

## Letter from the Editors

This issue of *Itinerario* deals in large part with the expansion of a European successor state, the United States of America, in Asia during the twentieth century. Most contributions are papers read at the first *Itinerario* round-table conference, on the American Experience in Asia, which was held on October 23 and 24 at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in Wassenaar. Of course, we carry our traditional interview, with Alfred Crosby, pioneer of biological history, who has more recently shifted his concerns toward the *mentalité* of Europeans which, according to him, paved the way for European imperialism in more modern times by fostering a superior understanding of science and technology. Peer Vries contributes a thorough analysis of the latest and highly controversial book by Andre Gunder Frank, *ReORIENT: Global Economy in the Asian Age*.

The rest of the contents consists of conference contributions. Perhaps untypical for *Itinerario*, the conference touched upon the twilight of European dominance in the world and even beyond. One of the interesting conclusions of the conference was that the post-war history of international relations perhaps is much more a history of decolonisation than of Great Power Bi-polarity and that the Cold War was just a part of the greater process of decolonisation. There is therefore every reason to re-examine the nature of the Vietnam War, that great conflict of decolonisation and the Cold War, as is done by Hugh Tertrais, Lloyd Gardner, Alfons Lammers and Marilyn Young. A fifth and highly interesting paper on this subject, by Mark Bradley, will be published in *Itinerario* 1998/4.

The twilight of European domination in Asia coincided with the rise of new powers: the United States and Russia. Dave Schimmelpenninck, who has contributed to *Itinerario* before, asks in his article how the two came from co-operation to rivalry. Post-colonial Asia was a new world, also for Americans, who desperately tried to understand it through the most modern methods of sociological and anthropological research. Glenn May, author of the lucid book on how Philippine hero Andres Bonifacio was actually invented, tells the highly interesting story of Frank Lynch and his influence on Philippine social science.

By the way, those readers not interested in these modern or even contemporary historical questions need not to worry. The next *Itinerario* conference will be on the 'Nature of Atlantic History', focussing on the early modern period. Obviously, at the conference, the now neglected continents of Latin America and Africa will receive all due attention.

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