See Soedjatmoko, “The Indonesian Historian.” In An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography, ed. Soedjatmoko (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965): 407.


\textsuperscript{131} Notice that the VOC sources equally allow tracing the “political calculations” of men like Speelman. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 16; and also idem., “Aspects of Dutch historical writings on colonial activities in South East Asia with special reference to the indigenous peoples during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.” Historians of South East Asia, ed. D.G.E. Hall (London: Oxford University Press, 1961): 213-224.
on indigenous Indonesian chronicles.” In short, a proper VOC-orientated contextualization of historic actors functions as a wand to bring them to life and read their thoughts.

The relational objectivity within De Graaf’s work stimulates a portrayal of warlords’ rationales rather than their organizational ties. Well-founded assumptions on and interpretations of personal decision-making flourish in his texts. But neglect of the martial networks and associations of the warriors conceal their attitudes inside the military system they were part of. Only his article on Kajoran -the religious patron of Trunajaya- truly takes such interests. In the case of Trunajaya, De Graaf puts much weight on his desire for recognition by Amangkurat II. He, for instance, describes Trunajaya’s “pleasure” at receiving the Sunan’s letter in December 1679, which again addressed him as a subordinate rather than a rebel.

The long-term efforts of setting up a large war-band are thereby slighted. De Graaf is occupied with square inch circumstantial analyses -direct responses to current events- on the one hand, and very general narratives -winning the war, personal feuds and the like- on the other. This grants a contextualization of individual behaviour, but neglects perceptions actors themselves had on their conduct. That De Graaf wrote three separate articles on the Trunajaya’s deeds -concerning his rise, main alliance, and death- reflects the absence of an account fully dedicated to the man. By contrast, Berg did advocate thorough enquiries on personal motivations and thereby approached sources in a different way.

It should not be forgotten that the theoretical debates supervised by Soedjatmoko defined both the possible connections between the sources as well as their intrinsic character. Not surprisingly, the single author that did reject ‘relational objectivity’ conceptualized Javanese chronicles in a very different manner. Berg considered the past as “a specific complex of myths” construed as “part of the speech habits of a community”. Over time, new generations would add new layers to the myths. Accordingly, a “continuous narrative evolution” added new and possibly contradictory aspects into a single “picture of the past”.


133 In this article, De Graaf ponders on the reasons Kajoran’s forces accepted him as a warlord and the causes of the war-bands slowly falling apart after the sacking of the Mataramese kraton. See H.J. de Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk.” Djawa XX, no. 4-5 (1940).

134 De Graaf states: “De brief zal intussen Raden Truna-Djaja mede genoegen gedaan hebben, omdat dit het eerste teken van vertouwelijkheid was, dat hij sedert ruim drie jaren van de Susuhunanana mocht vernemen”. See De Graaf,”Gevangenneming” : 289.

135 Notice that De Graaf did write single and complete narratives for Sultan Agung, Amangkurat I and other royal figures. Even within these works, the description of events stirs most reflections on the historical subjects under concern. See De Graaf,”Gevangenneming” ; idem, “De Opkomst”; and idem., “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”.

For this reason, Berg suggests a “syntypical” method to evaluate the Javanese sources. This involves perceiving them as “products” of the “Indonesian culture” and “spirit”. Doing so requires attending to the intrinsic value of Asian mythical texts, not contrasting them with Western ones.\(^\text{137}\) Zoetmulder applauds Berg and urges to read with the grain and view the sources as “special cultural manifestations and as a component parts of that culture”. To avoid a vicious circle merely based on the historical literature itself, ‘local knowledge’ should be used for theories and conclusions.\(^\text{138}\)

Friction between the two research approaches is evident. Soedjatmoko manages to express it clearly when stating: “Berg’s basic assumption cannot be ignored, and his provocative theory stands as a challenge to those historians who, on the basis of Javanese historical writing, are working towards the ‘re-enactment of past thoughts’ - to borrow R.G. Collingwood’s phrase”.\(^\text{139}\) Berg hence offers a different analytical platform, and allowed scholars to write a Javanese history contrasting clearly with that disseminated by researchers like De Graaf. Still, Berg never attempted to apply his methods to Dutch sources.

Interestingly, the scholarly schism of the 1950s tended to propel the historical research for the subsequent decades. With it, the neglect of an actor-centred take on VOC material continued too. This can not only be seen in the historiography on Java as a whole, but also for the sub-discipline of Javanese seventeenth century warfare. The major work in this field –Ricklefs ‘War, Culture and Economy’- demonstrates this most clearly. It is mainly concerned with the Kartasura period, 1677-1726, and how the Mataram dynasty re-established itself through strong dependence on the VOC. Ricklefs portrays a Dutch dilemma. Every subsequent upcountry conflict required a choice whether to continue intervention.\(^\text{140}\)

The VOC could either prolong their interference in hopes of returns when peace was established or it could retract its forces and thereby lose their chance to gain more hinterland influence. The book pushes forwards an image of the Dutch Company as a ‘consortio economicus’; a purely rational actor opting the most profitable way out of every subsequent troublesome event. Even though the work offers many valuable insights on distinct circumstances, its scope is too large to refine on them extensively. The broad periodization draws attention away from small-scale

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138 Zoetmulder wrote on the adaptation of Indian epics in Old Javanese; such epics were conformed to the standards of Old Javanese poetry. He struggles with the limited ability to interpret Javanese sources and discusses a “vicious circle”: “we should read the sources using our knowledge of the cultural pattern, yet how can we comprehend that pattern if not from the sources?” Despite these limits in ‘reliving the past’, local knowledge can serve as an alternative to century-old European knowledge. See P.J. Zoetmulder, “The Significance of the Study of Culture and Religion for Indonesian Historiography.” In *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, ed. Soedjatmoko (Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1965): 326, 329, 335, 338 and 341.
139 Soedjatmoko, *An Introduction to Indonesian*: xix
140 Ricklefs, *War, Culture*. 
decision-making by specific authors, and consequently the less ‘rationalized’ choices made in engaging men like Trunajaya.\textsuperscript{141}

Ricklefs does give general reasons for the Company to involve itself with the inland struggles, yet further exploration of individual motives falls short. The biographical account he gives of Van Goens and Speelman stretches no further than one paragraph in total, afterwards Speelman’s motives are rarely referred too. Instead, much of the book is dedicated to technological exchanges and the contracts signed between Mataram and the VOC, especially the way in which debts were demanded.\textsuperscript{142} For the Javanese, a similar bias is found.

Mataram is depicted as a social structure with a hereditary hierarchy struggling to retain its dominance. Still, unlike the VOC it is seen as stirred by dominant personas, namely the lineage of Sunans. Here then, individual actors do shine in the limelight, be it in such a way that it suggests “a highly personal rule”. The shadow of De Graaf -Ricklefs’ former supervisor- casts over the “dynastic approach to history” directing Ricklefs’ focus on rulers. Hoadley admires the “truly Asian-centric view on history” portraying “Javanese perspectives”. Still, the strict abidance to the primary material disregards “any evaluation of the voluminous data’s veracity, or even their significance”.\textsuperscript{143}

Much of this disregard can be explained through the remnants of ‘relational objectivity’ in Ricklefs’ analysis. Throughout his work, both Javanese and Dutch sources are used to create a factual stage on which his actors of main interest operated. His Asian-centric view on history becomes one of interpreting the actions or motivations of the Sunans.\textsuperscript{144} These rulers are situated in a “world of brutal power struggles” in which they needed to “persuade, cajole, threaten or compel other powerful men with more direct control of resources until he achieved a consensus of notables in his favour.”\textsuperscript{145}

Hence, the bulk of attention goes to the figure of the Sunan himself and his attempt to sustain power. Further institutional and societal aspects as court alliances and war-banding thereby end up in the background. Theoretically they are stated to have been of significance, but the use of sources eliminates a thorough consideration for these facets.\textsuperscript{146} Like De Graaf, sources from both the

\textsuperscript{141} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{142} A chief reason being the Company’s dependence on Central and Eastern Java for food and timber reserves in the headquarter of Batavia. See ibid : and 33. Ibid : 14-21, 33-35, 38 and 47-48.
\textsuperscript{143} As Ricklefs himself introduces: “Dr. H.J. de Graaf and Dr. Th. G Th. Pigeaud, have left their mark on all that I write”. See M.C. Hoadley, “Review of Ricklefs, War, Culture and Economy,” The Journal of Asian Studies 53, no.3 (1994): 1019; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: x.
\textsuperscript{144} In this way, Collingwood’s influence seems to linger ahead, even without being explicitly recognized.
\textsuperscript{145} Stated differently, the Sunans needed to operate in world where violence was the “social fact”. Amangkurat I, for example, is seen to have “tried to centralize his kingdom to serve his interest alone. He achieved thereby the alienation of many of those whose consensus the Javanese state depended: princes, officials, regional notables and religious leaders.” (Ricklefs, De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie: 357). See idem., War, Culture: 8, 10, 12 and 31.
\textsuperscript{146} In the introduction Ricklefs writes: “[a] central function of the administrative arrangements of the state was the levying of men and wealth for war. Military power was the basis of imperial politics. Java’s poor communications and barely institutionalized administrative network may indeed have encouraged war. Regions were emboldened to resist central authority while the centre, if personal ties, threats, cajolery and murder failed, could in the end only attempt conquest and retribution.” See Ricklefs, War, Culture: 13.
VOC and indigenous side are combined to reconstruct historical circumstances, not so much historical associations. Actors follow cues to an end, but are not clearly situated in the community they were part of.

Ricklefs carefully considers the lacking mutual understanding of both Europeans and Javanese about each other. And he thereby certainly abandons any notion of VOC material being exclusively objective. Nonetheless, in bridging the gap between his varied historical materials, he searches for a straight-forward overarching narrative of the Kartasura period. The wonderful effort to create a plain oversight of what exactly happened in these times does, however, leave out more mystical or personal motivations of the actors involved.

Ricklefs’ description of both the VOC and Mataram shapes his conclusion on the influence of warfare. As he sees it, cross-cultural exchanges defined the martial activities and the institutional changes surrounding it. Both players were required to respond to each other’s innovations. Mataram is suggested to have lost the war not because of limited military capacities, but due to corruption within the Javanese court. Court intrigues hindered the successful adaptation to changing political, cultural and economic circumstances. Yet, Ricklefs fails to connect these issues of alliance to the intrinsic character of the Javanese military apparatus.

In his work, cross-cultural influences are largely limited to transference of military technology and intensification of “cultural (and) political identities”. The latter aspect gave war a perpetual character “exacerbating” the conflict which led to further schisms of identity. Unfortunately, however, the last point is only substantiated through discussing different dress codes and slight changes in behaviour. As Hoadley already observed, an important question is hence left out; how intensified identities can “explain the growing tensions within Javanese culture in the institutional sense”.

The strands of VOC-embracing ‘modernizers’ and hostile ‘conservatives’ at the court is a case in point. Their stance was not merely affected by affinity; the benefits they could gain from increased trade equally drew them closer or further from foreigners. Applying the notion of military labour markets reveals even more of these schisms. It expounds on the conflicting interior and coastal

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147 “For Javanese society one must rely in part upon European documents which are contemporary, but which also reflect misunderstanding and misinformation.” (p.1-2). See ibid.: 1-2, 22 and 23.
148 Even though it is only perceived as volume one of a proposed project on Kartasura. For a theoretical discussion on the difference between mystical and personal motivations for Javanese actors to conduct violence see R. Bertrand, “Un subject en souffrance? Récit de soi, violence et magie à Java.” Social Anthropology 11, no.3 (2003): 285-302.
149 Ricklefs stresses three! aspects of ‘military affairs’ that contrast between the VOC and the ‘indigenous forces’. These are the quantity of warriors, discipline and strategy plus tactics. It is the failure to discipline the troops and, at times, the lack of shared strategies that left the Javanese in disadvantage. See Hoadley, “Review of Ricklefs”, 46; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 38 and 234.
interests, the mingling of non-Javanese forces and the dynamic collaborations that Ricklefs already touches upon, but does not flesh out.\textsuperscript{151}

Just as individual decisions of VOC men and the intricacies of Mataram are overlooked, the bridge between the Company and the Javanese is interpreted using contemporary concepts (‘histoire réalité’) in a matter that largely ignores the notions applied in the ‘histoire-récité’ of either the European or Asian authors. Ricklefs almost got to discussing it thoroughly, apparently intending to write on the religious sides of Javanese warfare. But his publisher declined the project.\textsuperscript{152} Therefore, shadows still linger. Others did tempt to surpass them, however. Bertrand has been able to shine his own light over the sources and take up the issue of ‘L’histoire à parts égales’; the history beheld by two different societies in two unique ways.\textsuperscript{153}

Implicitly, he continues in line with Berg’s work; seeking “special cultural manifestations” and reading along the grain. Unlike Berg, however, the VOC men are now counted as cultural actors too. He describes they “sont issus, non des milieu lettrés ou nobilaires, mais du monde du port et du négoce.”\textsuperscript{154} Care is given to De Houtman’s 1596 arrival in Banten, the rivalries between the British and Dutch trade company and the defence of Batavia. Though multiple “tableaux” he is able to address various themes of intercultural exchanges made by both Asian and European participants. Contrasting backgrounds brought separate prejudices and posed merchants next to nobles. The VOC servants were shaped by the events and debates in the Dutch Republic, the Javanese by the new understanding of both state and religion hovering over the archipelago.\textsuperscript{155}

In framing the latter perspective, Bertrand still leans a lot on an assumed rise of the priyayi. His earlier works described how the priyayi constructed an identity as noble administrators. They took the lead from the older aristocratic class of warlords; the courtiers by blood. In the wake of Sultan Agung’ conquests, the need arrived to control the extensive realm of Mataram. Slowly a mandala was instituted, in which control over outer regions was facilitated through the command of the courtisized priyayi, including the bupati exercising local rule. According to Bertrand, the discourse

\textsuperscript{151} Ricklefs, War, Culture: 42-43.
\textsuperscript{152} This was conveyed to me by Dr. David Kloos; I have yet to gain confirmation from Prof. Ricklefs himself. Likely the correspondence between H.J. De Graaf and M.C. Ricklefs will reveal similar intentions; see the personal documents of De Graaf (KITLV-inventaris 125).
\textsuperscript{153} Bertrand argues: “Écrire une histoire “à parts égales” des commencements de la rencontre, pas encore tout à fait inégale, entre les Provinces-Unies de la Grande Révolte et les sociétés des mondes malais et javanais, ce n’est pas tenter de recomposer arbitrairement un monde commun. ...d’une part de prendre acte du fait qu’elles ne constituaient que l’un des plans de pensée et d’action des parties en présence, de l’autre d’admettre qu’elles n’étaient pas initialement dotes des mêmes coordonnées spatiales et temporelles.” Bertrand, L’Histoire à Parts : 15-16.
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.: 19.
\textsuperscript{155} Bertrand’s treatment of the intrinsic mysticism of political power, for instance, stresses the expanding “negara” or governed realm ideally under control of the “souverain-ascète”. Looming over this discussion are the “noblesse de robe” priyayi, who assured l’administration de la maison royale halfway the seventeenth century. Thereby they constituted the newly conquered negara of Sultan Agung and allowed his ideal kingship to blossom. See ibid.: 19, 21-22, 25-58, 99-120, 189-214, 231-260, 293-322, 323-346, 375-444 and 445-449.
of these ‘nobles of the robe’ - ‘la tradition parfait’ - dominated the Javanese state system since then.\textsuperscript{156} This, however, makes it appear as if warfare lost its identifying potential.

The discourse surrounding Islamization has shown otherwise, but only of late. For a long time warfare remained disconnected from the spread of Islam. Anthony Johns proclaimed the scholarly and mercantile Sufi conversion as the chief propagator of Islam.\textsuperscript{157} The Southeast Asian trade ports came to the fore as transformative hubs from which the surrounding lands were converted.\textsuperscript{158} In a like manner, Azyumardi Azra describes “penetration” was first caused by Muslim merchants and then by “wandering Sufis and scholars who came in increasingly large numbers to the area from the thirteenth century onwards”. The scholars achieved a mix “between shari’ah (Islamic legal doctrine) and \textit{tasawwuf} (Islamic mysticism)”.\textsuperscript{159}

Azra and Johns do not only chase the aggressive face of proselytization, they equally depict it as externally imposed. In his recent trilogy on Indonesian Islam, Ricklefs shifts this narrative around. The Islamic waves do not come from the shore but the court inlands. There, Islamic and Javanese cultures and believes were mingled into a “mystic synthesis”. “The cultural and social choices of the elite of this hierarchical society” were “crucial” in “developing cultural synthesis”. Simultaneously, Ricklefs still expects a surge in “Islamic sensibilities as a cementing force of resistance against the king and his new Christian allies”.\textsuperscript{160}

The trilogy, then, recognizes the violence underneath Javanese Islam. It acknowledges both war and religion as ‘social identifiers’.\textsuperscript{161} But is does not allow the ‘courtier’ and the ‘rebel’ to speak up with the same volume. This has to do with a dichotomy underlying the mystic synthesis and that derives back to his earlier work.\textsuperscript{162} In courtly circles, Islam did not so much guide “personal faith and

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\textsuperscript{156} The new identification also altered education, as Bertrand notices: “Jusqu’ au milieu du 17e siècle, l’apprentissage des arts de la guerre faisait partie de l’éducation du gentilhomme priyayi, qui était exercé dès la prime enfance au manierement de la lance et au tir à l’arc” (p.69). See Bertrand, \textit{État colonial}: 68-81, 86-90, and 100-103.
\textsuperscript{157} As he states: “[n]o other words the history of Islam in Southeast Asia cannot be understood apart from the history of the generation of trading centers at focal points in the archipelago.” A. Johns, “Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflections and New Directions.” \textit{Indonesia} 19 (1975): 37.
\textsuperscript{158} Unlike his predecessors, Johns went beyond discussion on the “provenance of Southeast Asian Islam” and instead gave prime attention to the “modality of its spread” as well as “the social and political effects of the new religion, and the subsequent character of the centres of political power where it developed”. In this manner, hard-core ‘Islamization’ theories were avoided and the Southeast Asian trade ports came to the fore as transformative hubs. However, the streams of conversion still flowed as rudimentary forces of trans-cultural adaptation. As he sees it, the “Muslim city-states” emerging at the coast around the fifteenth century were “gradually to diffuse waves of Islamic influence into the hinterland, […] which was to lead to the Islamization of broad swathes of the indigenous population” (p. 34 and 39). Even though a direct implementation of Arabic or Indo-Persian Islam is thereby doubted, it still asserts a religion prescribed from the coastal plains. See Johns, “Islam in Southeast Asia”: 33-55.
\textsuperscript{159} He refers to a “cosmopolitan scholarly community linked together in a relatively solid fashion by way of their studies, particularly of \textit{hadith}, and their involvement in the \textit{sufi tariqahs}.” Crisscrossing theological networks and religious “processes of transmission” shaped the community. Pilgrimages subsequently furthered the connections with Mecca and \textit{haji} hubs. Through the effort of the roaming scholars, a “harmony” was achieved “between shari’ah (Islamic legal doctrine) and \textit{tasawwuf} (Islamic mysticism)”. In effect, a “socio-moral reconstruction of Muslim societies” occurred, creating a “renewalist drive” touching “the outlook and daily lives of many Malay-Indonesians”. Azra opens new windows by considering the bridges laid down by Middle Eastern and Southeast Asian theology. See A. Azra, \textit{The Origins of Islamic Reformism in Southeast Asia} (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 2004): 2-4.
\textsuperscript{160} Ricklefs, \textit{War, Culture}: 29 and 40. Ricklefs refers to Azra too, See ibid.: 50-1.
\textsuperscript{161} It thereby elaborates the social identification set out in ibid.: 11. That is, it now includes markers of cultural identity.
\textsuperscript{162} Ricklefs’ notion of identity stirs a lot on assumptions of ‘Islamization’: the mystic synthesis assumes a binary collide and assimilation between forces of Islam and Javanese ‘culture’. Think of sentences as: “[i]t is possible that the idea of Javanese identity came to be
behaviour” as it shaped cultural identities. Within the pockets of conservative religion, matters were different; theology and personal belief did surface there. But in the seventeenth century, Islamic religious communities were not yet part of the regular hierarchy. Java held internal islands of religion; the frequent ethnic and sectarian hostilities between regional groups evidence this.

From Ricklefs’ perspective, a cleavage existed between the pious Muslims and the mundane or politicized one. A parallel to Geertz’s division between the abangan, priyayi and santri -the followers of ‘Javanese Islam’, the royals, and the dogmatic believers- comes to mind. Yet, different identities were eminent before the 1850s. Dogmatism was less important to the synthesis than how the ‘Javanese’ thought about converting to Islam, being a Muslim or living next to one. Accordingly, the juxtaposition of an Islamic and Javanese identity features prominently. The question looming in courts, mosques and villages was whether ‘Javanese Muslims’ existed, not whether they were proper believers. For Ricklefs, however, the question tends to become whether ‘courtly Javanese Muslims’ prevailed.

The mystic synthesis juxtaposes the creation of an Islamic identity with that of ‘unified’ Javanese one. Even though no actual homogenous society was achieved, the synthesis did bring people together during the initial decades of the seventeenth century. Sultan Agung (r. 1613-1645) initiated it in 1633, under pressure to consent the rebelling Islamic groups. He both abided to rooted

approximately coterminous with an Islamic identity as one of the fruits of the success of Islamization. The reader only needs to recall the work of Pollock and Rici to perceive the danger of such a scheme. In their view, the power of “grammar” or religious concepts tempted a “cultural process of imitation and borrowing” leading to the gradual emergence of a realm-like cosmopolis with a similar “cultural-political style”. Instead of a collision and synthesis, Islam seems to have entered the archipelago by circulation and regeneration. See S. Pollock, The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006): 133.

M.C. Rickelfs, War, Culture: 11.

Villages of the pious usually gained an independent (pradiken) status. Central to their functioning were the pesantrens that soon spread throughout the island, although uncertainty remains over their existence in the seventeenth century. The founders of the schools often chose to locate near holy graves, particularly those of the walis. Believers expected such places to hold extraordinary powers or kramat. This made them attractive for both worship and refuge. Especially the graves of Kajoran and Giri consistently allured wanderers at odds with the central state hierarchy. Not surprisingly, these places eventually turned into hotbeds of ‘rebellion’. See ibid: 4 and 11.

In this manner, Ricklefs takes the continuing violence to indicate prominent local and religious identities rather than a dominating and all-encompassing Javanese one. Moreover, Ricklefs conceives a ‘degree of fluidity’ of ‘ethnic and cultural categories’ which allowed shifting identities. See ibid.: 22 and 225.


Notice how such a dichotomy suggests a still limited amount of separate branches among the Islamic believers. Different interpretations of beliefs and rituals certainly proliferated, but a split as that between Islamic modernism and the ‘spiritual’ Javanese Islam was not in place. This surely was to change in the modern age, at which point the mystic synthesis came to be deconstructed. Ricklefs defines identity as “the perception of membership within distinguishing boundaries that a group regards as defining itself, as expressing significant shared characteristics. All of us have multiple identities at any moment, but in some circumstances one or another of these memberships came as the most salient”. Ricklefs, Mystic Synthesis: 4 and 12.

Notice that such debates of dogmatism have been described as occurring prior to Sultan Agung. Bertrand even states that “[a]u fil de ce processus [of Islamization], Java connut, à l'instar de toutes les sociétés du pourtour insulindien, une islamisation ‘en dents de scie’, productrice d’identités distinctes, en parfois contradictoires”. See Bertrand, L'Histoire À Parts: 261-291.


courtly traditions and pious Islamic ones; visiting Tembayat, marrying the Goddess of the Southern Ocean (Ratu Kidul), creating a new calendar (Anno Javanico), financing extensive Islamic literature, and accepting the title of sultan. A new, normative culture was cropping up. Yet, after Sultan Agung expired in 1645, his successors would tear it apart again.

Amangkurat I and II managed to increase internal hostilities rather than resolve them. In this sense, the wars in and after the 1670s resulted from an accumulation of discords within a realm lacking courtly synthesis. Fighting the Sunan became a fight for a proper Islam; a jihad to expel the kafir influences at the centre of the mandala. For the insurgents, the kraton was tarnished through its ties with the Christian VOC and the lacking Islamic affections of the king. Underlying the schism were networks of different kinds. Firstly, the ‘colonial’ one focused on commerce, mercenary and profits. Secondly, the ‘Islamic’ one with its teachers, holy men and scriptures. Both clashed violently and derailed a proper mystic synthesis for the years to come.

Ricklefs thus certainly sketches an intricate and thoughtful account on the expansion of Islam. Nonetheless, the Islamic motives of warring forces can be delved out much further. Several sides of religious ‘social identification’ are not yet disclosed. Trunajaya’s ties to Majapahit, his marital links with the Makassarese and appreciation for Islamic honorary titles become side-matters. One reason for neglecting such aspects is the very abidance to a conceptual ‘mystic synthesis’. This pushes forwards an image of Islam directed by monarchs. But so much occurred beyond the capital.

Local actors were vital for adapting and taking on the religion, while redistributing it at the same time. All kinds of means were available for this; from pesantrens to infantries. Such continuing reproductions of, for instance, the Walisanga legend is partly omitted from Ricklefs’ study. Relational objectivity rears its head again. The era is defined by a fluctuating mystic synthesis that during certain events was active and others, as the early Kartasura wars, was not. Ricklefs’ findings on identities thus derive from event-based reconstructions of the past. The hybrid beliefs of Trunajaya’s forces are not counted as a mystic synthesis or are merely depicted as a continuation of “the themes of Javanese identity as shaped by Sultan Agung”.

Since they were expressed while fighting the Javanese overlord, they do not fit the narrative of a dynastic fusion of Javanese and Islamic identities. The circumstances conclude full recognition of

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171 Tembayat is the grave site of Sunan Bayat, one of the Walisanga who is depicted as a last ruler of Majapahit. He supposedly was converted to Islam by Sunan Kalijaga. The legends tell Sultans Agungs met Sunan Bayat’s soul during the grave visit. The main pieces of sponsored literature were the Carita Iskandar, Serat Yusuf, and Kitab Usulbiyah. This synthesis contrasted with earlier manuscripts that often contradicted the Javanese and Islamic identity, although judgements are difficult to make for the times prior to Sultan Agung’s rule. See Ricklefs, Mystic Synthesis: 21-25, 34-36, 39 and 43-44; and idem.: War, Culture: 39.

172 Ricklefs continues with self-conscious Muslim identity established by the efforts of on Ratu Pakubuwana in the early 18th century. But this is beyond the scope of the thesis. See Ricklefs, War, Culture: 58. For a view similar to Ricklefs, see Remmelink, “De Worsteling om Java”: 348.

173 Ibid.: 63.

174 Ibid.: 63.
Trunajaya’s own mystic motivations, for they were only relevant as far as they countered the courtly ones. The diverging voices of warriors become melted into a single scream for insurgence. Yet, Islamic motives on the battlefield were uttered in different terms by the diverse amount of actors and war-bands involved. Even the VOC material manages to demonstrate the dissenting views of their warrior correspondents and addressees.

The rebels’ constant regeneration of warrior cults calls for attention. By suggesting a rather uniform Islamization to underlay the mystic synthesis, Ricklefs does not give this attention yet. The different groups of believers are assumed to have been subjected to an overarching religious process that speeded up or impeded in subsequent historical periods, usually defined by the successions of Mataram rulers. Their thoughts are a reaction to the religious processes encapsulating them; to be framed in an abounding Islamic dispersion.

Again a stage is set for interpreting the reasoning of historic actors. Their thoughts are approached through the supposed wave of Islamization the subjects happen to be caught into. The actors are hurled together as pawns on the chessboard, moved from one square to another. A master play follows, in which the long term adaptation of Islam is reframed. What is left unexplained, however, is the manner in which every pawn piece is held together, or whether they form a unity at all. That is, what grouped the rebel forces specifically?

I will reconsider these pawn pieces through taking the observations of individual actors as a starting point. In this case, these actors are the VOC men rather than the Javanese. Bertrand has demonstrated that the nature and authors of sources need to be respected; looking at Dutch material thus begs for a consideration of VOC actors. Surely, these were not the ones exposed to Islamization, mystic syntheses or Javanese identification. But great parts of their military subjects and opponents were. It is the way in which the VOC commanders considered these, that new insights on martial Islamization can be reached.

b. Methodology

In the Dutch Republic, friendships ensured survival. So they did on Java. Bertrand’s emphasis on limited contacts between the “Hollandaïs et Javanais” does not go for the era of encounters starting around 1650. The new series of embassies and interventions greatly widened the connections across the cultural divide. With it came personal relations that ran the gamut from amiable to hostile.

175 L. Kooijmans, Vriendschap en de Kunst van het Overleven in de Zeventiende en Achttiende Eeuw (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 1997).
176 On the initial contacts, Bertrand states: “[t]el est les secret bien gardé de la rencontre imperial entre Hollandaïs et Javanais: elle n’a pas eu lieu.” He means no great civilizational exchange occurred, but only ones “entre des fragments instables de celles-ci”. The interaction between Mataram and Batavia became significant enough after the passing of Sultan Agung to claim the two societies were tied together later on, which is left ignored by Bertrand. See Bertrand, L’Histoire À Parts: 445.
Salvaging the former turned out crucial to attain success. I research how the new Asian networks were put to paper by the VOC commanders.

Unbarring intercultural networks is the main reason individual authors are spotlighted. Archival ‘pulses’ are useful for describing the greater scheme of things. They can be researched to perceive the broader shifts of narrative. Yet, micro-level enquiries on actors as well as meso-level analyses of their associations enable a wholly different approach. Questions on mutual understanding, socio-religious motivation, self-perception and fraternization can only be addressed properly from those levels.

Bridging cultural gaps required a cosmopolitan attitude. One could, however, have been cosmopolitan in many ways. The concept needs to be historicized to understand the past act of “conviviality and tolerance”. On one extreme, authors might sustain an intrinsic interest in the culture and people he or she encounters abroad. On the other, purely pragmatic motives abound. Usually the first attitude is taken as true cosmopolitanism. Yet, for those Europeans wandering in early modern Asia, empiric impressions tended to be shaped by ‘banal’ interests; as Bertrand calls them. Indeed, this was an “age of improvisation” in which contacts were to be sustained with newly contrived behaviour faceted by both commercial and cultural interests.

The earliest European visits to Asian courts were both intrinsically exploratory and utilitarian; seeking out how the hierarchy operated as well as how to reach profitable agreements. No manual was yet in place, so different approaches were tried out until trial and error led to consensus. Exploring the culture and rationality of the ‘Other’ and acting in accordance to it could open doors to new treaties. Subrahmanyam calls this the “negotiated ways of understanding one another”.

He describes a ‘produced incommensurability’ that attends to the decisions of actor rather than any intrinsic semiotic divides. Diplomacy hence becomes a core interest. Despite the distortion through mistranslated treaties and false promises, diplomats had the power to negotiate and...

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177 J. Gommans, Asian Cosmopolitanism and the Dutch Microcosmos in Cochin (article to be published) (Leiden: Leiden University, 2013).
178 Jacob had uttered an overarching definition spinning around “curiosity, interest, acceptance” and the absence of “suspicion, disdain and disinterest”. While the emphasis on “praxis” or “experientia” rather than ideology is useful, it is doubtful that the cosmopolitan attitude or behaviour can be simplified in this manner. Her exploration of the multiple social spheres in which cosmopolitanism can occur is illuminating. As is the way in which these varying communities are chronologically discussed in one narrative. Still, a distinction between personal and societal ‘acceptance’ is not drawn and the pragmatic drive of especially the initial encounters is overlooked. See Bertrand, *L’Histoire à Parts*; 22; and M. C. Jacob, *Strangers Nowhere in the World; The Rise of Cosmopolitanism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2006): 11.
mediate ways in and out of cultural conflict. Their impact thus ranged from cultural exchanges of paintings and the like to erupting warfare due to exaggerating or summoning mutual agitations.

The commensurability of war cultures is yet another issue. Geoffrey Parker has prompted it through his overarching thesis on ‘the military revolution’. He uttered contrasting cultural notions of warfare to have determined most conflicts between Europeans and non-Europeans from 1500 to 1700. Three differing extra-European spheres are perceived as exposed to three different types of clashes. ‘Indonesia’ belongs to those regions where Europeans had triumphed by the 1650s. European modes of war and technologies had supposedly ruled superior, leaving the indigenous without any chances. Hence, the VOC had won through exploiting a gaping incommensurability.

Like Subrahmanyam, I will not adhere to such theories. They suffer from structuralist assertions that take historical continuities for granted. In other words, intercultural dynamics are dimmed down, local deviations ignored and colonial dominations asserted. On Java, the West did not simply clash with the East; military cooperation stretched beyond such dichotomies. Even the acceptance of firearms demonstrates this complicity; as is ironically proven by a joined article of Parker and Subrahmanyam. Having said that, ideas of acculturation and trans-culturalism can be just as misleading. Teleological assertions on ethnicity and integration condemn the theories to oblivion.

Instead, “shifting vocabularies and changes wrought over time by improvisations” directed the early contact. This had little to do with fundamental incomprehension or gradual incorporation, but was charged by a rational aim of reaching consensus and striking deals. A triangle of understanding, alliances and intelligence evolves. The awareness of cultural networks and etiquette enabled a clever selection of contacts resulting in the intelligence needed to negotiate ones objectives. Ergo, circumstances demanded careful consideration, spontaneity in approaching the right persons, and disclosing insights and information to reach a resolution. How this was to be done differed from one situation to another.

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182 Subrahmanyam notices “there is a tendency to think of cultural incommensurability as particularly acute at moments of encounter, when two disparate (and perhaps historically separated) politico-cultural entities come into contact.” Subrahmanyam, Courtly Encounters: 4-5, 8-9, 32 and 209. Similar processes can be perceived in early modern Europe, see W. Roosen. “Early Modern Diplomatic Ceremonial: a Systematic Approach.” The Journal of Modern History 52, no.3 (1980): 452-476.


