

**THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF GUERRILLA WARFARE
ON THE BOER FORCES DURING THE
ANGLO-BOER WAR**

by

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Submitted as partial requirement for the degree

DOCTOR PHILOSOPHIAE (HISTORY)

in the

Faculty of Human Sciences

University of Pretoria

Pretoria

2004

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Abstract of:

“The psychological impact of guerrilla warfare on the Boer forces during the Anglo-Boer War”

The thesis is based on a multi disciplinary study involving both particulars regarding military history and certain psychological theories. In order to be able to discuss the psychological experiences of Boers during the guerrilla phase of the Anglo-Boer War, the first chapters of the thesis strive to provide the required background. Firstly an overview of the initial conventional phase of the war is furnished, followed by a discussion of certain psychological issues relevant to stress and methods of coping with stress. Subsequently, guerrilla warfare as a global concern is examined. A number of important events during the transitional stage, in other words, the period between conventional warfare and total guerrilla warfare, are considered followed by the regional details concerning the Boers' plans for guerrilla warfare. These details include the ecological features, the socio-economic issues of that time and military information about the regions illustrating the dissimilarity and variety involved.

In the chapters that follow the focus is concentrated on the psychological impact of the guerrilla war on the Boers. The wide range of stressors (factors inducing stress) are arranged according to certain topics: stress caused by military situations; stress caused by the loss of infrastructure in the republics; stress caused by environmental factors; stress arising from daily hardships; stress caused by anguish and finally stressors prompted by an individual's disposition. Then the psychological theories regarding an individual's resistance resources (or general resistance resources – GRRs) and the means of using these resources to cope with stress are applied to the actual circumstances that the Boers were faced with. This discourse is arranged according to material resources, motivational issues and intrapersonal resources.

Subsequently the complete guerrilla warfare phase is considered, the accent being placed on the psychological effect that the Boers' strategies, as well as the British counter strategies, had on the republican forces. The phase is subdivided into four stages according to the course of the war, while still furnishing an overall account of the guerrilla phase – ranging from the initial successes on Boer side, the gradual decline in Boer initiatives to the final months, when the few successful encounters that the Boers launched, came too late to change matters.

In the final chapter the impact of the guerrilla warfare on a selected group of Boers is examined in the form of case studies. The group includes President M.T. Steyn, whose health failed him in the end and Generals C.R. de Wet and J.C. Smuts, where their positive conduct is considered from a psychological perspective. The result of the continuous pressure on the young Commandant G.J. Scheepers is examined and the stress related experiences of Chief Field Cornet H.S. van der Walt, Burghers P.J. du Toit and R.W. Schikkerling are analysed.

Opsomming van:

“The psychological impact of guerrilla warfare on the Boer forces during the Anglo-Boer War”

Hierdie proefskrif is gebaseer op ‘n multidisiplinêre studie wat beide militêre geskiedenis en sielkundige teorieë insluit. Om dus ‘n sinvolle bespreking van die sielkundige ervaring van Boere tydens die guerrillafase van die Anglo-Boereoorlog moontlik te maak, word die eerste hoofstukke van die proefskrif gewy aan die daarstelling van die nodige agtergrond. Eerstens word ‘n oorsig oor die aanvanklike konvensionele fase van die oorlog gegee. Daarna word die tersaaklike sielkundige agtergrond, veral kwessies rakende die ontstaan van stres en metodes om stres te hanteer, beskou. Vervolgens word guerrilla-oorlogvoering, as ‘n wêreldwye verskynsel, bespreek. Na ‘n hoofstuk waarin sekere gebeure tydens die oorgangsperiode van konvensionele na guerrillaoorlog ondersoek word, volg ‘n uiteensetting van die verskillende streke waar guerrillaoorlog gevoer is. Daar word onder andere gekyk na die ekologiese eienskappe van die verskillende streke, die sosio-ekonomiese toestande wat tydens die betrokke periode geheers het en die militêre organisasie van die Boere in die streke om die uiteenlopende aard daarvan te illustreer.

