

The formative stages of Russian America



**De dynamiek van het maritieme rijk
in de Aleoeten, 1741-1819**

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Leiden University Institute for History

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ISSN 2213-171X

Acta *Historica*
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Eén jaar later; een jaar ouder, wijzer, maar ook een tikje succesvoller! Zie hier het tweede nummer van Acta Historica. Het afgelopen jaar heeft ons tijdschrift een aanzienlijke groei doorgemaakt en heeft onze oproep voor bijdragen een gewillig gehoor gevonden. Het resultaat is deze gevarieerde uitgave, gevuld met een vijftal interessante artikelen over zeer uiteenlopende en bijzondere onderwerpen.

In het eerste artikel behandelt Kevin de Kuyper de weinig bekende vestiging en ontwikkeling van de Russische kolonie in Alaska. Pelsdieren vormden een van de natuurlijke rijkdommen in de Aleoeten en Kevin bekijkt in zijn artikel hoe de handel in bont paste in het handels- en persoonlijke netwerk van de Russische handelaren. Het tweede artikel is van de hand van Martin Steegmans. Hij onderzoekt welke tastbare herinneringen de Spaanse veldheer Cristóbal de Mondragón op het Zeeuwse eiland Schouwen-Duiveland heeft achtergelaten. Dit doet hij aan de hand van het begrip 'erfgoed'; kan het beeld van Mondragón op Schouwen-Duiveland daaronder geschaard worden? Rodrigo Cortéz Ríos onderzoekt welke weerslag de oorlog op de Falklands had op de Nederlandse politiek. Hij analyseerde daarvoor in het bijzonder de reactie van Nederland en het tweede kabinet van Dries van Agt, zowel in nationaal als in economisch opzicht. In het vierde artikel onderzoekt Nils van der Vegte de persoon van de Russische 'Eichmann', volkscommissaris Nikolay Yezhov. Was deze man, die verantwoordelijk was voor talloze executies in Stalin's Rusland een koelbloedige moordenaar? Had hij zijn eigen motieven of was hij simpelweg een instrument van Stalin, dat, toen het niet meer nodig was, zomaar uit de weg werd geruimd? Tenslotte een bijdrage met een theoretischer insteek. Luuk Krijnen onderzoekt het begrip Global History. Wat is Global History precies? Welke potentie heeft deze stroming voor de historiografie? En wat zijn nu precies de voor- en nadelen?

Voor het volgende nummer is de redactie uiteraard weer op zoek naar nieuwe bijdragen. Wil jij ook het resultaat van maanden ploeteren online gepubliceerd zien? Stuur dan je scriptie, essay of paper, samen met een verkorte bewerking van 3.000 tot 4.000 woorden naar: redactie@actahistorica.nl

De redactie

The formative stages of Russian America

The dynamics of the maritime empire in the Aleutian Islands, 1741-1819

In 1741, a Russian naval squadron of two ships, under Captains Bering and Chirikov, discovered the Aleutian Islands and the coast of Alaska. The Russian Imperial Navy laid, by 'right of discovery', a claim on these lands. Private Russian entrepreneurs were then expected to use the 'right of occupancy' to incorporate these lands in the Russian Empire.¹ This year marked the start of establishing a colonial presence in what would be called Russian America.

What drove these pioneering Russian merchants to leave the vast Eurasian landmass and go out to the sea? What riches lay in the unknown islands and Alaskan land? And, once they had found these riches, how would they obtain them? The Bering-Chirikov expedition discovered that natives lived on some of these islands and on the Alaskan coast. How did the Russians interact with them? As I have found out from my research, the colonial possessions that were called Russian America were no homogeneous area. There were, especially in the hostility and (in)dependency of natives in different areas, huge differences that influenced the ways the Russians did their business. Because of this, I have restricted myself to the position that the Aleutian Islands took in Russian America. From 1741 until the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the position of these islands and their native population, the Aleuts, continuously changed, and therefore I have chosen to work within this timeframe. As will become clear in this essay, the fur-bearing animals were the natural riches of Russian America. How the resulting fur trade of Russian America, in particular of the Aleutians, fitted within both personal and trading networks of Russian merchants, is the main focus of my research.

The importance of fur for Russian America

On the 4th of June, 1741, when Elizabeth, daughter of tsar Peter the Great, had just been crowned as the Empress of Russia, Vitus Bering was starting his Second Kamchatka Expedition. His ship, the *Sv. Petr*, went out together with Chirikov's *Sv. Pavel*, with the goal of exploring the American Pacific coast. On the 21st of June, the expedition was caught up in a storm and the two ships were separated from each other. Each vessel followed its own route, and Bering landed, among other places, on the western Aleutian Islands. Chirikov landed on the central and eastern Aleutians, but on other places as well.² Chirikov was the first one to meet the natives of the Aleutians, the Aleuts. They came in single-hatch kayaks towards his ship, staying close by but refusing to go on board. These Aleuts would drift along the ship for several hours at end, during which both parties observed each other and traded some goods. The Aleuts gave edible vegetable roots, mineral wrapped in kelp, a wooden hat, sea-mammal bladders that acted as

containers, while the Russian gave water, spears, a china cup and cloth, a copper kettle, knives and an old axe. After the gift exchanges, the Russians had enough confidence to set foot on the newly discovered island. They explored the land, while staying in sight of the boat, and noted how the natives lacked armament. They had no bows and arrows, only knives.³ The Russians also discovered that the islands they visited were teeming with foxes, sea-otters and fur seals. There were also whales, but the Russians were more interested in furs at the time. In 1742 the survivors of the Second Kamchatka Expedition returned home, bringing with them a lot of sea-otter pelts.⁴ Vitus Bering did not live to see his homeland again; he died on the 8th of December 1741 on an uninhabited island, which would be named Bering Island.⁵



Vitus Bering
The Danish-born explorer in Russian service,
Vitus Bering, 1681-1741.
online-utility.org

To thank Bering for his accomplishments, the narrow strip of sea that separated the Eurasian and American continents was named the Bering Sea. In 1743 the first *promyshlenniki*, the Russian word for fur trappers and frontiersmen⁶, set out for Bering Island to hunt fur-bearing animals. The Russian merchant Emelian Basov was the first one to make several trips, returning with many skins. On his second voyage alone he brought 16.00 otter skins, 2.000 fur seal skins and 2.000 blue fox skins. The value was around 200.000 rubles, a huge

¹ L. T. Black, *Russians in Alaska: 1732-1867* (Fairbanks 2004) 39.

² Ibidem, 40-41, 45-46.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ H. Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture 1741-1867* (New York 1965) 32-33.

⁵ Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 48.

⁶ M. van der Zwaan, *The Peopling of a Colony: The case of Russian America, 1741-1867* (Leiden 1999) 26.

sum at the time.⁷ How did these first promyshlenniki organize their travels? There always was an initiator, such as Basov. He decided for himself that he wanted to hunt furs at Bering Island after he had seen how many pelts the survivors of the Second Kamchatka Expedition brought back. First, he needed the means of travelling to the island. A trader by the name of Andrei Serebennikov put up the money for the building of a boat, and Basov himself put together a crew of some thirty promyshlenniki. The boat that was built was a shitik, a type of boat that was originally used on the Volga. This meant that they had to cross the sea in what was essentially a river going vessel. The shitik was a flatboat, almost keel less for an easy landing on shores, but very stable. With its two masts, it could be sailed. Shitik could carry up to fifty persons and several tons of freight. Despite being a river boat, it did the job, as becomes clear from the successful voyages that Basov undertook.⁸

Th[e promyshlenniki] adopted the Aleut dress and the Aleut diet of meat and fish down to the blubber. They lived with many Aleut wives and had the males do the hunting for them, paying them (or not) as they pleased.