185 Subrahmanyam, Courtly Encounters: 24-26 and 29.
The context of the encounters is thus key to comprehending the underlying motives. The meetings were not between societies at large, but rather between “particular subcultures or segments of societies”. Where Subrahmanyam’s segment of choice is the court, most of my attention is on interactions during military marches (Hurdt) or the preparations for them (Speelman). However, his observation on the heuristics applied by the foreign visitors is applicable to both situations. The Portuguese rephrased the Asian court systems in their own vocabulary, automatically crafting a biased impression through translation. A search for parallels and recognizable hierarchies equally defines the Dutch intelligence on the Javanese war-bands.

Consequently, the VOC agents framed warrior groups in much more rigid terms than seems suitable. Designations as ‘Javanese’, ‘Makassarese’, ‘Balinese’ and even the obscure ‘Malayans’ are thrown around; suggesting clearer groupings than might have existed. Along with the categorization came rejection of the Asian “subservience and willingness to please, poor vitality and absence of wilfulness, a mixture of indifference and courtesy”. What is more, the leaders of these subservient and indifferent men—warlords or not—tend to be portrayed as greater arbiters than they appear to have been. However unguided such identifications may strike us now, they did fit the state-centred warfare of Europe.

A rationale in search for European army structures easily evoked such biases. Of course, a complete parallel was never drawn between Dutch and Javanese armies. European vocabulary could not encompass all new phenomena; hence the authors sometimes resorted to foreign words. Still, the convention of esquadres, infantry companies, and battalions as made famous by the Dutch States Army lingered in the descriptions. And a tendency remained to speak of Adipatis, Radens, Tumënggungs, Pangérans, Karaëngs as if they were captains, lieutenants, corporals, or sergeants.

All in all, ‘the Asians’ had exactly the same inclinations. Like the VOC, the Javanese elite saw many opportunities in military cooperation and “hoped to profit from it”. Similarly, they encapsulated Dutch victories, histories and even alcoholism into their own stories. The wayang clown servant panakawan—comical and victorious—became associated with the Europeans, the independence from Spain was retold in a Javanese context and Speelman was portrayed in chronicles.

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186 Ibid.: xiv, 212.
187 For Subrahmanyam, religion was not dominant in the courtly encounters. In his mind, they occurred in a “potentially secular sphere, where the religious identities of participants were at times somewhat attenuated or rendered irrelevant”. Subrahmanyam frames translation as “a positive intercultural hermeneutics based on deploying concepts such as prejudgments”. See ibid.: xiv, 29, 62, 173 and 213.
188 Malayans seemingly often refers to men from Minangkabau.
189 J. Van Doorn, A Divided Society: Segmentation and Mediation in Late-Colonial Indonesia (Rotterdam: Erasmus University Rotterdam, 1983): 95.
190 Note that state-centred warfare did involve many private investors who often benefitted from bloodshed. See Parrott, The Business of War.
191 Notice that while the reforms of Willem III after the ‘Rampjaar’ 1672 changed the military organization, its contrasts with the Javanese warriors groups remained about as large. See O. Van Nimwegen, “Deser landen crijchsvolck” Het Staatse leger en de militaire revoluties (1588–1688) (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2006); and K. Roberts, Pike and Shot Tactics, 1590–1660 (Botley, Osprey Publishing, 2010).
as the drunk Dutch general. Asian alliances of the Dutch were characterized as part of this VOC cosmopolis as well. Still, the Javanese heuristics are usually neglected due to a “deeply asymmetrical knowledge of the source materials of the period”.

Subrahmanyam even warns for the “impoverished history” which only perceives European agents as ‘cosmopolitan’, active translators and bridge-builders. The reader might want to blame me for falling into the trap. But, even though the analysis sticks to Europeans, I certainly do not see them as the sole actors crossing cultural borders. Rather, they offer one of the several perspectives available on the abundant social, cultural and religious interactions during the wars on Java. For that very reason, a ‘Bergian’ analysis of their motivations is more than welcome.

c. Asian Associations

Capturing the diverge networks VOC men were part of, is the first leap to contextualizing their insights. To put it bluntly; their Asian associations determined the way in which they associated Asian concepts and institutions. Since the military campaigns were “intricate processes of treat, diplomacy and battle”, negotiations were as significant as fights. For both pursuits, victory and loss shaped the idea of an inferior or superior opponent. Face-to-face talks thus led to impressions on the society as a whole. Accordingly, it is important to distinguish the inter-personal from the inter-cultural exposures. The first are characterized by feuds and friendships, the latter by generalizations.

In Mataram, friendships were always tainted by the larger political parties opposing each other. In this manner, any personal contact would yield a particular angle for looking at society. The importance of associations is not surprising in a “network state” lacking elaborate institutions. To achieve aims, personal ties and strong personality counted much. The realm was a flexible and adaptive one, finding its way like a meandering river. Only the destruction of war could really tear the social-political network down. Fractions characterized the kraton. In different times, contrasting groups of courtiers gained the Sunan’s approval and dominated Mataram politics.

Ordinarily led by a prince or powerful patih, these fractions could stir policies to trade or isolation, war or peace and fellow believers or kāfirs like the VOC. Consequently, “the regents’ sense of commitment to Mataram” was very much shaped by “the extent to which they could help determine the policy pursued by the court”. The Garebeg Mulud was the best occasion to

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193 Subrahmanyam, Courtly Encounters: 30.
194 Ibid.: 30.
196 As Nagtegaal states: “it was only in the extremities of war, when social life itself was thrown out of joint, that the network collapsed altogether”. See Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch Tiger: 45-46 and 51-55; and Subrahmanyam, Courtly Encounters: 215.
demonstrate ones loyalty. Not attending this annual ceremony more or less paralleled rebellion and the seats and roles given during the celebrations exposed ones standing at the court.197

Outside the court, leaders were suppressed as much as possible. But the arms of Mataram were not strong and its grip not tight. The local power networks were still largely intact despite the conquest of Sultan Agung in the first half of the seventeenth century. When Trunajaya stormed the island, the peripheral cities and communities were governed by individual rulers with local roots. Therefore, they were very capable of disobeying courtly orders in case their interests were not served. The Sunan’s frustration with this power balance is illustrated by his attempt to turn things around in 1680. Multiple local leaders were replaced for one single, non-native, bupati per region (kabupaten). But still centralized control remained limited and conflicts stayed on the horizon.198

The VOC men discussed here, found themselves at the heart of these conflicts: Cornelis Speelman and Antonio Hurdt landed in the middle of military affairs splitting the Javanese.199 They both had to direct and mobilize the combined army of the Company and Mataram by drawing in warlords. However, they were unable to control or fully understand the army under their guidance. There were large fractions of local allies with high independence and on the verges of Dutch administration. The VOC men could only partly recognize the organization of such war-bands, including their shifting alliances. Equally limited were the attempts to survey Trunajaya’s legions through correspondence, negotiations and embassies. And in some cases, the main impression on his warforce was derived from the warriors switching from one army to another.

Still, enough was perceived to formulate personal heuristics on both royal and martial matters. To appreciate those interpretations, analyses based on ‘relational objectivity’ will not suffice. Reflection on the epistemic value of the consulted sources is required to go beyond event-based interpretations of what historical subjects were supposedly thinking. A focus on chronological events and actors can be combined to suggest the presence of military fraternization perceived by certain historical subjects and occurring in a specific time frame. Those fragmented observations are small beams of light revealing larger military tendencies, markets and group formations. For between events and actors, one can find the war-band.200

197 Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 45-46.
198 Ibid.: 43-45.
199 That is, to the degree that the Javanese were one people to begin with.
200 That is to say, by considering the perspectives and associations of the VOC authors, the epistemic value of descriptions of Javanese martial organizations can be judged upon. Based on such a survey, the particular military labour market in which war-bands functioned as well as, in extension, the nature of war-bands can be more carefully interpreted from the VOC’s standpoint.
To fathom the consequences of the preceding methodological assertions, I will offer a test case: Rijckloff Van Goens’ five embassies between 1648 and 1654. The example will equally demonstrate the effect of shifting associations on the appreciation of Mataram as a whole. More so than Speelman and Hurdt, Van Goens witnessed the centre of the mandala and was thus strongly exposed to its political tides. In addition, the case offers a comparison between delegates and admirals; or that of ambassadorial and martial commensurability. The VOC man entered a world of court intrigues and needed to reach diplomatic consensus through availing the courtly divides. He had the option to either do so by force or consent.201

Van Goens (1619-1682) is a well-known character within VOC history. His conquest of and rule over Ceylon plus his position as governor-general between 1678 and 1681 have brought him fame. It equally established an image of a ruthless colonizer interested in bashing the autonomy of local Asian leaders to pieces.202 As two authors have pointed out, however, Van Goens’ colonizing tendencies seem to have entrenched in the early 1650s only.203 Most of his accounts of the Javanese court predated this ‘turning point’. He visited Mataram five times between 1648 and 1654. In the elaborate accounts on these embassies, there are only scarce hints to the colonizing agenda he would embrace afterwards. The court is not portrayed as a burdensome institution per se. Instead, his writing demonstrates a concern for delving deeply into the Javanese mandala. It is only when negotiations break down in the last two embassies that dismissal of the kraton comes through.204 Still, even at that point there remains an evident interest in the courtly alliances and the way to use them to reach his diplomatic aims. His sudden aversion might indicate self-censorship while corresponding with Supreme Government or doubts about the feasibility of subduing Mataram. But these possibilities only partly explain the trends in his reports and letters.205 Not aversion but immersion defined his embassies.

201 I say ‘peaceful’ because no massive wars occurred. The court itself was by no means serene: the Sunan in these days, Amangkurat I, was known for his violent and aggressive punishments. See R. Van Goens, De Vijf Gezantschappen van Rijklof van Goens naar het Hof van Mataram 1648-1654, ed. H.J. de Graaf (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956): 74-75, 202-3, 221 and 254.
203 s’Jacob, “Rijcklof Volckertsz”: 140; and Van der Kraan, A Baptism of Fire: 1-52.
205 Van Goens might have purposely avoided direct critique on Maetsuycker’s government. At the same time, he neither expressed his aversion under the more liberal regime of the preceding governor-generals Cornelis van der Lijn and Carel Reyniersz. The hierarchical context in which he functioned does thus not explain much of Van Goens’ silence in this political debate. On the other hand, s’Jacob asserts that the very idea of an aggressive policy towards Asian rulers would only come to him during his voyage back to the United Provinces in 1655. Goonewardena, The Foundation: 162-165; s’Jacob, “Rijcklof Volckertsz”: 140; W.M. Ottow, Rijckloff Volckertsz Van Goens: De
After serving as secretary to Sebalt Wonderer during the first visit, he took charge of the delegation and was thereby enabled to carefully examine court relations. Van Goens used the knowledge of translators like Michiel Zeeburch and Matthijs Pietersen—who spend years in Mataram as captives—to his own avail. He praised the latter to “get along with these people wonderfully” and “speak the Javanese language fluently”. Zeeburch even converted to Islam and appeared to have married a Javanese wife. Assistants like that could guide Van Goens over the cultural and linguistic gap to the core of the kraton. 206

The VOC man’s framing of the reeling and dealing at the royal centre thereby tells a lot about the degree to which a European outsider could grasp the elaborate networks of Javanese court alliances. Confusion remained. The delegate, for instance, misinterpreted royal titles he encountered as representing the realms of subordinate kingdoms. As a consequence, he drew a faulty map of the mandala. For Schrieke, “this fact leads one to accept with some reservations what he has further to say regarding the administrative structure of Mataram”. 207 Still, the VOC man was able to, if not touch, at least approach the essence of courtly functions of Pangérans, Tumĕnggungs, and that of the Sunan himself. Hence, Bertrand takes Van Goens as the sole eyewitness of the Mataramese state centralization; albeit one “légèrement plus tardif”. 208

Such judgement can be substantiated with an analysis of the reports used to convey his insights. Delving into Van Goens’ mind-set requires a concern for the different mediums used to pen down his observations. Whereas these were daghregisters -daily journals- for the first three embassies, the fourth and fifth one have been conveyed in letters and general reports. S’Jacob stated how Rijckloff’s writing style loosened accordingly. 209 Yet, such loosening does not seem to have greatly affected Van Goens’ literary devices for judging the Javanese.

Clearly, daghregisters do have a more formal and chronological structure. In fact, the first one was even written anonymously, which stresses the bureaucratic nature of these documents. 210
Yet, when it comes down to it, they enabled a similar kind of reflection on the occurrences during the audiences as well as the events before, in-between and afterwards. Of course, letters did usually address a more particular topic and general reports could juxtapose events that occurred on different days. Still, expecting such differences to result in fundamentally different narratives by Van Goens is far-fetched. Rather, s’Jacob’s implication that the changed medium reflects an increased comfort with the kraton politics is well taken.

Within all the sources, one can recognize a consistent approach towards the Javanese society. It is only in the overarching report addressed to the Lords XVII in 1655, *Javaense Reyse*, that the stories gain a fundamentally different character. A mangkurat I suddenly receives a more despotic personality and malpractices at the court are highlighted. The text seemingly caricatures Mataram and is therefore best perceived as part of a diptych with Van Goens’ *Vertooch* pamphlet from 1655. This report, after all, sees the eyewitness turn into an orator.

The *Vertooch* pamphlet -addressing issues of concern to the Lord XVII and striving for more VOC dominance in Asia- forcefully rejected Asian polities and advocated increased independence from those corrupted trade partners. What is more, Christian sentiments pop up that had been marginal in his previous texts. *Javaense Reyse* picked up on this theme and appears to transform and embellish his embassy experiences to exaggerate the inefficient and lawless central Javanese court hierarchy. Even this document, nonetheless, shows through the court fraternization Van Goens was exposed to. Therefore, it is not to be entirely disdained. Rather, it demonstrates how the same court structure was described differently when viewed with distinguishable political motivations.

So, what did Van Goens tell us about the court coalitions? First, I will discuss his interpretations given in the direct reports; afterwards a short contrast is drawn with his *Javaense Reyse*. A key point is Van Goens’ own functioning within the court. The man became trapped in royal games of affiliation. The elaborate attention for court relations and etiquette is a remnant of this. It indicates how courtly contacts shaped the information reaching Van Goens. Many of his observations could have only been derived from Javanese sources; treating circumstances that occurred more than a decade earlier, or that involved intricate details of the court system.

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Fractions split the intelligence received. After decades of mutual avoidance under Sultan Agung, his successor Amangkurat I finally sought contact. His court was divided on these approaches; some welcomed the VOC, others quite the opposite. Even though we cannot expect binary opposites, the texts of Van Goens sometimes do suggest them. Already during the first embassy, complaints are made on the limited visits to courtiers due to “the jealousy between them”.215 Wierra Patra, for instance, showed dismay at being visited later than the Tumènggung Mataram. Subsequently, the report dismisses the former as a distrusted stooge of the Sunan; calling him arrogant and feeble-minded.216

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216 Note that this man was also known as the assassin of Wiera Goena, whom is described as an enemy of the Dutch. From the account a Dutch prisoner, Wiera Goena is claimed to have been personally responsible for the murder of several Dutchmen after the request for their liberation during a previous embassy. Ibid.: 23, 60 and 62.
The arrival of the fourth embassy was judged gloomily because the deputy welcoming them was seen as “our biggest enemy, and would not prefer anything more than our downfall”. This Anga Prajia was a court translator that seemingly had troubled the delegates before. Tension was only relieved when the favoured Tumênggung Pati appeared a bit later to guide them further.\textsuperscript{217} Evidently, the right connections mattered much for reaching success.

In fact, Van Goens’ attempt to disentangle the courtly ties and schisms went further than mere side-observations. He tried to stipulate the relations between the courtiers, saw the Garebeg Muludan court gatherings, the Sumatran embassies and noticed places at the kraton only accessible to favoured ‘nobles and friends’.\textsuperscript{218} Most importantly, Javanese nobles informed him on courtly feuds during his stay inlands. Most reveal an aggressive search to centralize the realm. So he is told by some Kjais that “the chief reason for the Susuhunan to travel southwards was to eliminate certain old lords, like Tumênggung Arta Tales and Tumênggung Wiera Sastra”.\textsuperscript{219} It is a confession leaving the delegate dazzled by the “odd manner of their government” to “kill the old, to make room for the young”.\textsuperscript{220}

\textit{Javaense Reyse} contains the bloodiest account of the Sunan’s aggression; telling about the large-scale murder of Islamic ‘priests’ whose bodies were still spread over the countryside. It appears these religious figures had favoured Allah over the monarch. The embassy reports describe executions too. During the third embassy, the courtier Ango Prajia conveys to Van Goens that the Sunan could not attend the VOC embassy for he was busy “killing 25 Javanese (...) whom against the Susuhunan’s order courted several Balinese women”. So, the delegates instead entertained themselves at Kjai Patra Mangala’s house.\textsuperscript{221} Similar events happened during the other embassies.\textsuperscript{222}

But punishments were not the Sunan’s only means to control. Van Goens is struck several times by the way in which warfare is applied as a power tool. In \textit{Javaense Reyse}, he refers to the register of all “noteworthy lords” and their followers. The importance of martial power thus even led

\textsuperscript{217} Ibid.: 96 and 118-119.

\textsuperscript{218} Concerning the off-limit areas, it is mentioned that the “zuijderpleijn, alwaer wij audientie gehad hebben, daer niemant mag binnencomen dan sijn beste virden ende heeren, daerop sich vertrout, ende uut deselve niemandt, dan die door hem daer geroepen wierden”. See ibid.: 46, 66, 79-80, 87-88 and 91-93.

\textsuperscript{219} Van Goens received this information during the return travel of the embassy. The quote above is roughly translated from: “‘de principale saeck, daerom den Sousounangh sijn reijse om de zuijt hadde aengenomen,was om eenige van d’ oude grooten, daar hij noch op gebeten was, om den hals te helpen, als den Tommagon Arta Tales en de den Tommagon Wiera Sastra’. Later on, he hears about the hostilities between “Wiera Sittia ende Soeta met Angapraja”. The former assist the Dutch in their hunt for Chinese defaulters. During the third embassy, Van Goens would come to know that Wiera Sittia and Anga Prajia had lost the Sunan’s favour. Wiera Sittia was even degraded to a post in Kendal. Around the same time the news drippe din that “den Tommagon Mattaram mede in ongenade des Conincx was ende alle sijn volck, zijnde 6000 mannen, hem afgenomen waeren, ende geordineert was, sich als een gemeen Edelman met weijnich swiete te erneren”. Ibid.: 67-70 and 79-80.

\textsuperscript{220} Translated from “‘t Stondt noch te [ge]loven, dat het getal met geen 2 ofte 3 soude ophouden, daar door de vreemde maniere van hunne regeringe can bespeurt werden, die voor d’ one onbegrijlijck is, mits d’oude vermoort werden, om de jonge plaetse in te ruijmen”. Ibid.: 67.

\textsuperscript{221} Van Goens, \textit{Javaense Reyse}; and idem., Vlij Gezantschappen: 84.

\textsuperscript{222} For the fourth Van Goens writes that there “was groote verslagenheit onder de grooten om des Conincx grimmicheijt ende gestadige toorn, dat meest dag elijcx d’een ofte d’ander den hals coste”. Ibid.: 119.
to a bureaucracy surrounding it. Tellingly, Amangkurat I’s first enquiry is on the Dutch contacts with his martial rivals. It is plausible the VOC appeared as another potential warlord on his list.²²³

Feigning war was effective too. The first embassy report concludes it is “certain” that the Sunan’s call to attack Banten, served no other reason than “to keep his enemies under fear, or eliminate his distrusted subordinates”.²²⁴ His analysis of the alliance between Mataram and Banten in 1652 equally typifies. Concerned with a potential pan-Islamic attack and a shrinking rice supply, he sets out the new marital links connecting the polities as well as the courtly oppositions towards them.²²⁵

Two political strands are described. On one side, the resistance of Pangéran Purbaja against the marriage. On the other, the plans of the “priests and other riff-raff” to attack Bali first and leave Banten in peace for now. Van Goens knows this plan is being advocated in the name of Sultan Agung who had seemingly claimed that “one should turn Mataram’s arms to the East before taking them to the West, otherwise they will not be blessed”. He had heard a near lethal accident with an exploding cannon had made Amangkurat I religious and abiding to the “priests”.²²⁶

Besides confirming to the VOC delegate how “whimsical” these people are, the account above also shows how the delegates’ ties could establish and break apart. Next to the punishments, and war treaties plus peace agreements, a vital way of expressing political preferences was through the embassy itself. The VOC men indicated their subordinate visitor status by wearing a yellow band and carrying their letter above the head. The most explicit expression of Javanese dominance was, however, the distance at which one was seated from the Sunan.²²⁷

The VOC visits were comparatively rare next to the frequent commission of local leaders. The more dismissive nature of ‘indigenous’ embassies is recognized by the VOC men. The Pangéran from Jambi visiting the court in 1651 is said to be “in awe of the Susuhunan’s power” and to undertake the journey “against [his] own wish”.²²⁸ It became obvious to Van Goens that subjected

²²³ Ibid.: 45, and 54. See also De Wever, Javaense Reyse: 41.
²²⁴ This war never materialized Van Goens, Vijf Gezantschappen: 67.
²²⁵ For the VOC, Mataram hostility towards either Banten or Blambangan was both equally obstructing. In both cases, it would likely mean an attempt by the Sunan to assure Dutch neutrality through putting the rice supply under pressure. Pan-Islamic alliances between Banten and Mataram would endanger Batavia for an attack from East and West. During the embassy these threats did not seem likely, however. Van Goens states: “Immers met Bantham is ’t heel aff, ende tracht men des Coninxx outste soon off den pangoran Maes (geseijt prince des Rijcx), met een dochter van Bantham te trouwen, nochtans met conditien, dat de Banthammer een van syn kinderen ofte naeste bloetverwanten, dependenten van ’t Ryck synde, aldaer ten hove senden sal ende jaerlycx continueren, wanneer den Coninck ofte Susouhouunan aeneneemt vrient ende bongenoot van den Sultan te wesen”. Ibid.: 103-104 and 153.
²²⁶ The quotes are translated from Dutch: “papen en ander gespuys” and “men soude de Matarams wapenen eerst naer ’t Oosten ende dan naer ’t Westen wenden, anders waeren se niet gesegent.”. On the religious turn of the Sunan he states: “dit doet hem religieus werden, bid de papen voor hem te bidden, staet aff van syn hartneekig voornemen, sweert den oorlogh tegen ’t Oosten ende belooft hem met den Bantammer te bevredigen, behouden des reputatie synes persoons”. Ibid.: 122-123.
²²⁷ Ibid.: 53-54, 102-103 and 122-125.
²²⁸ The quotes are roughly translated from Dutch: “de oorsaake, waerom desen pangoran ten hove comt, geschieft nergens dan uit ontsach van des Susouhouans macht, ende genech tegens den Jambijnese ssin sin, ’t welck UEd. vrijelijck voor vast gelieven aen te nemen; ende ’t gene de Jambijnese van hun out hercoment maechschap voorgeven (hoe wel ’t seecker ende waer is) is niet dan omtrent ons hun cleijn heijt tegens den Coninck te bedecken.”Ibid.: 94.
polities needed to be submitted to these rituals if the realm was to be kept together. Schism within the court were not all that mattered, those between the centre and the periphery were just as important.

Gradually, the independence enjoyed by local rulers was noted. That the fringes of Mataram were not easily commanded by the kraton came across when Van Goens needed to pay extra fees to locals while settling the trade post of Japara. Or when he needed to retrieve the promised rice himself when it turned out not to be delivered to Semarang by the local leaders. The Sunan expressed his concern for disloyal subjects multiple times. The Javanese migrating to Batavia were, for instance, dismissed as “bad and lazy no-goods, that flee from their masters” deserving to be punished.

229 As is stated in one of Van Goens’ reports: “hoewel den Coninck ons geschoncken had, ‘t gene wij begeerden, soo conden die luyijden, die reede op dit eijlandt woonden, niet verdrijven ofte wij mosten den Gouverneur, die last had ons huijs op te maacken, de handt salven met 200 Ra., doch niet eer te leveren, voordat wij ‘t eijlandt aileen in possessie hadden”. Ibid.: 95, 112 and 116.
230 The quote is translated from Dutch: “quade luije schelmen, die haer meesters ontlopen”.Ibid.: 86.
231 “Tournooispel te Mataram in 1664” In Schouten, Oost-Indische Voyagie Derde Boeck: 147. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-47-468.
In fact, the way in which Amangkurat I was subordinating the coast during these times demonstrates his need to clamp to it as if it could break away every moment. Local rulers were put under strict legislative and taxative restraints to ensure their loyalty. Even the VOC post at Japara was perceived as submissive to the court, despite its clear service to the Europeans. Yet, the centralization attempts witnessed by Van Goens were largely in vain. The possibilities to enact policies far from the kraton were limited, and governors strengthen their status through tertiary alliances.

The Company became a great allure to them. Throughout the embassies, multiple lords of the Sunan request the prolonged stay of the Dutch, usually for protection from their overlord. In this manner, the VOC offered local rulers a remedy to intensified central control by the court. When the VOC delegates wanted to sail off to end their third embassy, several Javanese governors came on board and delayed the departure so much that Van Goens reckoned they were “exceptionally attached to us, as if we were their guardians against the Susuhunan”.

In 1651, Anga Praija assumed even the mere arrival of the VOC delegates to bring him and other coastal governors “back in the king’s favour”. Three years later, Tumenggung Patty and Nebey Wangsradja felt the opposite when the VOC delegates had not brought the cannons that the two courtiers had ensured the Sunan to arrive. Nonetheless, the bupati succeeded in convincing Van Goens not to mention these issues at court and delayed his arrival till after the jurisdiction day. In this way, the embassy was still employed as protection against the Sunan’s wrath.

On the other hand, the VOC delegates were frequently assisted themselves. Van Goens, for instance, called on two ‘old ladies’ functioning within the kraton to speed up his demission. At another time, he supported on Tumenggung Patina-Arnawa and the governor of Patramenggala to get extra rice supplies. At the end of his final embassy, two bupatis even assisted sacking Makassarese ships in Japara. Next to these aids, informal meetings were equally arranged without any apparent aim other than the consumption of wine.

232 This became clear while Van Goens was discussing permission for the VOC resident of Japara to immediately visit the Sunan whenever he is being obstructed in his dealing by the local leaders. Amangkurat I approved this, stating the residents were bound to listen to his call. Yet, a year later the Sunan would be offended when one of the head of the Japara trade post would leave to Batavia without a request to the Sunan. Van Goens, Vijf Geszantschappen: 35, 84, 111-112 and 128. See also De Graaf, De Regering vol. I.: 83-85.

233 During the first embassy, ‘Queij Soeta’ asks the VOC delegates to remain at the Semarang harbour, for a few days longer, which is declined. Van Goens, Vijf Geszantschappen: 68.

234 The quote is a rough translation from: “die hem sonderlinge veel aan ons laet gelegen syn, als die syn lyffbeschermers omtrent den Sousouhounan zyn”. It concerns two nobles in particular. Ibid.: 96-97.

235 Van Goens mentions how halfway the third embassy a lot of courtiers were visited “die alle sonderlinge smaack in onse Spaence wijn hadden, ende dickwils niet vertrokken, voordat thuijs gedragen werden”. Unfortunately no further information is given. Ibid.: 86.
The refined way of interacting with the elites largely limited the actual inter-personal contact to the kraton and regional centres. Yet, the latter’s impact could define the image of the Javanese way of living beyond the courtly walls. Van Goens does draw some generalized conclusion about the “Javanese” based on his strictly courtly networks. He notices their “hospitable and polite attitude” and less obese body shape. When frustration rises, especially during his fifth embassy, derogatory comments intensify; the Javanese are condemned for their “slowness” and to be trusted “as much as flies”.

Clearly, the most important contact was with the Sunan himself. On occasion, cultural exchanges similar to the interchange of paintings at the Mughal court happened. Be it that the objects of interest were weapons and horses. This did not keep the parties from praising each other’s cannons and stallions, which appeared to be among the Sunan’s pastimes. Acts like these strengthened a mutual hospitality. During the first three embassies, hardly any incommensurability was produced. The reception of the delegates symbolizes this. The magnificence of it even left some Pangérans amazed about “the extra honour the Susuhunan gave to them”.

A shift would occur halfway 1652, however. Amangkurat I started emplacing restrictions on rice exports and logging. The underlying but ambiguous reason was the need for reserves due to a looming war with Banten. As it turned out, no such direct hostilities were planned by the Sunan. Rather, the restrictions functioned as a scheme to make Batavia more dependent on the court. This strategy was an old one: Javanese rulers used it back in the sixteenth century in an attempt to subdue Makassar.

Van Goens was requested to deliver a fourth embassy to resolve the issue. Like previous years, the envoy existed out of fourteen men as not to expose the Company’s anxiety. Yet, the fear was reflected by the higher value of gifts brought with them. Even though the issues could be temporarily resolved through signing a new contract, a new court visit was required within a few months. Van Gent delivered it reluctantly after failing to strike a deal with the Japara leaders directly. Effort was thus made to bypass the Sunan altogether and to build on connections with his subordinates.

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240 The quotes are translated from Dutch, e.g. “traecheijt deser menschen”. See ibid.: 107; and Van Goens, Vijf Gezantschappen: 12, 134, 150 and 158-164.
242 Ibid.: 94.
244 This was about f 58727; more than three times the amount given in each of the previous embassies. In 1654, the VOC spend f 27171, which was a noticeable figure too. Ibid.: 32.
245 Ibid.: 94., 126-127.
Not much was achieved through this tactic, however. A new embassy was set up in 1654 to gain further cooperation from the Sunan. Van Goens was again called upon to fix the lingering restrictions as well as provoke a war between Mataram and Makassar. The latter request had to appear a personal one, for the VOC wanted to conceal their limited capabilities for warring the south Sulawesian polity. Flattery was used to pull in the Sunan; Van Goens calling him the “biggest king in the world” and asserting the mere fact of him declaring war would scare away the opponents.\textsuperscript{246}

A translation error during the request enabled the courtiers contentious about fighting the Makassarese to intervene. Tumënggung Paty and Nebey Wangsaradja, who were mentioned earlier as the courtiers anxious about the lack of cannon gifts, objected that the VOC put too much pressure on Mataram and that “one should not appeal to the king to war his fellow believers.”\textsuperscript{247} The fraction hostile towards the VOC had spoken.

Soon after, Amangkurat I politely refused the suggestion, supposedly stating Batavia and Mataram were like a single household: “Batavia was the husband due to his combativeness, and Mataram was the housewife due to her incapability and weakness”.\textsuperscript{248} To Van Goens, these “empty offers” meant minimal Mataramese assistance; leaving the hard work to the Company. From that moment on, the VOC man would fathom the infeasibility of his demands. As De Wever suggested, the European perception on the Asians was largely determined by their ‘usability’.\textsuperscript{249} Van Goens’ subsequent dismissal of the kraton is hence not unexpected.

His writing started to reflect his frustrations. The delegate criticizes the “special incapabilities that excel in the nature of these people and the lightness that is detectable within it”. He dismisses “barbarians” and their “windy offers” and expects any concession to change whenever “the king feels like it”.\textsuperscript{250} It is “as clear as the sun that the king never intended to fight Makassar or any of his

\textsuperscript{246} Van Goens’ statement to Amangkurat I reads as follows: “Dat den Coningh van Maccassar wel sagh, dat hy tegens soo grooten Coningham niet bestaen conden als den Sousouhounan, ende daerom liever ons tegens d’ Amboyneseen socht te becommeren, om door middel van onse oneenichyeit proffyt te doen, en dat wy vast stelden, soo de Sousouhounan den oorlogh tegens hem aennam, dat hy weel in corten tyt mocht contributaris van den Sousouhounan werden (…)by weleker goet succes hy een der grootste Coningen van de werelt syn zoude!”

\textsuperscript{247} These courtiers thus understood Malay and dared to intervene between the Sunan and the delegates. The quote is translated from Dutch: “Anga Praija (…) wert op ’t jongste belet door den Tommagon Paty ende meest door Wanga-Radjia, juyst daer den Coningh tot den oorloogh geamineert wert, voorgevende, dit discours tehooch liep ende men den Coningh niet behoorde te raden tot oorloogh tegens haer gelooffswerlanten (…)”. Ibid.: 139 and 140.

\textsuperscript{248} The quote is translated from Dutch: “hy geen vyanden hadde, ende met niemant in oorloge waere, maer was seer belust syn volek onder d’oneze ten stryde te conjugeren om te bethoonen dat wy een land besaeten, die als man en vrouw huys hielden; daerbij voegende: Batavia was de man, om haar strytybaerheyt, ende de Mataram was de vrouw, om haar oncunde ende slapherticheyt; gevende genoch te kennen, dat hy veel meer genegen was, ons met volck te willen adsitseren, als wel een ander met de macht van syn vaertuygen te offenceeren.” Ibid.: 138 and 156-162.

\textsuperscript{249} Van Goens, Javaense Reyse: 108; and idem.: Vijf Gezantschappen: 94-107.

\textsuperscript{250} The quotes are translated from Dutch: “speciale incapaciteijten, die in denature deeser mensch[en] uijtmunten ende de variabelheijt, diedaerin bespeurt wert”; “winderige aanbiedingen”; and “den Coninck weder andere sinnen in ’t hooft comen”. Van Goens, Vijf Gezantschappen: 141-142 and 145-146.
subjects, countries or provinces”. 251 At the same time, he also loses trust in the capabilities of his courtly contacts, his “assumed Javanese friends”, to speak in his favour. This while the hostile courtiers deserve a tough treatment, for a soft one would only make them “braver and bolder”. 252

Van Goens’ comments were not merely prompted by personal animosities but equally reflect a growing sense of incompatibilities between two societies. His ‘Javaense Reyse’ and ‘Vertooch’ exposes the disbelief in future cooperation. They suggest the Susuhunan brutally dominates and arbitrary rules abound. The people accepting such dictatorship are not to be trusted either. The VOC delegate “often wondered on the sovereign power of this ruler, that I even figured it a miracle rather than an ordinary course, to govern such numerous people in such a slavish matter”. 253

A large section of ‘Javaense Reyse’ is dedicated to the intrigues between the young Amangkurat and Wira Guna; an important governor of Sultan Agung. Eventually this would result in the massive murder of priests, with whom Wira Guna had aligned. The lesson Van Goens draws from this gory episode is how a “gruesome, tough and unyielding wrathful nature” is rousing “this nation”, “yet how deceitfully these people hide their pretensions through skilful courtesy”. 254 The centralizing urges were now seen as autocratic suppressions. No wonder, then, that refuge was sought among the local governors to at least make some impact. As a desperate final attempt to draw in the Sunan to war Makassar, he sacked two Makassarese ships in Japara with the help of local rulers. 255 This was the only wedge to be driven between the overlord and his ‘subservient’ subjects.

