

Letter from the Editors

This volume of *Itinerario* contains three papers which were initially presented at a conference held at the University of Utrecht, 2-3 September 2004, entitled 'Colonialism and Diplomatic Relations in Asia, 1600-2000'. This conference was organised by Jurrien van Goor, a senior lecturer in the history of colonialism and decolonisation at the Historical Institute of the University of Utrecht. The event marked his retirement from the Historical Institute. On this occasion, Dr Van Goor also presented the tenth volume of the *Generale Missiven*, letters of the High Government in Batavia to the Gentlemen XVII of the VOC in the Netherlands, 1737-1743. His book *Prelude to Colonialism: The Dutch in Asia* (Hilversum, 2004) was also launched at this conference. We are grateful to Janny de Jong, Zoltán Biedermann and Nico Bootsma for submitting their conference papers for publication in *Itinerario*. Also in this issue, Ana Crespo Solana publishes her research findings on an eighteenth-century tobacco firm operating between Puerto Rico and Amsterdam, thereby contributing to our understanding of trade monopolies and free trade in the Atlantic commercial networks.

Thanks to the close cooperation that *Itinerario* has with the members of the *Forum on European Expansion and Global Interactions* (FEEGI), this volume also contains a good collection of book reviews written by FEEGI members and others, including two book review articles by our colleagues Ignacio Gallup-Díaz and James Tracy. Suggestions for book reviews or review articles can – as always – be sent to the *Itinerario* book review editor Markus Vink in New York, who distributes the books and acts as collection point for all reviews.

The Editors