In die hoofstukke wat volg word daar toegespits op die sielkundige impak wat die guerrillaoorlog op die Boere gehad het. Die wye verskeidenheid van stressors (faktore wat stres te weeg bring) wat bespreek word, word volgens temas ingedeel: stres wat deur militêre situasies ontstaan; stres as gevolg van die verlies van die republieke se infrastruktuur; stres wat deur omgewingsomstandighede veroorsaak is; stres as gevolg van daaglikse ontberings; stres veroorsaak deur angs en laastens stres wat voortspruit uit individue se persoonlikhede. Die sielkunde-teorieë wat te make het met individue se weerstandsbronne (“general resistance resources” – GRRs) en verkillend maniere hoe hierdie bronne kan help om stres te bemeester (“to cope”) word vervolgens op die omstandighede wat die Boere beleef het, toegepas. Die bespreking word onderverdeel in materiële hulpbronne, motiveringsaspekte van stresbemeestering en intrapersoonlike hulpbronne.

Vervolgens word die guerrilla-oorlog as geheel beskou, met die klem wat geplaas word op

die sielkundige uitwerking wat die Boere se strategieë, en die Britse teenstrategieë, op die republikeinsemagte gehad het. Die tydperk word in vier fases verdeel waarvolgens die verloop van die oorlog uitgestippel word. Dit gee terselfdertyd 'n geheelbeeld van die guerrilla-fase, vanaf die Boere se suksesse gedurende die vroeë maande daarvan, die geleidelike afname aan inisiatief namate die Britse strategie 'n uitwerking getoon het, tot by die laaste maande, toe die enkele suksesvolle veldslae deur die Boere te laat was om 'n ommekeer te bewerkstellig.

Laastens word die uitwerking wat die guerrilla-oorlog op 'n klein, geselekteerde groep Boere gehad het, as gevallestudies bespreek. Die groep sluit in president M.T. Steyn, wie se gesondheid uiteindelik geknak het en generaals C.R. de Wet en J.C. Smuts wie se sterk optredes vanuit 'n sielkundige hoek bekyk word. Die gevolge van druk op kommandant G.J. Scheepers word ook onder die loep geneem en die stres-verwante ervarings van hoof-veldkornet H.S. van der Walt, burger P.J. du Toit en burger R.W. Schikkerling word ontleed.

Key terms

Cognitive appraisal – The evaluation of a stressor (an agent causing stress) by means of the processes of observing, recognition, imagination, reasoning, judging, recollection, learning and thinking.

Alarm reaction stage – (AR) The first stage of Selye's *General Adaptation Syndrome* (GAS) theory when the first experience of stress is encountered. The normal level of resistance will initially drop when the individual takes fright, however he soon recovers and the level of resistance increases to above the normal and the *fight or flight* principle becomes applicable.

Stage of resistance – (SR) The stage that develops as the individual continues to experience the stress, meaning that he is becoming adapted to the stressor. This stage will continue as long as the body can handle the situation or until the stressor disappears. Additional hormones (adrenalines and cortisones) are required throughout this period to maintain an adequate level of resistance.

Stage of exhaustion – (SE) The stage that develops when the body's capacity of producing the increased levels of hormones becomes exhausted and the level of resistance drops drastically leading to physical exhaustion and even illness.

Psycho-physical ailment – Prolonged or intense stress may damage bodily organs that may lead to illness. When the individual's response to stress is abnormally intense and prolonged, the damage to organ systems contribute to the disease process.

General resistance resources – (GRRs) Resources that an individual has at his or her disposal that he or she can use to manage or to overcome stress.

Sense of coherence – (SOC) This is a dispositional orientation of an individual involving the elements of perception, memory, information processing and affect that lead him or her into habitual patterns of appraisal which are based on repeated experiences of sense making. There are three rudimentary elements of SOC namely *comprehensibility*,

manageability and *meaningfulness*.

Salutogenesis – Meaning the origin of health. Not all stressors are adverse and if they are managed well their affect may be neutral or may indeed be health enhancing.

Fortigenesis – Meaning the origin of strength. Following the concept of salutogenesis a new construct called *fortigenesis* is developed arguing that the successful management of stressors may not only lead to improved health but to increased psychological strength.

Transitional warfare phase – The stage of the Anglo-Boer War when the initial conventional warfare was coming to a close and the guerrilla phase was gradually taking over.

Guerrilla warfare – Derived from the Spanish *small war*, it signifies a form of warfare adopted by the strategically weaker side to give it the capability of taking the tactical offensive at chosen times and in certain places.

Drive – A military manoeuvre adopted by the British to use their superior numbers to concentrate the republican forces into positions where they would either surrender or could be captured.

