and she is wrong to describe the crisis of 1787-1790 in Surakarta as either an ‘uprising’ (212) or (oddly) a ‘pseudo-revolt’ (216). Her account of VOC monetary history would have been improved by discussion of the Kartasura court’s unilateral devaluation of VOC coins in 1724. She describes ‘the word Djawa’ as ‘the Arabic rendition of “Java”’ (100), whereas it is in fact the Javanese word for Java (spelled Jawa in modern transcription). It is surprising also that in this work on Javanese, bupatis, Chinese and north coastal economic life, she fails to note that some of the major figures in her story – the bupatis Jayadiningrat (sometimes called Jayaningrat) of Pekalongan and Puspanegara of Batang (38, 40, 51, 249) – were of Chinese descent. The book also has an odd way of referring to Javanese officials; e.g. the bupati of Pekalongan Jayadiningrat is called ‘Pekalongan Jayadiningrat’, Rekasanagara of Tuban is called ‘Tuban Reksanegara’ and so on. Other names are transcribed wrongly (presumably taken from antiquated VOC misunderstandings of Javanese names): e.g. ‘Suradimengala’ rather than Suradimenggala, ‘Ranga’ rather than Rangga and ‘Setiadiningrat’ rather than Secadiningrat. I find it hard to believe that there was a Javanese official in Brebes named ‘Batavie’ (220).

This is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the activities of the VOC in Java in the later eighteenth century. Kwee and the TANAP programme deserve congratulation for this contribution. The book’s limitations with respect to Javanese affairs should not lessen our admiration for what has been achieved with regard to Company aspects of the history of Java’s north coast. Kwee (along with Van Niel) has dramatically enriched our understanding of the history of this period.

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The book elucidates the British occupation of Indonesia from September 1945 to December 1946. Immediately after the end of the Second World War, the British XV Indian Corps numbering about 45,000 men, occupied Java. The primary purpose of the British occupation was to restore Dutch colonial rule in Indonesia. Richard McMillan provides a detailed account of the occupation from the perspective of British policy-makers, thus departing from earlier scholarship which has looked at this tense period from the standpoint of the Dutch or the Indonesian nationalists. McMillan is clearly sympathetic to the plight of the British military forces, who faced the unenviable task of rehabilitating and repatriating the Allied prisoners of war and internees while disarming and repatriating the Japanese and restoring calm and order to Indonesia. Throughout his book, he consistently implies that the British were the unfortunate victims of circumstances in Indonesia, caught in the crossfire of the phenomenally rising Indonesian nationalism in the wake of anti-Dutch feeling. Although McMillan does not skimp on using military terminology, non-military historians would be heartened to learn that he has kindly provided useful appendices detailing the dramatis personae involved in the British occupation, the structure of army personnel, and chronological events, as well as relevant maps and plans.

Based on his study of British colonial documents, McMillan identifies several external factors, which contributed to the general British ineffectiveness in Indonesia. By doing so, he downplays British accountability for the political chaos in post-war Indonesia. Instead, McMillan repeatedly emphasizes that the British must be given credit for attempting to smoothen the transition of power in Indonesia between the Japanese occupation and the return of Dutch colonial rule, despite being extremely
unprepared for such an immense commitment. Firstly, in his introductory chapter, he states that the British were given short notice by the Americans to occupy Indonesia. British territories in Malaya, Siam, Burma, India, as well as the newly acquired southern Indochina already formed a huge burden on British military resources in Southeast Asia. In Chapter One, McMillan argues that the dearth of intelligence on Indonesia prior to the occupation left the British occupational forces ignorant not only of rising Indonesia nationalist sentiments, but also of the various locations of camps and internees the British were supposed to repatriate. In Chapter Three, McMillan examines how British military forces endured the guerrilla warfare tactics (which they were unfamiliar with) employed by Indonesian forces agitating for freedom from colonial rule during the period of occupation.

The difference between British and Dutch modes of operation in Indonesia led to much tension and uncooperativeness between the two colonial powers, further undermining British effectiveness in Indonesia. From the British point of view, the Dutch were more violent and careless towards the Indonesians. This perspective exacerbated Anglo-Dutch relations in Indonesia, which McMillan explores in Chapter Four. Not surprisingly, McMillan points out in Chapter Six that British morale in Indonesia remained low most of the time in the face of such gargantuan challenges.

A distinguishing feature of McMillan’s book is the wide range of British colonial sources in the form of War Office files, War Diaries of Southeast Asia Command recently released in 1995, as well as intelligence documents. He also conducted numerous interviews with former officers in the Indian and Gurkha Battalion, as well as a Red Cross worker and a Dutch internee, who married British officers serving in Indonesia during the period of occupation. The strength of the book lies in McMillan’s detailed, thorough examination of British archival documents of two particular events, thus revealing the way they have been erroneously simplified in historiography. In Chapter Two, McMillan embarks on an in-depth study of various colonial documents surrounding the controversial death of British Brigadier Mallaby in October 1945 during the Battle of Surabaya, resulting in very interesting contradictions from various angles provided by different interlocutors, most of whom were part of the British military (46-52). In Chapter Five, he offers a close study of British colonial documents on the occupation of Sumatra and successfully reveals that contrary to popular belief, it was just as problematic as the British occupation of Java.

