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Please remember:

- Presentations should last no longer than 20 minutes.
- Commentators are asked to keep their comments limited to 5-10 minutes.
- We would like to ask the chairs and/or commentators of the parallel sessions to give a short report of their session during the final meeting on August 17.

DAY I

UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO – Senate Room –

09.00 – 10.00	Registration
10.00 – 10.15	Welcome address: Nira Wickramasinghe Leonard Blussé
10.15-10.45	Introduction to the conference theme Jos Gommans

Central Session I: Coast and Hinterland

10.45 – 13.00 (coffee break 11.45 – 12.00)

Chair: Nira Wickramasinghe
Comments: Rajat Datta

1. Remco Raben	On being land-locked: Shrinking horizons and imperial geographies in Mataram (Java) and Kandy (Sri Lanka) in the mid-17th century
2. Om Prakash	The coast and the interior – Europeans in Asia in the early modern period
3. Yogesh Sharma	The coast and the interior – arteries of trade in 17th-century Mughal India Pius
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch

Central session II: Representations I

14.00 – 16.30 (coffee break 15.20 – 15.40)

Chair: Pius Malekandathil
Comments: Charles Jeurgens

1. Catherine Raymond	Contextualisation of the first appearance of Europeans in Southeast Asian Buddhist wall paintings in the mid-17th through the early 18th centuries
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| 2. Corinna Forberg | What does the emperor of India look like? European representations of Indian rulers and staff (1650 – 1740) |
| 3. Manjusha Kuruppath | When Vondel looked eastwards: a study of representation and information transfer in Joost van den Vondel's <i>Zungchin</i> (1667) |
| 16.30 – 17.30 | Business meeting Encompass II |
| 18.00 | Arrival at the hotel |
| 19.30 | Departure for Dinner |

DAY II **UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO**
- Arts Fac. Board Room / Dep. of Economics Seminar Room -

Parallel sessions I

9.15 – 12.30 (coffee break 10.15 – 10.30)

A. Representations II (Arts Faculty Board Room)

Chair: Alicia Schrikker

Comments: Catherine Raymond

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| 1. Carolien Stolte | Textual reproduction – the curious gestation of the Dasávatara manuscript by Philip Angel |
| 2. Renee Spierings | Seeing Ceylon: the construction of visual representations in the works of Esaias Boursse (1661-1669) and Albrecht Herport (1669) |
| 3. Lennart Bes | Toddlers, Widows and Bastards Enthroned. Dynastic Succession in Early-Modern South India |
| 4. Yedda Wang | Aboriginal Communities and European Rivalry in North Formosa (1626-1668): with a special focus on The Basay as The Merchant of Merchants |

B. Bay of Bengal (Department of Economics Seminar Room)

Chair: Bambang Purwanto

Comments: Remco Raben

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| 1. Sher Banu Latiff Kahn | The VOC, Aceh and its vassal state of Perak: a narrative of response, resistance and resilience in the latter half of the 17th century |
| 2. Martha Chaiklin | Ayutthaya: the ivory kingdom |
| 3. Murari Kumar Jha | Linkages between the coast and the hinterland of Bihar: the Gangetic highway during the 18th century |
| 4. Pimmanus Wibulsilp | Arcot: the formation of the first independent Muslim kingdom in the Hindu Tamil Nadu land (the late 17th century to the 18th century) |
| 12.30 – 13.30 | Lunch |

Central session III: Indian Ocean Connections

(Arts Faculty Board Room)

13.30 – 15.00

Chair: Ruby Maloni

Comments: Om Prakash

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| 1. Rajat Datta | Money Use and Monetization in Early Modern India: A View from the East |
| 2. Ghulam Nadri | The indigo trade of the Dutch East India Company in the early 17th century |
| 3. Ranjit Jayasena | Interlocking VOC stations, connected material culture: recent excavations in Mauritius and Sri Lanka |

Parallel sessions II

15.15 – 17.30 (tea break at 16.00 – 16.15)

A. Connections across the Chinese Seas (Arts Faculty Board Room)

Chair: Leonard Blussé

Comments: Bambang Purwanto

1. Hoang Ahn Tuan Engineering socio-economic transformation: global trade and the Vietnamese integration in the early modern period.
2. Weichung Cheng Admiral Shih Lang's secret proposal of returning Taiwan to the VOC
3. Ariel Lopez Divergent narratives of two Sultanates: Maguindanao and Sulu in the 18th century
4. Carl Feddersen Speelman's diplomatic model in the "Notitie" – The Cases of Arung Palakka and Karaung Karungrung

B. Connections across the Arabian Sea (Department of Economics Seminar Room)

Chair: Jos Gommans

Comments: Ghulam Nadri

1. René Barendse The structure of Portuguese trade in Western India in the thirties of the 17th century
 2. Pius Malekandathil Shifting from inland to the frontiers of coastal societies: a study of the integration of coastal northern Konkan with the Mughal world
 3. Ruby Maloni Maritime cities and their hinterland: Surat as a counterpoint to Bombay
 4. Binu John Parambil The Dutch East India Company and the opium trade in Malabar
- 18.00 Arrival at the hotel
19.30 Departure for Dinner

**DAY III POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY/
SRI LANKA NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

Roundtable discussion
(Postgraduate Institute for Archaeology)

09.30 – 10.00 Coffee

10.00 – 12.00

Round-table discussion with reports from the commentators

*Chairs: Leonard Blussé and
Jos Gommans*

12.00 – 12.45

Lunch

Treasures in the Sri Lanka National Archives
(Sri Lanka National Archives)

13.00 – 15.00

Chair: Lodewijk Wagenaar

1. Jinna Smit

Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue: the Mutual Cultural Heritage Program of the *Nationaal Archief*

2. Nirmal Dewasiri, Nadeera Seneviratne,
Alicia Schrikker and Kate Ekama

Impressions and samples of the rich holdings of the Sri Lanka National Archives

15.00 – 15.15

Tea

15.15

Departure for City Tour

17.00

Arrival at the hotel

18.00

Departure for Farewell Dinner

*Conference Proposal and Research Agenda

**The Rise of Asia's Maritime Frontiers
Old and New Regimes at the Interface of Coast and Interior, c. 1650-1720**

... *puisque le voyageur qui court jusqu'au bout du monde ne trouve jamais que ce qu'il apporte : son humaine condition.*

Paul Hazard¹

The historical setting: Coastal breakouts

So far, the process of early-modern European expansion has been primarily investigated as a (Western-) European phenomenon. As such, historians still highlight the 'superiority' of Western institutions (for example the companies, 'trust', property, etc.) and Western ways of warfare. This Eurocentric perspective tends to neglect the autonomous, Asian context in this process. As is clearly demonstrated in recent studies on South Asia, mainland Southeast Asia and China, the early-modern societies of Asia were far from static entities merely reacting to Western expansion. Instead, they were highly dynamic political economies deploying a rich variety of push and pull forces vis-à-vis Europeans and other 'foreigners'.

When taking a closer look at the seventeenth-century Asian setting of European expansion, the crises of the *anciens régimes* of the three large continental empires—Safavid Iran, Mughal India and Ming China—are a striking phenomenon. Although these empires were affected by the more global, fiscal crisis of the seventeenth century—the result of demographic growth and geopolitical overextension—much of their decline can be attributed to the concurrent rise of their maritime peripheries.² The latter was the result of two centuries of sustained commercial and monetary expansion, mainly triggered from the sea, which made it increasingly difficult for the imperial authorities—mostly having a Central Asian background and based in capitals in the (semi-) arid interior—to keep these ever more resourceful coastal provinces at bay. Thus the decline of the Safavid Empire almost simultaneously occasioned processes of Arab state-formation along the southern shores of the Persian Gulf. In South Asia, the period that saw the decline of the Mughal Empire simultaneously witnessed the rise of *de facto* more autonomous regional polities like Bengal and Hyderabad, with major outlets to the sea.³

Against this conspicuous rise of the littoral in West and South Asia, however, stands the restoration of centralist, 'interior' rule, first in mainland Southeast Asia and later in East Asia. At a somewhat earlier stage, some of these dynasties seem to have simply turned away from the sea, as in the case of the Tokugawa dynasty in Japan and, to a lesser extent, the restored Toungoo dynasty in Burma, remarkably enough both in the year 1635.⁴ However, at the maritime crossroads of Bengal and Burma, the state of Arakan was able to continue its

¹ First page of Chapter 1 of P. Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715* (Paris, 1935).

² For a discussion on the seventeenth-century crisis, see J.A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, 1991).

³ For the developments along the Persian Gulf, see J. Gommans, *The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire, 1710-1780* (Leiden, 1995), 36-37. For the process of regional centralization in South Asia, see the introduction of M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam in *The Mughal State, 1526-1750* (Delhi, 1998).