New model drive – A revised strategy by the British in the early months of 1902 involving even larger numbers of troops that virtually surrounded the Boers, closing in on them with the intention to capture combatants, non-combatants, animals and vehicles.

Uitskud – A term widely used by Boers implying the taking of a captured enemy's clothes, boots, arms and ammunition.

Loot – The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines it as the action of taking goods from an enemy after a victory. It is used in this context and does not imply criminal or violent acts of stealing or destruction of property.

Contents

Introduction	1
Chapter I – The conventional war	12
1. The imbalances	12
2. The first battles	17
3. The three sieges	21
4. Black Week	22
5. Roberts takes over	24
Chapter II – The psychological foundation	28
1. Introduction	28
2. What is stress	29
3. A simplified stress model	30
4. Historical development of the theory of stress	31
5. The elements involved in stress	34
6. Negative outcomes of stress	40
7. Positive outcomes	43
8. A perspective of stress and the Anglo-Boer War	46

Chapter III – Guerrilla warfare as a global concern	48
1. Introduction	48
2.. Guerrilla warfare and related concepts	48
3. Guerrilla warfare over the ages	52
4. The essence of guerrilla warfare	60
5. Guerrilla warfare: the road to success or failure	69
Chapter IV – Events during the transitional phase	70
1. Introduction	70
2. Transition commences	73
3. The first major laying down of arms	75
4. The last conventional battles	77
5. De la Rey and the western Transvaal	78
6. The Brandwater Basin	79
7. The hunt for De Wet begins	83
8. The ZAR finally embarks on guerrilla warfare	84
Chapter V – Regional background to the guerrilla warfare	86
1. Southeastern Transvaal	90
2. Northeastern Transvaal	93
3. Western Transvaal	98
4. Northern Transvaal	104
5. The Orange Free State	107
6. The Cape Colony	115

Chapter VI – Stressors Boers encountered in the guerrilla phase	123
1. Introduction	124
2. Stress caused by military situations	125
3. Stress caused by the loss of infrastructure	146
4. Stress caused by environmental factors	151
5. Stressors caused by daily hardships	158
6. Stress caused by anguish	174
7. Stressors prompted by the individual's disposition	182
8. Résumé	199
Chapter VII – Resistance resources and coping during the guerrilla warfare phase	200
1. Introduction	200
2. Material issues	203
3. Motivational issues	215
4. Intrapersonal resources	222
5. Résumé	230
Chapter VIII – The final appraisal	234
1. Introduction	234
2. Stage 1: Guerrilla war begins	235
3. Stage 2: The tide turns	246
4. Stage 3 – The watershed	258
5. Stage 4 – The last scene	268
6. Resumé	281

Chapter IX – The ultimate impact	284
1. Guerrilla war? Yes or no	284
2. The impact of the guerrilla war on the	
Boers: some case studies	287
a. President M.T. Steyn	288
b. Chief Commandant C.R. de Wet	293
c. General J.C. Smuts	297
d. Commandant G.J. Scheepers	303
e. Chief Field Cornet H.S. van der Walt	312
f. Burgher P.J. du Toit	316
g. Burgher R.W. Schikkerling	319
3. Resolution	327
Bibliography	328

Introduction

The major persuasion in embarking on a topic of this nature was to obtain an insight into the psychological influence that guerrilla warfare had in the lives on the Boers who were on commando from September 1900 to May 1902 – the guerrilla phase of the Anglo-Boer War. It will be demonstrated that this is a new sphere of research where modern psychological theories are applied to events that have become recognized as part of history.

1. The historical framework

The Anglo-Boer War generated a host of written works – both historical and fictional – dealing with different aspects of the war. Although the historiography of the war was initially characterized by books, articles and dissertations concentrating on military related themes such as the recounting and analysing of major events and strategies as well as recording the actions of prominent military leaders, the emphasis has recently begun to move away from the military historiography toward social historiography. This evolution is in line with modern trends, as F. Pretorius contended in the introduction of his work *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, published in 1991. He asserts that the military facets of the history of the Anglo-Boer War has not been exhausted – and the influx of new books and the reprinting of older works which have become available over the past decade indeed confirms this view. However, the tendency of historical research in the USA and Europe has migrated towards social-history, and he supports his claim by referring to numerous works on this subject which have appeared since 1970.¹