In 1745, the Russian fur merchants went beyond Bering Island for the first time and headed towards the westernmost Aleutians. The first contact between the promyshlenniki and the Aleuts was marked by a tense atmosphere and scared natives. Their attitude changed when they learned that the Russians, at that time, meant them no harm. The Russians, who stayed for the winter, adopted the local way of life. They adopted the Aleut dress and the Aleut diet of meat and fish down to the blubber. They lived with many Aleut wives and had the males do the hunting for them, paying them (or not) as they pleased. Payments were mainly done in iron which was the commodity most sought after by the Aleuts. The more generous Russian merchants were, the more they were helped by the Aleuts in obtaining the precious sea-otter skins.⁹ Russians staying on the Aleutians for longer periods of time were not exceptional. Most of them not only stayed for a winter, but for several years at a time. They obtained most of the valuable pelts

through barter with the native population, or by robbery. Only a small part of the pelts was secured through their own efforts.¹⁰ To keep exploring the Aleutian chain further and further, the promyshlenniki were encouraged by the Russian government through the receiving of medals and remittances of debts. The government did this for two reasons: it saw Alaska as a base for further expansion, and foreign trade was seen by the Tsarist government as a way to enrich the state.¹¹ The government received a ten per cent tax on the fur catch, which was collected by government agents on board of merchant ships while they were in Russian America.¹² Another income for the government was yasak, or fur tribute, which was established in 1748.¹³ This tribute was paid both voluntarily¹⁴ and obligatory, paying it to the local leaders who then gave the tribute to the Russians.¹⁵ After the first few cautious years a pattern began to emerge in the fur trade between continental Russia and Russian America: Russian traders came toward America and returned to Asia, small bands in sailing ships, trading their items for sea-otter and fox pelts. In the second half of the eighteenth century as many as a hundred ships traded along the Aleutian Islands, other islands and the Alaskan peninsula. This trade between the Russians and Aleutians was peaceful most of the time, as both sides cooperated, but it could also turn bloody.¹⁶ The Russians were, unlike other European powers, not so eager to use commodity exchanges to slowly increase the dependency of natives on Russian products. Instead they relied on subjugating the natives, taking many hostage and taking furs as tribute. Russian governance in Russian America relied on maintaining a form of indirect rule in which indigenous leaders were made responsible for tribute collection among their people in return for special privileges and incomes.¹⁷ But this form of indirect rule did not reach all of Russian America. Instead, it was confined to the Aleutian Islands, Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula. The partially dependent and fully independent native groups (such as the Tlingit Indians who lived on the coast of Alaska) who were successful in resisting the Russians but remained within reach of them, traded by commodity exchange. But natives such as the Aleuts were subject to the indirect rule and the strains that it posed on their population.¹⁸ Now that the fur trade in Russian America was established, how

⁷ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 33-34.

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ Ibidem, 36.

¹⁰ S. B. Okun, *The Russian American Company* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1951) 9.

¹¹ Ibidem, 10-11.

¹² Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 101.

¹³ Okun, *The Russian American Company*, 9.

¹⁴ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 37.

¹⁵ W. Jochelson, *History, Ethnology and Anthropology of the Aleut* (Oosterhout 1966) 5.

¹⁶ A. L. Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System: A Study From Russian America* (New York 1997) 12.

¹⁷ O. Frost, *Bering: The Russian Discovery of America* (New Haven 2003) 281.

¹⁸ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 11-12.

¹⁹ Ibidem, 14-15.

did this fit into wider trading networks? First, it is useful to define what Russian America really was. It consisted of the following areas: Alaska, the Aleutian, Pribilof, Commander and Kurile Islands, temporary settlements in California and Hawaii and (eventually) Sakhalin. In the period 1743-1799, which is also known as the 'boom phase', most trading voyages went to the Aleutians.²⁰ The colonial catch (which was mostly fur, but other products from Russian America as well) was assembled at New Archangel, which was the seat of the governor and the centre of the colonies. It was then shipped to Okhotsk and from there forwarded to either Saint Petersburg or Kyakhta, which was a Chinese port city.²¹ China was the foremost market, as the Chinese fur market was lucrative. The best port of entry to that market was Canton, but the Russians were barred from that, so they focused solely on Kyakhta.²² Now that the development of the fur trade is discussed, we can take a closer look at the people that were involved in it.

From competitive private individuals to a monopolistic state company

As was described earlier, Russian merchants had to gather a boat and a crew before taking off towards Russian America. But this was not all. Although the government felt no need to interfere actively in dealings concerning Russian America, applying an almost laissez-faire type of policy to its colony, it did not permit everyone to simply take off on their own. Russian merchants who wanted to go needed government charters that allowed them to go to Russian America. In case the merchants were granted a charter but could not raise enough money, they could turn to the government to obtain financial aid in the form of short-term loans.²³

[B]ecause of unrestricted hunting for furs on the [Aleutian] islands, the populations of fur-bearing animals dwindled, as did the wealth that came with capturing them.

The government did not interfere actively in the dealings of Russian America simply because the area, especially Alaska, was beyond its scope. In the second half of the eighteenth century, several wars and south- and westward expansion were already undertaken on the



'Neva'

The Russian sloop-of-war 'Neva', that played a key part in the Battle of Sitka in 1804, the last major conflict between Europeans and Alaskan natives. jcb.lunaimaging.com

Eurasian continent, and near Alaska several colonial powers were present, including the powerful British. Because of this, there was a great deal of free movement in the colonies, which was tolerated as long as the colonies provided the government with enough money through yasak and taxes. This also meant that the conquest of Russian America was undertaken by the merchants, private parties, themselves.²⁴ How did this conquest, by 'right of occupancy', take place? Sources indicate that at first, the Russians simply gathered furs and went back to continental Russia when they had enough of them. However, at the beginning of the 1770s, Russians started building permanent settlements for themselves, starting on the Aleut island of Unalaska.²⁵ This date came for a good reason: because of unrestricted hunting for furs on the islands, the populations of fur-bearing animals dwindled, as did the wealth that came with capturing them. By the 1770s, it became clear for the Russians that the continent that lay in the east had to be opened up if the trade was to survive. In order to do that, bases had to be built so the merchants could make the trip all the way to Alaska.²⁶ The settlements reflected upon other things as well. As the Russians were constantly confronted with native hostility, they could defend themselves easier in their own permanent settlements.²⁷ What is even more interesting is the fact that the settlements were not built by private merchants, instead they were being built by trading companies. Over the years, as ships were wrecked and voyages extended,

²⁰ J. R. Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America: The Changing Geography of Supply of Russian America, 1784-1867* (New York 1976) vii, 3.

²¹ Ibidem, 18-20, 33.

²² Ibidem, 8.

²³ Zwaan, *The Peopling of a Colony*, 26.

²⁴ Ibidem, 26-27, 35-36.

²⁵ Ibidem, 32.

²⁶ J. A. Harrison, *The Founding of the Russian Empire in Asia and America* (Coral Gables 1971) 113.

²⁷ Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 5.

single merchants had given way to partnerships, and small companies yielded to a few larger ones. These firms were the ones who began to stake out territory, establishing forts and settlements, and also conscripting Aleuts and Eskimos to do the hunting for them.²⁸ The demise of the single merchants and small trading companies was also linked to the extermination of the sea-otter populations at the Middle Aleutian Islands in the 1770s; the distance to fur-bearers was increasing, something which the single merchants and smaller companies could not handle. While they left the business, the big companies were busy increasing their own chances in the competitive fur trading business by building the permanent settlements to be able to extend the hunting time and have a nearby food and shelter base available.²⁹ Investment in the Russian American fur trade was also made more attractive to the large merchant houses because the trade was liberalized; the state monopoly on trade with China and the ten per cent tax on the fur catch were both dropped. After these measures were implemented, capital from Moscow, Irkutsk and Tobolsk began to fuel the trade. Large-scale entrepreneurs, who also courted and found government support, began to squeeze out the smaller companies.³⁰