⁴ Although the Burmese state turned more towards the interior, Lieberman tends to stress seventeenth- and eighteenth-century continuity. Overall, though, it seems that overseas trade is becoming less important compared to domestic agricultural development and the overland trade with Yunnan; see V. Lieberman, 'Secular Trends in Burmese Economic History, c. 1350-1830, and their Implications for State Formation', *Modern Asian Studies* 25 (1991): 1-31.

autonomy.⁵ In the case of China, the mid-seventeenth century witnessed the birth of the new maritime polity of the Zheng family in Fujian and Taiwan. Under the Qing dynasty, however, this Chinese maritime breakout was nipped in the bud. The commercial dynamic of the coast was not suppressed but once again channelled through closely supervised emporia like Canton. Whether in the shadow of imperial decline as in the case of the Safavids and Mughals, or imperial restoration as in the case of the Qing, the following century proved to be a century of ongoing economic and demographic growth.

It is in the context of this shifting political balance between coasts and interiors that we should come to grips with the impact of the European companies in Asia. In the footsteps of the Portuguese and Spanish, the Dutch and English commercial and military activities were clearly instrumental in bringing about and sustaining the rise of Asian littorals during the long seventeenth century. Especially in Southeast Asia, Europeans were vital in engendering the so-called Age of Commerce but were also responsible for bringing this very Age to an end somewhere around 1680.⁶

Obviously, the Indonesian Archipelago's peculiar post-1680 development was heavily determined by geography, which made it the world's spicery, but also denied it the mainland's extensive reserves or unifying internal arteries, and which left it exposed to the early application of European sea power. From the point of view of the coast-interior dichotomy, it seems that in particular the Dutch East India Company was successful in detaching the coastal fringes from interior control: just briefly from Ming China on Taiwan, more structurally from Mataram on Java and from Kandy on Ceylon.⁷ Together with the disintegration of the Safavid and Mughal Empires, this gave rise to the emergence of an 'other' Asia, i.e. a more sea-oriented Asia that increasingly turned away from the administrative centres of the interior and instead became more sensitive to the rhythm of overseas networks and markets.⁸ Thus, the 1680s did not signal the end of commerce for 'the Lands below the Winds' but rather the beginning of some new maritime networks that not only fostered Dutch expansion but also laid the foundations for the strengthening of various Maluku, Malay and Buginese port polities and maritime networks.⁹ For South India also, there is ample space to study the rise of new eighteenth-century coastal states such as Ikkeri, Arcot, Tanjore, Madurai or that remarkable thalassocracy of the Maldives. In many of these cases, the main challenge will be to incorporate the history of the VOC into the larger fabric of Asian, and indeed, World history.

Ideological realignments

At about this time, a new cultural and intellectual ferment emerged that stimulated the construction of ideologies and identities increasingly informed by the long-distance commercial and intellectual interaction across the Indian Ocean, including but by no means

⁵ J. Gommans and J. Leider (eds), *The Maritime Frontier of Burma: Exploring Political, Cultural and Commercial Interaction in the Indian Ocean World, c. 1000-1800* (Amsterdam, 2002) and Stephan van Galen, Stephan van Galen, 'Arakan and Bengal. The Rise and Decline of the Mrauk U kingdom (Burma) from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century AD (PhD thesis, Leiden University, 2008).

⁶ A. Reid, *Southeast Asia in the Age of Commerce 1450-1680*, 2 vols. (New Haven and London, 1988-93).

⁷ L. Nagtegaal, *Riding the Dutch Tiger: The Dutch East Indies Company and the Northeast Coast of Java, 1680-1743* (Leiden, 1996).

⁸ Cf. E. Whiting Fox, *History in Geographic Perspective: The Other France* (New York, 1971). See also J.C. Heesterman, 'Littoral et intérieur de l'Inde', in L. Blussé, H.L. Wesseling and G.D. Winus, eds., *History and Underdevelopment* (Leiden, 1980). Leonard Blussé, 'The Run to the Coast: English and Dutch Expansion in Asia during the *Ancien Régime*', *Itinerario* 12:1 (1988): 195-214.

⁹ J. Gommans, 'Trade and Civilization around the Bay of Bengal, c. 1650-1800', *Itinerario* 19 (1995): 82-108. See also V. Lieberman, 'An Age of Commerce in Southeast Asia? Problems of Regional Coherence—A Review Article', *Journal of Asian Studies* 54 (1995): 799.

limited to the *hajj*. This new wave of ‘globalisation’ not only involved the spread of Christianity and other European peoples and ideas but also, and more importantly, the reinforcement of Islamic ways of (court-) life and more legalistic, orthodox ways of thinking throughout the coastal societies of the Archipelago and the Indian subcontinent. In this maritime world of increasing interregional connections, ethnic and religious identities were constantly renegotiated between the various local courts and the highly cosmopolitan networks of missionaries, pilgrims, and (foreign) traders. In South and Southeast Asia, Islamic revivalism inspired various *jihad* movements, often opposing the rise of European power.¹⁰

Far from entirely losing out, the various *ancien régimes* of the interior often found recourse in an increasingly ritualized universe in which the Europeans served as their coastal vassals. From the perspective of the interior capitals of Kandy and Mataram, regime change at the coast indeed could mean the loss of effective power but, at the same time, it could herald an unprecedented degree of ritual authority, at some places even giving rise to religious revivalism and new inventions of tradition.¹¹ Turning to South Asia, the VOC material (for example the documents regarding its numerous missions to South India courts) would be the ideal starting point for a fascinating comparative study of the courtly societies of the various Vijayanagara successor states along the Kanara and Coromandel coasts.¹²

Economic and cultural interface

Apart from focusing on so far neglected coastal regions, it would be worthwhile to take a look at the various ways in which these coastal areas were linked to the interior. Here one could think of a study of the Ganges, Irrawaddy or Chao Phraya river systems as major trade arteries between the Indian Ocean and the political capitals in the interior. Like some overland highroads between ‘twins’ of capital and harbour, as in the case of Surat-Agra, Masulipatam-Hyderabad, Bandar-e Abbas and Isfahan, these routes were much-frequented by Dutch and other travellers such as diplomats, merchants, pilgrims and others, but, so far, they have never been studied in their capacity as central axes that channelled and managed the ongoing circulation of people, commodities and ideas.¹³

¹⁰ B. Schrieke was one of the first to observe the wider intellectual parallels and connections within and outside the archipelago; see B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies*, part 2, *Ruler and Realm in Early Java* (The Hague, 1957). The best study, however, is D. Lombard, *Le carrefour javanais*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1990). See also, S. Subrahmanyam, ‘Iranians Abroad: Inter-Asian Elite Migration and Early Modern State Formation’, *Journal of Asian Studies* 51 (1992), and, more recently, Engseng Ho, *The Graves of Tarim: Genealogy and Mobility across the Indian Ocean* (Berkeley, 2006).

¹¹ Roberts, Michael. *Sinhala Consciousness in the Kandyan Period 1950’s to 1815* (Colombo, 2003); Strathern, Alan, *Kingship and Conversion in Sixteenth-Century Sri Lanka: Portuguese Imperialism in a Buddhist Land* (Cambridge, 2007). For the way the VOC responded to, and actually facilitated this process, see the fascinating studies of Lodewijk Wagenaar, ‘“Knielen of buigen?” De gezantschappen van de Compagnie naar Kandy na het vredesverdrag van 1766’ in C.A. Davids, W. Fritschy en L.A. van der Valk (red.), *Kapitaal, ondernemerschap en beleid: Studies over economie en politiek in Nederland, Europa en Azië van 1500 tot heden*, 441-66 (Amsterdam, 1996); ‘Looking for Monks from Arakan. A Chapter of the Kandyan-Dutch Relations in the 18th Century’, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka*, New Series, 48 (2003), 91-110. ‘“Met eer en respect”’: Diplomatieke contacten tussen de VOC-gouverneur in Colombo en het hof van het koninkrijk Kandy, 1703-1707’ in Elsbeth Locher-Scholten en Peter Rietbergen (red.), *Hof en handel: Aziatische vorsten en de VOC 1620-1720*, 227-251 (Leiden, 2004).

¹² An integrated history of these Nayaka states is still to be written. For the challenges ahead, see however, V. Narayana Rao, D. Shulman and S. Subrahmanyam, eds., *Symbols of Substance: Court and State in Nayaka Period Tamilnadu* (Delhi, 1992).

¹³ A promising entry to the subject is J. Deloche, *La circulation en Inde avant la révolution des transports*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1980). Fortunately, the VOC often established factories along these routes and these provide unique windows through which to observe the intricate relationship between empires and emporia.

