

INTRODUCTION

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This collection of papers, which the contributors have dedicated to Professor Leonard Blussé, focuses on various aspects of Dutch historical sources related to a broad Asian maritime area stretching geographically from Japan to India and chronologically from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, both of which fall within the broad expertise of Professor Blussé. Most of the contributors are younger Japanese historians who studied at Leiden University during the 1980s and 1990s, while the others are colleagues who have studied in or about Japan at some time in their careers. Some were fortunate enough to study directly under the guidance and support of Professor Blussé, who since the 1980s has played a crucial role in the academic relations pertaining to the historical study of Japan and the Netherlands.

Born Johan Leonard Blussé van Oud-Alblas on July 23, 1946, in Rotterdam, Professor Blussé studied anthropology at National Taiwan University during 1970–1972, and then worked as a research assistant at the Research Institute for the Humanities at Kyoto University in 1972, graduating from the Sinology Institute of Leiden University that same year. In 1975, he returned to Leiden as the managing director of Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde (K.I.T.L.V.), while continuing his academic career at Leiden University as a research officer, until 1977, when he was appointed coordinator of the Centre for the History of European Expansion of Leiden University. After successfully defending his doctoral thesis, “Strange Company, Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia,” in 1986, he was appointed assistant professor of the History Department the following year. During the academic year 1991–1992, he enjoyed a research fellowship at the Princeton University Shelby Cullom Davis Center of Historical Studies, and four years later back in Leiden, he was promoted to associate professor. In 1998 he was awarded an Academy professorship by the Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen (KNAW, Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences), receiving the chair of History of European-Asian Relations; and three years later, a chair was created specially for him by Leiden University. In 2004, he was appointed Professor of Southeast Asian History at the Department of Southeast Asian Languages and Cultures and served as its department head from 2006 to 2008. From 1999 to 2006 he was also Professor of Southeast Asian History at the National Research Institute of Southeast Asian Studies of Xiamen University, China. He spent the academic year 2005–2006 as Erasmus Professor in Southeast Asian History at the History Department of Harvard University.

During the 1980s, Professor Blussé began providing guidance to foreign

students from Asia, and in 2000 founded the Toward a New Age of Partnership (TANAP) program, a joint project with the National Archives of the Netherlands. Among its various goals, the TANAP program's academic concerns aimed at training young, promising historians from Asia and South Africa. At present, Professor Blussé is the head of a follow-up project hosted by Leiden University called Encountering a Common Past in Asia (ENCOMPASS), which commenced in 2006. And he is also an Honorary Fellow of the Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library) in Japan since 2006.

It was in December 2005 that two Japanese historians, Ōta Atsushi and Shimada Ryūto, both graduates of the TANAP program, began discussions in Leiden with the contributors to this volume as to how we might express our appreciation to Professor Blussé. We decided to publish a collection of essays in English. Although Japanese historians, especially those specializing in Japanese history, rarely write in English, the students of Professor Blussé should be pioneers with the courage to go beyond the frontiers of language or nationality so that the "international" academic community is made more aware of their work. With the help, advice, and encouragement of a few senior scholars in Japan, in particular Professor Nagazumi Yōko, the contributors then held two preparatory meetings in Tokyo, which resulted in a decision to welcome anyone who wished to contribute to the volume. Unfortunately, a few researchers who attended our meetings were for various reasons unable to contribute, and we apologize to anyone we may have overlooked.

Among the contributors, Suzuki Yasuko, Tominaga Yasuyo, Tsukahara Tōgo, and Wada Ikuko studied under the guidance of Professor Blussé at Leiden University during the 1980s and 1990s with scholarship funding from the Dutch Government, the Japanese Ministry of Education and the Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC). Tsukahara also studied the history of science as a foreign student under the supervision of Professor Harm Beukers at the Faculty of Medicine of Leiden University and was the first among the contributors to receive his doctoral degree from Leiden University in 1993. In 1989, Patrizia Carioti from Naples Oriental University and Matsukata Fuyuko from the University of Tokyo Historiographical Institute, both members of the seminar headed by Nagazumi Yōko on Professor Blussé's *TRIBUUT AAN CHINA*, went on to study at Leiden University during the 1990s. In 1996, Martha Chaiklin from the United States also studied at Leiden University under a Fulbright Scholarship and funding from Leiden University. Since graduating from the Leiden University Japanology Institute in 1985, Isabel Tanaka-van Daalen has been working at the Japan-Nederlands Institute in Tokyo as a consultant in the editing of the Deshima diary's marginalia, a project which was set up by Professor Blussé. Cynthia Viallé graduated from the University of Amsterdam in 1984 and has been co-editor of the Deshima Diaries Project since 1993.