The Golikov-Shelikhov Company

The most famous, and also most important, company that operated at the time was the Golikov-Shelikhov Company. One of the main purposes of this company was to make voyages for a period of ten years. Therefore building forts and settlements was one of the main aims of this company. The leading merchant in this company³¹, Grigory Ivanovich Shelikhov, was the one who founded, in 1784, the first permanent (as in the first definite year-round³²) Russian settlement in America on Kodiak Island, which would be the centre of the Russian American colonies for about twenty-five years.³³ How exactly was this company established, how did Golikov and Shelikhov meet? Shelikhov became an agent, a prikashchik, for Golikov in 1773. Golikov was at the time already involved in the fur-trading voyages to the Aleutians and the Kuril Islands. After organizing a series of profitable trades, creating a web of trust between the two, Shelikhov and Golikov established their own company. But

the company was not a partnership of just the two of them. When Shelikhov contacted Golikov with the idea of establishing a company, with the objective of discovering new lands to help out the diminishing fur trade, the latter interested a relative of him and thus the three of them established the Golikov-Shelikhov Company.³⁶ In 1787 Shelikhov left the Aleutians for Siberia to propose to the governor-general at Irkutsk that the Tsar's government permit him and his partner Golikov to organize a company to monopolize the trade in the Aleutian-Alaskan region. While he was there, he needed someone to continue to do his businesses in Russian America. He picked Alexander Baranov to do the job, for two reasons. First and foremost, Baranov had been trading with the Chukchi³⁷ and thus had experience in the fur trade.³⁸ Second, sources indicate that Baranov may have financed some of the early ventures of Shelikhov, and the latter saw him, after having assessed his character, as a strong man.³⁹ Baranov was given a five year contract and some shares for the Golikov-Shelikhov Company. This happened in 1790.⁴⁰ Baranov arrived at Kodiak Island in 1791.⁴¹

In 1793 a small trade war began between Baranov and the rival firm of Lebedev-Lastochkin, ruining all Russian business activities in Russian America

In 1793 a small trade war began between Baranov and the rival firm of Lebedev-Lastochkin, ruining all Russian business activities in Russian America. Because of this event, the government decided that a single company should exploit the area.⁴² But tragedy struck the Golikov-Shelikhov Company when Shelikhov died in the late summer of 1795. His business activities were taken over by his wife, Natalia. The many opponents of the Company saw their chance, bundled their powers and began to try and undermine Natalia's creditworthiness. At the same time a man named Count Rezanov began to use his powers and push the government to create the Russian-American Company.⁴³ Who was he and how did he show up in this battle? The young nobleman Rezanov arrived in 1794, probably by his own choice, in Irkutsk as the one who was responsible for bringing priests and serfs to the colony of Shelikhov in Russian America. It was there

²⁸ Frost, *Bering: The Russian Discovery of America*, 282.

²⁹ Zwaan, *The Peopling of a Colony*, 32-33.

³⁰ Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 101.

³¹ Zwaan, *The Peopling of a Colony*, 32.

³² Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 5.

³³ A. V. Grin'ev and R. L. Bland, 'A Brief Survey of the Russian Historiography of Russian America of Recent Years', *Pacific Historical Review*, Vol. 79, No. 2 (2010) 266.

³⁴ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 37, 39.

³⁵ A. Krause, *The Tlingit Indians* (Seattle 1956) 27.

³⁶ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 53.

³⁷ Harrison, *The Founding of the Russian Empire*, 114-116.

³⁸ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 80-81.

³⁹ Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 121.

⁴¹ Harrison, *The Founding of the Russian Empire*, 116.

⁴² Ibidem, 116-117.

⁴³ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 70-71, 75.

that he met Shelikhov and his family, and became a welcome guest in their house. After a short stay there, he and Shelikhov made a trip to Okhotsk, and this trip changed Rezanov's view on everything. He found out how big Russian America really was, and how much history lay in the lands he visited. He subsequently started to learn all about Russian America. In either December 1794 or January 1795, he married the daughter of Shelikhov, Anna Shelikhova. This nobleman would try to help the Golikov-Shelikhov Company in pushing forth the creation of the Russian-American Company.⁴⁴ The prospects for the creation of this company had risen considerably in 1795 since Empress Catherine was replaced by Tsar Paul I. Unlike his mother, Paul was vehemently anti-British. He welcomed a strong (commercial) presence in Russian America. A single company was indeed created in 1797: the United American Company. Paul was advised by people around him that it should become a



monopolistic company because such an outfit would acquire a large Pacific fleet which would come in handy in case of a war there. In 1799 the recommendation was executed and the Russian-American Company was chartered under the protection of the emperor of Russia.⁴⁵ In the meantime, Rezanov had prevailed in his battle against other companies and Baranov, who came from the Golikov-Shelikhov Company, was made manager of the newly established company.⁴⁶ And so came an end to a process where, through competitive elimination and consolidation, the private companies gave way to a single state monopoly firm.⁴⁷ The Company could exploit the Aleutians, the Kuril Islands and all other islands on the Northeast Pacific. It could tap any resource, including furs. It could settle and fortify places and trade with neighboring countries if they approved and if the em-

peror consented. Although officially a state company, the Company seems to have been a private commercial company in practice. It was to take all the risks, and with it all the blame, and share its profits with the government. In return the government guaranteed to keep all Russian competition away and to give aid and assistance within certain limits, limits that cost the government practically nothing.⁴⁸ Under the Company, Russian expansion was undertaken because of stronger native opposition while also preventing foreign expansion on the Northwest Coast of America. The Company also established a new capital of Russian America: New Archangel, replacing Saint Paul's Harbor. This phase, that was characterized by expansion, ended in 1819.⁴⁹ This date can be linked, once again, to the fur trade. The sea-otters, the primary product of the Aleutian Islands, were ruthlessly hunted and quickly depleted, and this process was hastened by the adoption of guns by both the Russians and the natives. The depletion, which was no longer confined to the Middle Aleutians but to the entire area of Russian America, seems to have taken effect largely between 1804 and 1818, thereby weakening the importance of the Aleutian Islands (and Russian America).⁵⁰ Now that the role of the Russians has been discussed, we can take a closer look at the position of the Aleuts in the colonial society and its fur trade.

Aleuts: the natives, hunters, hostages and partners

The position that the Aleuts took vis-à-vis the Russians was influenced by the amount of Russians and Russian products in the area. With enough flows of labour forces and products from Russia to the Aleutians, the colonies could be administrated without the natives. But this was not the situation in the second half of the eighteenth century and especially in the first two decades of the nineteenth century, during the so called 'expansive phase.' This was due to various reasons. Firstly, the Russians had a lot of trouble in supplying the colonies. The main reason for this difficulty lay in nearby Siberia; the eastern Siberian climate was too harsh for productive agriculture. Without a nearby agricultural centre, food products had to be imported from faraway ports. The resulted scarcity in food, but also in hardware, cloth and other imported goods, prior to the mid-nineteenth century, promoted Russian dependency on local food supplies and fuelled the adoption of the native material culture, including clothing and dwellings. Another response to the problem was the development of colonial industries that were based on local raw materials.⁵¹ Secondly, the Russian population was limited by government emigra-

⁴⁴ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 66, 68-70.

⁴⁵ Harrison, *The Founding of the Russian Empire*, 117.

⁴⁶ Chevigny, *Russian America: The Great Alaskan Venture*, 75.

⁴⁷ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 13.

⁴⁸ Harrison, *The Founding of the Russian Empire*, 118.

⁴⁹ Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 9-10.

⁵⁰ Ibidem, 34.