Whereas the Central Javanese landscape is admired for its transparent beauty, its denizens are condemned for their inconceivable behaviour. No emotions are shown, it is impossible to even see “whether they are good or bad, happy or sad”. While this can make them worthy warriors, it equally makes them deceitful, jealous, and thievish. These were “evil and ungrateful humans” comparable to “Chams’ children” from the story of Noah. 256 The fruitless inter-personal relations at the court resulted in a castigating view of the society as a whole, leaving no hope for inter-cultural compatibility. The depiction of the Oriental despot sucking the blood of his apathetic subjects did not

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251 The quote is translated from Dutch: “zijnde soo claer als de zon, dat den Coninck noijt gedachten heeft gehadt, Maccassar ofte ymant zijner onderdaenen, landen, ofte plaetsen te bevechten, als in ’t verhael van deesen UEde. nader gelieven te zien, insgelijcx ’t principaehste op dese reijse voorgevallen”. Ibid.: 153.
253 The quote derives from: “my dickmael soodanigh verwondert over de souverayne macht van desen vorst, dat ick ’t selve eer een mirakel dan een ordinair maniere genaemt heb, om suleken grooten volek soo slaefs te regeren”. Van Goens, Javaense Reyse: 47.
254 The quote derives from: “Uyt dit lange verhael mach men oordeelen van wat wreede, harde, ende onversettelijckehaet-dragende nature dese natie gedreven wert” and “mitgaders hoe verradersch dese menschen haer voornemens door konstig veynsen weten te verbergen.” Ibid.: 74.
255 He reasons: “daermede dan den roep genoch in Maccassar sal comen, om hun te doen geloooven, dat dese custen voor haeronveijl zijn (…)”. The Batavian government was quite-displeased with these actions and opted to not tell the Sunan about them, hoping the courtiers would not do so either. Van Goens, Vijf Gezantschappen: 150-152 and 165-170.
derive from a priori biases towards Asians, but growing dissatisfaction in seeking cooperation with them.\textsuperscript{257}

A triangle of empirical description can be discerned. While picking up the sources, one will first notice the frameworks used to understand the phenomena surrounding the VOC man. Then the associations with indigenous informants are detected. Interestingly enough, the intelligence granted by these contacts evoked a whole new set of descriptive tendencies. Van Goens’ dismissal of the Javanese polity rooted in his suspicion towards certain courtiers and catalysed when he sensed the incapability of his kraton acquaintances to advocate his aims. The initial suspicion subsequently grew to new proportions and caused the VOC man to shift his attention to provincial rulers. By and by, involvement with the local networks again led to new reflections and raised fears for Javanese autocracy.

e. Expanding the case study: Trunajaya

The analysis of Van Goens’ reports shows the discourse on violent Oriental despots ultimately derives from alliances and fractions faced at court. The account given on Trunajaya can be delved out in this manner too. The degree to which he is depicted as a terrorizing vicious warlord rather than a capable ruler seems largely determined by the kind of informants engaged with. To trace the research possibilities left, I will end with an overview of what has been written on the warlord by De Graaf and Ricklefs. Especially their selection and interpretation of sources will reveal the potential for further enquiry.

As told earlier, Trunajaya was born bearing the name of Nila Prawata. He descended from Cakraningrat I; the Madurese leader that was exiled to the Mataramese kraton by Sultan Agung. Nila Prawata was soon orphaned. Both his grandfather and father passed away, the latter being murdered at Amangkurat I’s court. Apparently the family was perceived too powerful as formal vassal rulers of West Madura. Instead Trunajaya’s uncle, Cakranigrat II, was given the office.\textsuperscript{258} From then on, Trunajaya’s struggle grew.\textsuperscript{259}

Van Goens has described the previously mentioned courtly contests in his reports; framing them in his understanding of the kraton. Both De Graaf and Ricklefs have made ample use of these sources to recover courtly affairs. Treachery was very dominant at the court, and after some time Trunajaya himself fell into disfavour with the very man that had both raised him as an orphan and

\textsuperscript{257} De Wever expected the former, see De Wever, Javaense Reyse: 118-119.
\textsuperscript{259} This royal family turned out much less faithful than the Sultan might have expected. Notice that no absolute certainty remains about Trunajaya’s original name; but Nila Prawata is the most likely one. See K. Van Dijk, H. de Jonge, and E. Touwen-Bouwsma, “Introduction”, In Across Madura Strait: the dynamics of an insular society, eds. van Dijk et al. (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995): 1-6; and De Graaf, “De Opkomst”: 2 and 28.
taken the position of his parents: his uncle. At first, he sought protection from the crown prince, but to no avail. Trunajaya chose to flee to the town Kajoran where he married the daughter of Raden Kajoran; an Islamic holy-man competent in shakti (cosmic power) and tapa (asceticism).

De Graaf perceives both the alliances with Kajoran and the Makassarese to have constituted Trunajaya’s power. Attention to this cooperation is certainly called for; not only because of the soldiers they mustered, but also because of the identifications they evoked. Trunajaya’s relation with his stepfather Kajoran is described similarly in the varying Javanese chronicles, although the Dutch sources contain little about it. Usually, it is narrated how Kajoran considered him destined to become ‘a great hero’ and to bring Mataram to its downfall. According to the legends, the Mataramese crown prince asked the Raden to subdue the Sunan, after which he naturally chose Trunajaya to do so. For this purpose, he was trained and sent to Sampang, Madura, to gather supporters.

Speelman wrote about Trunajaya on multiple occasions. He takes his efforts in southern Madura to have been the basis for his further rebellion. From there, he managed to increase his control over the rest of the island, which was eased by the unpopularity of his uncle. Yet, his army truly took form after the Makassarese exiles reached East Java, where they started plundering towns and harbours as Gerongan. Large groups of Makassarese left Sulawesi in the years after their 1669 defeat against Buginese and VOC forces. Their reason for doing has not been determined yet, but they were clearly as outlandish to Java as cockatoos would have been. Violence, however, allowed them to settle or at least survive. In due time, the Makassarese moved from unknown to notorious. They thereby proved a competitor to state rule. Gradually, attacks were no longer necessary to win the support of Pasisir rulers; envoys would already do the job. Many coastal Javane learned the insurgency of their own accord.

Mataram sent out instructions to the bupati; demanding they submitted the Makassarese to their power and thus make them subjects of the empire. These calls turned out inefficient, nonetheless. Indications can be found of a closer cooperation between Trunajaya and Galesong’s Makassarese warriors, which was soon sealed by a marital bond in 1674. Trunajaya offered his

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261 This happened under the threat of his uncle. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 2-4; idem, “De Opkomst”: 3; and Ricklef s, War, Culture: 31.
262 De Graaf suggests both the Makassarese and Kajoran to have served as field warlords fighting in the interest of Trunajaya, but acting rather independently. De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 5 and 7; idem., “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”; and idem., De Regering vol. I.
264 Speelman specifically referred to his activities in Pamekasan. The Makassarese arrived in two main groups: a western one led by Karaëng Bonto-Marannu and an eastern one commanded by Karaëng Galesong. See De Graaf, “De Opkomst”, 14; and idem., De Regering vol I: 56 and 62-92.
265 The habitat of Cockatoo stretches from the Australia to all Indonesian islands east of Java, including Sulawesi.
266 Even the bastard son of the Sunan, Notobroto, betrayed him. He was claimed to have gathered the unlikely number of 100,000 men and ambiguously claimed neutrality. Only when local leaders would support his father, would he fight for the Madurese; a policy detrimental to Mataram. The Bupati equally had a dubious role in these sieges. C. Speelman “Letter X (9 January 1677).” In De Opkmost Van: 73-75. See also Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch Tiger: 19; and De Graaf, De Regering vol. I: 81-82.
daughter in return for “the conquest of Surabaya and Grisik".267 Around this time, the Madurese warlord started to use the royal title ‘Rad en Trunajaya’; the youthful conqueror. Two years later, he married one of Amangkurat I’s daughters and praised himself Raja or Panembahan Maduretna; the true king of Java.268 Likewise, Karaëng Galesong changed his to Adipati or Adipati Anom; the young ruler.269 To Speelman, these entitlements demonstrate a boisterous arrogance and relentless desire to conquer all.270

But the labels were as much directed to allied warriors as opposing ones. Throughout his struggle, Trunajaya strived for a cult status. Religion was one of the ways and means to do so; as Ricklefs observed: “an Islamic sense of identity had long been evident among the rebel forces”.271 Raden Kajoran stood central in this.272 But when Trunajaya decked himself with laurel, most attention indeed became focused on his personality; as was symbolized by the use of sacred standards, banners, and genealogies to Majapahit.273 This might be one reason for him to neglect his ties with the Sunan’s son. The kāfir enemy symbolized by the VOC only enforced such identifications. Mataram was rejected; his followers in Kediri praised Trunajaya as Sultan Intra Prista not Susuhunan.274

The numerous appellations of Trunajaya evoked legacies too.275 All boosted the warlord’s charisma further. The status constructed in this period appears vital for the onslaught that followed. Looking at conquests, De Graaf underlines the warlord’s rise in the preceding years without intending to constitute a new realm.276 Looking at his entitlements, his ascendance takes a different shape. It enabled a close cooperation with distinctive groups as the Makassarese. This new alignment soon led to the acquirement of Javanese beaches and ports proximate to Madura. In command was a capable overlord, whose pretensions were less imaginative than Speelman would recognize. Fear rose among


269 This title mimicked the one carried by Amangkurat II as a prince. Around this time, a priest associated with the Makassarese started to foretell the doom of Mataram in the mountains behind Gresik. See De Graaf, De Regering vol. I: 110.

270 C. Speelman “Letter XII (10 March 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 77-78.

271 Ricklefs, War, Culture: 40.


273 Galesong’s Makassarese used different banners. Trunajaya also asserted the title Susuhunan used to belong to him based on his own genealogical arguments and aimed to reconstitute the court of Majapahit. After Trunajaya settled in Kediri, he krisped the former head of the town; Katawengan. Having done so, Trunajaya divides Katawengan’s wives among his followers and titles himself panembahan Ratu Pamenang or “Coning van Groot Java …onder den titul van Ratou Cadirij”. Round the same time rumours spread on his illicit acts, which Speelman initially plays down. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 21; and Schrieke, Sociological Studies Vol. II: 125, 275 and 278.


275 Many myths spread that conflict with the Trunajaya’s own story of his predecessors gathered for the VOC by Moor Piero in direct negotiations in 1677. De Graaf, De Regering vol. I: 49-53.

276 Consider, for instance, his comment on the Moor Piero embassy. De Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-vaagstuk”: 286.
the local rulers that Mataram would not be able to beat the forces by itself, which indeed turned out to be the case. 277

In 1776, Amangkurat I attempted to pursue Trunajaya’s forces by sending, of all people, the crown prince to hunt him down. This is the very prince plotting a coup against the Sunan and the one eventually succeeding his father as Amangkurat II. The Sunan thus had plenty of reasons to be on guard. His army, however, largely consisted out of tanis, i.e. farmers; not noblemen that could keep their eyes on him. Chances were ripe for desertion. But instead of betraying his father, the crown prince was betrayed by Trunajaya. The two appeared to have agreed on a feigned battle at Gegodog to fool the Sunan. Yet, the prince’s forces instead faced a bloody and decisive defeat in October. With it, the amicable relation between the prince and the warlord was equally shattered. 278 After Gegodog, the crown prince’s brothers Pangéran Martasana and Puger took over instead, to lead a campaign that was now chiefly defensive.

The Madurese victory at Gegodog was followed by more success. On the fifth of January 1677, the forces reached up to Cirebon, although the inlands advance was naturally slower. New Javanese forces were attracted. 279 In the meantime, however, the Madurese and Makassarese started to drift apart; Trunajaya claimed to have been offended by the way Galesong “damaged and redistributed merchant ships without his order or any need”. 280 Within the latter group a further split occurred. 281 Concurrently, the kraton also fell to pieces now the Sunan proved incapable of stopping the Madurese. Naturally, De Graaf and Ricklefs underline the impact this had on the Mataramese dynasty, and the ego of Trunajaya. The personal betrayal of Amangkurat II by Trunajaya is eminent in their narratives; the Madurese dwarf had tricked the giant causing him to stumble and fall. 282 Yet, how the warlord’s followers shifted sides in the wake of these events has not been touched upon much.

Many changed camps, nonetheless. And the VOC sources give plenty of clues why they did. The Company got involved in 1676; Poleman took charge over multiple battles. In the beginning, unawareness of who was in league with whom hindered the campaign. Poleman was even ignorant

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277 The acquirement occurred when Javanese regents deserted from Mataram. Adipati Anom stirred this up to increase his power. In fact, the crown prince was assisting Trunajaya too, and the Makassarese were making much use of this second alliance. The alliance between the Madurese and the Makassarese was sealed through the marriage of Trunajaya’s daughter with Karaëng Galesong in 1675. See De Graaf, “De Opkmost”: 16, 17, 18; and idem. De Regering vol.I: 87-91.


279 Trunajaya was still abusing the earlier support he gained from Adipati Anom, which had broken apart after Gegodog. Making such fictional claims of alliance made it easier to attract Javanese rulers. See Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 53 and 119-128; De Graaf, “De Opkmost”: 26; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 33.

280 The quote comes from: “de vaartuygen der coopluyden buyten ordre off last aentastende en verdistruerende, was hy daardoor tot toorn verweckt”. Moor Piero, “Letter XIV”: 83-93.

281 Namely that between Karaëng Galesong’s Makassarese and those abiding to Karaëng Tellolo. Speelman, “Letter X”: 75. See also De Graaf, De Regering vol.I: 53 and 134-137; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 34.

282 De Graaf, De Regering vol.I: 139.
of Trunajaya’s involvement with the ‘insurgence’. But interests in alliances grew and the increased description of them allows an analysis of martial associations. Where Van Goens probed the court fractions, VOC admirals where now exploring the ties between different war-bands. Friendly and hostile forces were distinguished. Attempts were made, for instance, to survey the ties between the Madurese and the Makassarese through elaborate correspondence.

Even allegiance with Trunajaya was contemplated. Speelman’s campaign in Japara, and later on Madura, started with attempts to mediate with the warlord. During these negotiations, the warrior once exclaimed that all Javanese were already paying tribute to him, excepting the Sunan, so that within a month he would rule supreme. Nevertheless, he completely undermined the talks through unreliable promises, seemingly stirred by alcoholism, and war was declared by Speelman on the 27th of April, 1677. The warlord’s name would be blackened since. By that time, the Makassarese had equally abandoned Trunajaya.

Speelman now made the “master move” -in De Graaf’s words- and joined the ‘incapable’ Sunan. After attacks on Surabaya, the VOC hoped to create a path to Kediri; Trunajaya’s headquarter. Cooperation with his former allies, among whom the Makassarese, was sought to achieve this. Yet, the news that Kajoran had captured the kraton -the heart of Mataram- arrived in the meantime. Speelman appeared to have been at a loss. The intervention had only brought more instability; the admiral had cornered the cat, but now it jumped in rage. De Graaf and Ricklefs’ stress how Trunajaya and his followers were driven further inlands and attached to a religious resistance “against the king and his new Christian allies”. The capture of the court would only strengthen them.

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283 The same goes for Jan Fransz. Initially the mission was only aimed at stopping the Makassarese. It was only after Poleman’s first campaign that he started to notice the coalition between the Makassarese and Trunajaya. Ironically enough his campaign contributed to this alliance by forcing the Makassarese to abandon their ships and roam inlands. See De Graaf, “De Opkomst”: 18-19, 21 and 23; and idem., De Regering vol. I: 95-99 and 114.

284 Here one should mind the fact that Trunajaya only exposed himself in October 1676, which might have been due to the troubles of controlling the Makassarese as a force. De Graaf, “De Opkomst”: 16. The Makassarese had their own warrior background. Several sources can be used to trace it back. European literature grants some valuable descriptions of the society. The Makassarese court chronicles do mention acts of war, yet have a strong focus on the central ruler. See W. Cummings, A chain of kings: the Makassarese chronicles of Gowa and Talloq (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

285 Already on the 28th of February did Speelman sign a contract with Ngabéhi Wangsdipa, the Sunan’s regent of Japara. Later on, Amangkurat II would state he was misinformed about the contents of these contracts. Galesong also abandoned Trunajaya after the latter kidnapped his family. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 8-9; idem., “De Opkomst”: 27; and idem., De Regering vol. I: 146 and 165-166.

286 The contract of alliance was first signed by the governor of Japara in March 1677. Amangkurat I indirectly rectified it. Since he was too sick to put his signature himself, the soon-to-be Amangkurat II did it for him. After the fall of the kraton the alliance extended to Amangkurat II. Cooperation with the other princes was sought to, but with few results. None of them wanted to submit to their brother Amangkurat II. See Speelman, “Letter XII”: 77; and De Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”: 324.

287 While Trunajaya himself was kept at bay in Eastern Java, two of his warlords, Raden Wiramegala and Tumenggung Mangkujuda, fought their way to the kraton. The Madurese were not trusted in Central Java. But Raden Kajoran certainly was. He could hence hurdle enough men to attack the kraton twice. They managed to subdue the court at the end of June 1677, turning Speelman’s campaign on its head. See also De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 8-9; and idem., “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”; and idem.: De Regering vol. I: 170-180.


289 Ricklefs, War, Culture: 40.
Increased Islamic sensibilities go a long way in explaining the troops gathered by Kajoran to conquer the kraton on account of Trunajaya. The Madurese warlord himself was unable to constitute a power base in Central Java. He remained too much of an outsider, settled far eastwards. Only his father in law was recognized as a justified ruler by the population. After all, he was both Javanese and an established religious figure, unlike his stepson whose alleged sanctity was recent. Under these circumstances, a diarchy was set up to control the region. Kajoran was the authority in Central-, and Trunajaya in East-Java. Still, it remained clear who was in charge; Trunajaya swallowed all power. The court treasuries of Mataram were brought to Kediri; Kajoran would not see any of them. The nobleman would lose the capital he vanquished too; soon Pangéran Puger would take the royal city, and leave the warlord empty-handed.290

In the other military camp, new forms of cooperation were sought for as well. This alliance between Amangkurat II and the VOC, headed by Hurdt, would eventually lead to the end of Trunajaya. Hurdt’s campaign turned the tide and even caused men as Kajoran to desert Trunajaya and ally the Makassarese. This central Javanese holy man was not spared however, and got captured in September 1679. No Javanese lord wanted to kill him, so the VOC ordered a Buginese soldier to do it. Karaëng Galesong was still to return to Trunajaya, but was seemingly murdered by him after the Madurese warlord found out about his earlier deceit.291

Previous historians acknowledged the downfall of the warlord looking at these facts, yet did not thoroughly delve into the reasons ‘the insurgents’ fell apart. Only De Graaf’s article on Kajoran extends on this issue. First, De Graaf perceives a split of the Kajorans and their allies the Purbayas (centred in Madiun) from the kraton in early 1677.292 Secondly, unlike Trunajaya’s followers, Kajoran chiefly used Javanese warriors and lords; appealing to a shared ethnic background. Thirdly, he suggests Trunajaya tried to manipulate this appeal by summoning him to Kediri after the conquest of Mataram. Finally, this “honourable detention” as well as the absence of a suited heir destroyed his prestige in Central Java; from a charismatic warlord he turned into a stooge of the Madurese.293 Obedience among his subjects waned afterwards.

290 The Islamic sensibilities are for instance revealed when the Sultan of Banten offered Kajoran two “holy shirts from Mecca”. Notice that most of the regalia were still in the hands of Amangkurat I. Puger’s servant Raden Wira-Truna misled Kajoran’s warlord to leave the kraton early, so Puger could claim supremacy over it. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 12; idem. “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”: 323; and Ricklefs, War, Culture: 40-42.
292 The Kajorans are the denizens of Kajoran; the town and region ruled by Raden Kajoran.
293 Purbaya II was important for initiating the rebellion, but died soon after it started, explaining the minimal attention for this man in the VOC sources. Islamization is perceived by De Graaf as a way to legitimize power, especially when lacking heirs or ethnic ties, his comment on Islam is very brief, however, and does not do justice to the role in had in these uprisings. See De Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”: 279, 285-286, and 290-297.
The VOC campaign appears to have brought about a similar character assassination of Trunajaya. In these last months of fleeing about, Trunajaya sustained correspondence with both the VOC and Amangkurat II. In it, he exclaimed the injustice done to him as well as the motivations for his rebellion. To the VOC, he explained his revenge over not inheriting Madura as well as the hostility of his uncle towards him. He was a just prince; a ‘Ratu Adil’ who by nature was to muster many and constitute new hierarchies in replacement of the old corrupted ones. But it was not to be, due to the European ‘deus ex machina’.

Clearly, Trunajaya’s dream of becoming ‘the true king of Java’ had flown out of the window. His appeal as a mighty warlord with powerful allies was no more. After making his way to the Limbangan mountain ranges, Trunajaya surrendered to Captain Jonker on the 26th of December 1679. The opening scene of this thesis was to follow. The history of his resistance clearly reveals shifting alliances whenever victory occurred or losses prevailed. Moreover, his legacy remained inspiring for subsequent warriors. Wasengrana would, for example, pretend to be Trunajaya risen from the dead in August 1680.

Even though work has been made of clarifying the all too shuffling fraternizations, lore stimulating such resurrections directs us to new unexplored arguments of cult and faith. Most importantly, the manner in which such lore impacted the intelligence received on Trunajaya by the VOC is left ignored. Chapter four and the conclusion indicate how this determined his image as a rebel instead of a sovereign, how Amangkurat II became defined as a justified successor and how men like Galesong were neither fish nor fowl. Conceptions on the warlords subsequently established the vision on their war-bands.

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294 This is a statement that seems to be tied in current affairs; he even claimed his uncle wanted to kill him. See De Graaf, “De Opkomst”: 3-4.
295 Ricklefs, War, Culture: 57 and 77.
4. The Eye of the Beholder: Associations during martial encounters

In 1678, Speelman warned the VOC for the “devilishly hymned false prophecies” used by the opponents to distract the “general people” from “their required obedience”.296 Ironically, many similar ‘wicked’ temptations appear to have pulled in troops of Amangkurat II. The religious glue sticking the Company’s allies together was looked at less suspiciously, however. Observations on favoured men, ‘Islamic temples’ or graveyards “deemed very holy” by “the Javanese” and “their priests”, do not carry a diabolical undertone.297 The commensurability of heuristics has already been demonstrated in the last chapter, in the following pages it is asked how devils and saints fitted into a larger discourse on Javanese armies expressed by writers like Speelman.

Those ‘devils and saints’ were not necessarily religious figures; court fractions, ethnic warrior groups, and peasants were equally fashioned in similar terms. Such framing clearly reflects a broader interpretation of the Javanese society. The way in which writers approached the people, politics and myths around them thus deserves notice. I therefore offer a closer look at the actors or authors behind the Dutch sources. To begin, their manner of reporting on war-bands, shifting alliances and even religious legends is investigated. I describe their work and observations by looking at their occupations in Southeast and South Asia, the context in which they wrote and the retrievable impression of their personalities. Most of all, however, I consider the ‘Asian’ networks in which they operated.

Hurdt, Speelman and the previously mentioned Van Goens can all be taken as early colonizers. They strove to diminish the autonomy of indigenous rule and sought to bring the Javanese lands to fuller exploitation. The support of the Sunan was just a mean to win his obedience. Yet, they were equally some of the best informed VOC agents when it came to hinterland affairs. This apparent irony does not have to be taken as an oddity. The aims of these men could, after all, only be reached through a proper understanding of inland hierarchies, local issues, diplomacy and warfare. And, consequently, of social ties too. Mustering warriors required it.

Besides the ‘author’, the ‘document’ is worthy of concern too. All selected authors produced intelligence for an extensive trade company. But, the headquarters in Batavia and Amsterdam only partially directed the documented observations of the actors under concern. Their writings were largely derived from experiences on the field. The eye of the beholder justified a personal narrative

296 The quote refers to Kajoran’ efforts to tempt warriors around Mataram to join his side. C. Speelman, “Inscriptie door Edele Admiraal Corn. Speelman op zijn Edele vertrek van Japara aen d’Edele commandeur Isaac Saint martin tot naeright gelaten” (23 March 1678). Nationaal Archief, 1.04.02, 1332: 746.
297 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 82, 109, 245 and 251.
of issues, chronologies and causation. Yet, the beholder was not a scholar. He gazed on practical matters that, in the end, did serve the Company’s interest. The men in the field might not be strongly restrained in their writing, they were still expected to deliver certain intelligence.

In the end, all documents served as input to the Supreme Government in Batavia, or even the Lord XVII in the Dutch Republic. Different kinds of documentation took different aims. Daily journals sought to clarify the progress of operations, letters replied to specific queries, and mission reports granted overviews of key affairs. Therefore, all discussions on the authors will start by reviewing the type of records they made and how this influenced their writing. From the sources up, I then trace their articulated view on society, war and religion.

Some VOC servants contemplated more on indigenous affairs than others. I selected two lengthy reports that delved into martial alliances most thoroughly; Speelman’s instruction to De Saint-Martin’s and Briel’s daily report on Hurdt’s 1678 campaign.599 These sources were cornerstones for earlier research. But no one dedicated separate analyses to them or compared them explicitly; here they stand at the centre of attention. A progression exists from the previously discussed court focus of Van Goens, to the mixed interests in royal hierarchies and warring of Speelman, and the description of Hurdt’s hinterland military marches.300 All accounts, in their own terms, grant a unique perspective on mandalas and military labour markets.

It will be scrutinized how Speelman and Hurdt operated and understood the struggle against Trunajaya’s ‘insurgence’. The former campaigned on the Javanese coasts between December 1676 and late 1677. Hurdt took over afterwards and, unlike his predecessor, was allowed to go inlands. They themselves formally controlled troops of Mataram. But many of those went their one way still. The only means for directing these pejuangs was through constant examination of their fraternizations, leaders and political ties. VOC men needed to carefully note their assistance and the information they disclosed. Warlords were to be watched. Hence, intelligence provided by central informants like Jacob Couper, Moor Priero and Willem Bastinck is consulted too.301

298 These personal historical narratives spread since the 1560s and reflected a growing scholarly sense of causally linked events and a chronological history. Woolf has demonstrated how this conception impacted the perception of the English population at large. Bertrand stresses, however, that this new discourse also “se nourrissent en effet de plus en plus des façons de dire des voyageurs”. The empirical arguments of the travellers could then serve a strongly personalized historical narrative on exotic destinations. See Bertrand, L’Histoire à Parts: 51-57, and D. Woolf, “From Hystories to History: Five Transitions in Thinking about the past.” The Huntington Library Quarterly 68, no. 1-2 (2005): 33-70.

299 Some readers might be surprised by the absence of François Valentijn’s “Old and New East-India”. This elaborate text possibly allows the most in-depth insights into Javanese warring and religion from a Dutch perspective. Still, I wanted to stick to agents reporting within the VOC apparatus and thus contributing directly to the Company’s intelligence gathering and cooperating with local rulers out of a professional interest. Valentijn’s work, although based on his VOC service, were published as a separate travel report. Speelman, Inscriptie Edèle Vertrek; and Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt.

300 As Schrieke noted, the impression gained in the hinterland differed much from the kraton: “[w]hen, thanks to Hurdt’s expedition from Japara to Kadiri in 1678, the Dutch East India Company first came to know the interior of Java, it proved to consist of various regions, some governed by court dignitaries (including members of the ruling family), others by officials, still others by the descendants of the original local nobility.” See Schrieke, Sociological Studies Vol.II: 153. See also Ricklef, “Some Statistical Evidence”: 2-3.

301 De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 49.
In the conclusion, I address the degree to which the VOC men could recognize the organization of war-bands, including their shifting alliances. The epistemic range of the VOC sources can then be tested. In general, much information can be obtained on the group formations, be it coloured by ethnic categorization, misspellings of names, and ignorance about the specific reasons for deserting or allying. But before sifting for such knowledge, I address how these different types of literature reflect the social associations of the authors as well as their produced incommensurabilities. Through reflecting on their authors, the qualities, narratives and oversights of the material are to be judged upon. And the devils and saints are to be appraised in context.

a. Cornelis Speelman

Like Van Goens, Speelman is one of the major figures in VOC history. Born in a higher middle class family in Rotterdam on the third of March 1628, he joined the Company as a mere sixteen year-old. His first functions were that of assistant and boekhouder-generaal. 302 Both positions required skills in accounting that Speelman would prove to master in his subsequent military career too. While his fame might have been largely obtained through martial success, it is his proficient writing that makes his legend highly suited for scrutiny.

Mataram was certainly not the first polity he would interact with. Speelman’s report on the Joan Cunnaeus embassy to Shah Abbas II of Persia is still published today and reveals a high curiosity on unknown cultures. 303 He had a nose for unfamiliar commerce networks too, as he was able to influence the trade relations on the Indian subcontinent during his three-year directorship over the Coromandel trade post. He fought privateering, but equally sought to establish a stronger influence on the indigenous polities. The latter aim tied him to intricate rivalries between local lords; leaving him caught in a web of local politics. 304

But conspiracies also hunted him in Batavia. False accusations of privateering blemished his reputation and led him to lose office. Speelman made up his mind to leave the Indies and return to the Republic at once after having cleared his name. His decision to abandon Asia would never materialize, however. Makassar would come in its way. Tension between the VOC and this Sulawesian polity had risen over the years. Signed contracts and VOC monopolies were ignored. When the Makassarese killed some VOC men while sacking wrecked ships, this proved to be the final straw. On the 23th of November 1666, Speelman was instructed to sail the VOC naval force to Sulawesi to impress the enemy by using cannon fire and thereby tempting them to negotiate. 305

303 C. Speelman, Journaal Der Reis Van Den Gezant Der O.T. Compagnie Joan Cunaeus Naar Perzië in 1651-1652 (Charleston, South Carolina: Nabu Press, 2010).
304 He received this position in 1663. Stapel, Speelman: 11.
305 Ibid., 25-28 and 34-35.
Were this to fail, Speelman was requested to plunder parts of the Sulawesian coast and visit Buton to win over its leader. Afterwards, sails were set to be to Ternate and Tidore for bridging the discrepancies between these realms. A final means was to block Makassar’s harbour and lead a destructive artillery attack. Yet, invasion of the city was prohibited. In case negotiations were possible, Speelman was to enact specific conditions of surrender predetermined by the Supreme Government.  

Matters turned out differently, however. Speelman was bold enough to stride inlands and commit to direct combat. The shores of Makassar were reached on the 19th of December; a Makassarese pirogue tried to pay off the murders through offering some silver and gold. Speelman refused to accept the gift, however, and demanded the death of those responsible for the bloodshed. So war began. A long struggle ensued testing the ties between the European and Asian army sections.  

The campaign was one of the first to intensively rely on pejuangs; local alliances were more decisive than the Asian legion or even European soldiers. The twenty-one ships for this mission contained six-hundred VOC soldiers and several Buginese and Ambonese assisting forces. The bulk of troops were, however, gathered at the spot. Speelman’s most crucial native intermediaries were Arung Palakka -the Sultan of Bone who had fled from the Makassarese- and Captain Jonker; the chief of the Ambonese. Both assisted in controlling a warforce far greater than the initial handful of Europeans. 

Attracting those crowds demanded traversing a long and winding road of diplomacy. Even though the martial instructions of Batavia were cast aside, the diplomatic plan of the Supreme government was partly enacted. The Batavian directions again positioned Speelman in the midst of Asian tact. Buton signed a treaty of alliance on the 31st of January 1667. Ternate, Tidore and Bacan were drawn in too. The VOC army equally attracted extra Buginese forces that deserted the Makassarese as soon as they learned about Arung Palakka’s presence.  

Speelman promptly requested for more freedom in contriving Makassar’s submission, which was granted by Batavia. During his visit to the Moluccas, he also took the liberty of shipping in additional troops that were officially assigned to their post in the eastern archipelago. At the same time, he managed to attract about 10.000 pejuangs through use of Sulawesian rivalries, promises of power shifts, the charisma of Palakka and the distribution of the spoils of war; especially ships and}

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306 Ibid.: 35-36.  
307 Ibid.: 36  
308 De Iongh, Het Krijgswezen: 68-69; De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 6; and Stapel, Speelman; 35.  
309 Other troops deserting to Palakka’s side were from Luwu, Mandar and Buma. See Raben, “Het Aziaatich Legioen.”: 191; and Stapel, Speelman: 38-41.
weapons. Despite these numbers, the war soon became one of attrition and unrest among the Buginese did need to be calmed down.310

A lot became at stake for settling the fights; for sickness, desertion and plain weariness started tearing the army apart. Speelman kept up pretence towards the Makassarese, as to fake military strength that was no longer there. Sultan Hassanudin went for the bait, but his initiation of negotiations was torpedoed by the Makassarese court. After resolving some internal disagreements, a peace treaty was finally signed in Bongaja on the 18th of November 1667. Among other things, it contained Sultan Hassanudin’s promise to retreat from Sumbawa, Buton and surrounding polities. Large celebrations on the Buginese and VOC side ensued, but Speelman retained his scepticism and kept the navy on guard for an extra month.311

And indeed another two years of fighting followed prior to a definitive peace settlement in 1669.312 The persistent resistance of the Makassarese and attritious warring against them likely evoked Speelman’s adage in the following years: “[the enemy] flees if one comes and returns if one retreats, so nothing is achieved. To strike at the heart of the matter, the enemy should not only be chased, but also pursued and crushed”.313 But these words stretch beyond Sulawesi; his efforts on Java are equally captured by these two phrases. 1677 saw the start of a campaign that would soon manifest the adage.