A more traditional but still very important theme that stresses coastal interaction with the interior is the study of European policies to control the centres of production (whether agriculture or manufacture), be it through direct colonization or through local and/or foreign (Chinese or Indian) mercantile brokers. Also in this case it is extremely important that students take the VOC as a case to be studied in the larger theoretical framework of agrarian expansion and proto-capitalism in early-modern Asia.¹⁴

The conventional historiography grossly neglects the cultural dimension of the VOC's presence in Asia. One way to move ahead may be to focus on the role of cultural brokers, for example between the VOC and the Asian courts in the interior. The 'new diplomatic history' as launched by Leonard Blussé in 1998 has yet to be thoroughly addressed.¹⁵ Here a comparative mindset may help to demonstrate 'civilisational' differences of courtly ritual and ceremony, for example between Indian and Chinese courts. Apart from diplomats, a whole range of Dutch cultural brokers like *predikanten*, interpreters, surgeons and painters are waiting to be studied (as categories) in earnest.¹⁶ Even more pioneering would be a systematic investigation of cross-cultural 'friendship' and 'love' between Dutchmen and Asians—whether or not such relationships were conceived as examples of corruption and moral decline.¹⁷ Jane Taylor, Leonard Blussé and Henk Niemeijer have shown how fruitful such research can be in an urban context.¹⁸ All this is very well possible if we just allow ourselves to loosen the still dominant tendency to write regional studies exclusively, and instead to take up again Charles Boxer's old but still fascinating agenda and focus on themes that bring together Dutch cultural and social activities throughout the whole of Asia, now in the context of other, by now much better studied cases of cross-cultural encounters.¹⁹

Representations

The neglect of the social and cultural aspects of Dutch overseas history also accounts for what seems to be a missing early-modern link in the history of European Orientalism. Chronologically speaking, Dutch descriptions of the Orient stand somewhere midway between the sixteenth-century tradition dominated by Portuguese and Roman Catholic representations and the well-studied early-colonial English and French discourse on Asia. It is high time we took another critical look at what seems to be a really unique efflorescence of Dutch ethnographic and scientific writing about the Orient, in particular during the later part of the seventeenth century. One author recently suggested that these extensive seventeenth-century writings on Asian flora, fauna, customs and religions announced a 'broad turn toward

¹⁴ For India, see for example P. Parthasarathi, *The Transition to a Colonial Economy: Weavers, Merchants and Kings in South India 1720-1800* (Cambridge, 2001). For the post-1680 Dutch expansion into the hinterland of Batavia, see H.E. Niemeijer, *Batavia. Een Koloniale samenleving in de 17de eeuw* (Amsterdam 2005).

¹⁵ J.L. Blussé, *Tussen geveinsde vrunden en verklaarde vijanden*, Inaugural lecture (KNAW, Amsterdam, 1999); revised English version, 'Amongst Feigned Friends and Declared Enemies', in Solvi Sogner, ed., *Making Sense of Global History* (Universitetsforlaget Oslo, 2002): 154-68.

¹⁶ Here the studies of J. van Goor may lead the way; for example, his *Jan Kompenie as Schoolmaster: Dutch Education in Ceylon 1690-1795* (Utrecht 1978) and *Kooplieden, predikanten & bestuurders overzee: Beeldvorming en plaatsbepaling in een andere wereld* (Utrecht, 1982). See also R. van Gelder, *Het Oost-Indisch avontuur: Duitsers in dienst van de VOC* (Nijmegen, 1997). Although more specific studies on priests and painters are available, these tend to suffer from a Neerlandocentric perspective.

¹⁷ G. Kruijtzter, *Xenophobia in Seventeenth Century India* (Leiden, 2009).

¹⁸ J.G. Taylor, *The Social World of Batavia: European and Eurasian in Dutch Asia* (Madison, 1983); J.L. Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht, 1986); H.E. Niemeijer, *Batavia een koloniale samenleving in de 17e eeuw* (Amsterdam, 2006). For an interesting comparative study, see R. Raben, 'Batavia and Colombo: The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities 1600-1800' (PhD-thesis Leiden University, 1996).

¹⁹ For example, S.B. Schwartz, ed., *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on the Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern World* (Cambridge, 1994).

an anti-dogmatic empiricism that was a conspicuous strand in Dutch culture at these years'. These works should be re-analysed in the context of ongoing discussions on the making of the European Enlightenment and the construction of pre-modern Asian identities.²⁰ At the same time, such analysis should connect more thoroughly with the Company's transfer of information both within and between Asia and Europe. Here one could imagine a fine prosopographical study of information and patronage networks still very much hidden behind the official facade of VOC institutions.²¹

Call for papers

We have invited junior and senior colleagues to submit papers that address various aspects of the interaction of coast and interior in Asia in the period of 1650-1720. First of all, papers could highlight specific cases of coastal breakouts and the formation of new maritime (and colonial) states and networks. Secondly, we would be very much interested in the ideological background and consequences of this coastal divergence, whether or not highlighting the way the Company actively participated in this process. Thirdly, we would like to reinvestigate the dynamic interface between coast and hinterland, by focusing on connecting river and road systems as well as human networks of economic and cultural go-betweens. Fourthly, and slightly beyond our immediate research agenda, we would be delighted if papers would reflect on Dutch representations of some of these Asian regime changes of the period, the more so since cases of Dutch Orientalism may provide interesting missing links in the history of both European Orientalism and Dutch Radical Enlightenment. Finally, *all* participants are invited to take up again the fascinating agenda of the Cambridge-Delhi-Leiden-Yogyakarta conferences of the 1980's and to be particularly sensitive to relevant comparisons and connections that may help to cement the flourishing but also increasingly fragmented fields of colonial and area studies.²²

²⁰ Cited from J.E. Wills, 'Author, Publisher, Patron, World: A Case Study of Old Books and Global Consciousness', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 13 (2009), p.376. For a recent flavouring, see the various contributions in L. Blussé and I. Ooms, *Kennis en Compagnie* (Amsterdam, 2002) and, in particular, H.J. Cook, *Matters of Exchange: Commerce, Medicine, and Science in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven and London, . See also the fascinating study of E. van den Boogaart, *Het verheven en verdorven Azië: Woord en beeld in het Itinerario en de Icones van Jan Huygen van Linschoten* (Amsterdam, 2000). For the overall European context, see for example J.P. Rubiés, *Travel and Ethnology in the Renaissance: South India through European Eyes, 1250-1625* (Cambridge, 2000) and J. Osterhammel, *Die Entzauberung Asiens: Europa und die asiatischen Reiche im 18. Jahrhundert* (Munich, 1998).

²¹ A good example of what may be an extremely fruitful new direction of research is L. Kooijmans, *Vriendschap en de kunst van het overleven in de zeventiende eeuw en achttiende eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1997). The huge potential of such a perspective for Dutch overseas history may be gleaned from F. Gaastra, *Bewind en beleid bij de VOC 1672-1702* (Amsterdam, 1989) and L. Blussé, *Bitters bruid: Een koloniaal huwelijksdrama in de Gouden Eeuw* (Amsterdam, 1997). For India, an attractive beginning is provided by M. Peters, *In steen geschreven: Leven en sterven van VOC—dienaren op de kust van Coromandel in India* (Amsterdam, 2002) and *De wijze koopman: Het wereldwijde onderzoek van Nicolaes Witsen (1641-1717), burgemeester en VOC-bewindhebber van Amsterdam* (Amsterdam, 2010). For a more general overview of Dutch life in Asia, see R. Raben and U. Bosma, *De oude Indische wereld 1550-1920. De geschiedenis van de Indische Nederlanders* (Amsterdam, 2003).

²² This refers to the four Cambridge-Delhi-Leiden-Yogyakarta conferences on India and Indonesia held between 1985 and 1989. For reports, see the special issues of *Itinerario*, 10,1 (1986); 11,1 (1987); 12,1 (1988) and 13,1 (1989). Although the results of this co-operation were stimulating, the emphasis on the comparative approach often missed the more obvious observation of the ongoing interaction between the two areas.

*Abstracts

Central Session I: Coast and Inland

Remco Raben:

On being land-locked: Shrinking horizons and imperial geographies in Mataram (Java) and Kandy (Sri Lanka) in the mid-17th century

The purpose of this paper is to explore the fates and strategies of two Asian land-locked empires. Mataram and Kandy had parallel experiences with Dutch expansionism, which seem to have resulted in their relative isolation from the outside world. The chronology of the two empires is markedly similar: a gradual shift to isolation in the mid-seventeenth century, an intermittent struggle with the coastal power, and ultimate conquest (both by British) in the early-nineteenth century.

This paper will concentrate on the first phase and attempt to compare the causes of the isolation and the changing world views of the courts of Kandy and Mataram in the mid-to-late-seventeenth century. With the advent of the European traders and conquerors in South and Southeast Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the connections to the outside world of these two empires became severely hampered. It is worthwhile to investigate the dynamics of Asian imperial geographies and the impact of the Europeans impacted on inland kingdoms.

In the paper, I will try to address three sets of questions: 1) What is the meaning of their parallel histories? What do we compare? 2) How can we measure the isolation of the two empires? Was there a retreat into the interior? How and to what effect did expanding Dutch power over Asian coasts impinge on the external relations of the empires in the interior? And 3) What were the strategies chosen by the rulers of Mataram and Kandy towards the European powers? Did isolation affect their world images? What were the effects on court cultures and legitimation processes?

