

First TANAP Workshop held in Singapore

Report >
Southeast Asia

Gathering for the first time since the initial TANAP (Towards A New Age of Partnership) conference was held in Leiden in December 1998, the group of Asian and Dutch historians that initiated the TANAP project discussed the progress of the programme in Singapore on 7-8 December. Thanks to the excellent logistic and financial help of the Department of History of the National University of Singapore, this workshop went not only smooth for the organizers, it also laid a firm foundation for what has since been called the International TANAP Research Group.

By Henk Niemeijer

During the workshop all eight students of the 2001 Advanced Masters Programme presented their papers, followed by comments from both their Asian and Dutch supervisors. Without exception each paper presentation was followed by a lively



Dr Niemeijer and students at the Dutch cemetery examining some old gravestones.

debate on topics related to the central theme, "Asian and Western attitudes towards maritime trading networks and settlements in Monsoon Asia 1600-1800". The comments of the TANAP historians who were invited as special guests from India and Indonesia (Om Prakash, Djoko Suryo, and Leirissa) were particularly welcomed. The research papers by the three students who have received scholarships within the TANAP PhD programme 2002 received special attention.

The workshop has proven to be extremely useful as substantial research expertise, methodological experience, views, and historical knowledge is brought to use to reformulate the students' research proposals, to raise questions, to point at practical research obstacles, and to define topics. Due to the specific character of the workshop, information and experience can be exchanged in a focussed manner. TANAP students can use this unique

network of scholars. TANAP workshops will be held on a yearly basis at different locations in Asia, with support partly coming from the IIAS.

After the workshop a short trip was made to Malacca, where the research group was welcomed by a small group of Malaysian-Dutch descendants. After fairly relaxing walks through the Heerenstraat and Jonkerstraat, a visit to the oldest Chinese temple, the churches, the *stadhuis*, and a boat trip at sea, the 2001 group finally returned home.

The proceedings of the above workshop in Singapore are available from March 2002 onwards, to be ordered by e-mail: H.E.Niemeijer@let.leidenuniv.nl <

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Group photo at the Ruin Church at St. Paul's hill. Top row, second from left is Mr Christopher Pereira of the MHRS.

The TANAP PhD Programme

This year TANAP (Towards A New Age of Partnership) has entered the PhD phase. Atsushi Ota and Russel Viljoen were sufficiently prepared to enter the PhD programme directly, three others were selected from the Advanced Masters Programme 2001 with the approval of the Scientific Board of Research School CNWS. Below you will find an overview of this year's names, e-mail addresses, and research topics:

1. Atsushi Ota (Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan; e-mail: A.Ota@let.leidenuniv.nl), *Dynamics in Pre-Colonial Society: Changes in the Social Structure of Banten (West Java) 1750-1808.*
2. Russel Viljoen (University of the Western Cape, Bellville, South Africa; e-mail: R.S.Viljoen@let.leidenuniv.nl), *"Land of our Forefathers": Jan Paerl, a Khoikhoi Prophet in Cape Colonial Society, 1761-1851.*
3. Bhawan Ruangsilp (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand; e-mail: B.Ruangsilp@let.leidenuniv.nl), *Through the Company's Eyes: European Perceptions of Court Culture in Ayutthaya and Kandy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries.*
4. Kwee Hui Kian (the National University of Singapore; e-mail: H.K.Kwee@let.leidenuniv.nl), *Communities, Connections, and Commodities: The Flow of Goods and Access to Wealth and Power in Semarang, c. 1740 - c. 1780.*
5. Ryuto Shimada (Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan; e-mail: R.Shimada@let.leidenuniv.nl), *Japan, the Global Copper Trade and Asian Economic Development in the Early Modern Period: The Trade of Japanese Copper by the Dutch East India Company.*

Dutch Gold in Madras Towards A New Age of Partnership in India

Report >
South Asia

At the end of 2001, several events in the South Indian city of Chennai (formerly Madras) highlighted the importance of Dutch archives to the early-modern history of India. The launch of an archival guide to materials in the National Archives in The Hague was coupled with an exhibition of Dutch records kept at the Tamil Nadu Archives in Chennai. In addition, three Indian students presented proposals at a seminar for the research they intend to carry out in the Netherlands within the framework of the TANAP (Towards A New Age of Partnership) programme.