Picture 8 “Victory of the VOC over the kingdom of Macassar”: this well-known print is noticeable for its depiction of heroic Buginese fighting alongside the European soldiers. Both Speelman, on the top left, and Palakka, on the top right, are praised for their command.314

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310 These pejuangs were not just Buginese. See Stapel, Speelman: 37-38, 40, 42 and 44.
311 Sultan Hassanudin tried to appease the Boni and Palakka. See ibid.: 40-41 and 44-48.
312 De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 5.
313 The quote is translated from Dutch: “[de vijanden] vlughten, als men komt en retourneeren als men terughkeert, sulcx op die wijse nooyt gedaan wercq. De saeck moet in ’t herte aangetast en de vijandt niet alleen verdreven, maer vervolgt en ontsenuwt werden.” De longh, Het Krijgswezen: 123.
Again Speelman brought along a mixed arm force. Besides the 310 Europeans, he assigned four companies of Ambonese, Malays, Balinese and Mardijkers plus 600 sailors and the like to join the 400 troops already stationed in Japara.\textsuperscript{315} In the beginning, negotiations were led with both Amangkurat II and Trunajaya. The admiral hoped to meet Trunajaya “with good intentions”, but those turned sour soon enough. In April, the Sunan gained Speelman’s favour, war was declared on Trunajaya and all his followers were urged to again obey Amangkurat who will “forgive their sins”.\textsuperscript{316} Nagtegaal takes the agreement with the Mataram as a “personal initiative” of the VOC man, who looked for an “autonomous yet subservient ruler”. Trunajaya, in contrast, was suspected to easily take matters in his own hands.\textsuperscript{317}

In the admiral’s final report, mention is made of the failed attempt to draw Trunajaya to Japara for negotiations. Speelman was willing to give an “honourable pardon” plus rank and recognition. Yet, it soon “turned out, that all our efforts were to no avail and to confidence in him could be stabilized, [him] being like all criminals, full suspicion, disbelief and distrust, so that were finally forced to draw the sword from the sheath”. God immediately “blessed” this decision through the conquest of Surabaya.\textsuperscript{318} To which Trunajaya responded that the true favour of God could only manifest without the arbitrary intervention of the Company. He rebelled because of internal issues: dissatisfaction among the Mataram courtiers, inheritance of Madura, and courtly assassinations.\textsuperscript{319}

No matter whether the ties to Amangkurat were a personal initiative or not, Speelman certainly grew strongly disfavoured towards Trunajaya due to failed diplomacy. The reliability of Amangkurat II was doubted too, however. The VOC officer distrusted the degree to which the Sunan and his ‘minister’ Mandaraka were seriously involved with the war. Their lacking persistence led to a warning. The admiral would retreat his VOC forces if Amangkurat’s men “would show to have been born to serve Trunajaya as slaves” rather than fight against him. Military support was minimal. When the Dutchman sought to set up a campaign only the “the old, honourable” Martapura and Martalaja volunteered.\textsuperscript{320}

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{315} Ricklefs, War, Culture: 35.
\item\textsuperscript{316} Amangkurat I’s sickness inhibited him to meet with Speelman, so his son led the negotiations which eventually would concern his rule as overlord. In the other camp, Moor Piero met with Trunajaya to negotiate agreements. Speelman, “Letter X”: 7, idem., “Letter XII”: 77-78; idem., “Letter XVII (16 April, 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 115-116; idem., “Letter XVIII (30 April, 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 116-117; and idem., “Letter XIX (23 May 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 117-119.
\item\textsuperscript{317} Nagtegaal, Riding the Dutch: 23 and 25.
\item\textsuperscript{318} The quote is translated from: “een honorabel pardon , en daar en boven nog zoo veel meer eere staad, en aanzien, zonden verzongen, als hij eeniger maten met rede konde desidireeren, dan het is gebleeken, dat alle onze moeijten te vergeefs en in h em geen confidentie te stabilereen was, zijnde gelijk al tijd de misdadigers, vol argwaen, agterdagt en wantrouwen, zoo dat wij ten laatsten genoedtukt zijn gewerdig het swaart uijt de scheede te trekken, en onze proceduren op die wijze aan te leggen, die hoewel door God de Heere genadelijk gesegent met de veroveringe van Sourabaja”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 745.
\item\textsuperscript{319} This was stated years later on the second of December 1679; shortly before Trunajaya met his end. Couper, “Letter LXII”: 280-282.
\item\textsuperscript{320} The quote is translated from: “aandien zy lieten blyken, als geboren te wesen om Troenadjaja als slaven te dienen”. See C. Speelman, “Letter XLI (30 November 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 175-178.
\end{itemize}
Martapura was a stout supporter of the Sunan; the mere request to join Trunajaya’s forces led him to behead the harbingers. But even his commanders needed to be urged by Speelman not to return without putting up a fight for “he would shoot a bullet through their head” if they did. Tumenggung Martapura reconquered Kudus, Pati and Djuwana with 1500 men, but the lords were eventually led to a retreat. Having arrived back, more hostilities followed as Tumenggung Martapura was killed in courtly affairs. Mobilizing the Sunan’s forces thus required having an eye for courtly friendships; for the ones that truly cooperated could be rare.

Speelman’s campaign again immersed deeply into local strives. Much of this is due to his efforts to find stable political support from Javanese leaders. Selecting a leader for Surabaya, for instance, involved quite some considerations. Since the governor Wangsaprana had just passed away, the priesterworst of Giri, named Panembahan Agong, was next in line. Since he too was old and weak, contact was made with his representative; Dipati Mas Tumapel. Tumapel, subsequently, gained de facto power over the city. Unlike the Panembahan, he did not pursue high autonomy and accepted the Sunan’s wishes. Speelman’s political manoeuvres ensured a vassal state, not a competitor. Similar negotiations were conducted in Semarang, Demak and Pati.

An elaborate documentation was needed to choose proper representatives. Speelman asked Amangkurat II to pen down a “Nader Verclaringe” on the fall of the kraton and the court ‘historian’ Surawikrama to record his insights on the war and Javanese society. Even more perceptive is the account of the alliances by the admiral himself at the end of his mission; written in Japara and Semarang and completed on the 23th of March, 1678. Speelman was promoted to First Counsellor and Director-General of the Indies and had to leave Central Java with the onset of the monsoon. Since the war was still in full swing he wrote an elaborate Memorie to his assumed successor De Saint-Martin. In this manner, the new Dutch admiral would be able to approach the right men, keep hold of the needed resources and steer the war-machine that was as much Javanese as it was Dutch.

At the time of writing the Memorie, Speelman was suffering from grits in his kidney and bladder for about ten days. His illness made it difficult to abide to the exact wishes made for the

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326 De Graaf, Titels en Namen”: 64.
327 Speelman gained the position of “Eerste Raad en Directeur-Generaal van Indië”. As will be read in the next section, not De Saint-Martin but Hurdt became the new admiral. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 739–742.
Missive. Instead, he “was forced to use whatever was still in my memory and how I considered the matters at present”. And -as he stresses- if some of those matters are not described truthfully at least they are addressed as issues of concern. To his own surprise, the text “has become much larger and elaborate, than I had expected in the beginning”. But he does believe it to reflect “the most important current affairs”.329

Of all these affairs, starting the inland campaign is deemed most essential.330 The piece addresses De Saint-Martin as well as the Supreme Government. Both are offered a summary of the VOC’s potential for winning the war. Elaborations are sometimes avoided, however. He promises to give additional oral explanation on certain issues treated in his text.331 At other points, he refers to previously send letters containing details on events, problems and allies.332 Still, the Memorie remains a coherent overview of Speelman’s perception on the current circumstances and military potentials.

The writing style exposes an interest in foreign terms and expressions. Not only does he resort to French words and terms, he equally layers his texts with Javanese titles and concepts.333 Only at rare occasions are Dutch translations of noble titles attempted. This demonstrates recognition of the unique nature of Javanese entitlement, including the confusing name-changing for every new status. Speelman even tends to give both the venerable and common name for lords. And whenever he is unaware of the original name, he careful avoids mentioning it by referring to ethnicity or other personal features.334 His grasp of Javanese designations must have been enabled by his assistants.

Speelman relied much on servants assembling news on the road. As mentioned, he tends to direct his reader to their reports and letters for more elaborate information. The dependence on them is not surprising, for the admiral was stuck at the coast himself. They could thus operate as back land envoys. Especially translators were of much value. His Malaysian scribe Alem and Javanese writers Pousparaga and Pouradria are rewarded for their services. The “most highly regarded” Sergeant Couper is praised for his “Javanese language capabilities”. These men were rare, and would a similar interpreter be found, “he will be wisely employed and used”.335 Dealing with Javanese and

329 The quote derives from: “van ’t geene mij de geheugennisse suppediteerde en zoodanig, als mij de zake present voor ooge stinden”; and “veel groeter en wijtloper is gevallen, als ik inden beginnen gedagt hadde”; and “de zaken ten principalen voorgevallen”. Ibid.: 902-903.
330 Ibid.: 903.
331 Ibid.: 739, 769 and 786-787.
333 These terms are often basterdised to Dutch, as was common in the Dutch Republic.
334 Tumĕnggung Jalalana is, for instance, referred to as the “Balinese” prior to achieving his noble title from the Susuhunan. See ibid.: 796-797.
335 The quotes are translated from : “Javaanse taalkunde” and “die zal wel mogen aangenomen en gebruikt werden.”. The Scotsman Couper was the resident of Japara between 1671 and 1676, and led embassies to the Sunan. He has been stated to speak Javanese fluently and also appears to have been a crucial intermediary for the admirals. At the end of the war he even took command of the VOC force in East Java. See ibid.: 862-863. Also see De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 49.
Malaysian was crucial in his opinion; to gather the desired knowledge required crossing linguistic borders with care.

Such care is exhibited when choosing informants too. These agents came in all colours and shapes: Dutch, Scotts, Javanese, Muslims, royals, and merchants. The reports range from Jagapati’s account of the Madurese occupation of the kraton and the genealogy of the Sunans, meetings between Trunajaya and Moor Priero, to the assassination attempt on the Madurese warlord as observed by Captain Couper. All these conveyed important insights, but others failed doing so. Few issues led to condemnation as much as corrupted or partial intelligence. If VOC officers or merchants neglect to inform, the admiral tends to request their discharge. The comments on Javanese informants can be equally sceptical: “one can in general not trust Javanese messages, as our experience has taught us redundantly and dreadfully”.

This does not change the fact that two of his most knowledgeable contacts were Javanese: Tumĕnggung Surawikrama and Tumĕnggung Ingawanga. The first is described as a “secretary of state of the old and the new Susuhunan, who was famous among the Javanese as one of the major shrewd and specialized experts of their antiquity”. De Graaf suggests he might have been an editor for the famed Mataram court chronicle: the Babad Tanah Jawi. Ingawanga was a grand-Mantri and confidante of the Sunan, and served as a delegate to both Pangéran Puger and the Supreme Government. More Javanese agents offered valuable insights, however. In fact, several Javanese lords were invited to attend the VOC meetings in Japara, which demonstrates appreciation for their accounts.

Deputies of warlords or rulers were welcomed as well. The admiral confirms to the Supreme Government that he does keep a watchful eye to whatever delegate asks for his attention, but reveals the best salutes were reserved for those negotiating a submission or alliance. Most eager was the admiral about a possible abasement of Amangkurat II’s brother, Pangéran Puger. Both princes held legitimacy to the Sunan title. Favouring Amangkurat over Trunajaya still left the former’s siblings the possibility to claim sovereignty. The mandala, after all, allowed multiple monarchs to

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336 De Graaf, “Titels en Namen”: 64; and Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 782.
338 The quote is translated from: “gelijk men int geheel op geene Javaense tijdinge doen mag, zoo als ons d’ervaren theejd overvloedig en tot vervelens toe, geleert heeft”. Ibid.: 756
339 The quote comes from François Valentijn, it is roughly translated from: “Sura-Wikrama, secretaris van staat van de oude en nieuwe Susuhunan, welke, onder de Javenen beroemd was voor een der voornaamste vernuftelingen en kennis hunner oudheden”. De Graaf, “Titels en Namen”: 64.
340 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 91.
341 Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek : 862 and 890.
342 Ibid.: 844.
gather a significant backing. The admiral draws parallels with the Indian and “European kingdoms, where the kings have many brothers” and fears fraternal fights. 343

To avoid secession struggles, Amangkurat II’s inheritance is elaborated to show why he suffices better than his brothers. It is told how he arrived in Japara on the 15th of September bearing the title Susuhunan Amangkurat Sinnepattij Ingalaga; which he claimed to have obtained from his dying father. The new Sunan arrived with a mission, for his father had equally recommended him to search VOC support, because “there was no hope for restoration”. 344 Trunajaya had to be put to death. But, the new Sunan said he was powerless because “I cannot bring the people of Mataram to warring or fighting”; he asked VOC’s help to reconquer territory “so many may follow me” again. The Javanese lords no longer sent delegations “out of fear for Puger” and Trunajaya; leaving Speelman the only one to turn to. 345

Speelman was, however, aware of the rumours among “the people” that this prince had killed his own father. Since this would invalidate any claim to the throne, the admiral enquired further on these hearsays. Amangkurat II was asked to report on the fall of the Kraton via a Nadere Verclaringe or additional declaration. The resulting report shows knotty courtly ties to have slowly dislodged Amangkurat I. Only the crown prince stayed at his side; a self-proclaimed and uncontested loyalty. 346 Speelman takes this for granted and rejects the gossip as plotted by the “deceased untrustworthy Marta Saaija”. 347

The deceit and defeat at Gegodog is excused too. Amangkurat II is relatively open about it and his courtiers convey his father never gave hay to the accusations of the prince commencing rebellion. 348 But curbing the rebellion he can; Speelman hopes to control the uprise through establishing Amangkurat as recognized overlord. A captured warlord from Semarang, Astrajuda, provides Speelman with a detailed account of the kraton’s fall and stresses that many of the Mataramese courtiers brought to Kediri desired for “one of their legitimate rulers” descending from

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343 The quote derives from: “andersuijt te verwagten, als nog het dempen van ’t eene vier, het weder onfonken van een ander, gelijk d’ervarentheid in de Europische Coninkrijken, daar de coningen veel broeders hadden, en nog bij onze geheugenisse in het Hindostanse gebiet, ten oeverlode geleet, en aangewezen heeft”. See Ibid.: 877-878. Notice that Speelman was aware of the Aria Martalaja’s attempt to refrain the Sunan from contacting the Dutch. See Speelman, “Letter XXX”: 136-137.

344 Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 746-747.


347 The quote is translated from “den overleden trouwloze Marta Saaija”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 747.

348 Ibid.: 758-759.
Sultan Agung. Amangkurat II might well be it. To prove so, further attention is paid to the mothers and the background of the brothers.

Just two of the six princes are judged “lawful and legitimate” heirs; Amangkurat II and Pangéran Puger. In the end, Speelman claims the former to be the true successor. Nine courtiers witnessed Amangkurat I’s decree: it “is my oldest son on which I rely, and [to him] Mataram belongs; Niety Nagara, hand to him my precious gong Sibietsia, and my krits Belatar” as “to recognize this truthful, and legitimate successor of his father, in spite of Pangéran Puger”. In contrast, Puger is said to only have only one important Mantri following him. One cannot avoid noticing the opportunistic reasoning behind this; Speelman himself suggests the choice of Sunan is not as relevant as “the Company’s interests” of retrieving “tranquillity” and “eradicating” Kajoran and Trunajaya. Counting Mantris eases the choice of ruler, so attention can be quickly turned to chief concerns.

The intricacies of legitimacy to rule are side-issues. Speelman even wishes the fight between the brothers would cease “so to exterminate their shared enemy easier with the Company’s help.” Thereby they would sooner become independent, and the VOC would be able to halt its costly intervention much faster. The intrinsic difficulty of having two heirs fight alongside is hence disregarded and Puger’s suggestion to divide the realm into a two rejected. The false promises of Puger to attend Amangkurat II’s court are instead blamed on “mistrust and suspicion”, self-interest, “false hearsays” and ignorance on the VOC’s aim “to make them rule the realm themselves.” Even cooperation with Kajoran and Trunajaya is suspected. Nonetheless, “as much honour and respect
should be given [to him] as is convenient for princes of such royal birth”; for that will prove the Company’s good intentions.357

Puger himself claims to face famine and epidemics and can only send delegates to Japara. Speelman agrees to support such an embassy and selects a commander to guide it; the “most adroit and capable” Mandaraka. Mandaraka is assigned a hidden agenda, however. He is to gather an sizeable army as “to march towards Mataram with awe, so in case Pangéran Puger would submit to his brother, they can meet him with all due respects.”358 Although the embassy was never assembled, the intention of Speelman to draw an alliance between the two brothers shines through once more. The reported weak position and popularity of Amangkurat at the kraton would supposedly ease this aim.359

Conversely, Pangéran Puger is “generally perceived” as a “just as competent ruler” that “was by far not as guided by his lust that much”.360 Amangkurat II instead managed to offend “the bulk of the large and small people” by taking “wives and daughters for his own pleasure”. Speelman even needed to publically reproach him for this behaviour to satisfy his subjects; stating it would be a sin to God empowering a man acting like that. The Sunan was urged to change his ways.361 Javanese courtiers had similar objections. Indeed, at one point Amangkurat confessed having too few followers to “do anything significant”.362

According to Speelman, Amangkurat II subsequently swore “with very touching oaths, and tears in his eyes, that he would no longer disgrace himself with this [behaviour], and that he would even punish his commanders by death or other heavy penalties, in case they would act alike”. Rather than an actual confession, this anecdote appears a flight of fancy; serving to increase the Batavian support for Amangkurat II. The Sunan had persisted in pursuing romantic affairs and insisted “that the previous wars among the Javanese were generally fought for women or daughters,

357 The quote derives from: “zoo veel eere en respect te bewijzen als princen van zoo hooge geboorte convenieert ... te tonen dat wij haar welstand betragten zonder ander opzigt als om ons contract met haar en haar vader gemaakt, als trouwe bontgenoten naar te komen, en in een onverbrekelijke vrede en allantie tot afweeringe van alle vijande met haar te continueren, indien zij luiden van hare kant insgelijks alle pilgten van een eerlij bontgenootschap komen te presteeren en met haar broeder den Sousouhoenan in vrede blijven leven ...” Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 871-872.

358 The quote is roughly translated from: “om met ontzag voort naar de Mattaram te trekken, behouden dat ingevalle den Pangéran Pougar zijnen broeder quam te erkennen, zij hem als dan met alle respect rencontreeren”. In reverse, when Puger would not show any intentions to abasement, they could claim to have arranged an army for the purpose of showing respect not causing bloodshed. See ibid.: 766-767.


361 The quotes derives from: “is nogal het gemeen gevoelen ... dat Pangéran Pougar door het geheele land, bij groot en kleen, aangenamer, en veel meer getrokken zij, als den dezen dat hij ook ruijm zoo bequaam tot de regeeringe is ... maar op verre na zoo veel niet aan zijn wellust, als den dezen, zeer was overgegeven, zonder nogtans ijmans vrouwen off kinderen tot zijn vermaak naar hem te nemen, ’t welk de grootste en voornaemste oorzaake gezagt wert, te wezen, waarom deze zijn hoogheijds successieve, het meeste gros van groote, en kleen volk, tegens de borst zoude stoten”. Ibid.: 763-764. Earlier agitations arrived over Amangkurat II desire for retrieving a certain princess. See C. Speelman, “Letter XXXII” (6 October, 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 145-147; and idem., “Letter XXXIV”: 157-158.

362 The quotes is translated from: “jets van belang te komen uitregten”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 827.

363 The quote is translated from: “sweerende indien tijd met zeer diere eeden, en de tranen in zijn oogen, dat hij niet nader zig daar met niet bezoeten, maar dat hij ook zelfs zijne bevelhebbers, met de dood, off ander waarschayt straffen zoude, indien zij het hun onder wonden te doen.” Ibid.: 764.
and that [these desires] were hence not strange to this country, but familiar". 364 Speelman appears
to cover up the Sunan’s convictions to the Supreme Government. Amangkurat’s ‘oaths and tears’
suggests the reputed decency of Puger should not lead to preference for him, for in the future the
same can be expected of Amangkurat.365

Couper seems to have laid the seeds for favouring Amangkurat II. His embassy in March 1677
centred on Amangkurat II; then still titled Pangérán Adipati Anom. He was the one recommending
the visit to his brother Pangérán Martasana to open doors to the kraton. Martasana, however, warns
Couper for the possible difficulties in getting his three brothers to sign for cooperation with the VOC.
“One wants to become Susuhunan [i.e. Puger], the other is a womanizer [i.e. Amangkurat II], the
third just slacking about [i.e. Singasari]; leaving the realm’s matters to decay. For if they had acted
like sons of the Susuhunan, Raden Kajoran would, without doubt, not have turned his back” to
Mataram.366

Their “distrust towards each other” precluded efficient rule; as the ill and aging Sunan had
given authority to them. Yet, having arrived at Pangérán Adipati Anom’s court, Couper is assured full
support by the prince. The crown prince calls himself “the admiral’s own son” and stresses how his
brothers are jealous on the recognition he gains from the Dutch. It is he who receives the diplomatic
letter and contract; “opening it with his own hands”, asking the royal secretary to read it out and
“calling loudly: silentium, thee Mataramese lords listen with attention!” When the Sunan turns out
too sick to sign the contract, his son Adipati Anom does it for him; as such rectifying a contract that
would soon position himself as the ‘just prince’ and Sunan, at least as far as Speelman was
concerned.367

All these arguments for supporting a single legitimate leader, point into one direction: the
need to quickly initiate a hinterland march to constitute the Sunan’s power. Throughout the
Memorie, the campaign to Kediri keeps looming. All kinds of preparations are made; from
strengthening fortifications and depots, accumulating arms and cannons, to gathering intelligence

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364 The quote is translated from: ‘dat de voorgaande meeste oorlogen onder de Javanen al doorgaans om vrouwen of dochters was
toegecomen, en dat het Mitsdien hier te lande niets vreemts; maar familiar was’”. Speelman, “Letter XXXIV”: 157-158; idem., “Letter
XXXV”: 159-160; idem., “Letter XLI”: 179-180; and I. De Saint-Martin “Letter XLV (9 May, 1678).” In De Opkomst Van
: 208-209.

365 Notice that Speelman expresses his doubts on the confession, but subsequently demonstrates how his behavior has improved. Hence,
concluding that the oaths were legitimate. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 764-765.

366 The quotes derive from: “d’een wil Sousouhounan wesen, d’andere hout het met moye vrouwen ende den derde met een toebackjen,
latende de saacken van’t ryck verlooren gaan. Want indien se haar als des Sonsonhouans soons gethoont hadden, boytyn twyfyl was
Radingh Cadjohoran niet wegh geraackt, en dat ontstaet uyt bet misvertrouwen, dat sy op den anderen hebben, waarmede het soodanich

367 The quotes derive from: “want ick ben des admiraals eygen soon, hy mach van my in alles verseecert wesen, ick sal Pangorangan Pongar
beweegen om met my syn stemme tot des admiraals versoek te geven”; “want myn broeders zyn jaloers, dat ick bij de Hollanders in
meerder aansien zoude wesen als syluyden”; “Pangorangan Adypatty, die den brieft en contract oock overnam, doende de brieft’ met
eygener handen open”; and “overluydt geroepen zynde. silentium, ghy Mattaramse grooten hoort toe met aandacht!” . Couper is the one
ending up reading out the contract, as he could speak Javanese. See ibid.: 98-113.
and tempting warriors. As Speelman stresses in the first pages, the opponents were slowly forced into retreat. The enemy was “pushed back to the land of Djepan” by “the might of some of our army men” and the assistance of Javanese troops charged by Adipati Martapura and Martalaja. Thanks to “the help of God” it is evident how “mighty the Company’s weapon has become on this island”.

The situation was “favourable for the upcoming campaign”, and no further time should be wasted “lying still”. While putting these words on paper, Speelman must have realized the power shifts in Batavia would make such hinterland campaign very feasible indeed. Up till that point, he had received autonomy of the Susuhunan to act as he wished within Mataram. No similar sovereignty was granted by the governor-general. The new leadership of Van Goens would do justice to his agreements with the Sunan; granting access inlands. In his own words, the Mataramese contracts were signed with “the intention to safe his majesty from the disorder striking his realm ... to the fullest extremity”. To blame were “Trunajaya... and his followers under Raden Kajoran” and the “roaming Makassarese under Karaëng Galesong”. Freedom to enter the back lands would finally bring back order.

He had already brought the Pasisir “to again obey the Susuhunan”; capturing the coastal towns “under the Company’s protection” or planting VOC flags to deter opponents. Thereby they “would have contributed to whatever made the recovery of calmness practicable and applicable”. Yet, stabilizing peace further required stepping foot on the back land. Trunajaya hid in Kediri, where Speelman had been unable “to visit” him due to “the strict prohibition of the Supreme Government”, causing the admiral “very sincere discontent”. In the meantime, Trunajaya’s “deceitful father in law, masked under priestly sanctity, played his part and distracted the common population through devilishly hymned false prophecies”. Mataram had been

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368 For the enforcement of forts see: Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 794, 827-832, 837-839, 843, 863-864, 871, 879-880, 882-883, 893, and 902. New depots were built too.

369 The quote derives from: “dat alles met Godes hulpe naar alle apparentie zig naar wensche vlijen, en schikken, zoude, hebbende de ervarenheid ons tot nu toe overvloedig geseert hoe onsaeglijk ’s Compagnies wapen op dit eijland gewerden zijn”. Inid.: 742. Speelman had been stressing this since the conquest of Surabaya, see Speelman, “Letter XIX”: 117-119.

370 The quotes are derived from: “dog dat ook sedert de veranderinge op Sourabaja en hier om herre met de hulpe Godes met alleene weder geredresseert, maar dat ook zelfs den vijand hier bij, en omtrent doorgebroken, door t’ontsag van weijnige onze militeijren, zonder eenige bijzondere resistentie te derven bieden, of ergens stant te houden, zoo verre zijn gedreven gewerden tot in t’land van Dsjepan toe, t’gunt zij al meede verliesen en aan d’onne ten besten gaven zulke de Javaanse troepen van zijn hoogste onder Adepattijs Marta Poura en Marta Lajia geaardisteert”; “die brave gedesidererde situatie, zoo favorabel voor ’t aanstaande companion door de Javaanse troopen”; and “in plaats van stillegen”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 738, 742, 763, 790 and 837-839.

371 Two contracts determining a taxative payback as well as increased autonomy of Batavia show an unusual recognition of autonomy that might not have been granted to other neighbouring realms. The VOC was even allowed to control the foreign Asian groups within their territories. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 16-17.


374 The quote is derived from “den Sousouhounan weder hebben doen erkennen, verklarende met verzegelde acten en het uijt deelen van prince vlaggens, dat wij die plaatsen namen onder Compagnies bescherminge, ten minsten, tot zoo lange wij vanwegens de Compagnie alles zouden hebben bijgebragt wat to herstellinge van de ruste particulie en applicabel konde wezen”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 744-745.
sacked and “the old lord, with his four feminized sons” had cowardly fled. A stitch in time had to be made before disorder would rule all. 375

The fastest and easiest way to reap the benefits of these contracts would be a submission of Trunajaya and Kajoran. Kajoran could “be brought back to friendship and taken as a noted minister of the state”. Trunajaya could become a governor of Madura, if he acts properly. Speelman hopes for this, but at the same time envisions the inevitability of conquest. 376 To muster the required manpower, the admiral evaluates the pejuang troops that are likely to participate or are already under command. The teaming of Puger and Amangkurat II is one aspect of this query. But local leaders and war-bands gain equal attention. 377

In the overview he gives of the current army, four categories are applied: European (566 soldiers), Ambonese (138 soldiers), Mardijkers (81 soldiers), and Makassarese (67 soldiers). Smaller war-bands are found among them: the Makassarese are commanded by three and the Ambonese by two lords. All these sections are stationed separately and appear to have formed rather independent war-bands. Hardly any details are given on these groups, however. 378 It almost appears the particularities of the warriors no longer matter when they are already drawn into the warforce. This is different for the potential allies.

Other than his successor Hurdt, Speelman fully relied on pejuang troops for hinterland battles; for only they could enter the back lands with large groups and for an extended period. 379 The concern with Sulawesi and Javanese warriors is thus not unexpected. Several reports were written on them. Couper’s account, for example, unveiled the fraternization within Galesong’s army and demonstrated the need to make the Makassarese submit to the Company. It suggests different war-bands started to drift apart. The group “is about 2.000 men strong, but divided by so many leaders of equal quality, nobility and origin, that they as such assert to be alike [and] that Karaëng Galesong … do[es] not hold much authority over them, and the internal discords are not small”. Speelman plans to cause a split between these troops by sending two- to four-hundred of Raja

375 The quote is derived from “en al waar wij hem hem tot mijn bijzonder, en zeer hartelijk leetwezen, door hey expres en stricte verbod van de Hooge Regeeringe niet hebben mogen gaan bezoeken, en heeft hij derhalven binnen ‘s lands de handen ruijm gehouden, om ten principalen door toe doen van zijnen listigen schoonvader, onder schijn van een priesterterlijke heijligheijd, zijn personage te speelen en het gemeene volk door een parthije duijvelsche gesingen valsche prophecijen van hare schuldige gehoorsaamheid af te leijden, zoo verre dat denouden laten vorst, en zijne vier verwijfde zoonen, eijnteling haar niet langer in de Mataram dervende vertrouwen.” Ibid.: 746.


377 Ibid.: 769-770.

378 On Semarang are stationed: Karra Pappas leading 12 Makassarese soldiers and one sergeant, two Ambonese Sergeants leading 40 Ambonese and Kambral heading a group of 19 mixed indigenous men. The latter mixed groups were also described as Mardijkers; but it is not clear whether they had anything to do with Batavia. ‘Mardijkers’ was after all a very ambiguous moniker. In the fields: the Makassarese lieutenant Karremou Toulij charging three sergeants and 41 soldiers, 96 Ambonese under Captain Abraham Tieko, eight Makassarese soldiers of Care Montoulijs. See ibid.: 834 and 836-837.

379 Hence Speelman’s request to the Sunan for men after the fall of Surabaya. See E. van der Schuer, “Letter XX (4 June, 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 119.
Palakka’s “best men” which ought to be done “with care”, because “no opportunity should be given for one part of [Palakka’s] group to desert to Trunajaya”.380

A comparable plan was made for convincing the Madurese to submit to Amangkurat. This time the Buginese themselves proposed going to Madura “to deprive Trunajaya of all support that he could still aspire from those lands”. The admiral had to admit that “the project is in fact not ill conceived”. But care needed to be taken to select a trustworthy warlord to avoid one that “will act to his own benefits, and would attempt to make himself master, which is not an unlikely event, and which will grant them more prosperous and arable lands than can be found on the entire Javanese island”. Yet, with the proper warlords and VOC surveillance - he reckons - this plot might convince locals to join the marching army.381

Next to attracting new masses, local rulers were also expected to hold on to their current ones. Speelman recommends local leaders to “firmly win over the favour of the villages, at least those approximate [to their power centres], so rebels won’t dare to invade or oppose them”.382 The population surrounding the cities was to be used for guarding duties too; the Chinese and Javanese living near Semarang were, for example, insisted to flee inside the city and not the forests whenever enemy forces approached. In that matter, they could be equipped with arms if the need arrived. Local protection was thus relied on; both in and outside city walls. Several Javanese nobles were assigned to guard the fields with their own followers and minimal European backing.383 At the same time, Speelman realizes that for some villages “our help might be as small as anything, [but it] seems to be their only salvage”.384

Just as was the case for winning over new warriors, protecting villages was done better by some leaders than others. If successful, Javanese warlords and rulers are highly praised and usually earn royal designations in consequence.385 Aria Urawan stands out particularly; both Couper and

380 The quotes derive from: “bestaan de hare presente sterkte naar dat Glissons broeder Dain Memang met de zijne van ’t eijland Cagginjan bij den hoop gekomen was, volgens de laatste tijdinge, door Sergeant Couper daar van gerapporteert zoo men zegt in ontertwe twee duisent koppen, dog verdeelt onder zoo veel hoofden van gelijke qualiteit, geslagt en akomst, en die der halven, meijnen d’een zoo wel als d’ander te wezen, dat Craijn Glisson en zijne naaste Dain Masserrij, neve van Niontemorano, daar over zoo groot gezag nog autoriteit niet zeer geschikt, en de onderlinge disordre niet kleen is”; and “want U Edele zelfs genoegsaam weeten dat daar door geen oorzaake zoude mogen gegeven warden, om een partijje van de zelve tot Troenadjaaija te doen overgaan”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 790-791. Speelman first expressed this plan on the 10th of March, 1677. See Speelman, “Letter XII”: 78.
381 The quotes are translated from: “om Troenadjaaija te ontzetten alle hulpe die hij zig van die kant nog mogte imagineren, ’t project en is in effect van zoo quaden aanzien niet”; and “daar in naar eijgen voordeel zoeken, en tragten zouden, voor haar zelven meester daarvan te werden, ’t welk voor hun gansche geen onmoogelijke zaak is, en waar met zij dan nog gelukkiger en vrugtbaarder akker zouden bezitten als op ’t geheele eijland Java te vinden zij...”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 791-793. Another reason is to free VOC prisoners kept by the Madurese after a shipwreck, see ibid.: 793.
382 Descriptions of trade posts or villages often have the tendency to urge proper defences against roaming rebels. The quote is translated from: “de dorpen met een sterke hand, ten minsten de gene die naast bij gelegen zijn, onder haar devote te stellen, omdat wij gelooften dat de Maccassaren hun evenwel openvolent daar tegen niet en zouden durven stellen, nogen in oppositie komen”. Ibid.: 794, 800 and 806-807.
383 Only the most basic information on the troops is given: leaderships, number and provincial origin. However, mention is made of slight competition between the units. Ibid.: 873-874, 878-879, and 896-897.
384 The quote is translated from: “dat onze hulpe zoo kleen alsoe ook wezen mag, haren eenigsten toeverlaat schijnt te wezen”. Ibid.: 809.
Speelman acclaim his dedication. This “modest” and “brave” Surabayan governor offered to conquer Kediri, if about two-hundred VOC soldiers or the Ambonese/Ternaten legion would assist him for two weeks. Furthermore, he would be able to maintain the city and its surroundings “with the followers he was convinced to gain there”. He took this as a safe bet for the Kedirians were still angry about the murder of their former lord and the assignation of his wives to others. But his brother had escaped to Giri and could attract “his followers in Kediri ... that he surely still had”.  

