

Letter from the Editors

One could argue that this issue of *Itinerario* is the last one of the twentieth century, although the coming of the new millennium was celebrated a year ago. Last century saw the coming of age of the historical discipline, which posed many questions and answered at least a few of them. One main problem is still a mystery: Why did the European economy become modern and industrial? Why did the European become dominant in the world? What were the causes of the so-called 'European miracle'? It is an issue discussed recently in numerous important books and also during a small conference in the Fall of 2000. The papers of this conference are published in this issue of *Itinerario*, with an introduction by Jan Luiten van Zanden. Those of you not interested in the European miracle, should not worry. We also have three rather different articles, one by G.V. Scammell on British Smuggling in the Iberian Americas, one by Robert Aldrich on the Decolonisation of the Pacific Islands and finally one by Bart De Prins on the sadly neglected Belgian commissioner-general in the Dutch East Indies, Léonard du Bus de Gisignies.

The editors of *Itinerario* hope all our readers will experience a very happy third Millennium!

The Editors