This genre of social history has consequently also become more important in the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War and Pretorius' work about the life of burghers on commando – assisted by a number of works by other authors that relate to Boer-civilians and Black people – opened new doors in this sphere. Within this domain several themes have emerged that deal primarily with the experiences and the fate of different categories of people – including several race groups. Most outstanding among these topics is the history of women, children and

¹

F. Pretorius, *Kommandolewe tydens die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902*, p. 15.

certain non-combatant men in the concentration camps. Several works have been published which relate to this issue, several of which were written by authors who viewed the matter rather subjectively. A recent balanced collection of chapters titled *Scorched Earth* was edited by Pretorius and contains several relevant reviews. Among them is one dealing with the concentration camp in Bloemfontein written Elria Wessels, one considering the schools in the camps by Paul Zietsman and another deliberating the clash between British doctors and the Boer women, by Elizabeth van Heyningen.² The book was published in 2001 both in Afrikaans and English and it includes several other excellent articles relating to the British strategy of scorched earth. Another authoritative article about women was written by Dione Prinsloo and published in *The Anglo-Boer War; Commemorative lectures at the Rand Afrikaans University* in 1999 with G. Verhoef as the editor.³

There were also Europeans of different origins who were not in camps but who were living either freely in their homes, or were hiding in the veld. The collection of lectures edited by Verhoef include a paper on the Jewish community of Johannesburg that stressed the role they played in maintaining vigilance in the city and after the majority had been relocated, how an ambulance corps was established by those who remained.⁴ There were moreover Black people of various clans or groupings, either employed in doing military service for the British or working as civilians. Among them were many Black people who were held in camps by the British. The issue of Black people during the Anglo-Boer War was dealt with extensively by Peter Warwick in his dissertation which was published in 1983 with the title *Black people and the South African War 1899-1902*. Warwick deals with Black people over most of southern Africa, and includes features such as the quest of the Black mineworkers, and the concentration camp system for Black people.⁵ In *Scorched Earth* Stowell Kessler contributed a chapter titled "The black and coloured concentration camps" and J.S. Mohlamme wrote a chapter named "African refugee camps in the Boer republics".⁶ It therefore becomes clear that the issues of women in concentration camps and those of Black people either in military service or held in camps are themes of the social history that have received substantial attention in recent years.

² F. Pretorius (ed.), *Scorched earth*, pp. 60-85, 86-109, 178-197.

³ G. Verhoef (ed.), *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog: Herdenkingslesings aan die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit*, pp. 52-65.

⁴ G. Verhoef (ed.), *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog: Herdenkingslesings aan die Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit*, pp. 96-101.

⁵ P. Warwick, *Black people and the South African War 1899-1902*.

⁶ F. Pretorius (ed.), *Scorched earth*, pp. 110-131, 132-153.

Then there were those burghers who were no longer actively engaged on the side of the Boers, some of whom were held in prisoner of war camps, while others had merely laid down their arms to become known as “hendsoppers”, or more serious, had joined the British forces earning them the derogatory name of “joiners”. The issue of these two groups who had voluntarily laid down their arms is dealt with in detail by Albert Grundlingh in *Die “hendoppers” en “joiners”: die rasional van verraad*, which was first published in 1979.⁷ A second addition was published in 2000 by another publisher, forming part of the centenary commemoration of the Anglo-Boer War. This publication gives valuable data, as well as enlightening views on why burghers abandoned their struggle. Within the same group – burghers who were taken out of the war effort – but who were held as prisoners of war, there are numerous annotated diaries for example “*Dagboek*” van Rocco de Villiers, which was annotated by M.C.E. van Schoor and published in *Christiaan de Wet-Annale 3* in 1975⁸ and *Krijgsgevangenschap van L.C. Ruijsenaers* edited and annotated by O.J.O. Ferreira and published by the Council for Humanities Research in 1977.⁹ There are moreover several other publications in a more popular style that support this range. It should be noted that except for the sources by Pretorius and Grundlingh mentioned above, the rest that are mentioned do not relate directly to this study.