Urawan requested governorship over the area in return. The Surabayan Ombols (county regents) similarly recommended installing him as city administrator. The Sunan equally tried to “pull him in”. Urawan’s popularity thus stretched beyond the VOC. The potential of the fervent warlord was recognized by all. His initiative never lifted off, however, since -as Speelman stresses- no VOC soldiers could enter the backcountry due to Batavian policy. Instead, he is offered governorship over Sidaijo “where he is much better regarded and appreciated by the population” as the current ruler.  

Comparable endeavours were suggested by other local rulers. But these were not always as reliable. The governor of Wiera Saba, for example, claimed he only needed about 30 men support to retake his land. But Speelman notices that he had “joined the Makassarse” immediately after Trunajaya has conquered his territory. Even though Wiera Saba assumed Galesong to be warring under the Sunan’s banner, the admiral still thinks him a traitor. Other rulers do formally abide to the Sunan but do not mobilize their population. When Kjai Derma Souda and Aria Blater -lords ‘eastwards of Surabay’- are asked to “appear from their mountains and hiding places and arm and marshal their people”, none such efforts are made; “so that their loyalty cannot be honoured”.  

The lords residing in Mataram with Pangéran Puger claim similar recognition without living up to it. And the Javanese lord that deserted the post Siepan, Martalaja, simply refuses to collect men to retake it; rather requesting to be assigned a new territory. Similarly, the ruler of Balora quietly fled his town while pretending he had defended it well. Prince Martasana even faked alliance, while he “detracted the loyalty to the Susuhunan from the people on Wates with evil intentions”; making it necessary to reconquer the post.

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386 The quote is translated from: “maar ook met den aanhang, die hij vast stelde te zullen krijgen”. Ibid.: 795.
387 The quotes are translated from: “weder bij sig te trekken” and “waar in hij bij het volk veel beter gezien en bemint is”. Ibid.: 795-796. See also Speelman, “Letter XXXIV”: 156.
388 This happens even when traditions of handing out men exist; see for instance the complaints on Limbraauwa. See Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 756, 776 and 883-884.
389 The quotes are translated from: “uijt hare bergen en schuijlhoeken te voorschijn te doen komen en haar volk in wapens op de been te brengen” and “zoo dat ook van hare getrouwehijjd niet te roemen valt”. Ibid.: 798-799.
390 This is demonstrated to Speelman by Pugers’ ‘deceipftul’ occupation of the kraton and informants stating the insincerity of the rulers in the old court. See ibid.:760-763, 768.
391 The Sunan forgave him these pretensions, possibly showing an expected confession of bravery even when it did not occur, or otherwise a form of nepotism. See ibid.: 807-808 and 865-870.
All of them appeared to be playing a diplomatic game in deceit of the VOC. For each and every case, Speelman expresses his frustration. That his doubts were justified is proven by the two-day showdown with which Martalaja sealed his disobedience. After his wishes were not fulfilled, he hid in a removed *kampung* as an act of resistance and needed to be hunted down. In the battle that followed, not only he himself, but equally the well-respected Martapura and Wangsa Diepa lost their lives. The lament over the latter offers a shining contrast to the condemnation of Laja for whose cut-off head a “high price was paid”.  

More forgiveness is shown to the Surabayan Ombols that had temporarily associated with Trunajaya or the Makassarese but later travelled to Japara to submit to the Sunan. They gained new noble titles as a reward. All their backgrounds and personalities are described to showcase their alliance. Speelman recommends gratifying them “so them all ...., as well as their community, will be indebted and tied to the Company through well-doings and riches and unable to persist without those and her fatherly care”. The admiral even accepted Amangkurat selecting rulers that were known “as very disfavoured towards the Company”. None of them, after all, could bite the hand that feeds; a hand ultimately belonging to the VOC.

For the campaign lying ahead, Speelman had plans to ensure comparable compliance from new allies. Traversing the right roads was one of them. It was necessary to find out how the land lies to gain support. The Supreme Government is alerted on the lacking geographical knowledge on “provinces, cities, villages etc.” The hinterlands and coastal peripheries thus need to be mapped out. Few Javanese have acquired the knowledge to do so; therefore Speelman suggests their first mate Cornelis Coops to expand an earlier map of the shipper Corter.

Routes for the campaign were picked; three trails are suggested for three different army sections consisting out of men with varied ethnic backgrounds. Unlike the broad categorizations of Hurdt’s armed force, Speelman refers to certain regions where warriors can be obtained. The routes of the campaign seem tailored to collect these specific regional forces. The admiral is

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392 This ‘traitor’ did appear to enjoy Amangkurat’s protection, to the chagrin of Speelman. Yet, the admiral already believed him to “desert” whenever he will be capable to before his rebellion. Later on, the VOC man would regret would come to regret the initial trust he had gave to him. See ibid.: 800-805.
393 For the letter accounting on them see C. Speelman, “Letter XXV (1 August, 1677).”: 126-130.
394 The quote is taken from: “‘want dezelve alle zonder onderscheijt, zoo wel als de heele gemeente, door weldaden ten overvloede aan de Compagnie verpligt, ende verbonden zijn, en ook nog eerst zonder dezelve, en haar vaderlijke voorzorge, niet en zouden komen bestaan.” Speelman, *Inscriptie Eedele Vertrek*: 797-798 and 860-861.
395 Speelman mentions how “ zoude uijt het volk van Coudoes Damacq, Pattij, Jawana, Rimbang, Lassem en de plaatsen daar om her, het derde esquandre zoude bestaan, uijt het volk van Sourabaja, Griesik, Gierij, Zidaayo, en eenige uijt het Kindanse gebergte om daar mede over Wiera Saba, of een ander bequamer weg, naar de generale rendevous, daar men dezelve komt vast te stellen, te avanceeren.” Ibid.: 769 and 882-883. The list of villages controlled in Banjukunung on folio 882-883 might be noted down with similar intentions. For earlier planned routes see Speelman, “Letter XXI”: 121-122; and idem., “Letter XXIII”: 123-125. Here again, submission or scaring away Madurese support in towns and regions was aimed for.
therefore very displeased when one of the posts that was part of his scheduled march, Siepan, is suddenly abandoned without any permission of him or the Sunan.397

Seasonal scheduling is also addressed; for monsoons can change paths into swamps. “His highness as well as his principal ministers” declare to Speelman that they cannot muster their forces before the end of May or the start of June due to heavy rainfall and the harvest season. Still, the admiral urges that “the Company and the Susuhunan are determined to have the bulk of our troops moved beyond Kudus ... before the end of April, as to submit those areas, stop the invasion of thugs and poachers, and ensure the [acquirement] of the harvest.”398 Those troops, be it European or pejuang, required training and provision

Speelman makes several requests to the Supreme Government to ensure the army is well prepared.399 Special care is taken to ready the “foreigners” -Chinese, Balinese, Arabians etc.- in Javanese port towns, since they will require much “guidance”. The Javanese do “not have the power, nor the skills to bring those people to proper obedience and under discipline”. Without such control, they will bother everyone -“friend or enemy”- with “robbing, stealing, burning and plunder”.400 Were there to develop difficulties between the Javanese and the foreigners, the Sunan was to settle those. Amangkurat was equally held responsible for delivering carriers and grooms, who were demanded separately from the warriors.401

Indigenous manpower thus served two purposes to the VOC: fighting and transporting. Amassing the former kind tended to involve much more diplomacy and consequently takes up much more attention within Speelman’s report. The Javanese commander Mandarak a suggests 20,000 armed forced and between 600 till 1,800 horses can be mustered at the coastal towns between Tegal and Surabaya. Speelman, however, trusts his own judgement better, and instead counts on 2,000 to 2,500 men, to be collected by Adipati Martumappel. To the admiral’s opinion, destruction of the region between Tuban and Demak makes it impossible to collect manpower there. Simultaneously,

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397 This appears so because the suggested routes tend to take a detour towards these regions. Notice that the Madurese reconquest of Surabaya initially led to a planned campaign through Mataram (Couper would retake it before this Missive was written, but after the first ideas for a campaign were discussed), but that this campaign was adjusted to gathering troops in that area. See Speelman, *Inscriptie Edele Vertrek*: 769-770, 773, and 800-806; and idem., “Letter XLII”: 184.

398 Quote derives from: “de Compagnie ende dde Sousouhounan ernst gaat werden het gros van onze troepen met het eijnde van April naar buijten tot in Coedoes, en naar gelegentheid ook verder tot in Grobagan te voeren, om die landstreek voor eerste tot beter devotie te verpligen, d'invasie der loopers en stroopers te doen ophouden en ‘t gezaij op ‘t veld dat dan rijc en ontrent rijp zal zijn, allent halven te verzeekeren”. Speelman, *Inscriptie Edele Vertrek*: 770-771

399 This included a recommendation to make “our armed forces” capable of “using the horses of this land”. Mandaraka was to collect six to seven hundred of them. Bans on the private consumption of arak were also suggested to avoid disorder; instead the army could provide them with a daily small amount of it. See ibid.: 771-772, 825-826 and 840-841.

400 The quotes are translated from: “vreemdelingen”; “begeleidings”; “de Javanen, nog de magt, nog de bequaamheijt hebben, om dat volk onder behoorlijke devitue en discipline te houde n”; “‘t zij vrunt of vijand”; and “met roven, steelen, branden, en plunderen”. Ibid.: 820.

401 The seal of the Sunan was referred to when asking obedience from Javanese warriors, in combination with the threat of death when defying orders. Ibid.: 773, 809 and 841.
the VOC had “lost many benefits” in the last few months due to “the risen rebellion that has been so successful”.402

Interestingly, the admiral refers to the march to Kudus conducted some months earlier to showcase how alliances could be attracted and lost. Within the “short period” of one week, their “Javanese force grew to no fewer than 6,000 heads”. Similarly the march of “the aged Martapura and other chiefs, who were assisted by so few of our men” “multiplied” in force too. This convinces him “that the assistance of Javanese will not disappoint”. Yet, one “requisite” is the presence of the Sunan, so “the suspicious and superstitious people see, and as such believe …, that the Company is not making such great costs and efforts for themselves but for his resumption”.403

Most of these men were not ready for combat. Speelman reckons Javanese war-bands consist out of few actual warriors; less than twenty percent usually. The fighters, who initiate the battles, wear “one or two krisses and a pike… the rest, and the bulk, are carriers, some equipped with a kris or a knife, or often a parrying dagger”.404 While “the provinces tax one on every one [to eight] thousand men, to serve the lord when the need arrives … from that number no more than 100 out of 1,000 men are counted as armed soldiers”. Sometimes, warlords will even “provide them with more guns, to feign larger numbers”. This tendency can be catastrophic, as the admiral point out by recalling Amangkurat II’s defeat at Grobogan.405

The “disastrous” army of 150,000 had no more than 15,000 armed warriors. “At the first rumour of approaching enemies”, they were all “brought into confusion and put to flight” because “of the large number of carriers and attachments” and “the lacking experience of the commanders”. The “long lasting peace in this realm [made] all military discipline unusual”. “In the previous old times” -Speelman must have been told by the court-historian Surawikrama- “the cluster of carriers were put two miles back whenever a fight or encounter lay ahead, to avoid such confusion”. Luckily, neither allies nor enemies manage to bring such order to their forces today; to the competitive advantage of VOC interventions.406

402 The quote are translated from “veel avantagie verloren” and “de opgerese rebellie die zoo voorspoedig is geweest”. Ibid.: 774-775.
403 The quotes derive from: “zijn U Edele zoo wel als ik van gevoelens dat het aanden bijval van Javanen niet gebreken zal, en dat de Compagnie met het voorselijke vermogen al hier, magt genoeg op de been zal hebben”; and “op dat wantrouwende , en bijgelovige volk te sien, en soo doende te beter geloven tegen, dat de Compagnie niet voor haar zelve maar tot zijn herstellinge zoo groote kosten, en arbeid doet.” Ibid.: 775.
404 ‘Parrying dagger’ probably refers to less luxurious krisses
405 The quote are translated from: “het rampsalige leger”; “op het eerste gerugt, van vijanden zonder datze nog ijemant sagen”; “in confusie en aan’t vlugten gebragt wierden”; “door het groote getal dragers en bijloopers”; “door puer gebrek van ervarenheijd der bevelhebbers”; “door de lang beleefde ruste in dit rijk, alle oorlogs discipline ongewoon” and “in de oude voorgaende tijden, te practisereen dat tros dragers, wanneer eeing gevegt en rencontre voorhanden was, ten minsten een of twee mijl agteruijt gelaten wierden, om dergelijke confucie te voorkomen”. Ibid.: 876-877.
Even though some assumptions on the preserved discipline are made, the ways in which Trunajaya and Kajoran gather their men remains obscure to Speelman. Yet, he reports how the half-brother of Kajoran, Kabaijang, suddenly appeared in Japara and gave several insights into the hostile war-bands. From him came to “most certain and probable” account on the enemy received thus far. Besides information on fortifications and armouries, it contains the number, origin, and leadership of the warriors in Kediri.\footnote{Ibid.: 779-780.}

On Trunajaya, Kabaijang states that “he was beloved among the general people, because he was inspiring to them” and was able to keep prices low.\footnote{The quote is roughly translated from: “bij dat geheele volk niet onbemint te wezen, omdat hij over deselve wildadig was”. Ibid.: 780} The charm of the Madurese warlord equally pulled in several courtiers from Mataram, who were seen walking around in Kediri. Marriage and entitlements tended to be used to tie in these nobles. As Speelman concludes: the warlords “credit and status will improve over time” while, at the same time, he is enjoying life and alcohol in his new headquarter.\footnote{Ibid.: 781-782.} Earlier accounts on the warlord were exaggerated here.

The VOC delegate Moor Piero visited Trunajaya in a Surabayan “little bamboo house” half a year earlier. He reported on the warlord’s inability to bring tribute to the Sunan and his clash with the Makassarese. Both clues of stubbornness and cruelty prevail. Trunajaya kept the embassy waiting for many days, and is offended by the demanding VOC letter that does not pay due respect to ‘a ruler descending from Majapahit kings’. The warlords explains how he cannot leave “since I have no-one to whom I can trust my realm to, at which moment ... two cut-off Makassarese heads were brought in, which [Trunajaya] beheld, saying: these heads belong to folk, whom I provided and cared for, because they are people of my brother, still since they resisted and dishonestly my aids, I was forced to treat them in this manner”.\footnote{The quotes are translated from: “bamboes huysje”; and “mynen broeder onbiet my by hem te comen, en hoe kan ick by myn broeder gaan, daar ick niemant hebbe aen wie ick myne negryen toevertrouwen kan; onder welcke samenspraak aildaar in hunne tegenwoordicheyt twee afgekappte Macassaerse hoofden gebracht wierden, welcke de Panembaan aenschouwende, seyde by: dit syn hoofden van volckeren, die ick onderhout gegeven en goed gedaen hebbe, omdat sy volckeren van mynen broeder zyn, doch sy solcx verwerpende en myne weldaden met de voeten tredende, ben ick genootsaackt gewerden haar soo te laeten onthaelen.” Moor Piero, “Letter XIV”: 83-93.} One of Trunajaya’s former lords illustrates his vicious nature further. Trunajaya had murdered his stepson and molested his grandchild. His daughter -wife and mother of both victims- speaks to Speelman for revenge. The Admiral is struck by the ‘salient hatred’ reflected in “her eyes when his name is mentioned”.\footnote{The quote derives from: “men dien haat uit hare oogen, wanneer se synen naem noemt, merckelyk kan sien”. Speelman, “Letter XXI”: 122.}

Religious fervour was added to the list when Couper met the warlord near Surabaya two months later. The VOC man ensured the admiral “would offer him so many benefits as justice and capability could allow” in case he would recognize the Sunan as “his just lord and sovereign” and return to Madura. Trunajaya would consider leaving Java, but refuses to recognize a lord who is not
entitled Sultan by Mecca. With a touch of irony, Couper pens down “similar discourses” followed “while three to four glasses of brandy were consumed”. The warlord’s religious claims were demeaned.\textsuperscript{412} No surprise then, that both his title of Panembahan and Sultan are ridiculed and the prophecies of praise objected. He might have been foretold to found a wealthy empire in Kediri, but has no personal control over Mataram, did not attract a lot of people to Kediri and cannot keep the Makassarese in check.\textsuperscript{413}

In his final report, Speelman collects bad impressions of his delegates to denounce Trunajaya’s trustworthiness in support of a hinterland campaign instead of lingering negotiations. Regret is expressed on the failed assassination attempts conducted thusfar by insiders, for the death of the warlord would have made the campaign “very easy”.\textsuperscript{414} With the leader alive, Amangkurat II fears the people on Madura and in Kediri would “without doubts” allow him “to be an independent lord, without giving [the Sunan] recognition.”\textsuperscript{415} The very attempts on his life brought out the worst of Trunajaya. The admiral’s tells how he krissed three of his concubines and all his six till twenty-three servants and exiled his family near the Southern Sea of Java.\textsuperscript{416}

Luckily, an attack on Kediri will most likely result in the capture of the warlord and his treasures. The Sunan promises to use these spoils of war to pay off his war-debts to the VOC. Speelman figures this will encourage his troops “with the hope of bringing the loot home.”\textsuperscript{417} Even if Trunajaya manages to flee again, benefits will be gained. He will never be able to take the bulk of the treasury and, more importantly, will have to leave his esteem behind too. Speelman predicts that due to such cowardness “his primary power will lose its appeal, nor [will he] retain any noticeable group of followers”. Either way, “bravery” and ‘God’s blessing’ will thus surely ‘crown’ the campaign with a “successful end”.\textsuperscript{418}

\textsuperscript{412} The quotes derive from: “hem zoooveel gunst zou betoonen, als de regtmatigheid en billykheid kon toelaten”; and “diergelyke discoursen meer, onder welken een glaasje brandewyn drie a vier weder gedronken werd”. His drunken talk is suggested to lead to a false promise to meet Speelman that afternoon. But the warlord does not show up; keeping the admiral standing in the cold. See Speelman, “Letter XIX”: 118-119.


\textsuperscript{414} On the execution he states: “Een groot jammer; en waarlijk te beklagen zijnde dat de aanslagen door zijn Compangeran Sampan, tegens zijn leven gemaakt telkens of het tipje van de executie mislukt waren”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 782-783.

\textsuperscript{415} The quote is derived from: “indien gevalle het gantsche eijland Madura, en al het volk dat van het zelve of Caderij waren zonder twijfvel, hun bij hem zouden hebben gevoegt, en schijnt zijn hoogheijd onfeijlbaar vast, en zeker te stellen, dat hij hem al te getrouw  is om zig van hem ‘t ontrekken, en een heer op zijn zelven te wezen, zonder hem te willen erkennen”. Ibid.: 782-783

\textsuperscript{416} The death of his son and the concubinage of his daughter is mentioned too. Ibid.: 782.

\textsuperscript{417} Speelman is slightly skeptical about the offer of the Sunan: “‘t gunt wel schijnt de huijt te willen verkoopen, eer de beer gevangen is”. The quote is translated from: “op hope van goede buijt te maken”. Ibid.: 783-784.

\textsuperscript{418} The quote derives from: “dat hij zig door deze tweede vlugt van zijn voorneemste kragt zoude komen t’ onzenuwen, nog eenige bijzonderen aanhank blijven behouwden, vermits buijten twijfvel dan inzonderheid het gemeene volk alle ontzag en vreese zouden verliesen, zullende dan onzes eragtens zijn retraicte naar Madoura zoeken te maken, alwaar hij ook niet buijten de wereit, en wel te vinden zal zijn”; and “men verkrijgt geen groote dingen zonder dapperheijd en arbeijd, en mag men vrijelijk geloooven, zoo God de Heere s’Compagnies wapenen genadelij belieft te zeegenen, en zulke dit onderhandse werk, met een voorspoedig victorieus eijnde te kronen, dat de Compagnie daar bij niet weijnig zal komen te gewinnen”. Ibid.: 784-785.
The Makassarese war-bands are a second concern. Although Speelman does not want to elaborate too much on them, regret is expressed on the failed attempt to work together.\(^{419}\) The Makassarese “acknowledge to be the Company’s subjects, and happily want to abide to its orders”, but “requested not to be persuaded to leave from Java to Makassar... before taking revenge on Trunajaya.” Speelman found the Sulawesians in the middle of a major conflict with the Madurese. Trunajaya had even kidnapped and likely poisoned Galesong’s wife and child, who were his own daughter and grandchild.\(^{420}\)

But to the admiral these conditions are just excuses. Their promises of good behaviour “are not sincere”; even though they ceased bothering the VOC, plunder follows wherever “they reach or travel to” and inconsiderate on whether their victims belong to the Madurese or Amangkurat.\(^ {421}\) The warlord Galesong corresponded that “this happens without his awareness” and promises to punish the perpetrators.\(^ {422}\) Moreover, surveillance is very difficult due to his “small troop units ... who are always ready to drive off on their horses” and “who do not only need to take care of themselves, but also of their wives and children who were there with them”.\(^ {423}\)

These confessions, however, strike Speelman as “untruthful”. Reports of Sergeant Couper, the translator Annaihoda Subu and the informant Moor Husseijn all demonstrate “that there is no other aim among this people, as to settle on this island...”. The admiral prefers to see the Makassarese as unwanted conquerors instead of a decentralized warforce, thereby disregarding the contrasting army structures of both parties.\(^ {424}\) Speelman was certainly aware of the divergent warlords commanding the Makassarese, but he nonetheless insisted on their unity.\(^ {425}\) It appears Speelman still treats them as the single army of Sultan Hassanudin faced a decade earlier. He complains about their half-

\(^{419}\) He does discuss the informant send out to enquire on them. Ibid.: 785.

\(^{420}\) Ibid.: 786-787; and Speelman, “Letter XXX”: 143-144.

\(^ {421}\) The quote is taken from: “het geheele land dat zij maar bereijken en bereijsen konden, te berooven , en ‘t volk te schatten en te scheeren, zonder onderscheijt te maken of se onder Troenadjajaia nog sorteeren dan of ze haar weder aan de zijde des Sousouhoenans gevolgt hadden”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 786. Similar complaints would later be made by Couper on the Buginese fighting on Java. This time, ironically, the VOC themselves had brought them there, but their warlord Raja Boni appears to have lost control over them. See J. Couper, “Letter LXI (13 November, 1679).” In De Opkomst Van: 278-279.

\(^ {422}\) The quote derives from: “hoewel Glisson, en d’andere bevelhebbers altijt verklaart hebben dat dit buijten haar voorweten door het gemeene volk quam te geschieden”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 786. Similar statements were made in De Saint-Martin, “Letter XLVIII (4/5 August, 1677).” In De Opkomst Van: 135.

\(^ {423}\) Moor Piero reports, for instance, the sum up of Makassarese warlords given by Trunajaya. These were Karaëng Galesong, Bongon, Rupa, Lumu, Intje Hassan, Mupu, Tellolo and Datu Louadin. Further warlords of Malayan or Makassarese origin are: Dain Mainu, Aru Sium, Hadije Bulubauu and Intje Ladin. Some warlords are said not to cooperate with the other, as Intje Ladin whose only ally is Intje Soleman and his 60 followers. De Saint-Martin was aware of these schisms too. See Moor Piero, “Letter XIV”: 83-93; and I. De Saint-Martin, “Letter XLVII (12 June, 1678).” In De Opkomst Van: 211-212.
hearted attempts to fight the Madurese and their suppression of local lords. At the same time, he discovers how the Sunan bestows the Sulawesians with “grand titles” and promises of land lease.\footnote{Correspondance between Japara and Galesong was taken hold of, In it, the Makassarese warlord was allowed “tot permanente ingezetenen van zijn land ..., jaa ook daar en boven keuze van land streeken tot zijne bezittinge”. In other letters, requests were made to please to not attack villages belonging to the Sunan. Speelman, Inscriptie Edel Vertrek, 787-789 and 794.}

Apparently, Amangkurat did appreciate the promises of cooperation. The vision of alliance evidently contrasts between the VOC and many Mataram royals and courtiers. The Memorie exposes incommensurability between European expectations of definitive submission and Javanese acceptance of fragile and partial military support. Even Trunajaya was formally accepted as governor over half of Madura after his surrender and a few days before his death. The entitlement is not meaningless, for the warlord might have been murdered in rage not with aim. The intention to position him as local ruler fits the tradition of picking vassals and allies among the defeated enemy.\footnote{Think of Sultan Agung sending submitted local lords to the court. See H. J. de Graaf, De regering van Sultan Agung, vorst van Mataram 1613-1645, en die van zijn voorganger Panembahan Seda-ing-Krapjak 1601-1613 (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1958). Couper, “Letter LXVI”: 295-296.}

Traditions of the VOC differed, and confused the Javanese. One of the Mataramese princes was, for instance, amazed at the VOC’s command to send all Makassarese back to Sulawesi; doubting whether such itinerant troops could be controlled. The admiral, however, had all intention to submit them: “the roving and robbing, of these enemies, that is but a packed together tractable and intractable people, divided into multiple parties, [that will] not cease nor stop... before we take our power to commit to a campaign, because even if we will chase them today, and not pursue them further than that, or guard our position, they will return the day after”.\footnote{The quote is roughly translated from: “het loopen en stroopen, van dees genoemde vijanden, dat maar een t’saamgeraapt willig en onwillig volk is, in verscheijde partijen verdeelt, niet en zal cessereb big ophouden, gelijk hier voren ter materie al gealliggeert is, voor en aleer wij met onze magt ten principalen in campanje komen, want of wij schoon haar van daag weg jagen, en niet voort vervolgen, of posthouden, soo keerense morgen wederom”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edel Vertrek: 810. Notice that Speelman’s reference to “multiple parties” does not preclude his presumption of facing a single minded force. See also Couper, “Letter XVI”: 106; and Speelman, “Letter XI”: 180-182. Couper, “Letter XVI”: 106.}

One warlord that keeps returning time and time again is Trunajaya’s right hand: Kajoran. Kabaijang reveals that he resides in the mountains of Totombo, “two days travelling from Kediri, where he has about 200 men with him, without involving or being concerned with anything but agriculture”.\footnote{The quote is translated from: “twee dag reijsen van Cadierij, daar hij ontrent 200 man bij hem hadden, sonder zig ergens met te moeijen, of met te bekommeren, als met de landbouw”. Speelman, Inscriptie Edel Vertrek: 780.} Kabaijang also heard Trunajaya and Kajoran divided the realm between the two, but this he judges unlikely since “Trunajaya obtained the entire treasury of Mataram for himself”; having brought the regalia to Kediri. This possibly made Speelman more willing to seek alliance with Kajoran. In support of this pursuit, he stressed the interest Amangkurat I had in taking Kajoran into his court,
which he declined back then due to “suspicion” and “fear [that] it was not [a] sincere [offer]”. This misunderstanding led to his rebellion, but could surely be rectified. 430

In other parts of the text, however, the admiral is hypothesizing how Kajoran is ordering his troops from afar and seeks to empower his younger brother, not himself, though conquering the Pasisir so the rest of Java “will follow”. Religious deception is used to reach this aim. The admiral writes that they believe “God and his Prophet will never bless the Javanese land again, as long as the kaffers or unbelievers, the ... Company’s power and servants, will be accepted there”. It is a message “which can be easily taught to this foolish people, especially when it is told by a person that is ... renowned throughout the land as being so much holy as this Raden Kajoran” and his “creatures and temple priests, that continuously roam through the entire country”. 431

Still, the people “already start to see and recognize that [Kajoran’s] promise of invincibility does not suffice for the Dutch guns” and that his stooges are “immediately abusing the women and the daughters”. This shows they are all “the biggest thugs of the world”, no matter whether Kajoran falsely rejects the rapists as rotten apples that lacked “rigid trust in their prophet”. 432 All in all, Speelman can thus not make his mind up about the man, but moves from tempting forgiveness to full rejection and back again. As an opponent, Kajoran remains depicted as a devilish figure; usually purely evil but at the same time hard to grasp hold of.

The reader gets the impression Speelman thought similarly about the Javanese in general. He complains “how great his care has continuously been, to, wherever possible, take away the distrust of these suspicious people ... but this has not been as fruitful inlands as I had wished”. 433 No wonder, given the “enormous greed and avarice, which is a perfectly familiar Javanese deficit”. 434 Tasks are not completed due to “lollygagging in the Javanese fashion”, showing “how little one can or may expect of the execution by these Javanese, for no presumptions can be made on it.” 435 Nor can their

430 The quote is translated from: “Troenadjaaija, den gantschen Mattaramsen buijt alleen genooten”. Ibid.: 780. See also Speelman's skepticism on this decision on folio 874 and 845.
431 Notice how Speelman uses the word kaffers not kāfirs. The quotes are translated from: “Godt en haren propheet, het Javaanse land nooit weder zeegenen zal, zoo lang de calvers of ongelooovige, de nootereende s'Compagnies magt en dienaren, daar in gedoogt komen te werden”; “dit slegte volk zeer ligt is wijs te maken, bijzonderlijk als het afkomt van een persoon die door dit gantsche land, nu nog meer als voor heenen gereputeert wert voor zoo grooten heijlij, als dezen Radeen Cadjoran of Panamberhan Rama”; and “creaturen en tempelpriesters, die continuueel het gantsche land door, en weer doorloopen”. Ibid.: 874-876.
432 The quotes are translated from: “dog zij beginnen nu al te zien en te bevinden dat zijn verzeekeringe van de kragteloosheid der Nederlantse geweeren zoos vast niet gaan”; “misbruikende al meteen de vrouwen en de dogters”; “de grootste fielten van de werelt zijn”; and “dat zij geen vast vertrouwen op hare propheet gehad hebben”. Ibid.: 875-876.
433 The quote derives from: “zijnde u Edelen alle andere officieren, die kennisse van zaken hebben volkomen bekent, hoe grootelijke het van mijne zorge continuueel geweest is, om waar 't mogelijk uijt dit wantrouwije volk alles diffidentie weg te nemen, en inplaatse, een goed vertrouwen op te stabelen, maar het en is egter binnen s'lands nog van zoo veel vruut niet geweest , als ik wel hadde gewenscht, en zulke moet nog al door u Eede met alle kragt gebreide werden, om naar uijtterste vermogen daar in te avanceren, als zijnde een zake van groote consideratie, en importantie...”. Ibid.: 754.
434 The quote is translated from: “grote gierieheid, en hebzucht, 't gunt genoegsaam een familiaar Javaanse gebrek is”...”. Ibid.: 765.
435 The quotes ar translated from: “lanterfanten na de Javaense wijze”; and “hoe weijnig men zig van 't ondieren deze Javanen kan, en mag dienen, want daar op gantsche weijnig staat te maken zij”. The latter complaint was made after ambiguous Javanese promises on supplying horses turned out of little value. Ibid.: 774-775.
rulers be trusted: for good leadership “is not regarded” and “ministers” constantly challenge the sovereign.436

All in all, the narratives in the Memorie focus much on alliances, legitimacies and the preparations for campaigning. The stress authors as Ricklefs put on contracts and profit motives takes up only a small part of the content. Contracts do certainly feature within the Memorie and interest in their long-term benefits is uttered. After the war is settled, a bustling trade and reimbursing taxes are believed to lie ahead. Whole sections of the text are reserved for the trade potential of the island. The delivery of money, rice and wood all spring to attention, as does the recognition of state borders, trade posts and Batavian subjects; especially the non-Javanese traders.437 Protest against growing autonomy of VOC commerce by certain courtiers and regional leaders is not overlooked, but the Sunan is just expected to settle such matters.438

The attention for contracts is only natural; it was one of the most basic developments that needed to be conveyed to Batavia. Any march to Kediri was expected to eventually yield treasuries, taxes and higher commerce. Still, Speelman is not left daydreaming about such bright futures. He cares about the military operation itself too. For that very reason, most of the document is reserved for the ways and means to muster the required troops, keep them under surveillance and make them submit to Amangkurat. These enquiries go much further into unravelling the Javanese military labour market than the efforts to resolve the ‘Dutch dilemma’ described by Ricklefs.

b. Anthonio Hurdt
On the second May of 1678, Hurdt was asked to lead the VOC army in East Java. Two months later, two resolutions were accepted. One added 1.400 men to the total force of 1.100. The other selected Hurdt as the new admiral, backed up by Tack, Muller and Wesdorp as chief military officers. Initially a short march from Surabaya was planned, yet the Sunan wanted a long one to reconquer Mataram’s hinterland and thereby bolster his forces. This strategy of winning back former subordinates indeed worked.439

After a tumultuous advance filled with desertions, alignments and battles, Kediri fell on the 25th of November. In the aftermath, the motley troops immediately ransacked the town. As Kediri lay pillaged, so did the army fall to pieces. A dreadful return was to await the remaining forces, hindered by disease, swamps and bad weather. Hurdt’s campaign certainly was a tough one. Surprisingly, his

436 The quote is derived from: “maar daar op en wert bij deze vorsten, int minst geen agt geslagen”. Ibid.: 777 and 805
438 All other issues are naturally left to the VOC to resolve. See ibid.: 816-817.
previous career did hardly tie in with the difficulties faced here. In fact, he neither operated on Java or with warriors. Why, then, was he selected for hunting down Trunajaya?

