

ist and schematic account of military history. The reach toward a non-Marxist account deserves encouragement, but there are clearly a variety of approaches that can be adopted.

While it certainly could have been better edited, Shirogorov's study deserves wide attention.

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*Inventing the English Massacre: Amboyna in History and Memory.* By Alison Games. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. ISBN 978-0-1975-0773-5. Maps. Figures. Cast of Characters. Deposition Abbreviations. True Relations (printed). Note on Sources and Methodology. Notes. Index. Pp. xviii, 300. \$35.00 (hardback).

In 1623, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) beheaded twenty-one men on charges of conspiracy and treason in a public execution. Ten of the condemned were employees of the English East India Company (EIC) who had been trading in the Moluccas, better known as the Spice Islands, alongside their Dutch counterparts since the beginning of the century. The incident was hardly the most outrageous mass violence in the region's tumultuous past. Nevertheless, the EIC dubbed the episode the "Amboyna Massacre," which gained remarkable significance in various historical writings and unexpected longevity in the British culture in the following centuries. Alison Games's monograph *Inventing the English Massacre* is the latest scholarly inquiry into the ambiguous conspiracy and the episode's long afterlife, spanning British imperial history.

Britain and the Netherlands had been deeply enmeshed in social, religious, and economic domains through the common Protestantism, related languages, and their shared anti-Spanish (Habsburg) posture. While such linkages prompted the formation of the Anglo-Dutch alliance in Europe at the turn of the seventeenth century, the rift between the two East India Companies widened due to their growing competition in Asian trade. Against this backdrop, Games explores how the "Amboyna Massacre" triggered a diplomatic crisis between the two European allies. Moreover, the book illustrates how British writers and publishers produced layered narratives and images surrounding the episode in the following centuries. Not only did such depictions intertwine with the troubled history between the two nations, but they also profoundly shaped the British understanding of its empire. Games argues convincingly that the British essentially "invented" the first English massacre by generating interconnected histories based on the Amboyna episode.

The first two chapters revisit what happened in the Indonesian Archipelago, followed by another two discussing the incident's repercussions in Europe in the ensuing decades. Games first demonstrates that the English and Dutch trade rivalry

was imbued with suspicion, mistrust, and violence years before the Amboyna episode, which paved the way for the eruption of the conspiracy in 1623. Based on the survivors' characterization, the EIC then crafted powerful narratives regarding its employees' sufferings by labeling the incident a "massacre," associating Dutch cruelty and betrayal with the disputed judicial executions. The word "massacre" was relatively new in the English language, but EIC interpretations of the Amboyna episode significantly broadened the term's utility. They created a new way to describe secular mass murders beyond the imagery of Protestant martyrology, mainly by switching its focuses to aspects such as ingratitude and betrayal of a close ally.

The final two chapters scrutinize the afterlife of the Amboyna Massacre in British history and imperial culture. Although the two sides sought to resolve the protracted diplomatic disputes in 1654, the story lingered till the very end of the British Empire. Games shows that English writers reinvented the massacre in multiple new genres of writing, accompanied by powerful illustrations of the tortures and executions. The Amboyna Massacre thus lost its global setting and became domesticated within British culture.

Additionally, the episode has shifted to represent a "linchpin of the British Empire." British writers frequently related Amboyna to other mass slaughters against the empire, emphasizing the British innocence and victimhood on the one hand and the opponents' cruelty and treacherous acts on the other. More surprisingly, the Amboyna episode became a reference for Britons to understand anticolonial resistance globally, whether in India, North America, or South Africa.

Games's work has made a significant contribution to British colonial history by investigating the genealogy of a central, yet often-overlooked theme: massacre. Instead of treating the term as a static concept, Games skillfully investigated how the term's changing meanings reflect and distort people's memories of a particular historical event. The seemingly trivial changes profoundly shaped how people made sense of mass violence in later periods. It is noteworthy that on top of close readings of the original texts, Games has used searchable, digitized book databases extensively in her research. Materials such as almanacs, chronologies, and tablets of memory thus served as critical primary sources to trace the shifting connotations of the word "massacre."

Games states that she primarily framed the book in the context of British history and culture. She has made convincing arguments about how the EIC and British writers jointly (re)invented the Amboyna episode as "the first English massacre" over four centuries. This book is therefore an essential read for scholars of British imperial history, especially concerning how early collisions of empires shaped discourses surrounding the very idea of colonialism.

By contrast, the incident has not endured as a similar story in the Indonesian Archipelago where it took place. Nevertheless, for readers interested in Southeast Asia, Games's work curiously echoes J. C. van Leur's criticism in his review of F. W. Stapel's *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Indië* that colonial writings tend to overestimate the European preponderance by observing the colonial world "from the deck

of the ship, the rampart of the fortress, the high gallery of the trading house” (in *Tijdschrift voor Indische Tall, Landen Volkenkunde*, lxxx, 1940, pp. 544–67). Instead of producing a regional history in its own right, generations of British writers sought to make sense of Amboyna with reference to other European powers. Therefore, the domestication of the Amboyna episode into British culture, epitomized as the invention of the first English massacre, is a precise reflection of how such Euro-centric histories were constructed.

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***The British Army: 1714–1783, An Institutional History.*** By Stephen Conway. Barnsley, U.K.: Pen & Sword, 2021. ISBN 978-1-5267-1140-3. Illustrations. Timeline. Notes. Further reading. Index. Pp. xx, 197. \$42.95 (hardback).

Stephen Conway’s *The British Army, 1714–1783* distinguishes itself from a crowded field of literature with its innovative focus on the army’s internal life. Tracing how the army’s “customs, ethos, and unwritten rules” shaped it from the accession of George I in 1714 to the Peace of Paris in 1783, this broad study condenses recent scholarship and engages with topics dear to military and social historians’ hearts (p. xvi). At its core, this accessible book provides insights into the eighteenth-century British Army’s culture and challenges the notion that it was fundamentally different from other militaries of its age. Conway’s work is the first volume in the new Pen & Sword History of the British Army series and sets an excellent precedent.

Conway divides his study into eight engaging chapters addressing the army’s institutional characteristics, and the social and cultural forces shaping those serving in it. Topics include the army’s relationship to civil powers, recruiting practices, motivations to enlist, martial communities, women’s informal roles with the military, and soldiers’ experiences of service. In addition to synthesizing a dazzling array of secondary literature, Conway advances his original arguments by drawing on state documents, military records, and soldiers’ personal papers produced throughout the century. He frequently assesses the British compared to those they fought against or alongside, such as the colonial Continental Army, France, or Prussia. By adopting this approach, Conway reveals the army’s inner life without presuming that the British Army culture or structure was singular.

Conway’s chapters suggest, in fact, that pre-industrial militaries had much in common. Officers believed, for example, that they shared commonalities with a “European martial fraternity.” At the same time, recruits, battlefield norms, and soldiers’ mind-sets were relatively similar across much of pre-industrial Europe and colonial North America.

The heart of the book revises scholarly and popular understandings of British military discipline, exploring why men obeyed their officers and how officers