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Om Prakash:

The Coast and the Interior: Europeans in South Asia in the Early Modern Period

How does one rationalize the almost universal practice of the most important of the European trading establishments (called factories) in South Asia being located on the coast rather than in the interior where the bulk of the goods procured for the European and the Indian Ocean markets originated? In so far as both the import and the export trade of the European trading companies from the subcontinent was carried on exclusively through the medium of ships, this was partly a matter of convenience. The loading and the unloading of the cargoes often needed careful supervision, if only to minimize (it was impossible to eliminate) the smuggling of low-bulk high-value commodities such as opium aboard the Company ships by the factors themselves on their private account.

But considerations of strategy were of even greater import. The armed superiority of European ships over their Asian counterparts was well-known. A glaring example of this disparity was provided in April 1612 when six English ships congregated off the Arabian coast and hijacked in succession, fifteen passing Mughal ships from India, culminating in the capture of the great 1000-ton vessel Rahimi which belonged to the mother of the Mughal emperor. The prizes were taken to a nearby anchorage and plundered at will. The Europeans

extensively used the threat to attack Indian shipping on the high seas as an effective insurance to counter actual or perceived ill-treatment at the hands of the indigenous authorities.

This threat could be effective only when the companies operated from the coast and could, in principle, organize reprisals on an immediate and urgent basis. The paper will discuss these issues in some detail.

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Pius Malekandathil:

Shifting from Inland to the Frontiers of Coastal Societies: A Study on the Integration of Coastal Northern Konkan with the Mughal World

The period between 1650 and 1720 witnessed the emergence of several power contenders in and around the ports of northern Konkan. All the major maritime powers of Europe and Asia wanted to grab territories of varying nature along the coast of Konkan, which made the Mughals shift their capital from Delhi to Aurangabad in 1683 obviously with the intention of subjugating the regional contenders to the overarching Mughal authority and to link resourceful coastal terrain and its ports with the Mughal interior. On the one hand the Portuguese began to increasingly focus on the fertile agrarian tract called Povincia do Norte (Province of North) stretching from Thana to Daman, while the English started concentrating on Bombay and the neighbourhood. The Marathas had by this time set up a chain of marine fortresses along the coast for protecting their commercial and political interests in the region against the background of their burgeoning inland empire. The Adil Shahs of Bijapur tried to control the trade of northern Konkan through their ports, particularly that of Chaul and used Siddhis for controlling commerce and shipping in the region. The Dutch managed to get entry into the highly activated textile markets of Bijapur and inland Deccan through Vengurla. The periodical attacks on the coastal terrain by the emerging Asian maritime power of the Omanis in 1661, 1674 and 1700 all the more convinced the Mughals of the urgent need for integrating the coastal peripheral region of Konkan with the Mughal heartland located in the interior. The Mughals did not conquer any of the coastal ports of Konkan; however by localizing power in the vicinity of these ports, but reasonably distanced from sea-waters, the Mughals developed a highly pragmatic paradigm for the integration of coast and the interior, which continued to be the model till the end of first decade of eighteenth century. By keeping a reasonable distance away from the sea-side, the Mughals pre-empted themselves from probable attacks from various European powers. However Aurangzeb did not let the maritime space fall into the hands of various power contenders in the way they wanted. The Siddhis, who earlier managed the navy of the Bijapuris (till 1687), were given the charge of handling the threat from the Omanis and other powers. The Mughals hoped that all the major power contenders of India, who had by this time increasingly concentrated on northern Konkan drawing immense benefits out of its commerce, could only be checked by shifting power centre from Delhi to Aurangabad, which was in the vicinity of this commercial theatre. The shifting of power base to Aurangabad not only integrated this region with the Mughal interior, but also ensured easy access to bullions brought to the region by various European and Asian traders.

The central purpose of this paper is to see the processes and mechanisms by which the coastal northern Konkan, where the major European and Asian maritime powers highly concentrated during this period, was effectively integrated with the Mughal interior.

Central Session II: Representations I

Catherine Raymond:

Contextualization of the first appearance of Europeans in Southeast Asian Buddhist wall paintings in the mid-seventeenth through the early eighteenth centuries

As the Dutch merchant fleet was instrumental in bringing monks from mainland Buddhist Southeast Asia—particularly from Arakan and Siam—to Sri Lanka in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, CE, the VOC was instrumental for Buddhist religious revival in Lanka. Although we do not have any specific depictions of these monastic delegations, we do have a unique representation of one important pilgrimage site as it was understood and sketched presumably by Wouter Schouten in mid-November 1660 and later on adapted for his published travelogue in 1676.

Interestingly enough, it is during this period in Upper Burma and Siam that obviously European figures first appeared in some Buddhist narratives, within the wall paintings of numerous, modest temples located along the banks of the Chindwin, the Irrawaddy and the Chao Phraya riverine trade routes. As we will discuss such figures with their iconic, stylized wide-brimmed hats had become emblematic of foreigners until the late nineteenth century. Using new research based on VOC archives, as well as reviewing various depictions of Europeans in these temples dating from as early as 1654 CE this paper examines the context of their appearance which was accompanied by the intensification of trade much further inland.

This paper is looking at sharing with the participants:

How to read Burmese Buddhist Mural Paintings from that time?

What are we looking at when we study Buddhist Murals either from an Asian or from an European perspective ?

What could we learn in reading Burmese Buddhist Murals of that time? That will be the subject of my presentation.

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Corinna Forberg:

What does the emperor of India look like? European representations of Indian Rulers and staff (1650-1740).

What picture did the Europeans imagine and create from the Indian emperor? What sources did they use and what media helped to disseminate the pictures. What preconditions did the artists and recipients of these representations have and what kind of interest existed in the background? This chain of questions will lead through the topic of my paper.

Of course, there did not exist an unique India during the 17th and 18th centuries. India was a synonym for the Mughal empire. However, also smaller kingdoms as Golkonda and Bijapur were known in the European public. Their pictures were established by representations of their rulers, king's family members and ministers. The main and most convincing sources were Indian miniatures.

The widest dissemination of these portraits could be realised in the field of the art of book, where a lot of them appeared as illustrations in travel literature since the end of the 17th

century. The European centre of the book market were the Netherlands, where the biggest part of the illustrated books about India was published. Only a few portraits of Indian rulers, inspired by Indian miniatures, were published earlier. They are exceptions and will not be integrated in the current paper.

Not only in the field of graphic arts and book illustrations the representations of Indian rulers caught the attention of artists but also in the field of painting. The most prominent figure among these painters is Rembrandt, who produced about twenty drawings after Indian miniatures. By the example of three paintings, made for the Sicilian collector Antonio Ruffo, I will demonstrate the influence of Indian miniatures during the creative process. They contain the keys of Rembrandt's interest in Indian miniatures in general and give an indication of the motivation of booksellers to produce copies after Indian miniatures in travel literature. Roughly concluded, the foundations of that special Dutch interest in Indian miniatures lay the encyclopedic collections found in large sections of the society, the preference for naturalism and a special interest in chronology as a tool for historiography.

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Manjusha Kuruppath:

When Vondel Looked Eastwards: A Study of Representation and Information Transfer in Joost van den Vondel's Zungchin (1667)

Seventeenth century China was fraught with crisis. In 1644, the Ming dynasty fell, the emperor ingloriously committed suicide and the empire opened its doors to new rulers from the north, the Manchus. As an episode of unprecedented consequence in China, it was also an event of unparalleled attention in Europe. This political revolution was accorded substantial print space in a variety of texts in the mid-seventeenth century Dutch Republic. Drawing inspiration and information from these works, the Dutch playwright Joost van den Vondel in 1667 dramatized this episode in one of his very last plays titled *Zungchin*.

This paper broaches three principle themes in relation to Joost van den Vondel's *Zungchin* – i) representation, ii) information transfer and iii) the role of the Dutch East India Company. With regard to representation, this paper analyses the nature of characterization of the Orient in Vondel's play. It situates this representation within the context of a wide range of texts written in the seventeenth century Dutch Republic which chronicled this episode of dynastic change. This is done with the purpose of appraising the varying forms and tones that this event assumed in these different textual genres before culminating in Vondel's theatrical production. In proposing such, this paper builds on the leads provided by Van Kley in *News from China* who signals to the rich textual tradition in the Low Countries which in the seventeenth century increasingly bore information about China. Early news-sheets, first hand accounts and travel narratives detailed this period of crisis in Chinese history to the Dutch readership. Although the analysis of representation constitutes the prime objective of the paper, it also engages the theme of information transfer. It asks how Vondel, a 'sit-at-home' playwright based his drama on a historical episode of Asian extraction. Past studies suggest that Vondel appealed to a number of sources for his information and imagery when writing his play, most notably the first hand narrative authored by the Jesuit Martinus Martini's titled *De Bello Tartarico* (1654) and a travel account titled *Het gezantschap der Neerlandtsche Oost-Indische Compagnie aan de Tartarischen Cham* (1665) by Johan Nieuhof, a servant of the Dutch East India Company. This paper attempts to delineate these linkages and point to the connections that Vondel's *Zungchin*, by means of sources such as Johan Nieuhof's travel account reveal with the workings of the Dutch East India Company in

Asia. In illustrating such, the paper argues that the VOC played an important role as an agent of information transfer between Asia and the Dutch Republic in the period.