⁵¹ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 15.

tion policies; it was the time of the serfs in continental Russia. The number of Russians was extremely low if we consider the amount of territories that were occupied. This left the, mostly male, Russian population scattered throughout the colonies.⁵² The precarious position of the Russians forced them to take measures for their own protection. As already stated earlier in this article, Russians resorted to widespread hostage taking. This was not because they were 'brutal', but because this enabled them to protect themselves against the natives, who were overall formidable fighters and had them outnumbered. Hostage taking was in fact a centuries-old practice in Siberia as well as customary among the indigenous people of Alaska. The Russians were certainly not all-powerful in Russian America. Although they had some firearms (which the natives did not have), those were seldom used because gunpowder was scarce, and they altogether lacked powerful weapons such as cannons since permission to obtain them was needed from the authorities, something which was rarely granted.⁵³ The problem, of a lack of Russians in the colonies, existed throughout the eighteenth century and persisted even during the Russian-American Company period (up to the mid-nineteenth century). The labor force of the Company would consist of state, but non-serf, peasants from northeastern European Russia⁵⁴, who were drawn to Russian America to provision the new settlements there.⁵⁵ But the biggest group of employees would be the natives. At the end of the

The Aleuts, also called the 'marine Cossacks' (...) were coerced by force of arms, hostage taking, payment to native leaders for the labour of commoners and slaves, collection of tribute and (...) cheap trade goods, so that they could hunt in service of the Russian merchants

eighteenth century the yasak had been dropped, replacing it with a system of universal and obligatory service for natives to work for the state company.⁵⁶ The Aleuts were not only useful to the Russians as a labor force, they had many other qualities that benefited their colonial masters. The first and foremost quality was the hunting expertise of the Aleuts. As already stated earlier in this article, in order to get the much prized furs of sea-otters, the Russians used the natives who

knew how to hunt the fur-bearing animals. The Aleuts, also called the 'marine Cossacks' because they were seen as the best hunters by the Russians⁵⁷, were coerced by force of arms, hostage taking, payment to native leaders for the labour of commoners and slaves, collection of tribute and a few types of cheap trade goods, so that they could hunt in service of the Russian merchants.⁵⁸ This, however, did not mean that the Aleuts were altogether powerless. They had some bargaining power with the Russians precisely because of their hunting expertise.⁵⁹ The Aleuts, and other coastal Indians, would even act as middlemen, establishing very quickly a trade network among themselves, bringing fur and company trade goods along great distances.⁶⁰ The American anthropologist George I. Quimby describes how important the Aleuts were in these trading networks: '[t]he geographical position of the Aleut made them the middlemen in the distribution of Asiatic and American culture traits along the north Pacific shores of Asia and America.'⁶¹ The Russians, who had to rely on the Aleuts, tried to change their habits to match their own. To converse the Aleuts, Russian Orthodox churches and chapels were built to learn the Aleuts the Russian language and to transmit skills on to them which the Company needed (but lacked because so few Russians were in the colonies). It attracted Aleuts in several ways: natives who became members of the church got a tribute exemption for three years, church ceremonies served as substitutes for the local ones which were suppressed by the Russians, the church adapted certain procedures to Aleut customs (encouraging Aleutian interests) and services were conducted in both Russian and Aleut. The rising power of the Church went hand in hand with the declining power of the native shamans who could not battle the diseases that the Russians had brought with them.⁶² The Russian administration also forced the polygamist Aleuts to become monogamous and sexually virtuous. The multifamily dwellings were replaced by smaller, single-family dwellings. The Aleuts simultaneously adopted the nuclear family model. The personal consumption model of the Aleuts was also dumped and a barter model was adopted where furs were exchanged for company goods, which were mostly iron, bronze and copper goods. This was the first step to a monetary economy. Despite these many changes, certain aspects of Aleut culture remained. Because the Russians relied on forced labour, they saw no need to change the whole way of life for the Aleuts.⁶³

⁵² Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 15.

⁵³ Black, *Russians in Alaska*, 70-71.

⁵⁴ Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 7.

⁵⁵ Zwaan, *The Peopling of a Colony*, 35.

⁵⁶ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 14.

⁵⁷ Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 32-33.

⁵⁸ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 13-14.

⁵⁹ D. M. Jones, *Aleuts in Transition: A Comparison of two Villages* (Washington 1976) 18-19.

⁶⁰ C. I. Jackson, *Fort Yukon: The Hudson's Bay Company In Russian America* (London 2005) 2-3.

⁶¹ G. I. Quimby, *Aleutian Islanders: Eskimos of the North Pacific* (Chicago 1944) 42.

⁶² Jones, *Aleuts in Transition*, 19.

⁶³ Ibidem, 20-21.

These changes brought the Russians and the Aleuts closer to each other. At this point, another development took off which would be another defining feature of Russian America. The scattered and mostly male Russian population began to intermarry extensively with the native women, creating a Creole population. After this Creole population came into existence, the social hierarchy changed. Social rank in Russian America was as follows: Russians on top, followed by Creoles, followed by natives.⁶⁴ At the end of the 'expansive phase', ending in 1819, most of the Russians in Russian America were lower- to middle-class townsmen from Siberia. The Creoles, the ones who had Russian fathers and native mothers, were by this time already a significant part of the population (though still heavily outnumbered by the natives), making up an important part of the workforce for the Russian-American Company which still lacked Russian personnel.⁶⁵ After the initial, and harsh, period of conquest, the Creoles were fully incorporated in the colonial society. The mixed marriages were blessed by Orthodox priests and in 1821 the Creoles, together with full blooded natives who were willing to declare allegiance to the Tsar, were given an estate status that was equal to that of Russian townsmen. A Russian education, extended religious instruction and technical training were offered to many Creole boys, promoting their class elevation even further.

Conclusion

The Alaskan archaeologist Aaron L. Crowell concludes from these developments the following: '*Russian American society would thus appear to have had some basic parallels to the Spanish colonial pattern in the New World: conquest and exploitation of indigenous peoples, combined with efforts to bring about their religious and social incorporation.*'⁶⁶ But, as Crowell himself also states, this did not mean that social egalitarianism triumphed in the Russian American colonies. Although Russians adopted the Aleut way of life in the areas of clothing, dwellings and food, this local way of life and the intermarrying with natives occurred predominantly among the lower social ranks.⁶⁷ But the result was nevertheless that Russian America was a colonial society where the natives, as excellent fur hunters, kept playing an important role. It is perhaps this very result that was so important for the natives upon which the Russians kept relying, preventing them from pushing the natives aside as had happened in the British American colonies. All in all, fur was indeed the *raison d'être* of Russian America.

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⁶⁴ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 15-16, 18.

⁶⁵ Gibson, *Imperial Russia In Frontier America*, 11-12.

⁶⁶ Crowell, *Archaeology and the Capitalist World System*, 19.

⁶⁷ Ibidem, 18-20, 26-27.

Erfgoed van een vriendelijke vijand

De tasbare herinnering aan de Spaanse veldheer Mondragón op Schouwen-Duiveland.

Gedurende de Nederlandse Opstand vochten 'wij' tegen de legers van Filips II. Één van de commandanten van het leger van Filips II was Cristóbal de Mondragón, een Spanjaard van lage adel.¹ Toentertijd was Mondragón een bekende figuur in de Nederlanden, maar ook tegenwoordig is hij nog veel in het nieuws. Echter niet de persoon, maar zijn indirecte herinnering. In Zierikzee staat nog een oud theater dat de naam van de Spaanse veldheer draagt. De huidige berichtgeving over 'Mondragón' is dan ook in metaforische zin, over wat er moet gebeuren met dit verouderde complex. Het gaat niet meer over de belegeraar van de stad.² Maar waarom komt de naam van een vijand van 'onze' stad eigenlijk voor in de herinnering van Zierikzee?

In dit artikel behandel ik de geschiedenis van Mondragón op het Zeeuwse eiland Schouwen-Duiveland. Ook wordt de huidige tastbare herinnering aan de Spaanse veldheer op het Zeeuwse eiland onderzocht. Dit doe ik aan de hand van de notie 'erfgoed'. Wat is erfgoed precies? En kan het beeld van Mondragón op Schouwen-Duiveland worden gevat onder deze noemer? Uiteindelijk moet een duidelijk beeld ontstaan van de huidige materiële zaken die herinneren aan Mondragón en in hoeverre deze gekoesterd worden. Het is namelijk zo dat niet alleen gebouwen, maar ook documenten of personen als erfgoed kunnen worden beschouwd. Ook natuurmonumenten, de tegenhangers van cultuurmonumenten, worden steeds vaker gezien als erfgoed. Cultureel en natuurlijk erfgoed hebben raakvlakken, hoeven niet per definitie beiden erfgoed te zijn. Door de creatie en de verandering van deze begrippen zijn nu ook natuurmonumenten zoals landschappen, stadsgezichten en dijken erfgoed.³ Deze verandering hangt uiteraard nauw samen met het concept van de herinneringsplaatsen, de *lieux de mémoire*, het concept van de Franse historicus Pierre Nora. Nora had voor ogen om het historisch besef van de natie te herstellen door geheugenplaatsen te gebruiken als ankerpunten. De geheugenplaatsen zouden het gevoel oproepen dat wij in een continuerende ontwikkeling staan van de zoektocht naar onze toekomst en dat onze traditie ons daar houvast bij kan geven. De plaatsen van herinneringen zelf raken echter ook los van het zich verder ontwikkelende geschiedverhaal van de natie. Lokaal en nationaal erfgoedbeleid draagt hieraan bij, want voor een projectmatige werking van erfgoedbeleid moeten de plaatsen en objecten los worden gemaakt van het overkoepelende geschiedverhaal van de natie.⁴ Over Mondragón is de afgelopen jaren niet veel meer geschreven. Sterker nog, bij zowel de Koninklijke Bibliotheek en de Zeeuwse Bibliotheek komt het meest recente resultaat bij een zoekopdracht naar hem uit 1997. Over het algemeen is er sowieso niet veel literatuur gewijd