Rather than adhering to a strict dichotomous approach like his predecessors, who have either regarded the British as pro-Indonesian or pro-Dutch, McMillan stresses that he is keen on giving an accurate assessment of British policy in Indonesia. Through an in-depth analysis of British colonial documents, he demonstrates that the British were neither pro-Indonesian nor pro-Dutch. Rather, there was a strong sense of contingency in British colonial policy throughout the occupation. Political circumstances compelled the British to make decisions which were seemingly pro-Dutch or pro-Indonesia at different junctures during the occupation. Like any sustained historical examination of particular colonial archives, McMillan’s research shows that colonial policies are often shot through with contradictions, implying that they were often based on contingency and did not hinge upon a fixed political ideological agenda.

Conspicuously absent from The British Occupation of Indonesia 1945-1946 is an examination of the relationship between the British and Japanese prisoners of war in Indonesia. This is a large omission since the Japanese community was a prominent yet problematic presence in Indonesia. In order to make this volume a comprehensive study of the British occupation, British-Japanese relations should have been investigated outside of British colonial documents if such information is not found in them.

While this book does not intend to be a complete account of post-war Indonesia,
its view of the Dutch colony from a British military perspective means that little is said about the volatile Indonesian politics and the meteoric rise of nationalism unless they directly threatened British welfare. McMillan’s sources tend to provide a British perspective with a military dimension and when he needs to explain Indonesian society in further depth, he is forced to resort to secondary sources, such as Benedict Anderson’s *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance 1944-1946* (1972) or Ann Laura Stoler’s *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (2002), in order to fill the gaps. Both of these excellent books on Indonesia do not make use of British sources extensively, opting to refer to Dutch colonial sources or the works of Indonesians. Due to the brevity of the transitional British occupation of Indonesia and the overwhelming amount of chaos which ensued after British arrival, the British colonial officers neglected to offer a structural analysis of political affairs in Indonesia. In this way, McMillan’s insistence on a purely British perspective runs the risk of limiting rather than expanding our perception of Indonesia immediately after the Second World War.

Nonetheless, a British account of the occupation is a crucial addition to the historiography of post-war Indonesia, a field dominated by scholars, such as Benedict Anderson and Anthony Reid, who have mostly focused on the period through the lens of Indonesian nationalists and the Dutch. McMillan’s account of the occupation is also instructive in the way it illuminates how the colonial archive belies the notion of a coherent and monolithic colonial policy.

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*The Last Valley* by Martin Windrow is a military history of the French defeat at the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1954. It joins a number of important works published in Vietnamese in 2004 to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the First Indochina War. These include *Chien Thang Lich Su Dien Bien Phu: Toan Thu* ['The Historical Victory of Dien Bien Phu: A Compendium'], selected by Phan Ngoc Lien; *Chien Thang Dien Bien Phu, Su Kien: Hoa Va Dap* ['The Victory of Dien Bien Phu, Event: Questions and Answers'], compiled by Hoang Phong Ha; 50 Nam Chien Thang Lich Su Dien Bien Phu ['50 Years of the Historical Victory of Dien Bien Phu'], compiled by Tran Quoc Hung; and *Dien Bien Phu Nhung Trang Vang Lich Su* ['Dien Bien Phu: Golden Pages in History'] by Hoang Minh Phuong.

Unfortunately, Woodrow does not draw on any Vietnamese scholarship on the battle of Dien Bien Phu. He ignores such important early works by Vo Nguyen Giap as *Chien Tranh Nhan Dan Va: Quan Doi Nhan Dan* ['People's War and People's Army'] (1959) and *Mot Vai Hoa Cuc Ve Dien Bien Phu* ['Some Recollections of Dien Bien Phu'] (1964), and his later works such as *Duong Toi Dien Bien Phu* ['The Road Toward Dien Bien Phu'] (1999), as well as *Dien Bien Phu, Moc Vang Lich Su* ['Dien Bien Phu, Historical Golden Landmark'] (1994) selected and compiled by Phan Ngoc Lien, and *Lich Su Quan Doi Nhan Dan Viet Nam* ['History of the People's Army of Viet Nam'] (1999).

Instead, Woodrow relies entirely on the works of French scholars. He draws very heavily from *Pourquoi Dien Bien Phu* (1968) by Pierre Rocolle and *Hell in a Very Small Place* (1968) by Bernard Fall. Indeed, his interpretation of the battle seems to add very little to those offered by these earlier scholars. Woodrow cites a number of articles in *Revue Historiques des Armées*, and more recent French scholarship,