This then leaves the category of participants who were combatants in the war. Naturally they were divided into the two sides, the Boers and the British. For this study it was decided to concentrate on the experiences of the Boers. Both Pretorius and Grundlingh worked from this same platform, but whereas this investigation is restricted to the experiences, hardships and ordeals of Boers during the guerrilla phase of the war, the works of both Pretorius and Grundlingh deal with the entire period of the war. Grundlingh focusses on Boers who yielded to the pressures applied by their enemies and who discontinued fighting for the Boers. Pretorius on the other hand goes into great detail regarding the life of burghers who were on commando but, in contrast with this research, his investigation does not take the war’s psychological impact on the participants into account. The essence of this study is to delve deeper into the influence of guerrilla warfare on the lives of burghers and officers who were combatants during the guerrilla phase of the Anglo-Boer War. Hence the title of the study:

⁷ A.M. Grundlingh, *Die ‘hendoppers’ en ‘joiners’: Die rasional van verraad*, *ibid.*

⁸ M.C.E. van Schoor (ed.), “ ‘Dagboek’ van Rocco de Villiers en Bylaes” in *Christiaan de Wet-Annale*, pp. 3-103.

⁹ O.J.O. Ferreira (ed.), *Krijgsgevangenschap van L.C. Ruijsenaers*.

“*The psychological impact of guerrilla warfare on the Boer forces during the Anglo-Boer War*” is aimed at stressing the psycho-historical nature of the Boer’s experiences during the guerrilla phase. As no secondary sources which have a direct bearing on this subject matter exist, the information was primarily derived from diaries and memoirs of burghers and officers and the appropriate psychological conclusions were then made.

Among the most important memoirs that were consulted are Christiaan de Wet’s *Three years war*, a translation of his original work *De strijd tusschen Boer en Brit* which was written shortly after peace had been agreed on and while De Wet was still *en route* to England with Generals Louis Botha and Koos de la Rey. De Wet’s extensive portrayal of his important role in the war and his close relation with President M.T. Steyn are worthwhile sources of information. *Commando* was the journal written by Deneys Reitz the son of F.W. Reitz, State Secretary of the Transvaal. It deals with the experiences of Reitz as a youngster on commando from the very beginning of hostilities until the peace negotiations at Vereeniging. The preface was written by General Jan Smuts, under whose command Reitz had spent the final months of the war. It supplies meaningful pictures of the young burgher’s adventures and enthusiasm. *Eighteen months under General De la Rey* was authored by Max Weber a Swiss geologist who fought as a volunteer during the guerrilla phase and describes his experiences often with critical remarks regarding the Boers’ attitudes towards their country. The major diaries referred to in the study – some were annotated and others not – were *Diary of a National Scout P.J. du Toit 1900-1902* edited by J.P. Brits, in which the infidelity and lack of hope in the Boer cause leads Du Toit to join the British. *Oorlogsdagboek van ‘n Transvaalse burger te velde*, is the candid diary of Fritz Rothmann that was edited by his sister M.E.R. (M.E. Rothmann). Rothmann’s depiction of the tribulations leads to understanding of a Boer’s life full of hardship. The diary of the young and knowledgeable burgher Roland Schikkerling under the title *Commando courageous (A Boer’s diary)* not only explains the fear of battle and deprivations of those who were on commando, but it provides some of the humour and compassion that the young man experienced. Events and dates regarding the information mentioned in the diaries and memoirs, were confirmed by secondary sources such as five of J.H. Breytenbach’s series *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog 1899-1902*; by part V of *The Times history of the war in South Africa*, edited by L.S. Amery; Thomas Pakenham’s *The Boer War*; André Wessels’ *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902 ‘n oorsig van die militêre verloop van die stryd* and *Waarom die Boere die oorlog verloor het* by Leopoldt Scholtz.

The duration of the war has recently been conveniently divided into three periods. The first few months which lasted until Pretoria was occupied on 5 June 1900¹⁰ is generally known as the “conventional phase” because of the conventional form of warfare that was generally employed at the time. The date of 5 June 1900 is, however, arbitrary, as some measure of guerrilla warfare indeed followed the Boer’s defeat at Paardeberg on 27 February 1900.¹¹ It could therefore well be argued that the second phase or “transitional phase”, began after the Battle of Paardeberg. There were still conventional battles fought, but at the same time a number of smaller and mobile-type encounters took place in a number of positions. It was only after the Boers had lost the battle at Dalmanutha in the eastern Transvaal, towards the end of August 1900,¹² that conventional warfare was finally considered to be over and it was replaced by “guerrilla warfare”.

At that stage it was agreed that both republics would continue the war, but that the Boer commandos and cadres would henceforth be self reliant in respect of arms and ammunition, food and clothing, horses and saddlery as well as medical requirements. These units were to be highly mobile and would act as the aggressor wherever possible. Consequently the study deals primarily with the twenty-one months from September 1900 to May 1902. It should nevertheless, immediately be stated that, except where it bears a direct relation to the psychological background of the subject matter, the scorched earth policy as it was implemented by the British forces during those months and all its associated features such as concentration camps, the destruction of farms and homesteads or the technicalities of the blockhouse system, does not form an inherent part of this study.