aan deze man wat ook blijkt uit het aantal treffers, 6 en 11, bij respectievelijk de Koninklijke Bibliotheek en de Zeeuwse Bibliotheek. Wanneer er wordt gezocht naar Alva is het aantal treffers aanzienlijk hoger, namelijk 215 en 14.537. Uiteraard zijn hier resultaten bij die verwijzen naar een andere 'Alva', maar het geeft toch een duidelijk beeld.⁵ Ik zal daarom eerst enkele woorden wijden aan de persoon Mondragón zelf.



Het beleg van Zierikzee

De ommuurde stad met de posities van de belegerende Spaanse troepen, hun schepen en die van de Geuzen.

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, objectnummer RP-P-OB-79.640

De persoon Mondragón en Schouwen-Duiveland

Cristóbal de Mondragón werd geboren in 1504 te Medina del Campo.⁶ Zijn familie was van lage adel en daarom had Mondragón volgens de traditie drie carrièreopties: soldaat, landheer of priester. Hij koos voor een militaire carrière en dit ging hem goed af. In 1567 kwam hij als officier naar Nederland toen hij in het leger van de hertog van Alva diende. Door opstanden in Nederland, de voorlopers van

¹ De naam 'Mondragón' wordt ook wel geschreven als 'Mondragon', met name in de huidige berichtgeving. Dit komt voornamelijk door de digitale wereld die vaak geen accenten gebruikt. Overigens is het accent bedoeld om de klemtoon aan te geven, niet om een verschil in klank aan te duiden.

² Hiervoor heb ik gezocht op de site van twee lokale weekkranten, namelijk 'Wereldregio' (www.wereldregio.nl) 08-07-2012 en 'Ons eiland', (www.deweekkrant.nl) 08-07-2012.

³ Willemien Roenhorst, 'Monumenten van natuur en schoonheid', in Frans Grijzenhout (red.), *Erfgoed. De geschiedenis van een begrip* (Amsterdam 2007) 175-204, 203-204.

⁴ Willem Frijhoff, *De mist van de geschiedenis* (Nijmegen 2011) 18-19.

⁵ De zoekopdracht op de site van de catalogus van de Koninklijke Bibliotheek: (<http://opc4.kb.nl/DB=1/SET=2/TTL=1/CMD?ACT=SRCHA&IKT=1016&SRT=YOP&TRM=mondragon>) (08-08-2012). De zoekopdracht op de site van de catalogus van de Zeeuwse Bibliotheek: (<http://zoeken.zeeuwsebibliotheek.nl/?q=mondragon>) (08-08-2012).

⁶ Hierover is geen consensus. W.A. Boekelman, *Mondragón. Spaans kolonel tijdens de Tachtigjarige oorlog* (Den Helder 1997) 6. A. Teunis, M.P. de Bruin, P.J. van der Feen e.a. *Encyclopedie van Zeeland. Deel II* (Middelburg 1982) 340. J. Visser en J.G. Hoogenraad, *Mondragónpad. In de voetsporen van Mondragón. Met route en kaartje* (Zierikzee 2002) 3.

de Nederlandse Opstand, was Alva benoemd tot landvoogd van de Nederlanden.⁷ Deze 'ijzeren hertog' werd in 1573 echter al vervangen door Requesens, die de nieuwe landvoogd van Nederland en commandant van Mondragón werd. Inmiddels was deze laatste benoemd tot gouverneur van Zeeland, een opstandig gebied dat hij zelf moest veroveren.¹⁰ Onderdeel van Mondragóns opdracht was het veroveren van Schouwen en Duiveland. Daarmee zou er een breuk worden gecreëerd tussen Holland en Zeeland, wat het gemakkelijker zou maken deze gebieden te veroveren.¹¹ Naar aanleiding van Mondragóns eerdere successen met een

De schepen van de Geuzen konden weinig schade aanrichten aan het leger van de Spanjaarden, omdat zij door het lage tij niet dicht genoeg konden naderen.

aanval door het water werd er een soortgelijk plan opgesteld. Bij eb zouden soldaten met het water tot aan de middel vanaf St. Philipsland door het Zijpe naar Duiveland toelopen. Ook boten vanuit Tholen vervoerden soldaten naar het eiland. Op 28 september 1575 werd de operatie tot uitvoering gebracht en hij was een groot succes.¹² De schepen van de Geuzen konden weinig schade aanrichten aan het leger van de Spanjaarden, omdat zij door het lage tij niet dicht genoeg konden naderen. Na zes uur waren de soldaten aangekomen en werden zes versterkte posities op Duiveland binnen korte tijd ingenomen. Vervolgens moest de Gouwe, een brede kreek, worden overgestoken naar Schouwen. Hier kwam het water tot de borst, maar wederom was de tocht een succes.¹³ De legers van de vrijheidstrijd of opstandelingen moesten vluchten naar Zierikzee. Het feit dat een Spaanse veldheer zo slim gebruik maakte van de getijden en de wadden, het terrein van de Geuzen, wekte veel bewondering op.¹⁴ Meteen hierna pleegde baljuw Caspar van Vosbergen uit Zierikzee overleg met Mondragón. Er werd afgesproken dat de baljuw enige dagen zou bemiddelen met het garnizoen van de stad om de details van de overgave te regelen. De baljuw stelde zelf nog voor een gijzelaar achter te laten en een Spaanse kapitein toezicht te laten houden, maar Mondragón vond dit niet noodzakelijk. Enige dagen later bleek dat de baljuw Mondragón had bedrogen en niet van plan was zich over te geven.

Hierna volgde een beleg van Zierikzee en een andere vesting op Schouwen, Bommenede. Mondragón stelde voor eerst Zierikzee te veroveren, maar dit gebeurde niet, Bommenede werd eerst veroverd, hoewel dit enige tijd duurde. Tijd was iets wat de stad Zierikzee ten goede kwam op dat moment: dijken werden doorgestoken waardoor een directe aanval op de stad onmogelijk werd.¹⁵ Het beleg van Zierikzee was uiteindelijk toch succesvol voor Mondragón. Op 2 juli hield de Spaanse veldheer zijn intocht in Zierikzee. Mondragón was ondanks het bedrog van de baljuw en de lange duur van het beleg mild tegenover de bewoners van de Schouwse stad. De dominees en het garnizoen kregen, met behoud van hun wapens en bagage, een vrije aftocht. Ook werd de stad, tegen betaling van 200.000 florijnen, niet geplunderd en zouden de burgers niet worden lastig gevallen. Mondragón plaatste zijn Spaanse legers, wellicht hierom, buiten de stad.¹⁶ Ook de misleiding van baljuw Vosbergen werd niet bestraft. Mondragón vond het een lovenswaardige actie en bood hem zelfs een positie in dienst van de koning aan. Dit aanbod sloeg Van Vosbergen echter af. Vervolgens werd hij vrijgelaten in de stad, maar



Cristóbal de Mondragón

www.marceltettero.nl

later vluchtte hij toch. Mondragóns afspraken werden hem door de Spaanse Raad van State niet in dank afgenomen, maar hij reageerde hier laconiek op. Hij had een verzoek ingediend om een adviseur voor dit soort afspraken tot zijn beschikking te krijgen, maar dit verzoek was niet ingewilligd.¹⁷ Enkele dagen nadat Mondragón zijn intrek had genomen in Zierikzee ontstond er onrust onder zijn Spaanse troepen. Omdat zij lange tijd geen soldij hadden ontvangen, sloegen zij aan het muiten. Zij stuurden hun officieren weg en vertrokken al plunderend naar het vasteland. Kort daarna gingen ook Mondragóns Waalse troe-

⁷ Visser en Hoogenraad, *Mondragónpad*, 3.