Parallel Sessions I

A. Representations II

Carolien Stolte:

Textual Reproduction - The curious gestation of the Daśavatara manuscript by Philip Angel (1658)

This paper traces the textual journey of a manuscript on the ten incarnations of Vishnu (the Daśavatara) by painter and Dutch East India Company servant Philip Angel. In 1658, Philip Angel gifted this manuscript to Company Director Carel Hartsinck. It was intended to get into Hartsinck's good books: Angel had been recalled to the VOC-headquarters in Batavia in disgrace for engaging in private trade and was to account for his actions in a hearing. Back home in Holland, Philip Angel had been a painter and a published author. The manuscript conforms to all the seventeenth century conventions of an 'exotic' gift manuscript and reflects Angel's artistic skills. But Angel himself offers no details of how he acquired the manuscript, in what language, or who assisted him. This requires an investigation into the practices of information-gathering on Indian religious texts by important players of the time, ranging from Portuguese Jesuits to literati at the Mughal and provincial courts. Within the lively context of the mid-seventeenth century Surat region, it is likely that Philip Angel's manuscript saw much more local mediation than has previously been assumed. Specifically, this paper will examine an earlier and hitherto unknown draft of Angel's Daśavatara manuscript: the anonymous 'BPL 2881' manuscript in the Leiden University Library collection. This draft includes passages which did not make it into the final version presented at the VOC headquarters in Batavia. These fragments, in combination with the editing processes from draft to illustrated gift manuscript, strongly suggest that Angel had an Indian translator and collaborator on his project – whose voice, for various reasons, was written out in the process.

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Renee Spierings:

Seeing Ceylon: the construction of visual representations in the works of Esaias Boursse (1661-1669) and Albrecht Herport (1669)

Since the publishing of Edward Said's Orientalism over thirty years ago, studies on early modern European travel accounts have largely centered around representations of 'the Other'. In spite of notions such as 'imagination', 'Herausbildung' and indeed 'representation' itself, this research has always focused on text, overlooking the actual visual sources at hand. This article investigates the construction of the images that helped shape the European view on Asia and its peoples.

Center stage takes a remarkable sketchbook by Esaias Boursse (1631-1672), midshipman with the Dutch East India Company. On his travels to the East, to Sri Lanka in particular, he made a large number of extraordinarily unbiased and tender drawings of the people he

encountered. In a radically altered form, some of Boursse's figures ended up in the illustrations to Albrecht Herport's travel account *Eine kurze Ost-Indianische Reisz-Beschreibung*, published in Bern in 1669. This article endeavours to clarify the formation of both sets of images and, more specifically, to explore what this tells us about the representations of the people therein.

Strikingly, the subjects of Boursse's drawings and particularly Herport's engravings seem very European in their features. I believe that the appearance of race and racial characteristics as representational tools was never a given, but can be carefully traced through time. Far more important in these representations was the degree of civilization a foreign culture could profess to. This was of course measured by European standards, an understandable coping mechanism. When fitting them into his illustrations, Herport seems to have literally viewed 'the peoples in the East' as being interchangeable. However, this is by no means the norm, as demonstrated by Boursse alone.

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Lennart Bes:

Toddlers, Widows, and Bastards Enthroned. Dynastic Succession in Early-Modern South India

This paper concerns successions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century South India, focusing on several dynasties, including the Nayakas of Ikkeri, the Marathas of Tanjavur, and the Setupatis of Ramnad. Primogeniture and related customs appear to have played only a limited role whenever a new monarch was needed, as thrones were often occupied by such unlikely contenders as infants, widows, and illegitimates. Research questions dealt with in this study include: which factors determined the outcome of the struggles usually accompanying successions, which patterns can be recognised for the individual dynasties, and how do the various dynasties compare? While these kingdoms may all be considered successor states of the erstwhile Vijayanagara Empire and therefore to some extent shared a common political culture, the dynasties also differed from one another, having attained their positions through incorporation, military career, conquest, or secession, and each originating from a different socio-geographical region. The events surrounding the successions under study are often extensively described in the archives of the Dutch East India Company, but also come to light in indigenous sources gathered by the British around 1800 CE and known as the Mackenzie Manuscripts. Both types of records have much to contribute to our hitherto limited knowledge of these occasions. Consequently, this research also serves as an effort to improve the sometimes rather sketchy dynastic chronologies of the kingdoms.

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Yedda Palemeq:

Aboriginal Communities and European Rivalry in North Formosa (1626-1668): with a special focus on The Basay as The Merchant of Merchants

North Formosa has been a focus of scholarly interest since early 20th century. Linguists, anthropologists, ethnologists, archaeologists, geographers and historians based both inside and outside Taiwan have continuously contributed to the field by revisiting this contemporary political and economic hub of the island in its early-modern and modern contexts. Among contributions related to the early modern period, those regarding aboriginal communities (or *Pingpuzu*, 平埔族, Plain aborigines) have so far revealed the multi-ethnicity

of the area and the complex interdependence among different villages, while those regarding aboriginal communities and European (*i.e.* the Spanish and Dutch) presence are just starting to bring out stories behind two European powers' respective advance and aboriginal Formosans' contingent coping strategies. This study intends especially to engage with the second contribution.

Based upon previous studies and source publications since 2000, this study will look into aboriginal Formosan-European encounter experiences since the advance of the Spanish fleet in May 1626 until the retreat of the Dutch reoccupation in December 1668. Their primary nature formed at the initial encounters, changes throughout the course of time, and influences upon Formosan geo-politics as well as European colonial schemes are all matters of discussion. In time, the study spans over forty-two years including pre-, in-, and post-European-contact periods; in space, it covers north coastal areas and Tamsui River Basin (including the estuary, mid-and up-stream areas) where indigenous villages were located. Also, it attempts to review these encounters by paying close attention to local aborigines' coping styles and by recounting them in a narrative that includes—as far as the sources allow—the agency of both aboriginal Formosans and Europeans, and that explains aboriginal Formosan practices and cultures based on careful borrowings from existing anthropological literature.

One aboriginal group that has been studied more than others in north Formosa is the Basay. Their mercantile shrewdness, linguistic ability and various skills earned for themselves the position between Europeans and local villages as 'the Merchant of Merchants'. Throughout the contact period, they took advantage of the position for their own ends, but were also met with challenges precisely because of it. This case indicates layers of relationships in a cross-cultural context and the precarious nature of each layer and the whole. With other cases next to the Basay, this study also intends to problematize the popular conclusion of a unilateral (colonial) or bilateral (mutual manipulation) encounter experience. As cases in north Formosa shows, such experience is kaleidoscopic and a result of multilayer cross-coping in a selective manner.

Keywords: North Formosa, *Pingpuzu*, Spanish, Dutch, Basay, aboriginal Formosan-European encounter

Parallel Sessions I: B. Bay of Bengal

Sher Banu A.L. Khan:

The VOC, Aceh and its vassal state of Perak: A Narrative of Response, Resistance and Resilience in the latter half of the 17thC

To what extent did VOC intervention in the northern part of the Straits of Melaka bring about shifting power balance between the Company, Aceh and her vassal state of Perak by the end of the seventeenth century? This paper is a counter claim to the idea that Aceh's decline under the rule of Sultanah Safiatuddin Shah (r.1641-75) brought about improved conditions for the Dutch enabling them to assist Aceh's vassals to cast off Aceh's overlordship. Instead, I will explore and explain that the relationship between internal and external dynamics saw shifting power balances that were more fluid and that Dutch intervention and its impact were less uniformed. In contrast to Euro-centric views that the west had ascended, this paper

illustrates that by the end of the seventeenth century, European commerce and institutions had not yet displaced indigenous ones since they continued to survive. This paper supports John Wills' paradigm of interactive emergence where local Asian powers and European forces mutually adapt in their efforts to counter and respond whilst protecting their interests.

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Martha Chaiklin:

Ayutthaya: The Ivory Kingdom

In 1690, Engelbert Kaempfer, a German doctor in the employ of the VOC wrote that, "The Kingdom of Siam is the most powerful, and its Court the most magnificent among all the black Nations of Asia." Its capital, Ayutthata, was located on an island in the middle of the Chao Phraya river, which empties into the Gulf of Thailand. Advantageously located between the hinterlands of continental South East Asia and the thriving maritime network in the South China Sea, the power and magnificence noted by Kaempfer were based on trade. This trade is known as consisting of rice, deer skins, fish products and sappanwood. Despite the prominence of elephants in Thai culture, and the widespread knowledge of this even among non-historians (hence the term 'white elephant') the ivory trade in Siam, and the important role of the VOC in it has gone largely unstudied. This paper use archival and printed VOC sources and travel accounts in order to examine the procurement of ivory in Ayutthata, its importance in the material culture of Siam, its trade and the networks utilized by the VOC to disperse it across Asia.