One of the reasons for electing to concentrate the study on the guerrilla phase is the deficiency in the historiography of the Anglo-Boer War of a cohesive description of that phase of the war. Considering the wide geographical area where the conflict took place and also that this was the phase that lasted for the longest period of the 32 months of the war, the rationale for focussing on the guerrilla phase becomes obvious. If it should then also be argued that during the transitional phase – March 1900 to September 1900 – a certain amount of guerrilla-type of war was fought, the duration – and the impact – of this phase actually increases. The unfolding of the guerrilla phase of the war and the course that it eventually followed, forms the essential setting

¹⁰ J.H. Breytenbach, *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, V, pp. 546-547.

¹¹ J.H. Breytenbach, *Geskiedenis van die Tweede Vryheidsoorlog*, IV, p. 421.

¹² A. Wessels, *Die Anglo-Boereoorlog 1899-1902 'n oorsig van die militêre verloop van die stryd*, p. 29.

for the study of the psychological impact on Boers and it became clear that this aspect needed particular attention. Although many sources – some of which are mentioned above – deal with the experiences of individuals during the guerrilla phase, or alternatively, with specific manoeuvres that took place in this phase, there nonetheless remains a need for one cohesive account of that period. The complete picture of the guerrilla phase, its vacillations and its psychological influence have thus far not been recorded. This study will aim to fill these voids.

2. The psychological framework

The parameters as it is set out above implies that this research becomes a multi-disciplinary study and therefore it grows necessary to explore the psychological issues that have a bearing on this subject. Psychology, in contrast with history, does not rely on a foundation of the recording of adventures, explorations, political, military and other events of a national nature. Therefore it does not rely on a basis similar to “historiography”. The term “epistemology”, meaning the theory of knowledge, could probably be useful in this context. Alternatively, and this seems preferable, the phrase “a discourse on psychology” can be used. Because any discourse on psychology will be very diverse due to the many subdivisions within the discipline, only limited sources, which have a direct bearing on the subject matter of the study were used. The pivotal theme was health psychology with important works by researchers such as Aaron Antonovsky’s *Unraveling the mystery of health; How people manage stress and stay well* which was published in 1987 and the important article by Suzanne C. Kobasa pertaining to commitment and coping which was published in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* in 1982. Other important works which are in fact textbooks relating to this theme are *Health psychology: challenging the biomedical model* by C.L. Sheridan and S.A. Radmacher which appeared in 1992 and *An introduction to health psychology* authored by Andrew Baum, Robert J. Gatchel and David S. Krantz of which the third edition was published in 1997. Another significant segment of the discourse on health psychology are the two articles by the South African researcher D.J.W. Strümpfer, firstly his article on salutogenesis and, following that, his well argued paper on fortigenesis. In both these articles Strümpfer reviews the work of contemporaries such as Antonovsky and Kobasa. These articles were published in the *South African Journal of Psychology*, the first in 1990 and the next in 1995.

At the time of the Anglo-Boer War no firm theories that related to health psychology had been formulated and consequently no relevant literature exists. It was only after the Korean and the Vietnam Wars that psychologists began to realise the implications of warfare on the combatants. Several works have since been published relating to wars and their aftermaths. It is Hans Binneveld who in his book *From shellshock to combat stress*, published in 1997, first used the phrase *psychologically wounded*, indicating a third category of war victim. Previously war victims were classified as either dead or physically wounded. In 1990 Betty Glad edited a collection of essays with the title *Psychological dimensions of war*. It includes several chapters that are relevant to the subject, in particular a contribution by Anthony Kellett called "The soldier in battle: Motivational and behavioural aspects of the combat experience."¹³ There are presently numerous works dealing with the issues of health psychology as it relates to war.