By Lennart Bes

The activities were not without effect: as one established scholar sighed, "I am sorry that I was not aware of the significance of Dutch source material for the reconstruction of South Asia's history twenty years ago." Organized by the Royal Netherlands Embassy, the activities began on 30 November with the Tamil Nadu Archives hosting the book launch of *Dutch Sources on South Asia c. 1600-1825*. This guidebook, com-

iled by Jos Gommans, Gijs Kruijtzter, and myself, provides a survey of relevant archival material in the National Archives of the Netherlands concerning India and Ceylon (see IIAS Newsletter 25). Amid great interest from scholars, the press, and other visitors, the guide was presented to the Minister of Education of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, who underlined the historical importance of the archives of the Dutch East India Company in his speech. A selection from the 64 metres of Dutch

records at the Tamil Nadu Archives was exhibited to introduce these largely unique and hitherto unused documents to the public. Amongst other items, reports by Dutch envoys to local rulers, maps and drawings, correspondence in various Indian languages, and examples of damaged and restored papers were on show. As part of TANAP, the entire collection of Dutch records in Chennai will be restored, put on microfilm, and made accessible through a new, digital inventory.

The following day, a small seminar was devoted to the study of Indian history with the help of Dutch archives. Om Prakash from the Delhi School of Economics, Jos Gommans (Leiden University), and myself gave short lectures about various research possibilities and the accompanying pros and cons. Undeterred, the Indian students Anjana Singh, Mahesh Gopalan, and Gulam Nadri presented their proposals for a PhD research to be conducted within the scope of TANAP under the auspices of Leiden University. Basing themselves largely on the records of the Dutch East India Company, they intend to study internal and external relations of the Dutch at Cochin, Christian missionaries on the Coromandel and Fishery Coasts, and Dutch trade and the



Part of the Dutch Records in the Tamil Nadu Archives at Chennai.

TANAP Diary: A Warm Welcome for 13 Asian and South African Students

On 30 December 2001, the second group of TANAP Advanced Master's students landed at Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam. We were warmly welcomed by Prof. Leonard Blussé and Dr Henk Niemeijer, who were accompanied by the film-maker Steef Meijknecht. Steef focused his video camera on us right from the beginning and he will continue to follow us throughout the year.

During our study period in the Netherlands, we will find ourselves often confronted with this year's celebrations taking place in the Netherlands of the founding of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) 400 years ago. Newspapers, politicians, television channels, and radio stations are giving it quite a lot of attention, and the TANAP students will contribute to some of the intellectual reflections. Asians are now coming to Europe to study and attempt to write new histories of Asia, and to present ourselves in the Netherlands is a good initiative.

The first days in the Netherlands were like a piece of fiction. Here we are, in a foreign land, away from home, living now amongst a variety of people, all by ourselves, alone with a mission, this is a significant 'chapter' of our lives. Within two hours after arrival, we were left with each other: Naoki (Japan), Ricky and Marné (South Africa), Tuan (Vietnam), Nirmal (Sri Lanka), Anjana, Mahesh and Nadri (India), Lin and Hsin-hui (Taiwan) and Muridan, Bondan, Margana (Indonesia). The academic interests of this group cover social, political, and religious changes in Asia and South Africa, which offers a host of themes that will, without doubt, widen our perceptions of time and change.

On the 2nd of January, we began our intensive Dutch language course, slated to continue until 23 January. The classes and our first visit to the office of the IGEER were an equally exciting experience for us. Language classes are off to a good and promising start: after just one week, we already had a rudimentary understanding of Dutch. We are steadily gaining a hold on the pronunciation and grammar, and our attempts have created our own versions of Taiwanese-Dutch, Japanese-Dutch and also an Indian-Dutch 'dialect.' We also realize that, by the time we figure out the language, this TANAP group will already be halfway through an experience of the seventeenth century in a matter of weeks.

The days to come hold promises that will unfold in the contributions to this page by more TANAP students. < Mahesh Gopalan @ Muridan Widjojo

Editor's note >

The "TANAP Diary" by students of the programme will continue to appear as part of the TANAP section in future issues of the IIAS Newsletter.

Gujarat economy respectively. After these presentations, the aforementioned speakers and other scholars, including Lakshmi Subramanian, Ruby Maloni, Seema Aalavi, and Yogesh Sharma commented on the proposals. In this way, the seminar served as a final preparation before the students departed to the Netherlands.

Judging from the press coverage of the book launch and the exhibition as well as the students' enthusiasm about their research, the activities in Chennai have had a positive impact on both the awareness and the use of Dutch archives as sources for the history of India. <

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