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Murari Kuma Jha:

Linkages between the Coast and the Hinterland of Bihar: The Gangetic Highway during the Eighteenth Century

Geographically Gangetic Bihar in the middle Ganga plain is landlocked. Yet, in the past, the region had frequent access to the maritime world of the Bay of Bengal through the Gangetic highway. The Ganga River functioned as the highway of the empire (for both the Mughal and the British) and as such, it constituted an arena of economic and political activities along its water course. It facilitated mobility of the people with varied and variegated aims. The very act of traversing the fluvial course of the Ganga presents us with a case of close interaction with the natural environment, where a sailor had to face the weather, wind patterns, currents, shoals and, as a result, also the hazards of shipwreck. How travel was organized on this aquatic highroad of the empire and to what ends? How landscape of Gangetic Bihar influenced political and economic organizations? This paper aims to underscore the functional aspect of the Ganga River, treating it as a geographical unit with which people closely interacted to fulfill their economic and political interests. Thus, to analyze the nature of human activity in Gangetic Bihar, or eastern Hindustan, first of all, this paper sketches the physical geography of the region characterized by the Ganga River System, mountains, jungles, plain, towns and routes in the stretch between Patna and Rajmahal. The second section of the essay situates the Ganga River in historical perspective and looks at some of the political and economic patterns in la longue durée. And finally, in the third section, the paper discusses as how the Dutch East India Company's (Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie or

VOC) fleets used to sail from Hugli on the Bay of Bengal to Patna, around 500 miles up the river and vice versa.

The VOC used to buy goods such as saltpeter, opium and cotton textiles from the areas around Patna in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Dutch transported their merchandise from Patna to Hugli using the fleets of country boats in the Ganga River which functioned as a riverine highway linking the maritime world of the Bay of Bengal and hinterland of Gangetic Bihar. For the data on this subject I have mainly relied on the VOC sources such as Pattenase Togten, Memorie van Overgave and Overgekomen Briven en Papieren, preserved at the National Archives, The Hague. The Dutch sources privilege us to closely view the sailing patterns in the river. There is no reason to assume that the indigenous people or the other Europeans sailing in the Ganga would have followed completely different sailing pattern and encountered a new set of challenges than the Dutch sailors actually did and shown here in fascinating details. Thus, we can safely generalize the Dutch sailing experiences in the Ganga River for others who were making use of this aquatic highroad linking the hinterlands of Bihar and the maritime world of Bay of Bengal in the early modern period.

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Pimmanus Wibulsilp:

Arcot: The formation of the first independent Muslim kingdom in the Hindu Tamil Nadu land (the late seventeenth century to the eighteenth century)

A province of the Mughal Empire for about two decades (1690s-1710), later the first and only Muslim kingdom founded and permanently persisted in Hindu Tamil Nadu land, Arcot provides us an interesting example of how a Muslim power strived to build up its own political legitimacy in the Tamil Nadu Hindu arena. It has been mentioned, however, in previous literature mostly either as a part of the chaotic power struggles among many local rulers in the scene of the eighteenth-century declining South India, a part of the European rivalry (the Karnatic wars between the English and French), or the main bridgehead leading to the British colonization. The political history of Arcot has always been eclipsed by that of the British expansion and, even today an autonomous and comprehensive history of Arcot as a local Tamil Nadu power is yet to be achieved.

My paper is a preliminary study of Arcot's "state formation" with special attention being paid to the religious aspect of this process as it can be observed in European and Persian sources. In this paper I will try to answer how the religious boundary between Muslim and Hindu was crossed politically in the making of Arcot kingdom, or, in other words, the strategies with which Arcot incorporated itself into the local geopolitics in the eighteenth century. In doing so it may also help us to reflect anew on the so-called "harmonious" state between Muslim and Hindu religions prior to the colonial century that was yet to come.

Central Session III: Indian Ocean Connections

Ranjith M. Jayasena:

Archaeological research in Sri Lanka and Mauritius

In recent years archaeological research in Sri Lanka and Mauritius exposed the remains of seventeenth-century fortifications built by the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Even though 4,000 km apart, Fort Frederik Hendrik on Mauritius and Katuwana Fort in Sri Lanka were related components of the VOC's interlocking system of fortifications in the Indian Ocean, designed to facilitate the control and movement of trade goods and people. The coastal fortification on Mauritius served as a refreshment station for outward and homebound VOC fleets, whereas Katuwana Fort in the interior of Ceylon was an outpost to secure the Company's rule over the coastal regions.

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Ghulam A. Nadri:

The indigo trade of the Dutch East India Company in the early seventeenth century

This paper examines the significance of indigo as a commodity in the Dutch East India Company's scheme of trans-oceanic trade in the seventeenth century. The Company (VOC) purchased substantial quantities of indigo every year in South Asia primarily through its establishments in Surat/Gujarat, and exported them to Europe. Between the 1620s and the 1640s, a large proportion of the Company's total annual investment in Surat in export merchandise was in indigo. In view of severe competition from other European and Asian buyers, the Company contemplated to promote its production at various places in the eastern archipelago (such as Java, Ambon, and Cheribon) as well as at its other establishments in Asia. This was also perhaps a response to the attempted monopoly of the indigo trade by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in the early 1630s. This paper also analyses the opportunities and limitations of the VOC in globalizing the cultivation of indigo and manufacture of the dye and thereby restructuring the agrarian economy of its territories in Asia.

Rajat Datta

Money Use and Monetization in Early Modern India: A View from the East

There is a surprising degree of consensus among historians that the use of money had increased phenomenally in India in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. On the other hand, there is an equally surprising lack of consensus as to why this happened? One influential view holds that such high levels of monetization were fiscally induced through the collection and redistribution of the land tax in cash by the state. This resulted in a skewed monetary-nexus as the land tax, being a net drain from the countryside (the rural sector) to the cities, created a cash-guzzling (and overdeveloped) urban economy and a relatively money-starved (i.e. a relatively self-sufficient) rural economy. Attention is drawn to the absence of a rural demand for 'urban' goods and to the low levels of subsistence in the countryside as supportive evidence. I argue that while fiscal levers were

vital in sustaining urban monetization is pretty much indisputable, the use of money and the growth of a rural cash-nexus need to go beyond this fiscally-straitjacketed explanation for it bestows the state with an excessive degree of fiscal efficiency. Using evidence from eastern India in the eighteenth century, this paper will attempt a critique of this entrenched view and furnish an alternative (i.e. a non-fiscally deterministic) view of rural monetization in this period based on some of the following set of considerations. The land tax was seldom fully realized, there were enormous slippages and local magnates and powerful peasant groups retained (or siphoned away) substantial fiscal resources. Elaborate channels of rural trade developed on the basis of such resources. Commodity flows and banking networks webbed town and country in what appear to be autonomous fiscal networks. A wide variety of non-agricultural (sai'r jihat) taxes show the existence of complex commercial production systems where capital was invested by a variety of people and/or agencies, including the village community. A trimetallic currency and a graded system of mints ensured that money was accessible to all rungs of the economic chain, particularly to its intermediate and primary links. Finally, a market-induced commercialization at these two levels which occurred at this time, this paper will argue, was one of the most significant features of an early modern economy in India.

Parallel sessions II

A. Connections across the Chinese Seas

Hoang Anh Tuan:

*Engineering Socio-Economic Transformation: Early Modern Vietnamese Silk Production and Trade in Global Perspective**

In contrast to the conventional viewpoints over the early modern Vietnamese socio-economic history which over-emphasized the agricultural and land-based features, recent scholarship proposes another way for the assessment of Vietnamese history: viewing the national history from the sea. This approach particularly makes sense should one consider the extremely narrow coastal strip, wedged between sea and mountains, which rounds the Indochinese peninsula. Recent research reveals that, along this long north-south stretched coast, existed a flourishing commercial hub of the regional maritime trade throughout the ancient and medieval times, i.e. the so-called “Jiaozhi Ocean” which stretched from the Gulf of Tonkin southward to present-day central Vietnam.

The arrival of European maritime powers from the early sixteenth century transformed the traditional East Asian maritime networks. The expansion of the regional and global trading networks and, to a larger extent, the birth of early modern globalization stimulated the socio-economic changes in most of the regional countries. While Chinese export products such as silk and porcelain engineered the global exchange, Japanese silver (together with that mined in America) geared up the monetization of many regional economies. Falling in between these two giant economies, Vietnam, certainly between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries, utilized this regional trading network to expand its “commodity economy” and integrated into the global network. Vietnamese export products (silk and ceramics) bridged the isolated Gulf of Tonkin to connect northern Vietnam with the regional and international trading system, stimulated the socio-economic transformation in early modern Vietnam.