⁸ Liek Mulder, Anne Doedens en Yolande Kortlever, *Geschiedenis van Nederland. Van prehistorie tot heden* (Baarn 2005) 117.

⁹ Mulder, Doedens en Kortlever, *Geschiedenis van Nederland*, 120.

¹⁰ Teunis, De Bruin, Van der Feen e.a., *Encyclopedie van Zeeland. Deel II*, 341.

¹¹ D. H. Schortinghuis, 'Mondragón. De wad-lopende Spaanse kolonel', *Ons Leger* 48 / 9 (1964) 22-26, 22.

¹² Boekelman, *Mondragón*, 31.

¹³ Ibidem, 32.

¹⁴ Schortinghuis, 'Mondragón. De wad-lopende Spaanse kolonel', 26.

¹⁵ Boekelman, *Mondragón*, 33.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 37.

¹⁷ Ibidem, 38.

pen in de stad over tot muiterij. Zij namen Mondragón zelfs gevangen en plaatsten hem onder huisarrest. Aan de Raad van State schreef hij dat hij het liefst de helft van 'die duivels' had opgehangen.¹⁸ De Spanjaarden werden in 1577 echter gedwongen zich terug te trekken en zo kwam er definitief een einde aan de overheersing van Mondragón op Schouwen en Duiveland.¹⁹ Mondragón was mede vanwege de afspraken bij de overgave van Zierikzee een geliefd man op Schouwen en Duiveland.²⁰ Uit zijn verslagen blijkt, dat hij een eerlijk man was: hij beschrijft de 'dapperheid van de vijand en het wangedrag van zijn eigen troepen'²¹. Het kan natuurlijk ook zo zijn geweest dat Mondragón probeerde om zijn overwinning kracht bij te zetten door de sterkte en dapperheid van de tegenstanders uit te vergroten. Ook was Mondragón geliefd bij zijn militairen, zowel superieuren, ranggenoten als ondergeschikten. Hij was een doortastend en dapper troepenleider en hechtte sterk aan discipline.²² Het zal dan misschien ook niet als een verrassing komen dat Mondragóns naam in de geschiedenis niet is bezoedeld door gruweldaden, wat bij andere veldheren vaak wel het geval is.²³ Ook andere schrijvers eerden Mondragón. De Spanjaard Salcedo Ruiz bijvoorbeeld drukte zijn bewondering voor de heldhaftigheid van de Spaanse veldheer uit. Ook de Nederlanders Hugo de Groot en P.C. Hooft schreven dat Mondragón een dapper en goed soldaat was. Toch is vooral van belang dat zij Mondragón een zachtzinnig, humaan mens achtten in een tijd van wreedheden.²⁴

Huidige tastbare herinneringen

Tegenwoordig is Mondragón toch wat in de vergetelheid geraakt. Wanneer het gaat over de Nederlandse Opstand wordt vaak alleen Alva nog genoemd. Terwijl hij 'maar' zes jaar landvoogd is geweest van de Nederlanden. Mondragón vocht een veel langere tijd in ons land en was qua wreedheid de tegenhanger van Alva.²⁵ Dit is misschien de reden waarom er mooie hotels, straten, restaurants en theaters naar Mondragón zijn vernoemd en naar Alva alleen de dukdalf (duc d'Albe), de meerpaal waar de strop van de tros van een schip aan vast wordt gemaakt.²⁶ Op Schouwen-Duiveland is een wandelroute vernoemd naar de Spaanse veldheer: het Mondragónpad. Een route vanaf Bruinisse, langs de kreken van Ouwkerk, Zierikzee, Dreischor en weer terug naar Bruinisse.²⁷ Op deze route liggen verschillende tastbare herinneringen aan Mondragón. Dijken die er al lagen ten

tijde van de verovering van Schouwen en Duiveland, bij eb droogvallende gebieden en plaatsen waar de dijk werd doorgestoken. In Zierikzee is op de Noordhavenpoort de degen te zien die volgens de overlevering van Mondragón was en wat verderop het huis 'De Mossele' waar hij verbleef.²⁸ Het theater Mondragón is later naar hem vernoemd, maar heeft niets te maken met het werkelijke verblijf van Mondragón in Zierikzee.

Erfgoed of niet?

Het is nu duidelijk wie Mondragón was, wat hij op Schouwen-Duiveland heeft gedaan en welke tastbare herinneringen aan hem zijn overgebleven. Nu is het zaak te onderzoeken wat erfgoed nu precies is om erachter te komen of die tastbare herinneringen ook erfgoed zijn. Willem Frijhoff, een historicus verbonden aan de Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam en de Vrije Universiteit heeft geschreven over



Noordhavenpoort
De degen van Mondragon op de Noordhavenpoort
(Collectie auteur)

cultuuroverdracht, erfgoed en geheugen. Hij is van mening dat alles wat uit het verleden is overgeleverd erfgoed kan worden. Erfgoed is iets wat wordt toebedeeld of aangereikt uit het verleden. Dit werkt zo door in het heden en kunnen wij doorgeven aan de toekomst. Let op

¹⁸ Boekelman, *Mondragón*, 39.

¹⁹ Visser en Hoogenraad, *Mondragónpad*, 9.

²⁰ Ibidem, 10.

²¹ Boekelman, *Mondragón*, 35.

²² Ibidem, 34.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Ibidem, 5.

²⁵ Boekelman, *Mondragón*, 5.

²⁶ Teunis, De Bruin, Van der Feen e.a., *Encyclopedie van Zeeland. Deel II*, 341.

²⁷ Visser en Hoogenraad, *Mondragónpad*, 11.

²⁸ Ibidem, 15-20.

het woord 'kunnen', want dit doorgeven is niet noodzakelijk. Een progressieve manier van omgaan met het verleden komt neer op het vernietigen van alles uit het verleden en het alleen nog gericht zijn op de toekomst. Dit gebeurt echter bijna nooit. Er is altijd een mate van behoudendheid. Bijna alle zaken uit het verleden kunnen belangrijk gevonden worden, dus deze moeten bewaard worden om de band met het verleden te behouden.²⁹ De vraag die we naar aanleiding van deze definitie kunnen stellen is of Mondragón belangrijk is voor ons nu. Hierop zou een negatief antwoord kunnen worden gegeven, aangezien de Spaanse vijand van de Nederlandse Opstand wordt belichaamd door Alva in geschiedenisboeken en narratieven. Mondragón viel en valt dus niet binnen het vijandbeeld wat werd gevormd en gekoesterd. Toch valt Mondragón erfgoed te noemen, want de routebeschrijving van het Mondragónpad werd in 2002 nog uitgebracht. Dit toont sterk aan dat de opdrachtgevers hiervan de wens hadden om de herinnering aan Mondragón levend te houden. Dus is Mondragón erfgoed, samen met zijn tastbare herinneringen die op dit moment bestaan. Een andere presentatie van het begrip komt van Frans Grijzenhout, een kunsthistoricus die aan de Universiteit van Amster-

Erfgoed is iets wat wordt toebedeeld of aangereikt uit het verleden. Dit werkt zo door in het heden en kunnen wij doorgeven aan de toekomst.

