

Culture and Commerce in the Indian Ocean

Leiden, 25 - 27 September 2006

Organizers: Itinerario, Leiden University,
and the University of Technology, Sydney

Indian Ocean scholarship is faced with two new challenges. Firstly, the burgeoning global economic strength of East and South Asia means new political, cultural and commercial developments. Secondly, and in parallel with these developments, new identities are emerging in the Indian Ocean region, mapped into complex cultural exchanges among the global, the diasporic and the local.

For the first area, that of commerce, the conference will aim to analyze the historical roots of the current growth as well as the new markets that have developed in the new post-colonial yet globalized era – from spices to Bollywood. In this context, this conference will be framed by the relatively new paradigm of cultural studies, which welcomes historical, social and cultural analysis, and especially productive interdisciplinary methods. Information exchange, as well as key case studies, will deepen our knowledge of contemporary cultures and their historical roots. Building on disciplinary work, the cultural studies paradigm will create new concepts which can be used by scholars and others in newer decolonizing contexts.

At this conference, academics with Indian Ocean expertise from different disciplines will meet (for perhaps the first time) with cultural studies scholars. Academics and non-academics will also exchange views. The ultimate aim of the conference is to close leaving us with a better idea of why we should value the cultures of the Indian Ocean, old and new, and how the exchange of commodities interacts with cultural values.

Panels will feature three papers of 20 minutes each, with 10 minutes for discussion after each paper. If we receive papers of outstanding quality, parallel sessions may be run. Plenary speeches will last for an hour including time for questions.

DAY 1 - Monday 25 September 2006

Keynote Speech: 'The Spaces of the Ocean: The Exchange of Commodities and Cultures'

Panel 1: Maritime and commercial cultures

Panel 2: Ship-circumscribed societies

Panel 3: Diaspora and migration

DAY 2 - Tuesday 26 September 2006

Plenary Speech: 'East Meets Southeast: Chinese Commerce and Culture in the Lands below the Winds'

Panel 4: Religion

Panel 5: Decolonization and regime change (1)

Panel 6: Decolonization and regime change (2)

DAY 3 - Wednesday 27 September 2006

Panel 7: Fisheries, fishers and fishing

Panel 8: Environment, ecology and sustainability

Panel 9: Film, media and information technology

Roundtable Panel

Organizers

Henk Niemeijer, Michael Pearson, Peter Reeves, Stephen Muecke, Devleena Ghosh, Chris Nierstrasz, Lola Sharon Davidson

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Studies in Overseas History / 1

Ernst van Veen, *Decay or Defeat? An Inquiry into the Portuguese Decline in Asia (1580-1645)*. Leiden 2000. ISBN 90-5789-051-8. 313 pp. € 28.00*

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Leonard Blussé and Felipe Fernández-Armesto (eds), *Shifting Communities and Identity Formation in Early Modern Asia*. Leiden 2002. ISBN 90-5789-082-8. 219 pp. incl. index. € 30.00*

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Peer Vries, *Via Peking back to Manchester: Britain, the Industrial Revolution, and China*. Leiden 2003. ISBN 90-5789-084-4. 109 pp. € 17.00*

Studies in Overseas History / 5

Martha Chaiklin, *Cultural Commerce and Dutch Commercial Culture. The Influence of European Material Culture on Japan, 1700-1850*. Leiden 2003. ISBN 90-5789-086-0. 284 pp. incl. fotogr. & ill. € 30.00*

Studies in Overseas History / 6

Robert van Niel, *Java's Northeast Coast. A Study in Colonial Encroachment and Dominance*. Leiden 2005. ISBN 90-5789-111-5. 421 pp. With Appendices on cd-rom. € 40.00*

NEW December 2005: Studies in Overseas History / 7

Ernst van Veen and Leonard Blussé (eds), *Rivalry and Conflict. European Traders and Asian Trading Networks in the 16th and 17th Centuries*. Leiden 2005. ISBN 90-5789-104-2. 382 pp. incl. figs & index. € 35.00*

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BOOK NEWS

Robert Van Niel

***Java's Northeast Coast 1740-1840*
A Study in Colonial Encroachment and Dominance
(Studies in Overseas History, Vol. 6)**

This book narrates the story of a hundred years of social, economic, and political change in both Europe and Java.

When in the 1740s the Dutch East India Company (VOC) became the governing authority in the coastal area (*pasisir*) of the Javanese Kingdom of Mataram, change was started that brought about ever stronger control over Javanese society. At first the Europeans were satisfied to put themselves at the top of the existing Javanese hierarchy and obtain economic gains through traditional tribute. New ideas in Europe relating to personal and economic freedom, financial rationalization, administrative reform, and democratic politics began to affect the control patterns in Java. However, these ideas were not an easy fit in Javanese society resulting in difficulties that impacted on profits. Eventually a compromise was devised between the old and the new that restored the colony's profitability but also created greater dominance.

Robert Van Niel (1922) has his PhD degree from Cornell University (1954). His interest in Indonesian history developed after his experience in the Pacific Theatre during World War II. He has been Professor of Southeast Asian History at the University of Hawaii at Manoa since 1965 and is now Emeritus. His earlier books are *The emergence of the modern Indonesian Elite* (Den Haag: Van Hoeve, 1960) and *Java Under the Cultivation System* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1992). Both books have been translated into Indonesian. From 1971 to 1973 he was Foundation Dean of the School of Humanities at the newly founded Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang.

**CNWS Publications Vol. 137. Leiden, October 2005. ISBN 90-5789-111-5
422 pp. incl. maps, bibl. and appendices on cd-rom. Price € 40,00***

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BOOK NEWS

Ernst van Veen and Leonard Blussé (eds)

Rivalry and Conflict
European Traders and Asian Trading Networks
in the 16th and 17th Centuries
(Studies in Overseas History, Vol. 7)

The rivalry between the Dutch and Portuguese in Asia is one of the classic themes of the early history of European expansion overseas. Yet it is often forgotten that until the end of the sixteenth century the seafarers and traders of Portugal and The Netherlands were the best of friends and close trading partners in Europe. This collection of essays seeks to explain the abrupt change in the relationship by analyzing the European interaction with the maritime world of Monsoon Asia. Portuguese as well as Dutch interests, political, commercial and personal, became closely interwoven with those of the indigenous rulers, merchants and financiers. The final outcome of the conflict in Asia was mainly determined by the different ways in which both parties were able to cope with the intricacies of Asian politics. 'European Expansion in the Indian Ocean' was far from a one-sided affair and its history can only be understood in terms of the interaction of both Europeans and Asians involved.

Contributors: Ernst van Veen, Jacques Paviot, Mafalda Soares da Cunha, Walter Rossa, João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, Arie Pos, Francisco Bethencourt, Om Prakash, Pius Malekandathil, Rui Manuel Loureiro, Peter Borschberg, Arend de Roever, René Barendse, Marcus Vink, Cátia Antunes and George Bryan Souza.

**CNWS Publications Vol. 142. Leiden, December 2005. ISBN 90-5789-104-2
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Coconut garden with distillery in Ceylon.
Drawing from an album by Paul Hermann (1646–1695).