In contrast to such well-analyzed “internal pulls” as socio-economic and demographic developments, the “external push” (i.e. the influence of regional and international trade and

diplomacy upon Vietnam) was often neglected by Vietnamese historians when examining the “unprecedented development” in seventeenth-century Vietnam. On the basis of new data as well as a global viewpoint, this paper examines the spectacular development of seventeenth-century Vietnam which laid a foundation for the country’s integration into the global system during the early modern time.

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Weichung Cheng:

Admiral Shih Lang’s secret proposal of returning Taiwan to the VOC

During the rebellion of three feudatories, the feudal lords of Fuchien, Kêng Ching-chung, and Kuangtung, Shang Chih-hsin, not only ignored the maritime prohibition issued by Peking court but actually encouraged their subordinate merchants to trade in Japan and countries around South China Sea. The lord of Taiwan, Cheng Ching, occupied harbors on the Chinese shore like Haich’eng in Fuchien and Nantao in Kuangtung for expanding the China trade. After the Manchu court in Peking gained supremacy and gained control of Fuchien and Kuangtung in the 1680s, the Emperor Kanghsi initiated a series of actions to suppress the ‘traitor-merchants’. The merchants of Kuangtung were punished and abused severely during the prosecution of the chief merchant Shên Shang-ta and his gang. However, the Fuchienese merchants avoided harsh punishment because the governor Yao Ch’i-shêng argued that they were useful in raising money for attacking Taiwan. After Cheng Ching retreated all his force to Taiwan, the Taiwan transit trade soon suffered from the recession of China trade in Kuangtung and Fuchien caused by the Peking court.

Later Taiwan was struck by a drought. When the price of Siamese rice rose, the Taiwan authorities lost the fragile balance between food supply and commerce.

After the Manchu naval admiral Shih Lang defeated the Taiwanese naval force in the Pescadores in 1683, the sea-route to import Siamese rice to Taiwan was cut off and the Taiwanese authorities had to surrender. In taking over Taiwan, Shih Lang consulted with several members of the VOC and the EIC. He planned to lure the VOC and/or the EIC to become his exclusive partner of trade by conceding Taiwan on the one hand, and urged the Peking court on the other hand to maintain the maritime prohibitions (except in Amoy) to keep the foreign threat at bay. Playing out this two forked strategy, Shih Lang intended to help the Fuchienese merchants monopolize on the foreign trade at the expense of all other Chinese merchants.

However, the High Government of the VOC in Batavia was not interested in his proposal. Because no foreign threats materialized, Shih Lang eventually failed to prevent the abolishment of maritime prohibition ordered by Emperor Kanghsi. As a consequence, Shih Lang’s proposal of returning Taiwan to the VOC remained a forgotten secret. Taiwan thus played no more the role as an Entrepôt but became a potential open-frontier for the new immigrants from China.

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Ariel C. Lopez:

Divergent narratives of two Sultanates: Maguindanao and Sulu in the 18th century

Using previously underutilized archival sources from the Nationaal Archief (NA), this paper illustrates the dichotomies between the historical development of the Sultanates of

Maguindanao and Sulu in the 18th century. The rising economic opportunities from the expansion of European (Dutch and British) and Chinese economic activities in Sulawesi Sea and the larger Sulu Zone²³, failed to translate into the political consolidation of Maguindanao, but instead facilitated its 'decline.' On the other hand, these opportunities enabled Sulu to become an important entrepôt by the end of the 18th century. If 'most [of the] maritime emporia were ports located at the mouth of rivers which gave ready access to prosperous hinterland,'²⁴ as Dietmar Rothermund writes, then why did Maguindanao, with its access to upland resources such as manpower, rice and export commodities such as wax and deer meat,²⁵ not fully exploit these economic opportunities?²⁶ On the other hand, why was Sulu successful into transforming itself into an emporium for slaves, tripang (bêche-de-mer) and edible bird's nest despite of its insularity and contingent problems, such as shortages of manpower and rice, caused by a lack of hinterland?²⁷

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Carl Feddersen:

Speelman's diplomatic model in the "Notitie" – The Cases of Arung Palakka and Karaung Karunrung

The political regime that was instated by the November 1667 contract between the Company and Makassar substituted the Company for Makassar as the dominant force in Sulawesi. The primary challenges of Speelman's diplomacy both in attaining and preserving this hegemony was to uphold the loyalty of local allies, and control the Makassarese opposition. The issue of keeping both friend and foe equally in place in the new political order is accordingly predominant in his instructions and advice to his successor in Sulawesi. I shall restrict my analysis to Speelman's reflections on overseas diplomacy to his assessment of his main ally, Arung Palakka and his main antagonist in Sulawesi, Karaung Karunrung. Both cases well

²³ Adrian Lapijan and James Francis Warren have articulated the importance of the economic and geopolitical affinity of Sulu and Maguindanao to their broader regional setting. Adrian Lapijan, 'Laut Sulawesi: The Celebes Sea from Center to Peripheries,' *Moussons* 7 (2003): 3-16; James Francis Warren, *The Sulu Zone, 1768-1898: The Dynamics of External Trade, Slavery and Ethnicity in the Transformation of a Southeast Asian Maritime State* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981).

²⁴ Dietmar Rothermund, 'Asian Emporia and European Bridgeheads,' in *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400-1750* ed. Roderich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund (Stuttgart : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991), 3-4.

²⁵ François Valentijn, *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indiën*, vol. 1 (Amsterdam: J.C. van Kesteren & Zoon, 1862), 161.

²⁶ The developmental model of upstream-downstream relations of polities has been hypothesized by Bennet Bronson. B. Bronson, 'Exchange in the Upstream and Downstream: End Notes towards a Functional Model of the Coastal State in Southeast Asia,' in *Economic Exchange and Social Interaction in Southeast Asia Perspectives from Prehistory and Ethnography*, (ed.) Karl Hutterer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1977), 39-52. J. Kathirithamby-Wells specifically examines this *hulu-hilir* relation among the Malay states along the east coast of Sumatra. See J. Kathirithamby-Wells, 'Hulu-hilir Unity and Conflict: Malay Statecraft in East Sumatra before the Mid-Nineteenth Century,' *Archipel* 45 (1993): 77-96.

²⁷ Trade in edible bird's nest and *tripang* grew beginning at around the late 17th century. See David Henley, *Fertility, Food and Fever: Population, economy and environment in North and Central Sulawesi, 1600-1930* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2005), 71 and Leonard Blussé, 'In Praise of Commodities: An Essay on the Crosscultural Trade in Edible Bird's Nest,' in *Emporia, Commodities and Entrepreneurs in Asian Maritime Trade, c. 1400-1750*, eds. Roderich Ptak and Dietmar Rothermund (Stuttgart : Franz Steiner Verlag, 1991), 317-338.

illustrate what I propose is the general characteristic of Speelman's "overseas diplomatic approach", namely that agency takes precedence over context and that - if considered at all - the level of structure came third. Put plainly, Speelman was primarily preoccupied with the *personal qualities* of persons of power with whom the Company could, or had to deal. His consideration of context was motivated by the question of who actually was or could possibly be brought to agency-power. "Structure" understood for example as "political culture" is only relevant in Speelman's analysis as notifications of recurrent habits of local political practice, and never understood with a capital "C". Against this background Speelman stands out as a "methodological individualist" *avant la lettre*, or as a "principal pragmatic by practice". These positions reject commonly accepted *structural* assumptions in the historiography of the Company's overseas diplomacy such as notions of "Eurocentric tunnel-vision" and dogmatic adherence to international law.

Parallel sessions II ***Connections across the Arabian Sea***

René Barendse:

The structure of Portuguese trade in western India in the thirties of the seventeenth century.

This paper will mainly comment on a new seventeenth century Portuguese manuscript the "Livro do Estado da Índia Oriental". This manuscript which has so far been completely overlooked in the literature is one of the single most important manuscripts on the trade of the Indian Ocean since it contains a massive amount of statistic evidence on this trade which is not found in any other source. I will first comment on the quality of the statistics arguing that unlike most observers the author, Pedro Baretto de Resende, was at pains to verify his statistics by actually counting things, something still quite rare in this period in which most figures which we have are fancy figures. I will then argue that since most of the other figures are fancy figures - if Resende's figures are right virtually all figures have to be radically scaled downwards particularly if it involves the number of inhabitants of port cities but relating to the size of trade as well. I will then argue;

First, the thirties were for the mass of the population of the Indian west coast the worst decade of the entire early modern period as it featured the most grisly famine of the entire early modern period. This also severely hit many Portuguese settlements where in some places the population was halved. One formerly very important settlement, Chaul, never entirely recovered from this catastrophe, while the manufacturing industry of the Portuguese settlements was all but extinguished and also never recovered. The impact of this disaster on trade was however smoothed by it coinciding with a long term up phase of the world conjuncture; it did however feature the beginning of a long term divergence of the trade of the Indian Ocean in which trade shifted from western India to Bengal. A very disadvantageous trend for the Portuguese since they had just been evicted from Bengal, to some extent this made the fortunes of the Dutch and English company on the Indian subcontinent since they jumped into the vacuum left by the Portuguese.