dam hoogleraar 'Cultureel erfgoed, restauratie en conservering' is geweest. Hij geeft aan dat er twee vormen van betekenisgeving en omgang met erfgoed bestaan. Allereerst is er de positieve betekenis van erfgoed. Hiermee wordt de erfenis bedoeld die voorvaders bijeen hebben gezwogd: we kunnen deze aanvaarden, vermeerderen met eigen prestaties en doorgeven. Dit komt neer op alles wat door cultureel handelen tot stand is gebracht. De tweede betekenis is strijdbaar, defensief en selectief. Hier staat de kwaliteit centraal, erfgoed is iets zeldzaams en kostbaars wat in zijn bestaan wordt bedreigd, dus wat moet worden behouden.³⁰ Wel duidelijk is dat Mondragón beter in de tweede betekenis past. Een Spaanse veldheer die geliefd was bij vriend en vijand was zeldzaam. Zeldzame zaken moeten bewaard blijven, dus past Mondragón probleemloos binnen de tweede betekenis. Wat Grijzenhout echter niet duidelijk maakt bij de eerste betekenis is of erfgoed tot stand moet zijn gekomen door handelingen van de eigen cultuur. Mondragón is een veldheer van zijn eigen cultuur en de Nederlanders verzetten zich tijdens de Nederlandse Opstand tegen de cultuur van de Spanjaarden; ze wilden

meer vrijheid en autonomie. In dit geval zou Mondragón geen onderdeel zijn van onze culturele handelingen, maar een gevolg van een strijd tussen culturen. Hier komt de visie van Wessel Krul ook op terug. Wat voor de één erfgoed is, is voor de ander een reden tot vernietigen. Totale vernietiging van iedere vorm van erfgoed komt tegenwoordig niet voor, wat Frijhoff ook al opmerkt. Het afwijzen van bepaalde historische zaken kan uiteraard wel. Het is tegenwoordig in elk geval ongewoon om verval zijn beloop te laten.³¹ Er zijn in het verleden vast en zeker personen, verhalen of tastbare herinneringen aan de Nederlandse Opstand 'vernietigd'. Mondragón is hier echter niet één van, wat duidelijk maakt dat Mondragón als erfgoed werd en wordt beschouwd door de bevolking van Schouwen-Duiveland. Hierboven is gebleken dat zowel gebouwen, documenten, personen, maar ook natuurmonumenten kunnen worden gezien als erfgoed.³² Zo ook op Schouwen-Duiveland. Verschillende cultuur- en natuurmonumenten zijn officieel bestempeld als erfgoed.³³ Herinneringsplaatsen spelen een rol bij de nominatie van Mondragón als erfgoed. Zo denk ik aan de natuurgebieden die min of meer intact zijn gebleven sinds het 'bezoek' van Mondragón en zijn verblijf in 'De Mossele'. Maar ook plaatsen die zijn gecreëerd herinneren ons aan onze Spaanse vijand: de degen op de Noordhavenpoort en het theater.³⁴

Conclusie

Duidelijk mag zijn dat Mondragón onmiskenbaar behoort tot het erfgoed van Schouwen-Duiveland. Tastbare herinneringen geven mensen subtiel of direct informatie over de Spaanse veldheer die de bevolking van Schouwen en Duiveland zo goed had behandeld. Vanwege het feit dat Mondragón een humaan mens was tussen de talloze wreedheden van de Nederlandse Opstand werd hij gezien als een lovenswaardige vijand. Daarom werd hij op een positieve manier opgenomen als erfgoed. Als het Mondragónpad wordt gevolgd komt men langs plaatsen van erfgoed die eveneens met de naamgever van het pad verbonden zijn. De herinnering aan Mondragón is een opmerkelijk stuk erfgoed van de bevolking van Schouwen-Duiveland en wordt waarschijnlijk daarom nog altijd doorgegeven, gekoesterd en wederom doorgegeven aan toekomstige generaties.

²⁹ Willem Frijhoff, *Dynamisch erfgoed* (Amsterdam 2007) 23.

³⁰ Frans Grijzenhout, 'Inleiding', in Frans Grijzenhout (red.), *Erfgoed. De geschiedenis van een begrip* (Amsterdam 2007) 1-20, 2-5.

³¹ Wessel Krul, 'Tegen het erfgoed', *Ibidem*, 265-303, 286.

³² Roenhorst, 'Monumenten van natuur en schoonheid', 203-204.

³³ Op de site van de VVV-Zeeland is een lijst te vinden van alle bezienswaardigheden op Schouwen-Duiveland, waaronder de zaken die vallen onder 'cultuur', 'attracties' en 'routes' (http://www.vvvzeeland.nl/nl/eilanden/schouwen-duiveland_08-07-2012).

³⁴ Frijhoff, *De mist van de geschiedenis*, 18-19.

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Dutch Tangos

The Dutch reaction to the Falklands War, 1982

In the spring of 1982, the Dutch Cabinet Van Agt II, formed by the parties CDA, PvdA and D66, faced difficult days. The country was seriously affected by an economic crisis, high unemployment rates, a fierce debate on nuclear weapons and constant quarrels inside the government, all of which would eventually lead to the fall of the Government in May 1982.

The different views existing within the Government impeded the Cabinet's ability to find solutions to the previously named problems, to the detriment of the discontented population. Perhaps it was this difficult situation that inspired Dutch citizens to become more involved in the political debate, resulting in changes even to foreign affairs. Dutch organisations became involved in human rights issues in different countries. The government was also closely involved with these issues. Cabinet Van Agt's Minister of Foreign Affairs Max Van der Stoep (PvdA) had a long history in the Netherlands as a defender of human rights. Most of his foreign policies were based on two important factors: human rights and economic interests abroad. A difficult task in-



Cabinet Van Agt II

Van Agt's (left of Queen Beatrix) second cabinet was, due to a variety of national and international problems, to last just eight months.
winters.nu

deed, Van der Stoep was - most of the time - successful in linking these two apparently different areas in order to protect Dutch interests and defend human rights. In April 1982, seven months after Van der Stoep's appointment as Minister of Foreign Affairs, on the other side of the world in the South Atlantic, the Argentine military occupied the British Falklands islands. A century long issue, the dispute was - and is - for Argentina a matter of national pride, since Las Malvinas have always been considered as stolen by the United Kingdom (UK). The oc-

cupation led to an armed conflict between the UK and the Argentine dictatorship, which after two months ended with Britain's recovery of the islands. On the British side, the victory was a relief for Margaret Thatcher's government which was encountering public rejection on the application of extreme government spending cuts in different areas. Although taking place far away, the conflict had important consequences for both the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Netherlands due to their trade links and human rights policies. The timing is important: precisely during the days that the war broke out, Van Agt's cabinet counted its days, being pushed by inside quarrels to an unavoidable dissolution on May 12th of the same year. In this article, I will analyse the reaction of the Dutch Cabinet Van Agt II towards the Falklands war, as a country and as member of the EEC, and demonstrate that - in contrast to what Cees Homan sustains¹ - there was indeed a clear Dutch position to the Falklands Conflict. This position was not based on simply supporting the UK as an ally, since - as we will see - there were many other factors to be taken into account.

The Falklands Conflict

This is not the place to analyse the Falklands conflict or its historical background, a subject widely studied.² It will be enough for this article to sketch some of the main aspects. The April 2nd 1982 occupation of the British Falklands Islands was for the Argentine Dictatorship of Leopoldo Galtieri a suitable action in order to receive support of the people for his economic policies, which caused heavy demonstrations in Buenos Aires, reaching the millions by March of that year.³ This was not a difficult task since the 'Malvinas son Argentinas' slogan is known to every Argentinian schoolchild. Also the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the British take over on the islands made for a suitable moment to recover the Falklands. On the British side the occupation was in a way a 'lucky strike' for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. She had been under constant pressure because of her controversial monetarist economic policies. Riots and protests were staged every week in London as more and more trade unions went on strike. Thatcher was convinced that deep cuts in dif-

¹ C. Homan (a.o.), 'The Converging National Reactions (II): The Smaller States -Belgium, the Netherlands and Greece', in: S. Stavridis and C. Hill (ed), *Domestic Sources of Foreign Policy*, p. 90.