Associated to both the guerrilla phase as well as the psychological influences of such a war on the men involved, the present theory of guerrilla warfare had to be surveyed, as well as the history of the development of guerrilla war. A literary search revealed several works that are useful. The one book that seems to cover the subject matter most adequately is the work by Walter Laqueur called *Guerrilla: A historical and critical study*. This expansive study of the topic, which appeared in 1977, does exactly what the title says, namely reviews the history of the subject giving clarity on the variety of the terminology related to the issue and thereafter critically reviews guerrilla wars as they have transpired universally. This was a most useful source on the subject. Laqueur is a well known researcher in the realm of modern warfare. He is at present a prominent author of modern military history, specialising in political violence, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and the eastern European dilemma. He is also co-chairman of the International Research Council situated in Washington.¹⁴ Closer to home the work of Roland de Villiers called *Mobiele oorlogvoering*, published in 1987, concentrated on the modern aspects of mobile warfare. It incorporates the modern materials of warfare in the situation of "bushwar" as it is focussed on the South African war in Anglola in the late 1980's and soon after. Nonetheless several principles remain basically the same as the theoretical writings on guerrilla warfare by Mao Zedong and Ché Guevara after the Chinese Communists successes in ousting the Nationalist Chinese in 1949 and the victory of Fidel Castro in 1959.

¹³ B. Glad (ed.), *Psychological dimensions of war*, pp. 215-235.

¹⁴ <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals>

3. The blending of the elements

This then brings the three major elements of the study closer together. The last 21 months of the Anglo-Boer War called the guerrilla phase must be matched to the modern concepts of the doctrine of guerrilla warfare, while the topic of psychological health, with both its negative and positive elements, must be intertwined in the scenario. Moreover, the information on which the deductions of the experiences of the Boers are made can only be found in descriptions and other preserved documents of participants in a war that took place more than 100 years ago. It therefore means that modern theories and intelligence should be over-imposed on the recorded information, in an effort to reach a meaningful conclusion regarding the psychological impact of their ordeals. In summary it can be envisioned that there are three legs upon which this stool can stand. Firstly, the knowledge of modern theories concerning health psychology with its special relation to situations pertaining to warfare, and the situation of the *psychologically wounded* as compared to the earlier views concerning these soldiers and their behaviour on the battlefield. Secondly, most importantly, an understanding of the ideology of guerrilla warfare and the ramifications on the men who are involved in this age old, but nevertheless also modern form of warfare. Thirdly to develop an awareness of the Boers who were exposed to the stressors related to guerrilla warfare, what they had experienced and were forced to live through and how they coped with these situations by means of the resources at their disposal.

Consequently this thesis is structured along the following model: The first chapter, dealing with the conventional warfare in the first months of the war, supplies the required backdrop for the analytical and deductive portion of the work that follows. This brief overview of the conventional phase sets the scene in order that the two supplementary parts of the framework make sense. This first chapter does not pretend to be anything more than a brief outline of the opening stage of the war, a stage that has been well documented, analysed and commented on, over and over again. In fact, for many authors of historical works the first five months, with possibly including Lord Roberts' advance to Pretoria, were, in fact, the heart of the war, and consequently the remainder of the war is often left out or simply neglected.

The second chapter furnishes the background on the issues of health psychology that were

encountered in this study. The range of this topic starts with the concepts of stress and stressors, distinguishing between the different categories of stressors that lead to the cognitive appraisal of the stressors. The historical development of the concept of stress, beginning with Selye's GAS-theory and continuing to the more recent unfolding of certain constructs and theories, is also considered. Another important element of the study of stress and that receive critical attention is the matter of the general resistance resources (GRRs) that are at the disposal of an individual and that help him or her to cope with, or even to overcome stress. The negative outcomes, implying that the individual is not able to cope with stress, as well as the positive outcomes — called salutogenesis and fortigenesis — are finally referred to.

Then, in the third chapter, the theory of guerrilla warfare – the Spanish for *small war* – is examined and clarified. The terminology around the subject is often confusing and becomes misleading in the manner that it is used in the news-media. Therefore this aspect receives attention. The development and history of small war, ranging from Gideon and his band of 300 through to Mao Zedong's exploit in the mid 20th century, are discussed in order to illustrate, among other matters, how certain elements of small war changed over time according to the modernization of the tools of war. The essence or nature of guerrilla warfare is dealt with, accentuating the "David and Goliath" related principles of harassment, avoidance of decisive battles, sabotage of supplies and communication and effectively employing the elements of surprise and confusion. The fundamental requirements for successful small war, namely those of time, space and will as it was proclaimed by Mao Zedong, are examined. Additional thoughts on related issues such as the ideal combatants and the costs involved in guerrilla warfare are also considered.