Second, although the literature tends to focus heavily, in fact almost exclusively on the Portuguese trade with Europe, this trade was of only minor significance to the Portuguese trade in Asia and to Portuguese tax revenues by the third decade of the seventeenth century. Since Dutch and English imports in Europe had caused a drop in prices of the main export, Indian textiles, which meant that this trade was carried on at far too slim profit margins to

warrant the high risks involved in it, without constant bullying of the Portuguese/Spanish crown the trade might have ceased altogether.

Third, the mainstay of Portuguese trade in Asia in the late sixteenth century had been the India-China trade but that was in decay too as too many ships were being seized by the Dutch and therefore insurance premiums were too expensive. Furthermore, in the main export from East Asia to India, copper, the Portuguese were ousted by the Dutch. Southeast Asian spices were already only traded by the Dutch.

Fourth, Portuguese trade therefore essentially shifted to trade between India and the Persian Gulf, between India and Africa and between the west coast and the Coromandel coast - Ceylon/Sri Lanka had all dropped out from the Portuguese coasting trade and was making heavy losses. The most significant long distance trade was that with the Gulf, with Africa becoming increasingly important.

The bulk of it, however, fifth was not long distance trade but was coasting trade. I will argue that most Portuguese settlements essentially subsisted - and in some cases such as Diu and Chaul thrived - on the coasting trade as did San Thomé on the Coromandel Coast which was a center for the redistribution of goods from western India on the Coromandel Coast. This leads me, sixth, to a general observation on the Indian Ocean trade in general: the overwhelming bulk of Indian Ocean trade was short-distance coasting navigation - that this has often eluded notice is because the companies were not heavily involved in it. Because basically their ships and crews were too expensive to engage in this. The Portuguese however were for the Portuguese trade was unlike that of the Companies - except for the Lusitanian trade with Europe - not conducted by a centralized organization as by Portuguese private merchants who participated in trade with Indian, Persian, or Turkish merchants.

Here lies, seventh, also the very element of resilience of the Portuguese empire. Because, as I will show, the revenues of the Portuguese empire derived from the taxation of coasting trade. The core of the Portuguese state on the Indian west coast could manage financially due to this but the out-station (Ceylon, Malacca and Malabar) could not and were in severe financial difficulties. So that they had to be subsidized from the west coast. Finally, eighth, this also means that whereas most readers will probably mainly be interested in this topic as a background to the development of the Dutch and English trade it should be stressed that the Portuguese were in some ways like the companies, the basic pattern of trade and the commodities of trade changed little afterwards, but the Companies as it were only took over the upper storey of trade, that in high value, high profit commodities, and in that respect the Portuguese were completely unlike them. It was only in the eighteenth century that the 'country trade' moved into the trade in bulk goods.

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Yogesh Sharma:

The Coast and the interior – arteries of trade in 17th-century Mughal India.

The constant interface and reciprocal probings between the coast and the interior was strongly shaped by the trade routes which intersected and connected the vast hinterland to the coastal territories. These arteries, carried goods and commodities, armies and pilgrims, Europeans and Asians, merchants and officials, bandits and marauders, and several kinds of people, porters, horses, oxen, and dromedaries. Several sagas of life, death and adventure transpired on these trade arteries, at the numerous caravan serais and halting places that were located on the trade routes.

This network of communication and transportation had acquired critical significance by the 16th and 17th centuries, which was also connected to the process of state formation

and rapid growth of the commercial sector. The significance of these trade routes and transportation is reflected in Fernand Braudel's observation that India's commercial economy had become quite sophisticated and acquired the character of a 'national market'. He was particularly impressed by the remarkable system of transportation by huge ox-trains of 'Banjaras' comprising up to 10,000 oxen, which carried goods across very vast distances. Given the vast quantum and rich value of goods that moved on these trade routes, the highways could occasionally be unsafe and were prone to brigandage, which also constitutes an important area of study.

Several important routes cut across the marching territories or the interior regions which were cross-connected to the coastal regions. In the Indian sub-continent the Deccan, Malwa, Gujarat and Rajasthan circuits were important zones of cross-country movements. Also the access route that followed the Ganga river from Bengal moving up to north-west India via the imperial capitals of Delhi, Agra and Lahore and further moving towards central Asia was a key artery of transportation. This paper will briefly examine travel along two of the major trade routes mentioned above.

Thirdly, these travel routes have also spawned a wealth of historical travel literature that constitutes a very rich body of narrative pertaining to socio-political history and facets of environmental and economic history. Among the travel writers of the 17th century remarkable narratives have come from several such as John Jourdain, Pietro Della Valle, Peter Mundy, Sebastian Manrique, F. Martin, J.B.Travernier, Abbe Carre, John Fryer, and several others. An important facet of the European Traders was that they were essentially coast-centric in their location and activity. Consequently, a very extensive information emerges regarding the interface between the coast and the interior which has not been adequately studied so far.

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Ruby Maloni:

Maritime Cities and their Hinterland: Surat as a counterpoint to Bombay.

The Mughal port of Surat was a maritime city and a dynamic commercial centre. The presence of European trading companies played a role in its change of profile during the 17th and 18th centuries.

After Akbar's conquest of Gujarat in 1572, its ports became integrated with the larger economy of the empire. Major shifts occurred in trade routes and patterns of internal trade. A triangular exchange system of bullion and commodities between Surat, Ahmedabad and Agra became prominent. With the eclipse of Mughal power, after the death of Aurangzeb, Surat's hinterland became constricted, leading to a decline of its commercial importance. Yet, even after the shaping of Bombay as a 'colonial city' by the English East India Company, Surat continued to hold its own.

Although the English had acquired Bombay, their own port with a deep-water harbour, efforts to attract trade to Bombay were arduous during the second half of the 17th century. The dream of making Bombay an entrepot and commercial centre superior to Surat remained unfulfilled for more than a century. The island's long struggle to supplant its northern rival lasted well beyond 1759 when Surat was taken over by the English. Surat was a counterpoint to Bombay, the immediate instrument of a grand colonial design in Asia. Bombay as a port was consciously patterned as a 'seaward gate' and 'funnel for export'. Surat had grown to be so.

Surat had a hinterland of its own; Bombay's hinterland was created and gradually carved out, characterised by a dominant-dependent relationship. Surat's catchment area

extended widely while Bombay was restricted by the western Ghats. Mercantile and artisanal groups were traditionally established in the larger environs of Surat. To 'create' Bombay as the Urbs Prima in Indies, merchants, shipwrights and artisans were induced to migrate and settle in a new locale.

Surat and Bombay's integration and interaction with their respective hinterlands during the latter half of the 17th century and early 18th century make for an interesting study. The paper focuses on Surat and its hinterland, and compares its position in this context with that of Bombay.

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Binu John Mailaparambil:

The Dutch East India Company and the Opium Trade in Malabar (1663-1700)

One of the main problems that had to be tackled by the Dutch East India Company in Malabar was to supply the regional markets with merchandise of local demand, mainly in exchange for pepper. The main aim of the Dutch Company was to derive a profit out of such an import trade to support its pepper procurement in Malabar. When Malabar was identified by the VOC as a poor market for its commodities, it was eager to find a suitable substitute to cater the local demands. The attempt of the Dutch to monopolise the opium trade in Malabar was designed in this direction. This article attempts to analyse the opium trade of the Dutch East India Company in Malabar during the last four decades of the seventeenth century against the backdrop of the socio-political situation in the region. The efforts and failure of the Dutch Company to control the opium trade in Malabar reveal not only its limitations in controlling the coastal and hinterland trade routes, but also the resilience of the local mercantile community to maintain its sway over the regional trade.

Treasures from the archives

Jinna Smit:

Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue: the Mutual Cultural Heritage Program of the Nationaal Archief.

The Mutual Cultural Heritage Program 2009-2012 was initiated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands. Mutual Cultural Heritage (MCH) is defined as "[...] relics of a past that the Netherlands has shared with others [...]. They include heritage in other countries dating from the era of the Dutch East and West India Companies and from Dutch colonialism in Asia, Africa, and South America, as well as heritage deriving from a period of intensive cultural relations [...]" The National Archives of the Netherlands (Nationaal Archief) is one of the institutions carrying out this MCH Program in cooperation with archival institutions in the eight countries prioritized by the ministries: Brazil, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Russia, South-Africa, Sri Lanka and Surinam. An example of a MCH project is the Dutch Records Project in Chennai, India. As the VOC archives in the Tamil Nadu Archives are mostly unique, the Nationaal Archief finds it very important that the information in these documents will not only be safeguarded but made accessible as well. Therefore, these records will be scanned and put online via the

MCH Portal. For some MCH partners providing online access to digitized documents is a bridge too far though. This paper will address this issue from different angles.

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Colophon

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