

Letter from the Editors

The editors are proud to present another *Itinerario* issue with a truly global spread. The story of this issue starts in New Zealand, where *Itinerario* co-founder Leonard Blussé interviewed Nicholas Tarling on his life and work, before embarking on a sailing trip to round Cape Horn. The next port of call for this issue was the FEEGI conference in New Orleans. The *Itinerario* delegation looks back with great memories at the wonderful hospitality shown by our hosts at Tulane University and at a very inspiring conference. Please see the pages of this issue for a full report on the conference written by Andrew Van Horn Ruoss. We are also very happy that this issue carries another note from the archives, this time by Kate Law and Huibré Lombard on the Archive for Contemporary Affairs at the University of the Free State in South Africa. Finally, and that concludes our news for this season, we have a new addition to the *Itinerario* advisory board: Piet Emmer has stepped down after many years of service, and a successor has been found in Lauren Benton of New York University.

The research articles in this issue likewise contain a global spread that will hopefully help you to travel vicariously to unexpected places this Summer. Jonathan Gebhardt looks at sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Macau as a crossroads where people from disparate parts of the world came together to engage in profitable trade. Importantly, and in contrast to previous work on Macau as a hallmark example of cross-cultural interaction, he also looks at ways in which this interaction was less successful. An asymmetry in linguistic communication arose: members of Macau's Portuguese mercantile elite did not become fluent in any of the Chinese dialects, and did not learn how to read or write the Chinese script, while a number of the Chinese who came to live in Macau—whether as merchants, tradesmen, labourers, servants, or slaves—became proficient in Portuguese. Timothy Davies, in his contribution entitled “English Private Trade in the Arabian Seas, c. 1680–c. 1740,” likewise takes a localised approach to a trade network that encompassed the globe: looking at private trade in the western Indian ocean, he argues against too metropolitan-centered an approach to the study of private trade networks of the English East India Company.

From there, this issue zooms in on the lives and careers of individuals. Madelina

Veres, in her study of military engineer and mapmaker Michel Angelo de Blasco, shows us the importance of transimperial approaches to the history of cartography. De Blasco had done valuable work for the Habsburg monarch as well as for the Portuguese in Brazil. This made him a sought-after source of information and skill, but at the same time rendered him almost unemployable due to the risk of inter-imperial diplomatic conflict as a result of his unique knowledge. Next, Kaveh Yazdani examines the careers of Haidar Ali of Mysore and his son Tipu Sultan, both of whom unleashed a process of administrative, socio-economic and military proto-modernisation. Especially Tipu is often either idealised as an “enlightened” ruler or described as a pre-modern despot. Yazdani seeks to provide a balanced and concerted account of Haidar Ali and Tipu’s respective periods on the Mysore throne by consulting fresh printed and unprinted primary sources in English, French and German. Finally, Kyungboon Lee takes us into the twentieth century with her contribution entitled “Japanese Propaganda in the Third Reich: Japanese Musicians between Music and Politics during WWII.” She too focuses on the careers of two individuals: Ahn Ekitai (Iktae) from colonial Korea and Konoye Hidemaro, a high-ranking Japanese peer, both of whom became members of the Reich Chamber of Culture and performed with the Berliner Philharmonic orchestra. Her contribution explores the cultural and political functions that these conductors faced in terms of German war propaganda and how their different musical compositions, both named “Etenraku,” related to propagandistic values.

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