A significant reason is the rejection of this post by De Saint-Martin. Speelman had already penned down the ‘Memorie’ for this officer when it turned out leading the campaign did not fit his agenda. Other high officials like Willem van Outhoorn, Facob Camphuys and Jacob Pits, equally refused the offer. Hurdt thus was the last resort for a mission aimed to “increase the Company’s honourable reputation, recover the Susuhunan, tranquillity of the unrest and troubled lands, [and the] silencing and eradication of the insurgent rebels”. He was granted autonomy in dealing with the Sunan and obtained command over all “chief merchants, captains, merchants, ship captains, lieutenants, lower merchants, fenriks, postmen, lesser officers, soldiers, sailors, Javanese, Malayans, Balinese and all other indigenous servants and subjects of the Company”.

A collection of sources on Hurdt’s campaign is available. Central is the 240 page account written by his secretary Johan Jurgen Briel. Other material consists out of letters and resolutions. Even though merely an assistant, Briel himself was an interesting figure too. He, in fact, served the subsequent two admirals as well, and even took over when admiral Couper fell ill and could no longer supervise the capture of Trunajaya. In the next two years, he participated in the campaigns against Pangéran Puger and the ‘bandit’ Namrud, during which he himself diseased.

Despite Briel’s activities afterwards, he appeared to be unknown while penning down Hurdt’s offensive. No record of him can be found preceding 1678 and he left few personal marks in the campaign narration. His texts hence seem to reflect Hurdt’s view on the war, while Briel remains the silent scribe. Sometimes Hurdt is quoted directly; at others his impressions are paraphrased. But the general perspective on troop alliances and events seems his most of the time. Other important assistants were taken over from Speelman -like Couper or several translators- and again mainly provided information rather than explicitly shaping the admiral’s reports.

Hurdt himself is first mentioned when arriving in Batavia on the 22th of July 1652. Soon after, he was send toAmbon to work as a secretary. From 1657 till 1661, the man functioned as the head of Lontor. After receiving the position of ‘admiral’, complaints were heard about his civil background and him “equally being not so strategic”. Notice, however, that Speelman and Van Goens equally lacked these experiences during their first campaigns. The quotes are translated from “en ook zoo krygskundig niet”. See De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: 37.

The quote derives from the VOC authorisation presented on the ship ‘Zilversteyn’ that would take Hurdt to East Java. It is translated from Dutch: “tot vermeerderingh van Comps. loffelycke reputatie, herstellingh van den Sousouhounangh, tranquilliteyt van d’ ontruste ende getroubleerde landen, demping ende uytstroeyinge van de ruutinerende rebellen”. See Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 36 and 93-96.

The quote derives from Van Goens mission statement and is translated from Dutch: “oppercooepieden, Capitaijns, cooepieden, schippers,lieuehts., ondercooepieden, vaendrigs, stierlieden, mindere officieren, zoldaten, matroozen, Ja vanen, Maleijers, Ballijs en alleandere Inlandse onderdanen en subjecten van de Compe.” Ibid.: 95.

De Graaf, De Expeditie Hurdt: VIII; and idem., “Gevangenneming”.

Some commanders were also known as “fluent among the Javanese”; Willem van Buitengem was one of them. See Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 51 and 148.

And the end of his service, Hurdt’s wife passed away, but he remarried sometime after.
Hurdt was thus attached to the Eastern archipelago, not the western one. De Graaf stresses how he managed to overcome his limited knowledge on Java through “a cautious, controlled and wise generalship”.446

Earlier negotiations with the Moluccan lords and residents might have prepared him more than De Graaf expects, however. Judged from the cover, his regent accounts are mainly about agriculture, commerce and construction. But underneath lay deeper interest in local hierarchies or the remains of them. He discusses the surveillance of orang kaya (‘rich men’) to avoid them doing damage wandering around.447 Or he stresses to his sergeant to find “experienced natives” to occupy a forest of “large and ripe” bael or maja trees.448 These comments illustrate more extended associations with the Moluccan denizens aimed to use their brawn and control potential rebels.

Similar associations were apparent during his campaign in Central and East Java. Not the least, they occurred among the fractions of the VOC army itself. Four branches of infantry marched: those of Captain Tack, Van Renesse and Mulder, Bastinck and Hurdt himself. Their routes are shown on picture nine. The first started with 385 men, amongst whom 147 Europeans, 70 Mardijkers, 116 Balinese and 52 special troops with no ethnic moniker. Van Renesse and Mulder operated 308 soldiers: 103 Europeans, 24 Mardijkers, 97 Balinese, and 48 Batavian Javanese.449

Hurdt headed 158 Europeans, 58 Mardijkers, 105 Balinese, 28 “Ambonese and Makassarese”, 288 Batavian Javanese, 45 Makassarese,12 “indigenous soldiers” and 12 additional staff members. Under his command, several European subordinate officers led the European VOC legion and a small part of the Asian one: Isaac De Saint-Martin, Aernout Wesdorp, Martinus van Ingen, Andries Hartman and Pieter Craan.451 The other columns depended more on Asian lords.

The indigenous commanders stood shoulder to shoulder with the European officers. During the reorganization of the army the following lieutenants were counted: van Zeelst (58 Mardijkers), Marcus Mendonza (107 Mardijkers), Bagus (47 Ambonese), Alexander Maquelijn (54 Ambonese), Care Montoelij452 (73 Makassarese). Next to them were the captains: Captain Tiben (105 Balinese), Captain Kago Mataram (118 Batavian Javanese), Captain Wisa Praija (87 Javanese), Captain Naija

446 Ibid.: 52.
447 As Hurdt says: “om voor geen quade treck van die landt laten bedugt te wesen”. A. Hurdt, “Memorie door den gouverneur Hurdt van Banda op sijn afscheid en sijn vervanger de heer gouverneur Willem Maetsuijker ter handen gestalt, in dato 16 April 1672.” Nationaal Archief; 1.04.02; 1287: 909-910. As Hurdt says: “om voor geen quade treck van die landt laten bedugt te wesen”.
448 In this case only two natives were needed, but the request is exemplary. A. Hurdt, “Ordre en Instructie voor Cornelis van Dijck sergeant in de redout overburgh op Loeloe militerende omme hen in de administratie van sagou bosch aldaerna te reguleren dato 15 Julij 1672.” Nationaal Archief 1.04.02 1286: 592.
449 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 76-77. Van Renesse and Mulder army grew over time, as can be seen by the figures collected halfway the campaign; see ibid.: 170. For the difficulties see ibid.: 176.
450 Who are seen as part of the “Christian militia”. Ibid.: 115.
451 Wesdorp would be killed in battle on the 15th of October. Ibid.: 115; and J.J. Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister gehouden in den optogt na Cadieyt met Comps. Uijtgesette crijgsmagt, onder d’E. Heer Antonio Hurdt: “Hebbendeneden Commandeer 00q na gedane monsteringe de volgende compen. geformeerd en opgebragt. ” National Archive, 1.04.02, 1351: 30-36.
452 Also written as Corramansoelij.
All these Ambonese, Balinese, Mardijkers, Makassarese and Javanese warriors were part of the Asian legion, commanded by warlords settled in Batavia.

Similar to the Batavian kampungs in which these troops resided, the ethnic composition of the military units was much more diverse than suggested in the Company’s tables. A similar homogenizing description was given of the warriors joining the army later on or led by the Sunan. The latter, in fact, constituted the bulk of the fighting force. The VOC merely conscripted 683 soldiers, whereas Amangkurat II brought 4,000 men of whom 3,000 were armed with pikes. For those he selected four commanders: Tumenggung Narapaxa, Tumenggung Zitsianapura, Tumenggung Madura and Kjai Ranga. Together they were taken as the commanders of ‘the Javanese’.454

In due time, the number of ‘Javanese’ would surge and implode. Only 1,000 “armed heads” were counted in the first week of campaigning, this rose to 13,220 just before invading Kediri. Round harvest, it would drop to 1,000 again. For the VOC, high aggregates appeared to fully determine the Javanese military potential. The depiction of the Mataram army often stresses their lack of weaponry or lacklustre involvement. Tumenggung Surana’s “Javanese army” from Demak is, for example, described as standing “orderly arranged with their pikes. Many guns were not to be found amongst

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453 Notice that the troops were divided by their military titles; the 47 Ambonese of Lieutenant Bagus consisted out of 4 sergeants, 4 corporals, 38 soldiers and the lieutenant himself. See Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: “Hebbeneden Commandeur oog na gedane monsteringe de volgende compen, geformeerd en opgebragt, als.” and “Vrijdag 25e November 1978.”: 30-36 and 186-187.
454 Notice that the numbers of VOC troops mentioned earlier do include unarmed troops too, hence the amount of soldiers being under 706. See Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 78-80 and 98-101.
them, but all the more standards, pennons, and flags of all kinds of colours. Keeping up sizeable numbers was thus judged important, for Hurdt mainly defined his or the hostile armed force by its quantity not its quality. Dutch soldiers lacked short, so numbers should be boosted with local allies and care should be taken to remain successful to ensure these allies will hold by.

More than with the Asian legion, the uncertainties on the pejuang support riveted attention in the daghregisters. The texts describe how their alignment was offered, how Hurdt’s column formation was changed due to their presence and how the warriors behaved during the campaign. New alliances of the other columns are equally reported whenever the separate convoys meet again. Usually numbers and leaders are listed to show how the army was reorganized. The anxiety on fluctuating and divergent troop compositions, however, comes across most clearly in the accounts of the fourth column. This army section was only called to action at the end of the campaign and needed to be gathered together by Bastinck.

Bastinck was asked to prepare an attack from the East. Unlike the other columns he had to muster his troops in the midst of war. What is more, he was assembling them in eastern Java and not in the safe haven of Batavia. Since he already was “in commission to the Makassarese in Képer”, Hurdt requested him to join the campaign on the 26th of September. Several orders were given “to make the [Javanese] regents of Surabaya, Giri and Grisik bring together a separate army, as to tear down the enemy as much as possible.”

Bastinck, moreover, was to “animate the Makassarese to live up to their promises, to do their best against Trunajaya (...).” The 1667 contract of Bongaja was re-enacted, but uncertainties of support remained. At the last minute, union was reached when Mas Tumapel -governor of Surabaya and stepson of the Giri priest- joined the column in front of Kediri. The appeal of this Walisanga descendant must have been notable. Multiple groups combined forces, including several Makassarese lords led by Karaëng Galesong plus the ‘Malayan’ Entjik Subu, and Buginese and Towadjos ones under ‘Aru Tsiong’. In total they numbered: 380 armed Javanese, 200 ‘Surabayan’
carriers, 390 Makassarese and Buginese, 14 Dutch, 38 unidentified servants and Subu with his three guards. 460

The army was not too stable, however. As I mentioned in chapter two, the Makassarese were soon to desert “without goodbyes”. Hurdt still made a final attempt to retrieve their support by sending a letter. Emphasis was put on the unfairness of breaking deals. Such a “sudden change of retreating ones dispatched people” must have been caused by “the malicious inductions of several vile men”; that is, the Bantenese and their peers. Hurdt asked Galesong to come back and “fulfil his promises”, so he can “welcome them as good friends”. 461

The futility of this request might have been inherent to Hurdt’s misunderstanding on the ‘Makassarese’ attaching mainly to contracts rather than leadership. Karaëng Galesong even appears to have realized this himself. After Trunajaya fled from Kediri to Malang, he made all kinds of false promises to deceive the VOC in assuming him to operate on their behalf. On paper he pleaded to hunt down Trunajaya and return to Sulawesi, but in reality he was realigning with the Madurese warlord. Robberies and attacks secretly continued. Hurdt had learned his lesson and saw through the ‘deceptive’ letters. 462 Yet, his earlier surprise at the sudden Makassarese desertion shows this to have been a change of mind-set. Initially, the admiral was more inclined to take allies for granted and depend to them as ‘consigned’ sections of his warforce.

The admiral’s flawed notion of supervising conscribed army units reflected on the nominators used to identify the pejuang troops. The administration of clearly demarked groups allowed a sense of control over them. Yet, the ethnic categories distinguishing sections of the army could be arbitrary. Tack’s men changed from Europeans, Mardijkers, Balinese and some unidentified servants mentioned above to 232 Europeans, 59 Mardijkers, 114 Malayans, and 84 Ambonese and Makassarese during the regrouping with Hurdt. The difference in numbers is due to temporary backings, desertion and disease. The transformation of the moniker “Balinese” into “Malayans” raises some questions, however. More of these conflicting descriptions are found in the reports. 463 In such cases, the labels used might tell more about the bureaucracy behind them rather than the warbands they mark. It appears Hurdt was satisfied as long as supposed homogenous units of pejuang

462 After failing to notice the intentions of eight Bantenese ships” himself, Hurdt was informed on the attempt of the Sultan of Banten to reunite Galesong with Trunajaya. Yet, he was equally told that Galesong "de Sulthans begeeren buiten kennisse van de Edele Compagnie en zijn broeder der Craijn Bitteij niet accepteeren, noch eenigsints daerin consenderenconde, dewiij het sijnheere waren, want hij deze maaninge van sijn broeder om de Compagnie getrouwe te blijven, beloofd had, neerhalven geen leugenaar woude wesen". Hurdt responded: “zoodat uijt allen desen wij zouden mogen besluijten, dat ghij lieden de Compagnie getrouwe met goede beloften soekt te stillen, en in de slaep te wiegen tot ter tijd toe ghij uw wagtig hoop te vinden, omdeselvete wederstaan, en een eigen Conickrijke in Java op te regten”. Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: 261-262, 282-287 and 289-304.
463 The sudden “Ambonese and Makassarese” presence was likely a new alliance. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 76-81, 91, 98-101, 120, and 191.
troops could be emplaced in his military strategy. A classification of leaders and broad ethnic designations suited that purpose best.

Leaders and warlords are accentuated throughout the text. Be it to appellate specific war-bands or show esteem. When Suradikara perishes he is remembered for “his good services on Rembang”. Similarly the passing of Adipati Mandaraka -Amanкур bats It’s right hand- is considered a ‘great loss’ for the Sunan. Even the Babad chronicles mention how the “admiral.... was deeply impressed” by his death. Respected names as these are generally used to distinguish the “Javanese” aids. Examples are “Mangononang’s people” or “Tumėnggung Mankojuda with his Javanese cavalry”. Names of warlords serve as adjectives to sections of troops and thereby imply certain origins of warrior units.

Similar categories can be found when opposing warriors are described. The elaborate story of Patrajuda illustrates the attention for the trajectories of warlords rather than war-bands. Biographical information functions to explain the troops mustered and attacks delivered. The journal refers to his birth in Grobogan, the former obedience of his father to Amangkurat I, how Patrajuda joined Trunayaja after the fall of the kraton, his “friendships” with other war lords, his flight to the mountains and his capture. In this narrative, the warlord’s troops are merely stated to be assigned to him, and to consist out of a certain amount of ‘men’. Apparently, Hurdt had no interest in questioning the captured Patrajuda on where his men came from or for what reason they were following him.

Usually, most attention is paid to the names of the warlords and their origins. The retelling of the fall of Mataram is, for instance, filled with names of nobles. The information on the troops is vaguer. The forces of the Madurese commanders Wassingattij and Wiramenggala are described differently over time: be it “mixed people”, “1.000 men” or simply “hostile troops”. In his own words, Wiramenggala claimed: “we only have 1.000 men that can fight, 300 from Pangurit, 300 from Wira Baajja, and 400 from Raxa Baajja, all ready to run amok. The remaining force consists out of varying negori people [villagers] that do not know how to fight.” Even though the data might be

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464 As is written down by the VOC: “waeraan zijn Hooghd. nae de presente gelegenheid veel verliest, als zijnde geweest een goede raadsman, en van tamelijk ontsag”. Ibid.: 177, 195 and Babad Tanah Jawi in proza, ed. J.H. Meinsma and W.L. Olthof (The Hague: KITLV, 1874/1941): 197. This contradicts Speelman’s earlier complaints about his cowardness; but a change of heart might have occured. See Speelman, “Letter XL”: 176.

465 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 65 and 175-176.

466 These descriptions were partly based on informants but chiefly shaped by Hurdt’s discourse. Ibid.: 90- 91 and 109; Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: 309-310.

467 Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: “Relaas van een gevangen mantri van Troenadjaya gen(aam)d Patra Joeda”: 87-90.

468 The quoted words were translated from: “gedeelte volk”. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 91, 112 and 194.

469 The quote derives from the following letter written by Wira-Menggala and translated by the VOC: “Desen brief comt van Wiera Mangala, en alle andere Madurese hoofden alhier aan Mangonoaug en verdere Javaanse bevelhebbers met twee gevangens, die wij niet hebben willen dooden, maer met deze brief terugsenden. Soo ghijlieden lust hebt met mij twee à 3 dagen te speelen, ’t is goed, wij sullen bij u come. Wij hebben maar 1000 man, die vegeten konnen, 300 van Pangoerit, 300 van Wira Baaja, en 400 van Raxa Baaja, alle amokspeelers. De verdere magt is divers negorijsvolk, dat niet weet te vegeten. Komt maar oog met een gelijk getal van 1000 kopen aan! Wij sullen met de geheele magt nu niet vegeten, want al ons ander volk verlopen soude, maar wij sullen ons best doen, om al ’t volq onder
skewed since the warlord was challenging the VOC, it does show an internal heterogeneity only hinted at by the Company's informants.

In the *daghregisters*, lesser known war-bands are simply distinguished as “Madurese enemies”, “roaming gangs” or ‘Javanese forces’ be it with or without alliances with some “Makassarese”. Contrasting to them are the “Kajorans”. To all likelihood these forces were more ‘Javanese’ than those of the Madurese commanders. But the usage of the term for mystical warriors fifteen years after Kajoran’s death, suggests an association with religiously motivated ‘rebels’ rather than ethnicities. In either case, the labels carry wider expectations on the behaviour of the warriors.

When it comes to numbering these troops, similar broad strokes are drawn. The numerical indications are rounded off suspiciously for information usually based on rough guesses. Data on other phenomena -demographical, agricultural- suffer the same fate. The quantitative errors are thus not that particular. Yet, as far as war-bands are concerned, the figures do suggest a strong homogeneity due to single adjectives attached to them. References to a “Javanese force” of “6.000 heads”, implies a uniform body of troops. The VOC appears to consider them much more kindred than was the case. The 6.000 Javanese referred to above, for instance, likely belonged to Tumënggung Mankojuda from Kegu who commanded miscellaneous forces from Semarang, Wates, Kegu and Pajang.

A similar bias is found in the description of Trunajaya’s troops. It is only after the fall of Kediri, that Hurdt lays his hands on an extensive list of Trunajaya’s forces. These were given to him by the defected Madurese Pangéran Sampang, and contain the surveyed size of the total army shortly before the attack on Kediri. No simplified division along the lines of ‘Javanese’ and ‘Madurese’ was present; instead ten kinds of Javanese and seven kinds of non-Javanese troops are distinguished. This list discloses a strict grouping of regional fractions: the Javanese are therefore not one, but many. Up till that point, the VOC intelligence had not truly grasped this diversity.

Beyond numbers, central characteristics of military units are discussed too. Certain attributes are usually ascribed to distinguished warrior groups. Pastimes and traits particular to certain ‘ethnic’ groups are mentioned every so often. The “free Makassarese [i.e. those without a Karaëng warlord]
did not rarely hunt for deer and animals while sitting on their horses with their assegais”. The “Demak people” are called for building boats. And “our Javanese” are observed to “gain entertainment” from “burning emptied villages”. Specified characterizations like these contrasted with the condemnation of gambling done by “Europeans or natives” alike or the drinking of arak by the ‘Asians’. But such general references are never as abundant as those to ‘ethnic’ traits. It can be wondered whether these behaviours were chiefly shaped by ethnicity, rather than military fraternization.

Despites the prejudices behind VOC characterizations, ‘ethnic’ ties were certainly present; even across frontiers. A warning of one of Trunajaya’s Malayan soldier to his peers illustrates this. He was calling two acquainted Malayans serving the VOC “that they should be beware, as there will be an attempt to raid [the VOC camp], with amok games and fires”. In this case, concerns for the safety of associates hindered tactical ones; Hurdt came to know about the assault and could take the appropriate measures. Both the strength and weakness of ethnic ties is demonstrated here. Trunajaya’s Malayans cared more about their ethnic peers than their warlord, Hurdt’s Malayans the opposite. Ethnic rivalries were observed too: Hurdt had to keep the Makassarese and the Buginese apart. What, in the end, mattered most to the Company was performance not ethnicity.

Besides the ethnic labels, the Company also categorized their troops according to reliability. Two kind of allies existed: the “engaged” and the “non-engaged” ones. A distinctive treatment of these groups applied. Whereas the first were free to roam, the latter were kept under strict surveillance. It was a contrast between respect and suspect that determined both trust and tactical treatment. Sometimes the Asian soldiers could evade wary eyes. When the “free Makassarese” were caught looting Javanese horses, for instance, their leaders promised “to carry responsibility like all the [other troops]”. Repercussions and close observation was thereby avoided through confirming recognition of the VOC rules.

Later during the campaign, similar agitations did lead to action. A ban was emplaced due to “the multiple complaints, uttered by Mandaraka and others about the Balinese, Makassarese etc.
“because of stealing Javanese horses by day and night, which led to several disputes”. All groups were demanded to stick to their section, be it on march or in camp; and their chiefs were to prohibit their warriors to pass further than a musket shot from their respective flag standard. 482 From the 22nd of September on, more care was thus taken to segregate the army in subsections, as to avoid bad blood between the motley gangs of fighters with different loyalties.

The distinction between dedicated and less dedicated soldiers comes to the fore in the descriptions of battle scenes. Troops standing firm are praised as “magnanimous” and “brave” whereas defeat is often associated with chaotic battle formations and lacking discipline. Warriors in retreat are similarly depicted as unreliable. And carriers are bemoaned for throwing off their baggage and shiftily disappearing. In contrast, the indigenous themselves explain how chaos sprang from wounded or even killed commanders. 483

Most fights were skirmishes, only the traverse over the river Brantas and the attack on Kediri involved large amounts of troops and artillery. 484 Still, similar narratives are used for small and big battles. They usually start with a description of the opposite troops, the men hurt or fled during battle and the pursuit of withdrawing enemies. At times, particularities of the opposing forces are noticed. The colourful banners waving in the air, the gongs rang to commence the encounters and the crescent shape of the battle lines all illustrate the attacks. Leadership and tactics are also commented upon. Yet, they are not scrutinized. When it comes down to it, the depiction of battles concerned what was won and who was brave. 485

The appearance of enemy warlords caught the eye too. Once, Trunajaya himself was seen on the battlefield wearing his ‘priestly’ black clothes and a white pajong. 486 Particular offensive tricks are equally noticed. Madurese assailants on horseback could be recognized by the “way they wore their long hair” while storming through the rear guards like “wild people, the hair hanging in their face, and protecting the heads with a lance carried by hand”. A captured Madurese even identified one of the assailants as Antadersana of Arosbaja, simply by recognizing his kris. 487

Religion could be just as characteristic and cutting as krisses, but that was hardly recognized by the VOC. Admiral Poolman’s warning on the Makassarese attempt to win over the Buginese

482 The quote is translated from: “Op de veelvuldige klagten, die door Mandaraka als andere gedaan wierden over de Baliërs, Maccassaren & a., wegens het steelen van der Javanen paerden bij dag ende nagt, waeruit eenige onlusten stonden te rijzen”. Ibid.: 122-124.
483 The quotes are taken from the account of the battle near Tukum on page 166-167 referring to the “standvastigheid” and “dapper” repel of the “Captain of the Balinese” and the carriers who were attacked on the 10th of November “en ‘t hasenpad gekoosen hebben” (philologically this could also mean just fleeing in itself but since Briel stresses their complete disappearance it appears to mean fleeing cowardly). Brave conduct is even awarded with medals and promotions in the case if the Mardijker and soldier who measured the water level of the Brantas under heavy fire. See ibid.: 161, 166-168, 176, 184-185, 198-199, 204, 211-212, 223-226, and 237-239.
485 Ibid.: 212.
486 Ibid.: 232
487 The quotes are translated from: „dragt van haar lange hajir” and “als dolle menschen, ‘t hair in ‘t aangesigt hangende, en d’hoofden schuttende.” Ibid.: 160-161.
warriors comes closest. They prayed that “He will strengthen your and our hearts, so we will stand together with all out power that derives from our religion; for God’s words in the book of our prophets [tell] the pagans (Kāfirs) should be rejected [and killed] by us”. 488 To Hurdt, the religion of the Makassarese is insignificant. He limits himself to observing certain troops having ties with Kudus and Giri, without giving further comment.

The most explicit remark on spiritual devotion of these war-bands merely stresses how they would flee to Panembahan Giri in dire straits. Panembahan Giri’s role as an arbiter is stressed, however: it is mentioned how Arua Cartasan wanted to subject to the lord for refuge and how Trunajaya send money to him to march through his lands. 489 Hurdt and his colleagues seemingly found more ease in identifying troops by their origins than their creed. Whereas only the secular actions of the Islamic lords are discussed.

The accounted correspondence between Amangkurat II and the Bantenese forms the exception. The letter of Sultan Ageng reminds “his young brother” the Sunan “that God grants you life and made you; strength derives from one’s own God, as does weakness”. Sultan Ageng saw a Sunan ‘obedient’ to the VOC, who did not follow the path of his ancestors “because your life and religion as well as your realm contradict each other”. 490 The Sultan can only pray he would realign with his Muslim brothers so “God will bless and support you and retrieve your thrown”.

Although this letter was left uncommented in the VOC’s administration, the personal religious struggle of Amangkurat II did surface later on. At first, the Sunan appears to reject Ageng’s appeals as attempts to vassalize him and raise hostility towards him among the Makassarese and Madurese. 491 Yet, soon after, he suddenly “loses trust and says, among other things, that after restoring his realms, he wants to hand over governance to his son, to end his life in Mecca”. 492 The image of a secular overlord shattered. But only for a moment, for the VOC forced his way back to power; their ideal leader was anything but a Hajji, nor were the desired warriors ghazis.

Having treated the identification of warriors, it is time to consider how the Hurdt perceived their alliances and desertions. After all, the temporality of Asian alliances comes through most clearly while these topics are treated. One returning theme in Briël’s reports is the abasement of local

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489 The quote derives from: “Seggen was, dat de vijandelijke troepen, indien ze quamen onder te leggen, van sin waren hun onder den panambahan Gierij te begeven.” Briël, De Expeditie Hurdt: 150 and 193-194.
492 The editor quote is translated from: “geheel ontmoedigd en zegt o. a. dat na de herstelling van zijn rijk, hij afstand wil doen van de regering ten behoeve van zijn zoon, om zelf zijn leven te Mocha te eindigen.” Couper, “Letter LXI”: 278-279.
leaders to the Susuhunan, sometimes after battles or breakthroughs. Two hundred seventy village heads (patinggis) would, for example, submit after the successful traverse over the Brantas river. Many more followed when Kediri fell. One can find these submissions throughout the campaign, however.

Local allies assisted in multiple ways; from clearing roads to laying sieges. From time to time, Hurdt makes explicit requests for pejuang forces to join his column. Most often, however, the approaches came from the warlords or rulers themselves; be it to offer warriors or show gratitude. Already at the third day of the campaign, Hurdt is told how Jagaputra, “a subaltern leader of Kudus”, desires to again swear “faithfulness to his nobleness” Amangkurat II and his “great governor” Martapura. A year earlier, he had submitted to Speelman after a short desertion to the Madurese side. The presence of the new Sunan, however, urged a reaffirmation. Subjection to the marching king had a character of its own. But affiliations were not only reached at his appearance.

Striking is the letter received from Ngabéhi Dipanegara, who swore loyalty to the Sunan, but could not escape Kediri. It “was impossible, that I would get out of Kediri, because the Madurese guards are all around me.” Dipanegara conveys details on the hostilities between the Makassarese and the Madurese as to show he does not have “two lords, but one, the Susuhunan”. Still it is to be doubted whether his dedication was all-conveying. The higher nobility often bet on two horses. Even Trunajaya’s own uncle did so.

Exiled to a forest of predators and evil spirits (Loda), he was hoping to “get out of his banishment”. Since the Sunan was not yet able to bridge the river Brantas, he would wait for him to “cross over” before “joining his Majesty”. The occasion was there since “the Madurese, that were otherwise around him all the time, are now roaming here and there.” In the meantime, he planned to send his 200 men to plunder and loot “to the detriment of Trunajaya’s followers”. But his proposal only bore fruit after the fall of Kediri. Again, the conditional abasement was a very

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493 At the end of the campaign the soldiers of different backgrounds shortly abuse several abasing villagers or victims of gambling as their slaves. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 85-86, 127, 129, 143-145, 153, 155, 164, 187, 193, 213-214, 218, 226-227, 230, 247-251, 265-268 and 273; and idem., Vervolgh Dagregister: 304-305..
495 Arja Sindu-Redja, the governor of Keclu, was assisting Tack to clear roads. Aroe Palakka -Speelman’s main ally during the attack on Makassar- jumped in as a back up after the fall of Kediri. His Buginese raised their krisses on the alun-alun of Japara as “oath of trust”. See Ibid.: 113, 117, 257 and 271-272..
496 Ibid.: 156.
497 The quote is translated from Dutch: “hebbende sig doenmaels voor gem. sijn Edle. en den groot gouvr. Martapoera verootmoedigt, van dewelke oq wegens zijne begane faute gepardonneerd was, weshalven nu bij sijn E. sig liet aandienen, om niet onbekend te wesen, presentererende, indien sulx begeerd wierde, den Eed van getrouwigheijd noghmalen presenteren. Het is onmogel[ijk], dat ik buijten Cadierij kan geraeken, want de Madurese wagten sijn rondom mij.” Ibid.: 85-86.
498 Due to the word ‘nobleness’ (in two abbreviations: Edle and E.) instead of Sunan this quote might refer to both Hurdt and Amangkurat II; it is quite plausible both were addressed by Jagaputra. Ibid.: 85-86.
499 The quote is derived from: “nu hooppte eens uijt sijn bannissement te sullen konnen geraeken”; “over de rivier soude komen”; “bij sijn Hooghd. Vervoegen”; “mitsgaders Troenadjaja allen afbreuk toe te brengen”; and “to the detriment of Troenajaya’s followers”. Ibid.: 178.
ambiguous one, leaving Hurdt to call the exiled royal a “good man” yet deceiving any expectation of
direct assistance.502

Even whole communities opted for equivocal alliances. The Tubanese were well-known for it,
having pulled the same trick with Sultan Agung. Before Hurdt crossed the river Brantas, the
“residents of Tuban and its surroundings did not yet pick a side, not knowing, what kind of lord they
will choose; it is not possible to rely on their reasoning”. It is only after traversing Brantas, that Hurdt
obtained their support.503 This illustrates that local leaders expected achievements and advances
before tying their people to an army.

If possible, spiritual agents could serve to negotiate requirements of alliance. Mas
Wargadalem sent four “Javanese popes” after the Sunan failed to travel over the river Brantas. They
stated “that they had 1.000 men under their guidance, with whom they were inclined to be with the
Susuhunan, but that as long as the river was not crossed, it could not be expected to happen”.504
Such flexible pragmatism could be troublesome for the VOC. Still, Company sources were much less
suspicious about the alignment of noblemen than those of their messengers: the “devil worshippers”
and “priests”; the devils and saints.

Holy men would equally submit themselves. Five delegates from the sacred place
Wanasalam announced their priest’s compliance which Amangkurat II accepted. The tomb guards of
Kjai Ageng Sélá -the proclaimed godfather of Majapahit- acted similarly.505 Briel’s descriptions of
political and spirited concords differ slightly. The former are looked at pragmatically, the latter rather
curiously. The chief of Wanasalam is, for instance, “deemed very holy [like most of his peers], which
was shown by [the five delegates’] appearance, as the merely wore old patches on the body, the hair
on the head was washed by each other, living so the Javanese say, a strict life”.506 Having said this,
the arrival of “two sons of the Panembahan Giri with 400 armed Javanese and 100 carriers” was
connected to the surrender of two major opponents. With a religious man so powerful as
Panembahan Giri, recognition for political influences was much more pronounced.507

Another man respected for his political capabilities was Amangkurat II’s brother: Pangańran
Puger. As mentioned earlier, Speelman even believed the union of both brothers’ forces would entail

502 Ibid.: 178 and 198.
503 The quote is translated from: “De inwoonders van Toeban en daaromtrent staan nog tussen beijde, niet wetende, wat voor een heer dat
se kiesen sullen, konnende op hare redenen geen de minste staat gemaakt werden”. Ibid.: 190.
504 The quote is derived from a lontor to “Dat 1000 man onder hem hadde, met dewelke seer inclineerdebij den Zoesoehoenan te wesen,
maer dat soo lang niet over de rivier en waren, het beswaarlijk konde geschieden.” Ibid.: 213.
505 Ibid.: 112.
506 The quote is roughly translated from: “Tuan Ban bang die voor seer heijlig gehouden werd, gelijk meest alle deselve inwoonders de
naem soadanig voeren, zulk aan dese lieden wel uijterlijk bleek, alsoo maar oude lappen om ’t lijff dragen, ’t hair op haar hoofd was door
507 The quote is translated from: “twee soonen van den panambahan Gierij met 400 gewapende Javanen en 100 dragers aangecomen
waren”. Ibid.: 232-233.
a rapid victory. Puger was reported as wanting to assist his disliked brother with 10,000 men. What is more, in a letter to Hurdt he expressed: “I shall humble myself and greet my brother like a poor beggar from Mataram” when “the Susuhunan Amangkurat would arrive in Logendèr”. Yet, he likely knew his sibling would not be able to reach the town.

In reverse, Amangkurat II would request Puger for “500 horses, which are required for this army” and “his elephant” that had likely belonged to his father. Never would he get them. Ironically enough, the only time Puger would send forces in the direction of the VOC army, was when he mistook his brother to have died and feared the Company would head to his capital. This makes it all too clear that his courtesy towards Amangkurat II was a mask of mere self-interest.