With the frameworks regarding the elements of health psychology and the principles of guerrilla warfare now in place, the following chapter considers specific events that took place during the months of the transitional phase of the Anglo-Boer War, which were important to developments in the guerrilla phase. This chapter does not endeavour to give a complete historical account of those few months in the middle of 1900, but rather to lift out a number of the important incidents that were relevant to the guerrilla stage. In order to understand the progress of the war in the 21 months that followed, and to be able to envision the difficulties and problems encountered by the Boers, the next chapter furnishes an outline of the separate regions in terms

of their environmental features, the socio-economic issues of that time and the military aspects as viewed from the Boers' situation. The seven regions are chosen along the lines of the military organization of the republican armies at the time. The chapter includes a comprehensive table portraying the military actions in the seven regions over the period of guerrilla warfare and indicating whether the event was initiated by the Boers or the British. This table certainly has its deficiencies, but it serves to reveal the trends at certain times and under certain leaders.

The study then focusses on the most basic element of the stress concept, namely the identification of the profusion of factors that acted as stressors to the Boers during their life on commando. Because of the large number of situations that were involved in causing stress, whether it was short termed and cataclysmic stress, or of a prolonged and personal nature or possibly only irritating in essence, this becomes a voluminous chapter. The review of these stressors is arranged according to the actual situation as it applied in those months, rather than according to the theory of the psychology textbooks. The categories which are adopted reflect the military situations, the influence of the loss of the infrastructure of the two republics, environmental factors, daily hardships, anguish and, finally, the personal disposition of the men.

Following the study of the various stressors that were encountered by the Boers, it is logic that the topic of the Boer's resistance resources be examined and the question of their coping with, or alternatively yielding to, the wide variety of stressors, is explored. Once again the material is arranged according to the actual situation as it prevailed at the time, although, in a certain sense, Sheridan and Radmacher's guideline – as defined in their work on health psychology – is followed.¹⁵ This chapter is concluded with a table detailing 41 men who served as Boer-generals during the closing months (January to May 1902) of the war. Once again, the purpose of this table is not intended to be used as a reference work concerning the Boer leadership. That would fall outside the scope of this study. It is merely intended to illustrate specific aspects related to the individual's ability to cope with the multitude of stressors brought on by military leadership. Among these facets are features such as the age of the officers, the extent of their education and supervisory experience and any formal military training they might have had. Although the average age of the generals coincides with the guidelines suggested by Laqueur, that is from their late twenties to early forties,¹⁶ the general level of formal education

¹⁵ C.L. Sheridan and S.A. Radmacher, *Health Psychology: challenging the biomedical model*, pp. 151-153.

¹⁶ W. Laqueur, *Guerrilla: A historical and critical study*, pp. 397-398.

and working experience is an indication of inability.

At this stage, with an understanding of the psychological elements that applied to the Boers at that time and with a grounding on the theory of guerrilla warfare, it is only logical that this knowledge should be applied on the war and that the guerrilla phase should be considered in its totality as it is seen from the Boer's point of view. Therefore the 21 months that are considered as the guerrilla phase are segmented into four stages, each one exhibiting the particular trend and style of the struggle that prevailed at that particular time. The first stage deals with the beginning of the guerrilla war (September 1900 to January 1901), followed by the term that points to the fact that the tide of war was turning against the Boers (February 1901 to August 1901). The third stage (August 1901 to December 1901) considers the months of the watershed in the guerrilla war and the following stage (January 1902 to May 1902) depicts the last scenes of the war. A clear pattern emerges relating to the Boers' outlooks, and bears a strong relationship with the changing psychological status of the bulk of the Boers.

Finally the two questions that needed to be answered in the study can be addressed. Firstly, the issue of whether the protracted war could rightfully be labelled a guerrilla war is examined. Secondly the psychological impact of the guerrilla phase of the war on a number of Boers is considered. The group that is examined consists of men of different levels of seniority in the Boer hierarchy, various ages, unequal levels of education and varying origins. It is granted that it is a very small group when it is compared to the total number of Boers who were exposed to all the stressors, and it is neither claimed to be a statistical nor to be a representative sample. These particular seven individuals were specifically selected to demonstrate the infinite variety of psychological impacts that was possible among guerrilla combatants.

Although the study covered a wide range of themes, the crucial question of how the guerrilla war impacted psychologically on the Boers, be it individually or as a group, was always kept in mind and it acted as the guideline to stay on track.