

Letter from the Editors

In this issue we are proud to present to our readership a wonderful interview with David Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, a renowned specialist on the history of Russia's relations with Asia. Professor Schimmelpenninck van der Oye has been working on topics such as Russian imperialism and Russian orientalism—themes that we are more than happy to pay special attention to in *Itinerario*. This issue also contains three articles that deal with early modern history and one that covers the modern period. Karl Offen examines Puritan bioprospecting in early modern Central America and the West Indies. Cátia Antunes and Filipa Ribeiro da Silva explore the cross-cultural business networks that existed in the Atlantic between Dutch and Jewish merchants and their West-African counterparts during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. And Tonio Andrade reconstructs the Chinese adventure of two minor Dutch bureaucrats who accidentally set in motion the seventeenth-century alliance between the Dutch East India Company and the Chinese Qing Dynasty. On the modern period, Christopher Dietrich analyses the near-final stage of European colonialism in Africa. His article examines Portuguese diplomacy in southern Africa at the time of the Rhodesian oil embargo of the 1960s. Finally, in addition to the interview and the four articles, this issue of course includes an extensive book review section.

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