

Letter from the Editors

When one thinks of the industrious revolution, one thinks of Jan de Vries. This issue starts with a lively conversation between this inspiring economic historian and three graduate students from the History Department of Leiden University. Covering both his life and work, this interview is a window into De Vries' personal experiences and intellectual development over the past decades. Fittingly, the article section continues with a contribution from Maxine Berg, who engages with De Vries' work in her experimental approach to the concept of industrious revolution in her study of the textile industry in Kachchh (Gujarat). With the co-authored contribution of Ülbe Bosma and Jon Curry-Machado, as well as the article by Thomas Lindblad, we remain firmly in the field of economic history. Bosma and Curry-Machado present us with the results of their comparative analysis of innovations in the sugar production on Java and Cuba in the nineteenth century. Lindblad focuses on the continuities of British business activities in colonial and postcolonial Indonesia.

While economic activities were seen as the core business of empires at the time, they were facilitated by ever expanding bureaucracies. This theme is taken up by Gagan Sood and Upik Djalins, who engage with the growing field of colonial legal history and issues of governmentality. In his work on the Mayor's Court of Bombay, Sood sheds light on legal regimes in eighteenth-century maritime Asia. Upik Djalins continues this theme by taking us to Indonesia in her study of the legal education for native elites as a colonial project of subject formation that was inseparable from colonial state formation. Hans Hägerdal, finally, takes distance from those same colonial bureaucracies and the sources they provide to the historian, by analysing the quality of missionary sources on Timor.

Coupled with an extensive review section, this issue has become a thick one! Enough food for thought to last our readers through the last weeks of the Summer break, or to kick-start a new academic year.

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