Turning to content of the present volume, the contributions made by Ōta Atsushi ("Imagined Link, Domesticated Religion") and Tominaga Yasuyo ("KARTINI")

examine the changes that occurred in traditional culture and social circumstances in local regions of the Indonesian archipelago as the result of contact with foreign cultures from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. Ōta discusses the network of Islamic knowledge utilized for political purposes by local rulers in Indonesia, emphasizing that the image of Islam was a very effective ideological tool in legitimizing kingship. Tominaga takes up the struggle of a Dutch-educated Indonesian woman from Java for emancipation, revealing her cultural encounter with the West. This study reconsiders perspectives of the colonial period in Indonesia that are critical of Eurocentrism.

Iioka Naoko (“The Rise and Fall of the Tonkin-Nagasaki Silk Trade during the Seventeenth Century”) and Patrizia Carioti (“Focusing on the Overseas Chinese in Seventeenth Century Nagasaki”) examine the trading networks and maritime society in Japan and Southeast Asia during the seventeenth century. Iioka evaluates the historical meaning of the Tonkin-Nagasaki silk trade from the 1640s to the 1680s in terms of Chinese mercantile activities during the time, while Carioti focuses on Chinese language interpreters as mediators between the Japanese authorities and the Chinese community, concluding that the political decisions made by the Japanese reflected the Chinese presence.

Aspects of Japanese-Dutch relations during the second half of the seventeenth century are dealt with by Suzuki Yasuko (“Changes in the Nagasaki Governorship System, 1680–1690”) and Isabel Tanaka-van Daalen (“Communicating with the Japanese under *Sakoku*”). Suzuki demonstrates that the Japanese authorities had finally realized the importance of foreign trade by the end of the seventeenth century after the Nagasaki governorship system was reformed, while Tanaka-van Daalen focuses on the submission of Dutch complaints to the Japan authorities between 1642 and 1687 in the context of Dutch-Japanese communication.

Matsukata Fuyuko (“From the Threat of Roman Catholicism to the Shadow of Western Imperialism”) deals with the influence of Japanese anti-Christian policy within the Dutch–Japanese system of communication in an attempt to show the process by which the main subject of Dutch news reports to the Japanese authorities changed from Roman Catholicism to Western Imperialism during the eighteenth century.

The Asian commodities trade, a subject to which Professor Blussé has attached great importance, is discussed by Shimada Ryūto (“Siamese Products in the Japanese Market during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”), Wada Ikuko (“Diamond Trade by the Dutch East India Company in Seventeenth-Century India”) and Cynthia Viallé (“Fit for Kings and Princes”). Shimada investigates the import of Siamese forestry and fishery products to Japan from the viewpoint of changes in demand and the structure of consumption, while Wada argues that the VOC’s diamond trade, which is believed to have been made efforts to monopolize and organize by the East India Companies, passed through four phases from its beginning to its decline.

Viallé's contribution points to Japanese lacquer-ware as an example of diplomatic gifts imported by the VOC for European royalty.

The contributions by Tsukahara Tōgo ("Dutch Historical Resources for Climate Reconstruction") and Martha Chaiklin ("Simian Amphibians") both represent interesting case studies using Dutch sources. While Tsukahara provides an overview of Dutch meteorological records regarding nineteenth century Japan, Chaiklin attempts to connect Japanese folk beliefs about the existence of mermaids to the development of Western natural science in Japan from the viewpoint of cultural exchange in the export of Japanese "mermaids" during the nineteenth century.

After the celebration in 2000 of the four hundredth anniversary of the inception of Japan-Netherlands relations, academic cooperation between historians in the two nations has faded somewhat, forcing this writer to wonder if we will be forced to wait another fifty or hundred years for further stimulus. Recently, Dutch historians seem to be taking more interest in China, as young Chinese historians who studied at Leiden University during the 1980s and 1990s with funding from the Dutch or Chinese governments have gained important academic posts and are forming partnerships with Dutch academics. In this context and out of a love for knowledge for its own sake, it is our hope that this collection of essays will show that the pupils of Professor Blussé over these past twenty years have the potential to create a new era in academic relationships between Japan and the Netherlands.

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