Puger’s correspondence with Hurdt shows he himself was equally tempting warriors. He explains how his Dipati Mangkuburni was heading to Bagelèn “to bring several rebels to devotion”. Likely, these belonged to the Makassarese warlord Namrud, who posed a threat to his capital. Puger’s mask of self-interest was discerned over time. Captain Tack would later tell Hurdt “that Pangéran Puger was not sincere towards his brother the Susuhunan; in case he wanted to he was powerful enough to ruin Kajoran’s forces”. Hurdt even started fearing an alliance between the two.

Whenever alliances occurred, so did desertions. Even warlords needed to be replaced at times due to their betrayal. Soldiers deserted most frequently, however. After one week, six Europeans, four Balinese and one Javanese were already found absent. Around the same time, De Saint-Martin reports six deserters present in Trunajaya’s court, one of whom receiving the title Captain Agrajuda. Not long after, Hurdt would express his concern on “the collapse of our militia, (…), which lacks people”. Even the carriers appear to have regularly abandoned their position.
Amangkurat II shared the admiral’s worries, especially when the campaign halted in front of the river Brantas. 519 Deep and wide, the waterway posed difficult to traverse; certainly under heavy enemy fire from the eastern bank. Due to lack of food, casualties and the mere impasse; the Sunan feared “that his people would desert and abandon him”. 520 Indeed they did, but matters did not run out of hand. The campaign had not yet foundered so much as to cause massive abandonment. The VOC Sergeant De Saint-Martin warns for inactivity, however, for it will embolden the enemy and enable him “to draw in the general people”. 521

A raft bridge would hopefully break the distrust. Yet, until it was constructed, temptation from the opposite shore easily undermined the Sunan’s authority, although only for a small number of soldiers. 522 Europeans were seen walking in the hostile camp, probably the fugitives mentioned at the beginning of the campaign. Switching army could be a dangerous move, as the soldier Christiaan Muller experienced when he reached the opposite bank and was “beaten and stabbed off his horse with a pike, that [horse] fell on its back, and [he] was carried away by the stream”. 523

Still, other deserters did survive and tried pulling their peers along while fooling with the VOC officers. So soldiers were tempted by their ‘comrades’ to swim across and switch sides. “There is enough money and food, and no lack of womenfolk”; it was cried out. 524 One VOC sergeant screamed to a deserter that he would pay for his deeds. The reply ran: “come over, I shall pay you double (...) Do you also want to go to Kediri? You first have to face this”; at which point another deserter grabbed a gun to shoot at the sergeant. 525 The fact that such stories are frequently discussed in Briel’s journal proves the VOC’s anxiety about being cast aside by its service men.

Another fear was losing contact with the other columns. Not surprisingly, a large part of the reports is dedicated to the correspondence between the army fractions. A constant notification of hostile advances was crucial for setting up proper tactics. 526 Not even a week after the campaign started, Hurdt already grew nervous over the columns of Renesse and Muller, requesting them to “send daily expresses on the enemies’ activities, where they hide, how strong and all the other

519 Notice that the name ‘Palabaan’ is used which can either refer to the Majapahit Tjanggu or Kediri. Both, however, are located near the Brantas. See ibid.: 155.
520 Ibid.: 173.
521 This is a general statement on the campaign, not referring to the Brantas episode specifically. De Saint-Martin, “Letter XLIX”: 215.
522 Hurdt writes :“Nu waren er vijf van die schelmen aan de overzijde”. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 187.
523 The quote is translated from: “van de vijand aangerast en met een piek van ‘t paerd gestoaten was, dat agterover vallende, in de stroom wegdreef”. Ibid.: 187 and 218.
524 The quotes are translated from “Camerrath” and “Geld en kost isser genoeg, en geen gebrek aan vrouwlieden.” Ibid.: 183.
occurrences, so our measures concerning our subsequent march can be adapted to it, and especially whenever it is necessary for us to travel thither with our troops".

To travel and find directions, communication with the Javanese colleagues was crucial. Initially, misunderstandings arrived on both the routes and travel time. Already during the first day after departure, Hurdt was annoyed by the Sunan advancing so much that no track was left for them to follow. The admiral hence requested some Javanese guides for the VOC army to keep them from losing their way. Two Mantris were assigned to “stay near the Lord Admiral at all times, and point at the straight paths.” But more was asked from the indigenous troops and residents.

Surveillance demands similar to those of Renesse and Muller were made on the Javanese and Makassarese. The former tended to be used as spies that could equally serve to recruit villagers. The Sunan, for instance, sent four “distinctive Javanese” together with “some followers” to eye the enemy and gather men for Renesse’s column in Grobogan. The Madurese did the same, judged from the caught spy Sutagati. While conversing with the free Makassarese of the VOC he accidently admitted his Madurese origins. The troops immediately arrested him. He confessed being send together with five others by his namesake Sutagati; an Ombol from Surabaya. More information could not be gotten from him, since he claimed to just be a “simple person” that “never went to Kediri”.

Local rulers usually had better connections and would inform Hurdt about matters as the realignment between Trunajaya and Galesong. Captured bupatis that had escaped Trunajaya were also called upon. Tjiptaradja, for one, describes the impression he got from Kediri while detained there: only “16 to 1.800 Madurese” could be found in the city; “the rest are Javanese”. The emphasis, however, was on how to conquer the town, causing a focus on defensive works and the amount of cannons.

A more intricate story was received from a submitted Javanese that had just returned from Kediri. He has counted “7.000 armed men, among whom effectively 3.000 Madurese. He only saw

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527 The quote is a rough translation from: “dagelijcx pr. expresse boden berigt moesten toesenden van des vijands gedoente, waer sig onthoud, hoe sterq en van t geene anders meer passeerd, opdat men de messures aangaande onsen verderen optogt daerna aanstellen mogte, en speciaelij of het de nood sal vereijsen, dat wij selfs met onse magt derwaarts comen”. These expresses are sent using suruhans. Ibid.: 89.

528 At times, warning on dangerous routes would also be ignored, for instance Manda -Raka insistence on the tricky passage to Grompol. Ibid.: 82-83, 107 and 113.

529 Hurdt’s Kalangan assistants, for example, would tell him the journey from Grompol to Kediri would last 26 rather than 16 days. Ibid.: 124 and 148.

530 The Mantris were Nitijpraija and Cartanagara. The quote is translated from Dutch: “om altijd bij d’heer Admiraal te blijven en de rege wegen aan te wijzen.” Ibid.: 82-83.


532 Another spy was caught on the 21st of October. See ibid.: 114, 149-150 and 180-181.

533 Ibid.: 213; and Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: 269, 301 and 305-306.

534 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 116.
one Dutch, and one Ternaten inside”. This is confirmed by Dipanegara - a nobleman loyal to Amankurat II but stuck in Kediri - who saw “about 4,000 Madurese”535. A captured Madurese, who claimed “he was sent, to fracture our power”, has something else to tell: “only 1,000 Madurese and 100 Makassarese as well as Malayans, but no Javanese were inside Kediri”. The Madurese defector Wallingattij accounted the troops roaming outside the city walls.536

Even more interesting than these numbers, was the message by Najatjitra received while camped at the Brantas. After abandoning his governorship of Semarang, he joined the Madurese in December 1676. Now, he decided to return to the Sunan, which eventually would bring him back his old post. Najatjitra advises Hurdt to attack Kediri soon. “All the Javanese heads currently led by Trunajaya, and whose wives are in Kediri, longed for our arrival, hoping that success would deliver them from Trunajaya. They were planning to change sides, but saw no occasion to do so with their children and wives, and needed therefore to wait for a better opportunity. In Kediri, there were many qualms, so we would conquer it quickly during an assault, since varying Javanese heads that were inside would favour us.”537

When Hurdt and the Sunan did make it to the eastern riverside, Najatjitra again contacted the admiral on the “great tumult” in Kediri; “Trunajaya being shaken and having lost his tongue, at one moment wanting to live and die in Kediri, and at another wanting to flee when the Dutch come; however, being asked where, he is astonished, and does not know”.538 It almost appears as if Trunajaya himself was becoming the target of rebellions.

That Trunajaya was not betrayed during the attack on Kediri, shows that Najatjitra was either overly optimistic or deceptive. The latter did not appear to be the case given the additional entrusted information send by this lord. He offered a complete list of “both Madurese and Javanese heads” that were stationed “down or at the river”.539 The amounts of troops was very high and Trunajaya

535 Ibid.: 155 and 176.
536 The quote derives from: “Den gevangen Madurees beleed, ‘dat hij was uijtgesonden, om ons magt te verspieden, seggende dat maar 1000 Maduresen en 100 soo Macassaren als Maleijers, maer geene Javanen in Cadierij waren. Aan dese kant swooren 50 Madurese ruijters’, dog welk relaes voor absolute leugens en flatterije gehouden wierd, doordoen ‘t contrarie reeds hier bevonden hebben”. The VOC men hence show sceptismis towards his latter claim, yet do not judge upon the first. See ibid.: 161; and Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister “Wallingattij verschijnd aan boord en doet ‘t volgende relaas”: 272-280.
537 The quote is derived from: “Hij relateerd, ‘hoe alle de Javaanse hoofden tegenwoordig onder Troenadjaja, en welckers wijven in Cadierij waren, verlangden na onze overkomste, in hoope bij goed succes van Troenadjaja verlost te sullen worden. Zij waren wel van sins om over te komen, maar en sagen met haare vrouwen en kinderen geen kans, en moesten dierhalven beter gelegentheid verwagten. In Cadierij was veel murmuratie, twijfelden niet, off wij zouden bij een assaut in korten meester daervan wesen, want diverse Javaanse hoofden, die binnen waren, hun in ons faveur aanstellen souden’.” Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 219-220
538 The quote is derived from: “Daar was groote murmuratie, zijnde Troenadjaja in sijn gemoet kennelijk geturbeert, en in sijne concepten vacillant, willenende dan in Cadierij leven en sterven, en dan eens weder, soo haest d’Hollanders quamen, vlugen, dogh gevraegd werden, waarheen, staat hij versteld, en weet het niet”. Ibid.: 227.
539 The quotes is translated from “nederwaarts of aan de rivier”. The soldiers are described as 200 largely Madurese ones near Tukum, 500 Madurese in front of Tukum, 100 Makassarese and Malayans opposite the pagar, and 40 Madurese, 50 Javanese (Madr.), 60 Madurese collection of Javanese”, 50 Madurese and 30 Madurese in front of it. Additionally there were “about 1200” “forced Javanese” who were under surveillance. Ibid.: 220-221
appeared to have gathered many forces along the river, although not as much as he kept in Kediri. Through disclosures as these, an impression of enemy war-bands near and far could be formed.

Intelligence on the enemy at close quarters was gathered frequently. The same Madurese prisoner mentioned above named all leaders of his camp. Albeit he could not provide numbers, he did stress that “the enemy consisted out of Madurese, a small amount of Javanese, Makassarese and Malayans”. Others captives equally conveyed internal disagreements between Trunajaya and various warlords. So the VOC came to hear about Trunajaya repelling the warriors of Tumĕnggung Dermajuda, whom the Babad Tanah Jawi describes as a supporter of the Madurese. Likely, the trust between the two had been broken. Loyalty for other fallen commanders was more long-lasting and stronger.

Two Javanese boys even mentioned Trunajaya approached the frontier in search for revenge over the death of his two main field officers; Arja Singasari and Suradipa. He “wanted to run amok, still was retained from doing so by much prayer, screaming and begging of his mother and wives”. So much noise was produced by them that Mardijkers on guard at the other side of river Brantas could hear it. After losing Kediri, Trunajaya’s search for refuge was again traced by the VOC. Now the loyalty was offered to not by the fallen overlord. Three-thousand Sampanese, likely an exaggeration, were claimed to follow him. Escaping from Blitar to Malang, the warlord was assumed to seek consolidation with the Makassarese there.

Locals are equally questioned on the movements of the enemy, although such informants tend to be briefed on fleeing opponents rather than offensive ones. Only in rare circumstances do the hostile troops attack the VOC army. More frequent are the raids on surrounding villages to scare the provincial communities; a likely means to avoid them aiding the advancing Sunan. In fact, letters of pardon were spread along the villages by harbingers of the Sunan’s army to gain back their trust. Other traces indicated a large-scale provisioning of Kediri: wheel tracks became abundant while closing in to the city.

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540 Ibid.: 162, 181, 184, 219, 249-250, 263.
541 The quote is translated from: “De vijand bestond meest uijt Maduresen, weijnige Javanen, Maccassaren en Maleijers”. Ibid.: 162.
542 Derma-Juda used to be the governor of Pasuruhan and was ordered by Amangkurat I to fight the Makassarese. After a military defeat, he would however retreat to the Tengger mountains to suppose a neutral stand. Ibid.: 181; and Babad Tanah Jawa, ed. Meinsma: 163 and 191.
543 The quote derives from the confession of the boys: “Item dat Troenadjaja twee etmael hier tegenover sig hadde opgehouden, en ons leger besigtigt en, om de dood van de twee bovengenoemde Reeren te vreeken, had selfs amock willen speelen, dog was daarin door veel bidden, schreuwen en sneeken van sijn moeder en wijven verhinderd geworden”. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 191.
544 Ibid.: 253-255.
546 Ibid.: 112.
547 Ibid.: 233-234
548 It is mentioned how “Sij hadden diverse pardonbriefjes uijt de naam van sijn Hooghd. ende hr. Admirael aan de inwoonders, die hun mede in de bossen waaren onthoudende, verleent; en wanneer den Zoesoehoenan die streke quam op te trekken, zouden zig al d'inwoonders komen vernederen, hadde nog allerwegen kost genoeg gevonden.” Ibid.: 102 and 228.
549 Already on the second of October, Briel notices that the “de weg was goed en bequam, en van karrens sterk gefrequenteerd, die gepresumeerd wierden na Caderij gegaan te sijn.” Ibid.: 139.
Clearly, provision was crucial for the VOC too. Baggage train leaders as Jeremias van Vliet continuously notified Hurdt on food supplies and resting places. Friction could emerge on the division of foodstuffs. Hurdt expected the Javanese to hurdle together supplies, and could be angered when this did not happen. So he demurs Adipati Mandaraka “that more rice for the people would be delivered, as there isn’t half enough, and that even needs to be eaten without any extras”. The Sunan suggests drastic measures to improve delivery. He recommends to “stante pede kris” his servants that were supposed to supply the army, but did not. On other days, brief mentions are made of deliveries that did succeed.

Gradually, sickness would spread fervently and wagons for food were rolling next those transporting the ill and deceased. These transportation tasks were again assigned to indigenous troops, as were additional ones like building bridges and shelters or carrying loot. At times, this led to frustration among the VOC men, certainly during the Brantas river episode. The requested raft bridge took days to finish, by which time it lost its purpose since the river already ebbed. At other moments, encampments needed to be constructed. In cities and villages, shelter appears to have been built or restored on the spot “in Javanese fashion” and lofty when possible. On the field, pondoks or huts were constructed. Abandoned houses offered protection too. Villages, towns, and even temples are often deserted: a common tactic on Java when fearing upcoming forces. The surrounding forests served as refuge. So the Sunan was brought to “an old Javanese house” by one of his Mantris in Godong.

Houses like those in Godong were both sites of accommodation and negotiation. The mutual visits between Hurdt and Amangkurat II in these camps are described frequently; Briel states they occurred “habitually”. Ceremonies surrounded them, like the “3 charges and several cannon shots” that accompanied the Sunan’s entry of Hurdt’s house. The meetings usually served to discuss

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550 Ibid.: 86-87, 91,110-111, 119 and 135; and Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: 310.
551 This is directly said by Hurdt and put between quotes in the text, in Dutch it reads: "dat meerder rijs voor het volq zoude doen aanbringen, alsoo niet d’heft genoegh hadden, en de se nogh sonder eenige toespijsemoesten nuttigen &a." Briel, De Expeditie Van: 87. See also ibid.: 133, 134, 147 and 276.
552 The quote is a translation from: “stante pede krisken”. Ibid.: 107.
553 Ibid.: 88, 91, 97, 107-108, 110, 114, 116, 119, 127, 130, 142, 182, 218 and 231; and Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister: 260. Examples are: “Tumĕnggung Zoeranata liet eenige koebeesten brengen, die aan ’t volk verdeelden waren”. A hint is given on ties with Giri, when salt from that region is expected to be delivered. See Briel, De Expeditie Van: 173.
555 Ibid.: 186.
557 Even though Reid’s theory on military labour scarcity is contested, his reference to fleeing villagers appears less controversial. See A. Reid, “Low Population Growth and its Causes in Pre-Colonial Southeast Asia.” in Death Disease in Southeast Asia: Exploration in Social, Medical and Demographic History, ed. N. G. Owen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
558 Near Kalang, mention is made of a temple “the priests have abandoned” (“een tempel, waeru ijt de papen verlaopen waren”). Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 83, 87, 114, 119 and 139-141.
559 Ibid.: 82-83.
560 The quote is translated from “volgens gewoonte”. Ibid.: 110.
561 The quote is translated from: “3 charges en eenige canonschoten”. This is the only time this particular ceremony is mentioned. Ibid.: 88.
tactics. Be it to support the other columns, occupy cities, choose routes, arrange provision and troops, avoid overlooking enemy troops, send letters to local rulers, or even build bridges. Amangkurat’s reliance on Hurdt shines through in his constant abidance to negotiations and VOC tactics.

The Sunan equally makes his efforts to please Hurdt. He sends his “gandex”, or servants, to bring fresh fish and fruits, and gives water deriving from a source used by “Susuhunans of old times on”. Respect was mutual. When the princess Ratu Woh expires in Japara, Hurdt shows his sympathy through camping down “because [the Sunan] will call together all his Mantris, to conduct the customary mourning”. The wait did happen to suit his military scheme too, revealing how utilitarian and compassionate reasoning were often two sides of the same coin. When anger about Ratu Who’s death reared up again two years later, it was not the Company but the Javanese caretakers that were blamed and even hunted down. It appears the VOC remained understood as a protector of Mataram.

Nonetheless, shortly after victory distrust lingered. When Kediri fell, the Sunan attempted to shed off his dependence. Correspondence between the parties declined. Hurdt complained to the Sunan about the lack of “decent communication (...) even though that was very necessary”. The transport of sick soldiers was thereby delayed. Amangkurat claimed he “did not want to bother his father, the admiral, with nonsense”. Moreover, he was not to be blamed for the slow process since he did “order his Mantris to do their best”. Yet, now the delay had become evident, he would “immediately bring things in order”.

That was a promise hard to keep, however. The Sunan might have been able to obey, but could not always command to live up to it. Amangkurat held a fragile authority and bewailed his own lack of control. Most bothersome was “the slowness of the Mantris in diligently following his commands, contrary to the old habit of his ancestors’ times, that made women conduct most of [the Sunan’s] orders, so they would be done well and accurately. But now he was calling the shots, [they] were not listened to”. Hurdt did not fall for this and remained dissatisfied over the lacking organization of the Sunan and his Mantris, accusing them on several points.

562 Ibid.: 88, 92, 102-103, 107-108, 122, 125-126, 128, 130, 170, 172-174, 202, 207, 212-213, 228-229 and 266-267. Mantris were usually present too. The heads of the army are generally shortly referred to, mentioning their names and negotiations—not the topics of negotiation—with them. See ibid.: 96, 120 and 133.

563 Ibid.: 86, and 131.

564 The quote is translated from: “stilleggen, want hij alle zijne mantri’s soude bij malcanderen laten roepen, om de gewoonlĳcke roouw te bedrijven”. It derives from a letter sent by Marchier halfway 1680. Ibid.: 113 and 186.

565 The quotes are translated from: “had hij sijn vader, den Admiral, met beuvelingen niet lastig willen vallen”; “want hij zijn mantri’s gelast hadde haar best te doen”; and “Hij soude aanstonds ordre daerin stellen”. Ibid.: 214.

566 The quote is translated from: “Soesoehoenan klaegt “over de traegheid van de mantri’s in ’t vluitig naekomen van sjine bevelen, contrarie d’oude gewoonte sijner voorouders tijden, die haar meeste bevelen door wijzen lieten doen, en egter wel en accuraat geobserveerd wierden. Maar nu hij self alles gelaste, wierde niet verrigt.” Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 214.

Prior discussions were not as heated. Amangkurat II often expresses his anxieties towards Hurdt. The admiral certainly considers these, apparently taking the Sunan’s insights as valuable. The whole strategy of the campaign was, after all, shaped by Amangkurat II’s preference for a ‘long march’. The ‘listening ear’ is detectable in more passages. At the start of the campaign, the Sunan, for instance, asks “whether it will not be necessary to keep the post of Selimbi and Logendèr occupied as to make sure no hostile invasion will occur there, because he does not trust his brother Pangéran Puger”. Hurdt promises to keep this in mind, even though this would impede his plan to bring all forces together.

The day after, the Sunan’s call is partly discarded due to concerns that “our general army will thus be weakened too much by it.” Even then, an attempt is made to expound the motivations

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569 Briel, *De Expeditie Hurdt*: 89-90, 144, 163 and 172-174.
570 The quote, which might be citing Amangkurat II directly, is translated from Dutch: “of het niet noodig zoude wesen dat de post op Chelimbij ofte Lagondeer beset bleef ten eijnde daar ontrent geen vijandige invasie quame te geschieden, want hij sijnen broeder pangeran Poegar niet betrouwde; ’t welk d’heer Admirael zijnde in opmerkinge te sullen houden, om verder daervan te spreken.” Ibid.: 89.
571 The quote is translated from “dat men onsse generaele magt daermede al te veel verswacken zoude.” Ibid.: 90. Notice that Couper did urge earlier to only send commanders eastwards that were popular in those lands, which stirred up the courtiers and led to other to insist
behind the Javanese demands. So the feuds between Amangkurat II and his brother Puger are elaborated upon. Interestingly, Puger’s mythical claims on kingship are set out specifically. The Sunan apparently told Hurdt and his colleagues about the Sunan Kudus or possibly the Raden Patah, the ‘conqueror from Demak’, and his fears for his brother re-enacting this story. The description of the Sunan’s angst does not show any scepticism, besides the nominator of “pagan” for the pre-Islamic Javanese.  

Puger is residing “in a desolated place southwards of Mataram named Gambauwa while praying and doing sembahyang [conducting salat], living ascetically, to obtain from heaven, that he may retain the rule over Java, like in old times, when the Javanese were still pagans, a certain Sultan of Demak [who was] very much longing to take control and aspiring to take over the government of Majapahit, abstaining himself in a hole not far from this pager, for forty days with regular fasting and sembahyang, to, as stated, thereby obtain the region of Java, which he succeeded to do, becoming a master over Majapahit and conquering the land through violence. This the Susuhunan feared, his brother would also attempt to do.”  

This statement shows us Hurdt certainly had some concern for the intricacies of Javanese kingship, including its mystic sides. But the degree to which this influenced his tactics is hard to tell. The next day, Hurdt and Amangkurat II would inspect this famed ‘hole’ of asceticism; likely the Watu Bethek at Kayangan where the first Mataramese king retreated to meditate. Hurdt’s account of it is very descriptive, attending to the material shape rather than spiritual significances. At other moments, the Sunan’s advice on his brother’s spiritual capacities makes a more concrete mark on Hurdt’s operational plans.
On the 23rd of September, Hurdt asked him whether the rising sickness and decreasing provision should not prompt them “to advance to Mataram, as to place his Excellency on the thrown, as to clean the lands of Bagelèn, Wates, Kedu and others of enemies etc.” To which he responded: “no, and that one should pursue the path straight to Kediri, assuming, that the conquest of that place or city Mataram could not profit him; because his brother would flee to Bagelèn, and establish new followers there, to keep him in worries and rupture”. What is more, “when Kediri will be conquered, everything on this side [i.e. Central Java] will work out”.

Amangkurat’s advice comprises insights into the manner his brother rallied men, the fleeting significance of the Mataramese kraton and the absolute need to smother the voice of the rebels’ warlord before emplacing a new hierarchy in Central Java. Hurdt took notice of them and carried on the march to East Java. Clues of sincere trust in Amangkurat’s judgements are hence clearly present. Nonetheless, the suspicion rising after Kediri’s fall could be distinguished during the march too.

Especially the authority of the Sunan among his own people was occasionally doubted by Hurdt. At the public reading of the contract with the VOC, one Javanese regent jumped up and screamed “with much fervour” “that the Susuhunan was mad, that he simply gave away his country,” indebted his people and turned them into slaves. Punishment ensued.

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577 The quotes are translated from: “na de Mataram te trekken, om sijn Hooghd. aldaar op den thron te stellen, mitsgaders de landen van Bagaleen, Wattas, Kadoe en andere van de vijanden te suijveren &a”; “Van neen, en dat men moest de cours regt op Cadirij aansetten, sustineerende, dat souder die veroveringe van die plaatse ofte stad de Mataram hem niet voordeelig wesen konde; want sijn broeder de vlugt na Bagalen soude neemen, ende daar een nieuwen aanhang maeken, om hem steets in bekommeringe en rupture te houden”; and “dat wanneer Cadierij vermeesterd was, alles aen dese cant wel gaan soude”. Ibid.: 125.
supported, however, even when undermining royal power. The Mantris sometimes simply went their own way, as it evident from the request for VOC officers to join their military expeditions or the Buginese offer to attack Madura.\textsuperscript{579}

Amangkurat II lacked control over his own army. The failure to cross the river Brantas with rafts made this painfully clear. Even when Amangkurat II had urged his Mantris to “do their utter best, and assist in a truthful matter, because it concerned the Susuhunan and themselves”, the operation was hindered by Javanese truancy.\textsuperscript{580} Hurdt was deeply angered, exclaiming to the Sunan “that his highness can now see himself, how no claim can be made on his people, as their slowness and cowardness was the principal cause, for the fruitless results of our attack”. He now took it to himself, to warn the Mantris not to make the same mistake again, to which they obediently answered “that it would not fail due to their fault, and if it will [they] preferred to lose their lives”.\textsuperscript{581}

A week later, a new attempt was made. But luck struck. The water level turned out to have decreased dramatically overnight, and a passage on horseback was doable. The Babad Tanah Jawa took this as feat of the Sunan’s supernatural power, claiming two-thirds of the water level dropped when Amangkurat II drove his horse into the river. Hurdt instead names it a grace of God. In fact, the minister Manteau was called in “to conduct a prayer for all our people, and asking the Lord God for a blessing and victory” while the “Javanese force” was waiting by.\textsuperscript{582} This time, the Javanese did fight fervently; chasing the enemy and being praised for it.

For the next days, obedience was all present. Yet, at the very moment Kediri was conquered, ransacking urges destroyed the indigenous compliance. As the daghregister states: “the plundering spread through Kediri, at which the Javanese showed to be brave masters, thereby missing the occasion to continue chasing the fleeing Trunajaya, like they had promised in advance”.\textsuperscript{583} The
Sunan’s initial concern was with the regalia: hearing about “the Majapahit crown and other Mataramese court goods, like gongs, costly clothing and the like” he requested that those “will be returned, as they belonged to his ancestors, and [he would] prefer keeping them as a memory for his offspring.” Possibly realizing the royal authority gained by these objects, Hurdt promised to return everything that could be retrieved and even issued a notice on it.584

When the admiral as well criticized Amangkurat II’s lack of control over his forces, he replied: “it was difficult to tell who had hidden or taken [the treasures] away, suspecting our indigenous militia as much as his” and stressing “that a great part of his force had advanced, to hunt down the enemy”.585 Indeed some men seemed to have continued the chase.586 It is likely, however, that a large part of these were running to their fields instead; as the farmland called now the martial aim had been reached. Yet, the VOC sources do not consider this.

What the Company men do notice is money. One of Amangkurat II’s main means to control his servants was cash. He seems anxious to tell Hurdt not much of it had remained after paying his subordinate leaders and losing some Spanish reals through theft. The admiral appeases him, however, by stating that “he had not come for money, but to reclaim the charges of his Highness in time and according to capability”.587 Similarly, the fleeing Trunajaya was reported to have taken 10.000 Spanish reals with him, of which he offered 1.000 as an honorary gift to Karaëng Galesong while requesting his assistance. He likely made a similar appeal to Kajoran, who however refused.588

Holy matters were also used to claim abidance. De Graaf already briefly consulted Hurdt’s report in search of holy centres. Blitar, Kaluwang, Kalang, Prawata, Singkal and the mountains of Tegal plus Lawu are mentioned.589 Some of the sites abased to the Sunan, other denounced him. Mandaraka, for instance, informs how he has captured the insurgent Tédjalaku, the likely ascetic from the Babad Tanah Jawi that hid on the volcano Kelud together with forty students. Similar hostile ascetics were encountered throughout the campaign, getting rid of them proved Mataram’s power.590

585 The quote is derived from: “Waerop sijn Hooghd. diende, ‘dat hij mede wel wiste, dat er meer ligt geschut van bassen &a. alomme zij geweest, oog konden kwalij raden, wie ‘t selve verscholen ofte weggevoerd hadde, suspecterende onse Inlandse militie soo wel als de zijne; ende wierd aangenomen, hierop bij den aftogt te letten’. Zijde voorts, ‘dat een goed gedeelte van sijne magt was uitgetogen, om den vijand na te jagen, verhopende van deselve wat goeds’”. Ibid.: 223-224.
586 Ibid.: 250.
587 The quote servies from: “dat niet gecomen was, om geld [ tehaelen, maar de zaeken van sijn Hooghd. na tijds gelegentheijd en vermogen te redresseren’”. Ibid.: 246.
588 The old governor of Trunajaya, Suta Pattij of Rawa, told this to Hurdt. Ibid.: 253.
589 Singkal is merely refered to in the Javanese chronicle, but was encountered during Hurdt’s campaign. De Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-vraagstuk”: 320-321.
590 Ibid.: 109, 132, 133 and 134.
Just as effective was paying respect to holy sites. The old centres of the Walisanga are passed by; however the accounts on the visits differ between the Babads and VOC sources. While in Kudus, Briel only pens down the destruction of the city and the beauty of its mosque, or “Temple”. The Babad Tanah Jawa tells how the Sunan prays at Sunan Kudus’ grave and how his personal scribe and Wali descendant Panembahan Natapraja is called from Demak to “pray for him”.591

Briel’s description of Kediri merely refers to an “Islamic temple” with “some old royal graves” standing on the west side of the alun-alun “that is not as graceful as Gunonsari [the residential quarters]”. It was used as ammunition storage and almost blew up as a consequence.592 Judging from the Sunan’s visit to the Kudus graveyard and his interest in the Kediri regalia, he must have brought tribute to this site. Yet, such visits are not discussed by Briel. But towns were not the only localities of spiritual importance; shrines figure more clearly in the sources. For instance, gravesides that are “considered very holy by their priests” were visited by soldiers to offer tjempaka flowers.593

Eventually, Hurdt started to grasp the influence of religious authority. After Kediri fell, he makes an effort to resurrect the Sunan as an emblematic figure venerated by the realm at large. In a scene of cultural misunderstanding, Hurdt hands the Susuhunan a royal crown while he is sitting underneath a tree surrounded by “all his lords”. Briel happily writes how it “was received with great pleasure and soon many people came to submit to the Susuhunan”. Even the esteemed Madurese Pangérán Sampang fell “in front of his feet, and congratulated his majesty with tears in his eyes”.594

Yet, the significance of the ornamental head covering was not all that great.595 A more important step to dominance was taken by selecting the right men to govern Kediri, dismantling the city’s defences, and redeeming the abidance of the local population. At least, this was first on the Sunan’s agenda. Possibly he felt his spiritual status had already been established on march and did not need any newly imposed regalia. Care was taken to choose kin of the old Kediri dynasty, send men to Wates and even Madura to becharm its residents, and to retreat the European soldiers to the nearby Zinkal as to relief the fears of the Kediri city dwellers. Still, all this did not prevent Amangkurat’s great difficulties in mobilizing his Mantris and troops.596

The pillaging, gambling and even enslaving warriors could hardly be maintained. The Sunan asked Hurdt to post an edict against the misbehaviours and organized a tournament as a seeming

591 As explained in footnote 33, Panembahan Natapraja was a direct descent of Sunan Kalijaga. Ibid.: 84; and Babad Tanah Jawi, ed. Meinsma: 196.
592 The quote is derived from “Aan de westzijde van ’t pleijn staat den tempel, die niet soo cierlijk is als die van Goenonsari bovengenoemd, waernevens enige oude koninglijke graven gesien worden”. Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 245, 251.
593 The quote refers to the first graveside visited by Hurdt’s column: “Hier was ter zijden een oude grafstede, op een verheven plaats, die de Javanen zeijden van hare papen voor seer heijlig gehouden wierde, Alle morgen wierden offerhanden op dit graf gedaan van seker kruijt, ’t welk de Javanen om te offeren op alle graven gebruiken.” Ibid.: 82. Still today, Tjempaka flowers are used for this purpose. See E. M. Beekman, Fugitive Dreams: An Anthology of Dutch Colonial Literature (University of Massachusetts Press, 1988): 304.
596 Briel, De Expeditie Hurdt: 249, 251, 253-256 and 261.
attempt to restrain and appease the crowds. Although he succeeded to some degree, disorder still reigned. So the Sunan decided to isolate himself on the return voyage; to not sleep “in his prepared resting-place, but rest in the forest out of disfavour against his Mantris.” Concurrently, food shares delivered by the king to the soldiers decreased. Hurdt had no time for these affairs. In the wake of the next day, his patience ended. After “waiting a long time for the Susuhunan and the carriers of ammunition... we marched on without his presence and followers”. The campaign had lasted two months.

Trunajaya was defeated yet still alive. Soon after settling in Madura he informed the VOC he “would be inclined to visit the Susuhunan, but the general people refuse help, because Madura was given to Pangéran Sampang”. The latter prince had sought to oust Trunajaya from Madura for a long time already, and was now dominating the island with his followers. Trunajaya apparently felt stuck in the shadow of his competitor were he to submit to Mataram. An anxiety bolstered by receiving no replies from the Sunan to his letters requesting “that I would supervise Madura according to the right of my ancestors”. Therefore he “could not appear” “out of fear for the Susuhunan”. Instead, he promised “that I and all my people will abase” to Amangkurat if they were left in peace to grow rice around Malang.

Ambiguous as this message might be, it did show Hurdt how the status of Amangkurat II had become of much significance after the fall of Kediri. No matter the recalcitrant troops and massive looting, the Sunan was referred to as a landowner by the biggest enemy he had faced. Still, by now the admiral had learned that all that glitters is not gold. The ‘feudal’ relationship suggested by Trunajaya would be emplaced in a fragile state system. While his people might not have been “more than a 1.000 souls strong”, Malang could soon become a second Kediri. Hence, Trunajaya was not left in peace.

Nor was a massive campaign against Madura set up. The limited control over pejuang as well as the threat from Banten brought too many risks. Amangkurat’s appeal to send new forces to Madura was rejected and the Javanese were asked to just convince the Madurese to submit. Sending “one or two trusted Madurese” to “peacefully dispose” the “leaders and elites” to “accept” the rule

597 Ibid.: 264-266 and 274.
598 The quotes are derived from: “ging niet in sijn geprepareerde rustplaats, maar in ’t bosch logieren uijt misnoegen tegen sijne mantri’s”; “naar langen tijd op den Soesoehoenau en de dragers tot d’amunitie van oorlog gewagt hadden, zijn wij sonder sijn persoon ende gevolg met Comp. dienaars voortgemarceerd”. Ibid.: 275-276.
599 Pangéran Sampang had been requesting to return from the kraton to Madura for many months already; “verseeckende mede naar d’oost, benefens Keay Wangsa Diepa mocht vertreken, als wanneer hy siche verseeckerde, dat er veel van de Maduresen Troenajaja verlaeten, en by hem over komen zouden”. For a brief moment after the fall of the Mataramese kraton, he did serve Trunajaya: “ Pangeran Sampan had by Troenadjaja, na 5 dagen wachtens, weder zitplaats en aanspraak gekregen.” He soon abandoned Trunajaya, however, giving classified information to the Sunan and joining his side. Most Madurese did not favour him, but after the fall of Kediri, Mataram again dictated local rule. See Couper, “Letter XVI”: 112; and Speelman, “Letter XXX”: 139.
600 Briel, Vervolgh Dagregister “Brief van Troenadjaja, aanTumênggung Suranata gesonden”: 264-265.
601 Ibid.: 265.
of the Susuhunan would supposedly suffice. Thereby, no war of attrition would have to be fought against the “stubborn people”. Only immediate threats as, for example, the Makassarese in Kakappar were to be dealt with.\footnote{Notice that the VOC was also stained by possible attacks of Banten and Hurdt wanted to wait for the response of the Supreme Government before persuading further. Still his main argument remains: “onse Europische en Boegijse magt niet derwaarts oversonden maar verwagten dat de opperhoofden van selfs haar gemoedelijk den Soesoehoenan komen submitteeren”. The quotes in the running text are derived from Dutch: “Madurees of twee derwaarts moeste senden”; “met sagtsinnigheijd daar toe te disponeren” and “sij vermits het een hartneckig volk is”. Briel, \textit{Vervolgh Dagregister} “Voornoemde Pangeran moet self zijn best doen, om de inwoonders van Madura aan hem te verbinden”: 259; and idem, \textit{Vervolgh Dagregister} “Voorstel hoe men best Madura zoude tot redelijkheyd brengen”: 280-281. On the negotiations with the Makassarese as well as the plans to attack them, see: J. Couper, “Letter L VII (6 September, 1679)” in De \textit{Opkomst Van}: 270-271; idem., “Letter LX (15 October, 1679)” in De \textit{Opkomst Van}: 276-278, idem., “Letter LXI”: 278-279; and J. van Vliet, “Letter LVI (3 August, 1679).” In \textit{De Opkomst Van}: 269-270. For the capture and murder of Kajoran see Marchier, “Letter LVIX”: 274-276; and Sloot and Taalbeecq, “Letter LVIII”: 271-274.}

The campaign to Kediri had seemingly worn down the VOC forces. Judging from the reports, Hurdt’s weariness appears mostly rooted in administrative hurdles instead of combat. The sources on his campaign are not so much about battles as the gathering of intelligence. Since Javanese contacts were crucial for collecting it, the associations with allies, prisoners, enemies, villagers and warlords gain more attention than bloodshed and tactical concerns. The campaign reports become a looking-glass for cross-cultural networks, cosmopolitan awareness and contrasting acumen. Kediri fell due to pejuangs. The pejuangs fought since Hurdt could draw them in his VOC army.

Intelligence was necessary to bridge pejuang warfare with that of the Company. The reports show the incommensurability between two different ways of warring. The Sulawesian plan to attack Madura typifies this divergence. Whereas they wanted to “ravage” the island and make its residents and lords “oppose Trunajaya more out of remorse”, the VOC men warned them that ‘catching birds’ should not be done by ‘throwing stones at them’.\footnote{I am paraphrasing here, hence the single quotes. Briel, \textit{De Expeditie Hurdt}: 185; and idem., \textit{Vervolgh Dagregister} “De Boegijse groote comt aan boord”: 271-272.} Pillage mismatched ploy. As is shown in the conclusion, the manner in which this incommensurability is framed tells a lot about the extent to which VOC men could comprehend the mandala and military market in which they operated.
5. **Conclusion:** Traces of the military labour market

Can Trunajaya’s mystical impact be revived? The debate on historiography has shown us the tendencies of De Graaf’s ‘relational objectivity’ and Berg’s ‘syntypical method’. The former produced chronological narratives stretching over long periods and interpreting the thoughts of actors based on the events surrounding them. Less appealing were explanations centred on the community or organizations of which the actor was part. The syntypical methods did take such factors into account and tried to dissect ‘specific complexes of myths’ by analysing the intrinsic interests of authors or societies. Yet, neither research approach did justice to Trunajaya.

Relational objectivity ignored how he amassed his men through cults and charisma. And the syntypical method trapped itself in a reciprocal circle in search of the real meaning of myths; were they described explicitly or rather hidden under figurative speech? The central book on seventeenth and eighteenth century Javanese warfare adopted the discursive choices of ‘relational objectivity’. Ricklefs’ *War, Culture and Economy* treats the impacts of half a century of violence. The kraton collapsed, rebellions were suppressed, and exploitative contracts were signed with the VOC. In the heat of these events, both the desperate cling to royal power and the increasing Company debts come to the fore as the central concerns of the historic actors. Again, the particular perspectives of the contemporaries end up as side-matters.

Both De Graaf and Ricklefs sifted through the VOC sources to find information on contracts, battles and warlords. That these sources constitute windows from which VOC officers beheld the Javanese warfare was no direct concern. ‘Dates,’ ‘names’ and ‘regions’ are valuable facts, but the context in which they were scribed down proves ‘interests’ too. Those very interests –expressed in the selection of issues, layout, remarks and writing style- are yet to be fully appreciated. While these historians conducted seminal research on the materials, the personal perspectives within them were left tangled. Bertrand would not stand for this, and sought to retrieve motives and interests embedded into the cultures of both the Asian and European authors. The influence of warfare on the late seventeenth court is slighted by him, however. Only Ricklefs’ recent work has given full due to the martial influence on long-term Islamization.

In the end, the conflicting strands of historians reveal the difficulties in describing the mystical impact of warlords. Such an aim begs a specific inquiry. What war is to whom is the question. Cultures of conflict contrast and can be concealed across the breach of communities. What is obvious to the Javanese is often odd to the VOC, lest they cooperate so intensely that commensurability among the parties is produced. This is exactly what happened during the chaos of the late 1670s. Times of disarray called for new alliances. Soon the Europeans and Javanese would no longer quarrel.
at court, but march shoulder to shoulder. A continuum of sorts was achieved between a world of privatised state armies and one of fragmented fraternizations that segmented mandalas.

‘Strange’ parallels exist between the military enterprises of seventeenth century Europe and Java. On the one hand, the use of an Asian legion by the VOC and the use of the VOC by the Mataram Sunans, mirror the “public-private partnerships” shaping Swiss, German and Dutch armies in the same era. Warlords were to enact the wars intended by their governors; signing agreements and gathering provisions, arms and men for profit or benefits. On the other hand, the elaborate alliance system intrinsic to mandalas required a military approach different from the one uniting, for instance, the Dutch States Army. Not so strangely, the VOC had to adapt its intelligence to capture the dynamics of Javanese warfare fraternization. Most warlords in the archipelago could not be contracted and their war-bands were united ad hoc.

Yet, the continuity of upheaval, rebellion and war evoked the need for local warriors to settle lingering inland issues. Speelman’s adage of eradicating the enemy, inclined towards gathering as many troops as possible to bring resistance to a close. Next to the Batavian ‘Asian legion’ arose a new much more improvised form of Asian alliance. The military reputation established in the last few decades, allowed the VOC to access a ‘stable flow’ of itinerant war-bands in Java, Timor, Sulawesi and the Moluccas. The ways of war bended before the breeze. The Asian legion composed of strictly administrated groups like the Mardijkers, were complemented by the temporary assistance of pejuangs charged by autonomous war lords. Warrior charisma slowly became one of the pillars of the VOC’s army. The Company field reports reflect these changes.

The Company men had to craft agility in a military labour market that was unconventional to European standards. Commensurating Javanese notions of hierarchy and struggle proved a crucial step to do so. Mataram and the VOC were each situated in their own ‘cosmopolis’ or understanding of government and warfare; of hierarchies and their dissolution. The case study on Van Goens demonstrated how the impression of Oriental despotism derived from incomprehension of the court hierarchies and diplomacy. The frustration of dealing with capricious court fractions drafted the rejection of the polity or mandala at large. In consequence, Amangkurat I was spurned as an oppressor.

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604 The military enterpriser was less visible in Java, although that might be a natural outcome of the more restricted monetary economy. In some ways, the ‘fiscal-military’ state was never founded there, and the military boom after the 1670s in Europe did not find a direct parallel along the likes of Mataram, even if the Sunan tried to achieve it. Of course, the VOC itself equally “represented a huge level of delegated military authority by European states”. Still, that is not of interest if one restricts the analysis to how VOC men on Java dealt with Javanese warfare (p. 321). See Parrott, The Business of War: 13, 19-23, and 307-317.

605 De Jongh, Het Krijgswezen: 53-56 and 61-78; and Raben, “Het Aziatisch legioen”: 181, 185 and 197.


607 Notice that the Mardijkers also appeared to be a strictly administrative group; only existing in unity on paper.
The description of warlords and war-bands followed patterns similar to that of the autocrat. In the reports of Speelman and Hurdt, four warlords stand in the limelight: Raden Trunajaya, Raden Kajoran, Karaëng Galesong and Sunan Amangkurat II. Each gained labels and all were judged on their leading capabilities. What is more, their followers were scrutinized to see how compliant and alike they were. Just as Van Goens rejected the “slavish” court subjects, so did Speelman dismiss the stubborn Madurese, ‘deceptive’ Makassarese and Kajoran’s “creatures and temple priests”.  

To examine how the VOC sources described and comprehended fraternizations of these war-bands demands recognizing the biases reflected on them. Hence before continuing on mystical impacts, it is to be wondered what image was produced of men like Trunajaya. How was his charisma demeaned to that of a culprit? In one way, failed diplomacy was at the root of rejection. Speelman’s attempt to find a docile heir urged elimination of the rousing Madurese warlord for the sake of tranquillity and profits. Yet, the peaceful submission of Trunajaya was still strived for. It was realized that his adherents were numerable, and his ‘credit and status’ rising.

Securing Amangkurat II’s power required breaking the esteem held by his opponent, be it in fight or consent. Even after war was declared. Showing off brawn while marching to Kediri turned out a good way of winning regard and reducing that of the enemy. But brawn went with brains; new alliances were not only fought for in physical encounters, but also through the appeal of ones warlords. Troops were attracted to their charismas. Demands of subordination were easier to make with their presence. Hence, the enemies remained partners of negotiation. Their charismas could not be denied, no matter whether they were used for hostile means or not. Kajoran, Galesong and Trunajaya might have been despised, but they were equally urged to lay down their arms and join the new Mataram. All would add strength to the mixed army the VOC had gathered and stabilize the mandala for which it was fighting.

The comments on Kajoran and Galesong illustrate this best. Kajoran’s ‘devilish prophecies’ and religious deception “distracted the common population from their required obedience”. The admiral is wary of his schemes to subject the Pasisir and strike deals with elites and royals. Yet, informants conveyed that Trunajaya was the real overlord. Even through a diarchy was planned, Trunajaya draws all regalia and Kajoran himself to his headquarter. Speelman smells the opportunity to offer Kajoran a better alternative. He stresses how the warlord deserted Mataram due to misgivings, and could be “be brought back to friendship” as a state minister. The devil was loathed and craved for.

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608 Speelman, Inscriptie Edele Vertrek: 875-876.
609 Ibid.: 781- 782.
610 Ibid.: 746.
611 Ibid.: 845.
The Makassarese are approached in the same way, especially because their rupture with Trunajaya was more evident. From the start on, Speelman notices their internal fractures and attempts to split them apart. At the same time, he is unreceptive towards Galesong’s difficulties on keeping his “small troop units” in order. Whenever the VOC admirals complains to Galesong for not respecting treaties between them, the warlord’s lacking control over his roaming war-bands is dismissed as an excuse. The VOC men accuse him of either seeking to establish his own Javanese realm or join hands with Trunajaya.

As a potential threat, the Makassarese are rejected as a deceptive group of unwanted conquerors. As a potential partner, Hurdt seemed to keep faith of ‘conscribing’ them as units of his army. Deception taught him, however, not to expect too much. But the Sunan teaches a different lesson. He keeps addressing Galesong and other Makassarese lords as potential warlords and governors in his service. Despite his dismay, Hurdt finds himself in need to keep approaching the Makassarese for cooperation.

Like his subordinates, the overlord was not strictly an adversary. Alliance was sought with Trunajaya. The reports of Miero and Couper prepared ground for maligning the warlord as stubborn, vicious and Islamic; however devout. The rumours on dissent within Kediri and assassination attempts confirmed his malicious intentions. Yet, the ultimate aim remains incorporation, not to bring defeat. Trunajaya keeps being asked to acknowledge the Sunan as “his just lord and sovereign” and return to Madura. Disappointments followed disappointment for Trunajaya had no intention to do so. He wanted a Sultan not a Sunan; he wanted a natural war, not one involving the VOC; he wanted to cultivate East Java in peace, but not send an embassy to Amangkurat.

Throughout the insurrection, the warlord cherished his autonomy. Naturally, all his bids for the throne were ridiculed by the admirals. Any pretention for becoming a Ratu Adil or just prince needed to be nipped in the bud. Panembahan or Sultan; he remained a scoundrel till he was either dead or a vassal. Preference went to the latter, however. Not only would costs of conquest be avoided, capable warlords would equally increase the might of the Company or Mataram. His Madurese followers, however diverse they actually were, would provide a valuable addition to any realm or mandala. That is probably why Amangkurat II offered him half of Madura after his capture, despite the personal hatred between the two. His death likely followed in deny of his requested service.

The previous warlords were both ‘devils and saints’ depending on the situation, the military fractions exposed to and the kind of informants providing intelligence. While Kajoran, Galesong and Trunajaya were never purely treated as enemies, Amangkurat II’s pretensions to sovereignty were

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supported through thick and thin. And thin it could get. Coastal towns were lost, the kraton fell, Brantas could not be crossed, sickness struck; these were all events troubling his resumption. But the biggest issue was often he himself. The admirals are bothered by his womanizing, neglect of the campaign and his inability to control his own lords and manpower. And while Speelman considered him the legitimate heir, the Sunan’s allure appeared to fall short next to that of the insurgents.

But an interesting dynamic arose between the VOC and the Sunan. The latter asked the Company’s assistance in reconquering territory “so many may follow me” again. The former insisted that Amangkurat joined on march to win over from local rulers. The king sought to derive power from the mercenary, and the mercenary sought to achieve power through the king. Warlord and warrior alike were requested to join, either out of respect for the sovereign or out of awe for the European military. To Amangkurat, Speelman and Hurdt were powerful warlords capable of turning the tide. When the tide did turn, they could be dismissed. Not only because of having retrieved the Sunan’s followers, but also because the newly acquired cult would be strongest without the continued interference of outsiders. As the Bantenese Sultan Ageng had warned Amangkurat II; life, religion and realm were to be on one line.

The sources discussed here prove they were not for both Amangkurats. Van Goens describes a Sunan on its throne, Speelman one in exile, and Hurdt one on rampage. These are scenes of diplomacy, despair and combat; all starring a monarch that showed more sympathy towards women than holy men. The ‘long march’ to Kediri can be taken as a desperate effort to change the royal image. This thesis is really about marches rather than battles. Javanese politics centred on soft power not hard one, and as the Javanese adage goes: “soft power always prevails over hard power”. The walk of warriors is altogether different from their assaults. Their function was to impress as much as fight. At times, military advances even resembled ritual processions.

The VOC men wilfully participated in them for the sake of bringing inland stability and thus money to their pockets. However, intricacies of fraternizations, submissions, and legitimacy could not be ignored by them. More than spilling blood, the campaign revolved around these issues. Hence, the Company needed to recognize martial networks. Like any procession, symbolic values became expressed in social ties. One is reminded of the Garebeg Muludan -the celebration of the Birth of the Prophet- where rice-mountains (gunungan) are carried around the kraton under the protection of “royal soldiers in battle dress”. The gunungan came to stand for the wealth of the realm, eaten by the people and courtiers at the end of the procession.614

614 This is, at least, how it developed nowadays; during the seventeenth century different traditions were likely in use. L.F. Brakel, “Islam and local traditions: syncretic ideas and practices.” Indonesia and the Malay World 32, No. 92 (2004): 13.
The masses of men gathered during campaigns symbolize power and wealth as well. They tempted onlookers to submit to its commander; to be provided by his leadership as a bowl of rice to the hungry. Even if large parts of the army consisted out of porters, their mere presence still demonstrated abasement to the warlords. Marches turned into analogies of the network a ruler had expanded; quite alike the kraton rituals. Not soldiers, but their lords formed the hubs of it. The VOC men were part of these networks, and were delving out their own connections through correspondence with certain fractions within it.

During those interactions and through those associations, the Europeans found their ‘devils and saints’. As mentioned, the support given or refused strongly determined the portrayal of courtiers, rulers and warlords. Troops were of less interest. After all, most of the VOC commanders used to be diplomats; and politic negotiations are made with rulers and their delegates, not subordinates. The diplomatic system of the VOC naturally zoomed in on the leaders not the warriors. They were the ones addressed in diplomatic letters, and the ones replying. This gave a platform for expounding their concerns and motivations whereas those of the common warriors remained unheard.

Scarcely do the leaders mention lineages, Walis or Islam. Their statements were hardly ever spiritual. Yet, when considered as part of a military labour market, the implicit religious sides of them are revealed. ‘Intensified identities’ -coined by Ricklefs- can be distinguished in the manner recognition is given to Amangkurat II and different war-bands are joining the march to Kediri. Speelman’s fears derive from the rising Islamic appeal of men like Kajoran, and Hurdt’s weariness is caused by fundamental disagreements on commanding troops with distinct ethnic and religious backgrounds. Yet, all these groups hurdled under the Sunan’s banner; showing his allure was finally matching those of insurgents like Kajoran.

The VOC men did notice this. The socio-religious identification among martial gangs became most evident during the campaign. Surely, Hurdt does account fragmentation among the pejuang; all war-bands appear to have a mind-set shaped by specific localities and particular believes not shared with the indigenous army at large. But they affiliated with each other too. Hence the distribution of Mataramese offices among the warlords after the fall of Kediri; they were positioned in a new common hierarchy. Next to such state power existed a religious one. Both united the Sunan’s subordinates. Hurdt’s attempt to crown the Sunan, reveals he too grasped the potential of spiritual authority. Clues on it were given whenever pilgrimage sites like Watu Bethek -the ‘hole’ of asceticism- were passed by. Religion is never addressed directly; not a single author mentions the Walisanga. Nonetheless, traces persist of the warrior charismas and even some of the myths that seem to underpin these martial groups.
The realm we wandered through in this thesis was one of mandalas, warlords and Sunans but above all else Walis, asceticism, and Islam. Traces in babads and VOC sources show Trunajaya relied on these factors to construct his warrior charisma. Hurdt and Speelman never explicitly realized this, but their endeavour to win him over underlines how they did grasp part of his reputation. His refusal to comply immediately made clear Trunajaya was no just one of the warlords but held pretensions to the ‘Majapahit crown’. The competition between the two overlords - Amangkurat II and Trunajaya - resembles the contest for warriors on the Indian subcontinent. The two opponents mirrored the millennial sovereigns and ascetic warriors overseas. A military labour market spanned between the two leaders. The VOC was caught in the middle.

The manner in which the Company arranged alliances demonstrates how similar the Indonesian archipelago and the Indian subcontinent were when it came to reaching alliances. The martial continuum is as evident as the other ‘strange’ parallels drawn over the Indian Ocean or in Southeast Asia.615 Military demand and supply fluctuated strongly in both cases, and both areas were characterized by itinerant troops shortly sticking to overlords whenever the opportunity arrived. Hence, the ease of ‘Afghan’ warriors to settle in the Mughal Empire, and the opportunity for the Makassarese fighters to roam around Java for a long time. Both troops suddenly supplied skilful warriors in great demand. This allowed a convenient position; negotiating with multiple lords plus states and making requests proportional to the degree to which their brawn was desired.

Those impulses of warriors shaped the reports looked at here. The dynamics discussed above thereby determined the epistemic value of these sources. The endeavours of the authors did not resound ‘veni, vidi, vici’, but rather the Arabic ‘keep your friends close; hold your enemies closer’. Complicated alliances were reported, not simple victory marches. In other words, the knowledge sought for was different from that expected by De Graaf and Ricklefs. Their chronologies describing opposing dichotomous forces tend to deceive the many links connecting the armies. These links were the warriors themselves; war-bands and pejuang moving from one overlord to another.

Next to contracts and commerce, all VOC eyes were on the mobility patterns, fraternizations and leaderships of allies and potential partners in war. Clues of a larger Javanese military market thus scattered over the pages written to the Supreme Government in Batavia. The aggressive nature of the Javanese realm was hence underlined, and an image of the Javanese was constructed that contradicted with the serene romantics of the Tempo Doeloe (i.e. Good Old Times) two hundred

years later. The way in which the seventeenth century image of warrior charismas contrasts with that of the colonial times, enables a claim of reviving Trunajaya’s mystical impact. It is simply a matter of denying the stereotypes of indifferent and immobile natives that developed afterwards.

The portrayal of Javanese warriors became a shadow if its former self in the nineteenth century. Under the *Pax Neerlandica*, the Bupati clung to their image of warlords or *satriya* (refined knight) and celebrated their own Mataramese *Tempo Doeloe* by maintaining *jagos* (‘fighting cock’) and henchmen. That those *jagos* turned from respected warriors to thugs only underlines the words of the VOC soldier Schmalkalden used in the motto: “[b]iß Java ruhig steht und fürs sein Zulist [list] gestillt.” During war, men as Speelman might have sought close cooperation, but their ideologies founded the colonial state and its complete suppression. While depending on charismatic warriors, the VOC equally ushered in their decline. Of this, the death of Trunajaya was just a token.

Nineteenth century literature illustrates the demise. The 1890 children’s novel ‘The Crown of Mataram’ figures brave Dutch soldiers fighting thievish foes on quest for the lost regalia of their unfaithful ally the Sunan. Camped in Japara, a telling depiction is given on the European conquerors and their Asian dupes. The “sturdy [VOC] fellows ... with tanned faces, iron fists, and sparkling eyes ... stood in great contrast with the dreamy and apathetic Javanese ... who showed no sign of the zeal that gleamed in the eyes of the Dutch soldiers.”

No surprise; whatever the outcome they will “win nothing” for all the “mean and inhumane” Javanese leaders would mistreat them alike. In the VOC sources consulted, these warriors certainly were not dull and apathetic, nor were their lords disinterested in their faith. Two-hundred years before the *Tempo Doeloe*, those very troops were the lifeblood of a campaign struggling to muster an army of all shapes and sizes. The only reason the ‘brave Dutch’ managed to do so was through the help of local warlords. But decades of colonization made the Europeans forget. Warriors once hallowed were now shallowed to obscurity.

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616 The colonial times are here taken as the period after the Giyanti treaty of 1755.
617 Nordholt mentions the “colonial ideology” of “closed, more or less harmonious communities of farmers and non-agrarian specialists within which internal conflicts were controlled by the village councils”. This caused ignorance on the aggressive role of village heads and *jagos*, leaving the latter to live “in the shadow of the colonial state”. The legacy of warlords might still have led to some attention for the *jagos*, however. But this is to be further investigated. H.S. Nordholt, “The Jago in the Shadow: Crime and ‘Order’ in the Colonial State in Java.” *Review of Indonesian and Malaysian Affairs* 25, no.1 (1991): 77-78; and Houben and Kolff, “Between Empire Building”: 186.
619 The quote derives from: “wonnen er niets bij” and “leelijk en onmenschelijk”. Ibid.: 6.
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*Notes on the foot- and endnotes*

I. In the cases of edited primary sources, the writing of the editor and the original author are distinguished through separate references: one credited to the former, the other to the latter. Hence these book appearing in both the primary and secondary literature list. The editors usually add essays at the beginning or end of their books hence the need for this measure.

II. Repeated footnotes and endnotes referring to De Jonge et al., *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch gezag in Oost-Indie* abbreviate the title to *De Opkomst Van* without the authors for the sake of saving space. Reference to letters in ‘De Opkomst Van’ do not include the addressed institution or person for this is almost always the Supreme Government in Batavia. In exceptional cases, alternative addressees are indicated through quoting the heading of the letter. For the other letters the heading is left out since they are identical and do not convey important information other than the author and date.

## Appendix I: Index of royal titles and other terms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arja</td>
<td>(Madurese) High nobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adipati/dipati</td>
<td>Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bupati</td>
<td>Regent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kjai</td>
<td>Saint (usage does not appear restricted to holy men)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Karaëng</td>
<td>Makassarese prince by blood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mantri</td>
<td>Royal servant/ dignitaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mas</td>
<td>Nobleman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebey</td>
<td>Lord</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ngabéhi</td>
<td>Public servant of intermediate rank</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ombol</td>
<td>County Regent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panembahan</td>
<td>Very high nobility, saint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pangéran</td>
<td>Javanese prince by blood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patih</td>
<td>Royal Minister</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prabu</td>
<td>King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priyayi</td>
<td>Nobles of the robe/ royal administrators</td>
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<tr>
<td>Radèn</td>
<td>Intermediate nobility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunan</td>
<td>Honoured person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susuhunan (abbr. Sunan)</td>
<td>Lord of lords; the central king</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tumënggung</td>
<td>Public servant of high rank or warlord</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Further Definitions:

- **Daghregisters**: Daily journals of the VOC
- **Fitna**: Drive to secession and upheaval
- **Ghazi**: Honorific and mythical title for warlords; or the myth of such lords (Middle East and India)
- **ghazi**: Warriors who fought for Islam but were not devout per se (Middle East and India)
- **Kraton**: Javanese royal palace
- **Kris**: Asymmetrical dagger associated with the Indonesian archipelago
- **Mandala**: Realms with diffuse political power defined by their centre
- **Military labour market**: The total demand and supply of warriors; often shaped by itinerant war-bands
- **(Military) march**: This term usually refers to regular, ordered and synchronized walking of military formations. Here, however, it has the looser connotation of army sections moving to a particular locations led by a warlord
- **Pasisir**: Northern coastal region of Java
- **Pejuang**: Itinerant warriors following warlords
- **Prajurit**: Soldiers; or more specifically royal soldiers
- **Walisanga**: The nine saints or literally the nine representatives; the revered saints of Islam in Indonesia
- **Warlord**: A territorial ruler, aristocrat or town representative raising troops he can allocate to military enterprisers
- **War-band**: Groups of warriors following warlords

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620 These definitions are partly based on Van Goens, *De Expeditie Hurdt*: xii.
621 The meaning changed over time; see the introduction.
622 Other royals and public servants could function as warlords too, hence the preference for the term warlord rather than Tumënggung in this thesis.
Appendix II: Chronology of Trunajaya’s uprising

1624 Sultan Agung takes Prasena of Madura to Mataram and grants him the title Cakraningrat (I).

1647 Raden Demang Mlaja, son of Cakraningrat I, dies on the alun-alun of the Mataramese kraton while fighting Pangéran Alit.

1656 Apparent death of Cakraningrat I. Raden Trunajaya, son of Demang Mlaja, is now raised by his uncle Pangéran Ad Sampang, or Cakraningrat II.

1664 Death of Amangkurat I’s wife Ratu Mtilang.

1667 Capture of Raden Oji, the lover of Pangéran Adipati Anom.

1669 Pangéran Adipati Anom (Amangkurat II as prince)’s dalam takes fire in July.

1670 Death of Pangéran Wiramenggala. Temporary exile of Pangéran Adipati Anom to Lipury, shortly after he is positioned as the leader of Surabaya.

1672 The Merapi volcano explodes at the 4th of August; resulting into thousands of deaths. Dhobras accident caused by Ratu Singasari.

1673 Apparent treaty signed between Pangéran Adipati Anom and Raden Trunajaya, as mediated by Raden Kajoran. Trunajaya conquers Madura.

1674 De Makassarese are welcomed at Madura (before 2th of December).

1675/1676 Turn of the year: attack of the Makassarese. They plunder harbours in East Java with the assistance of some Mataramese regents and Pangéran Adipati Anom. The latter is send back to the court.

1675 Large famines on Java caused by drought.

1675 Shortly before December the alliance between Raden Trunajaya and Karaëng Galesong is secured through the marriage of Galesong with Trunajaya’s daughter Suretna. In December, a second Makassarese attack on the East Javanese harbours initiates. Surabaya is burned through the help of Pangéran Adipati Anom.

1676 In April and September: Dutch-Javanese expeditions against the Makassarese take place

On the 24th of May: Raden Prawiratarun passes away near Demung.

On or just after the 25th of May: defeat of Kjai Pandji Karfula on land.

Early June: Galesong flees back to Madura.

19th of June: Destruction of Mataramese fleet near Sidapaksa.

In August: All of East Java again occupied by the insurgents

In September: VOC admiral Poolman destroys part of the Makassarese fleet and subsequently visits Trunajaya on Madura. After his departure, the Makassarese and Madurese traverse the Madurese Strait to Java.

On 13th of October: Battle at Gegodog. Lords like Pangéran Purbaja get killed. Pangéran Adipati Anom is betrayed; he expected a feigned battle.

On the 20th of November: The Madurese forces reach the alun-alun of Japara, where they are countered by Javanese and Dutch troops.

On the 29th of December: Speelman leaves Batavia to start a new Campaign in Central and East Java.

1677 In January: Trunajaya moves to Surabaya to make it his stronghold

Between the 27th of January and the 10th of February: VOC delegate Moor Piero visits Trunajaya in Surabaya. At the same time, Kajoran makes his first attempt to conquer the Mataramese kraton. In retaliation, his town Kajoran is burned.

On the 26th of March: Council of war between Kajoran and Trunajaya. It is decided to attack

623 Largely based on the overview provided by De Graaf, “Het Kadjoran-Vraagstuk”: 324-325.
the Mataramese kraton from two directions

In early March: Pangéran Martasana reconquers Semarang, allowing VOC delegates to be send to the Mataramese kraton

Between the 12th and 20th of March: the VOC delegate Couper signs a treaty in Mataram with the Sunan and his four most important sons.

Between April and June: Double offence of the rebels against the Mataramese kraton

Halfway April: Semarang retaken by rebels: the connection with the Mataramese kraton is broken

End of June: Kajoran takes the Mataramese kraton.

On the 2nd of June: Amangkurat I flees from the kraton

In July: Amangkurat I dies of disease. His son Pangéran Adipati Anom succeeds him as Amangkurat II, while his brother Pangéran Puger crowns himself Sunan Ingalaga. The succession struggle starts.

Between 27th of March and 29th of August: Expedition of Speelman to reconquer Surabaya.

On the 13th of May: Speelman reconquers Surabaya; Trunajaya flees to Kediri.

On the 19th of September: Amangkurat II reaches Japara, in search for support of the VOC.

In September: The rebels abandon the Mataramese kraton and Trunajaya temporally flees Kediri due to the Madurese.

In October: Puger moves into the Mataramese kraton. Trunajaya reconquers Kediri.

On the 19th and 20th of October: Amangkurat II signs several contracts with the VOC.

In November: Offensive of Kajoran’s followers at the Pasisir.

1678 On the 17th of January: Death of Martapura and Martalaja

On the 23th of March: Speelman completes his Missive to his successor.

Between June and July: Second offensive of Kajoran’s followers at the Pasisir.

Between the 5th of September and 25th of November: Hurdt’s campaign against Trunajaya in Kediri.

On the 12th of November: Hurdt’s forces cross over the Brantas.

On the 25th of November: Kediri is taken, Trunajaya flees to Malang; Hurdt’s forces occupy the area and return to Surabaya.

Around the 1st of November: Kajoran moves back to Central Java.

1679 Between April and August: The Makassarese warlord Namrud has several victories in Central Java under the supervision of Kajoran

On the 14th of September: Captain Sloot captures Kajoran’s stronghold Melambang, captures the warlords and orders his assassination. Some of his followers -Kartapada, Kartanadi and Kartanagara- continue his struggle.

On the 13th of November: The headquarter of the Makassarese, Kakappar, is taken by captain Poleman.

On the 25th of December: Captain Jonker captures Trunajaya and his few remaining followers

1680 On the 2nd of January: Amangkurat II gives the order to assassinate Trunajaya.
Appendix III: Map of Couper’s march

Picture 12 Map showing the Southeast Javanese regions Couper marched through while seeking to capture or kill Trunajaya. Names of places and rivers are written down. Drawn around 1695, but likely based on expeditions drafts from 1679.624