² L. Freedman, *The Official History of the Falklands Campaign. The Origins of the War*, Vol. I & II (New York 2005); M. Hastings and S. Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (London 1983); H. Bicheno, *Razor's Edge: The Unofficial History of the Falklands War* (London 2006); I. Dale., *Memories of the Falklands* (London 2002); S. Devereux, *Terminal Velocity: His true account of front-line action in the Falklands War and beyond* (London 1997), among others.

³ M. Novaro and V. Palermo, *Historia Argentina, la Dictadura Militar 1976-1983, Del Golpe de Estado a la Restauración Democrática* (Buenos Aires, 2003) pp. 408-10.

ferent areas were the only way to keep the British economy from falling; she maintained strict measures with an iron hand. Precisely cuts in Defence were interpreted in Buenos Aires as a green light for the occupation. This interpretation was strengthened by the departure from the South Atlantic of the British vessel HSM Endurance after receiving new orders from London.⁴ However, when the occupation of the Falklands by Argentine forces did occur, Thatcher made clear that she would not tolerate it. A British Task Force fleet sailed from Gibraltar, reaching the islands by mid-April. At the start of the conflict, this fleet was meant as 'gunboat diplomacy' to scare the Argentines away from the islands. At this stage, a real confrontation was excluded and there was not even a plan to defeat the Argentine forces.⁵ Although many were against the use of force in the dispute, the UK was successful in finding support from the international community in the frame of the United Nations (UN). After explaining the case, UN British Ambassador Anthony Parsons received enough votes to pass Resolution 502 of the Security Council, which obliged Argentine troops to leave the Islands. Argentine diplomats, however, remained in their position of full sovereignty over the Malvinas and did not follow the Resolution. Diplomacy did not work anymore and Argentina resorted to war. After two and a half months of fighting, and a total of more than 900 casualties, the Union Jack was raised again on the Falklands.

The Netherlands and Argentina

The Netherlands, as a country and as a member of the EEC, was also influenced by the conflict. At the time the war broke out – a little more than a month before Cabinet Van Agt II would fall – the Dutch had important links with Buenos Aires. Firstly, the Dutch company *Hollandse Signaalapparaten* (HSA) BV was building radar and fire control equipment for Argentine vessels. This contract also included training for 79 Argentine soldiers and 78 technicians in the use of the equipment, meant for West German military vessels delivered after the end of the conflict. Secondly the Dutch enterprises *Koninklijke Boskalis Westminster*, *Nacap*, and the Dutch *Gasunie* had signed a contract for the *Cogasco* gas pipeline in 1979 with the Argentine societies *Tecsa* and *Pamar SA*. The contract included that they would build and maintain for 15 years a 1.800 kilometre long gas pipeline in the south of Argentina. The contract was signed for 2 billion guilders; approximately 1 billion euros. According to the contract, the gas pipeline was to be leased for 15 years to an Argentine state enterprise. After this time,

and if the payments were completed, the Argentine Gas del Estado would become the pipeline's owner. The Dutch Amrobank lent the funds to build the pipeline to *Cogasco SA*, a company established for the project. Boskalis owned 90% of this company and the Dutch State was guarantor for 2,3 billion guilders. According to retired diplomat Emile van Lennep, this was the biggest international project investment that the Netherlands had ever made abroad and, also, the biggest debt that Argentina had taken on with such a project. In the Netherlands, the contract was welcomed. Unemployment in the country was high and the project would give work to thousands of people. However, there were doubts about giving a dictatorship such high credit: Argentina had at the time a debt of 35.671 millions dollars.⁶ The Dutch Government, however, decided that Argentina's economy was stable enough.⁷ The third and final connection between the Netherlands and Argentina was the tie between the organization 'Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo' and the Union of Dutch Catholic Women (UNKV), made up of six Dutch woman organizations from around the country. Since the beginning of the Argentine dictatorship and its repressive policies, both organizations had worked together to press the Argentine Government to make an end to the repressive situation. In the spring of 1982, these organizations staged demonstrations to condemn the Junta's repression together with its illegal occupation of the Islands and sent letters to the Parliament, asking for a clear position from the Netherlands towards the Falklands Conflict. Issues such as the violation of human rights by the Junta, the delivery of residence permits to Argentine military officials and the HSA contract with Argentina, were strongly criticized by the Union.⁸

Cabinet Van Agt II and the War

On September 11th 1981, Cabinet van Agt II was formed during a critical period: unemployment was reaching high levels, with nearly a half million unemployed in the first three months of 1982⁹, and at the time demonstrations were being held against reduced spending. The *ziektegeld* benefit issue discouraged right-wing voters and met with opposition from the trade Unions.¹⁰ At the same time, differences within the government thwarted the possibility of successful cooperation.¹¹ The then Minister of Defence Hans van Mierlo (D66) called the Van Agt Cabinet II a mistake; he reluctantly accepted the Ministerial Portfolio, due to the Nuclear Missiles debate and, also reluctantly, stayed in office.¹² It was not a secret that Minister of Social Affairs

⁴ Hastings and Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands*, 42-43.

⁵ Ibidem, 77 and 317.

⁶ Novaro and Palermo, *Historia Argentina, la Dictadura Militar*, 410.7 E. van Lennep, *Emile van Lennep in de wereldeconomie, Herinneringen van een internationale Nederlander* (Leiden 1991) 290-301 and Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, vergaderjaar 1986-1987.

⁸ Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, zitting 1981-1982, nummer 30.

⁹ Elsevier, 1 May 1982.

¹⁰ Elsevier, 10 April 1982.

¹¹ A. Koster, *De eenzame fietser, Insiders over de politiek loopbaan van Dries van Agt* (Culemborg 2008).

¹² Ibidem, 209.

Joop Den Uyl (PvdA) and PM Van Agt (CDA) could not work together, and yet they had assumed the responsibility to form the Cabinet. According to Jos van Kemenade (PvdA), at that time Minister of Science and Education, Den Uyl accepted a place in the cabinet only because he was under pressure from the President of the FNV union, Wim Kok, and not because he wished to cooperate with the new government.¹³ From the first day, Van Agt knew that the cabinet would not work. The main reason was Den Uyl's refusal to assume his position as second in command, under Van Agt;¹⁴ this did not help the cohesion inside the Cabinet. Dutch media talked about a 'mix up of two visions.'¹⁵ With all these domestic troubles, it was difficult for the Prime Minister to concentrate on foreign affairs. And since he was a good friend of, and had similar views on foreign issues as Minister of Foreign Affairs Max van der Stoel, Van Agt decided to leave foreign issues to the Minister in order to deal with domestic issues and try to stop the Cabinet from dissolving.¹⁶ 'Talk about Max van der Stoel is talk about

When international society resigns itself to conquests by the generals, it'll be a free for all.

human rights.¹⁷ Van der Stoel was successful in creating relations between issues such as freedom, security, European integration and job creation on the one hand and human rights on the other.¹⁸ This determined the direction the country was moving to as a whole. In 1968, Amnesty International opened an office in Amsterdam, establishing the country as a human rights pioneer. In the mid 70's, when Den Uyl, as Prime Minister, helped thousands of Chilean exiles enter the Netherlands in 1973 by giving them political asylum, he made clear that human rights had become an integral constituent of foreign affairs. The Dutch Government would constantly defend these rights except when they affected Cold War relations, the development of Third World Countries or Dutch economic interests. These factors had, however, a limiting effect on Dutch human rights policy.¹⁹ For example in the case of Argentina, whose dictatorship systematically violated human rights, the foreign affairs report on the country's situation in 1979 was mild and uncritical. This was most likely caused

by efforts to secure the Boskalis Cogasco contract. Another example of the human rights/economic interests duality was in Indonesia where, despite violations of human rights, development aid was even raised. Decisions in these areas were 'always bonded to and mixed with other aims and interests.'²⁰ On the same day the occupation of the Falklands Islands occurred, April 2nd 1982, Minister Van der Stoel informed the Council of Ministers that Argentine troops had taken the Falklands islands through military action. The Minister pointed out in his exposition that this conflict would have consequences for the country due to the HSA contract. There had already been questions in the Parliament about this fact, but with the news of the conflict, it turned into a dilemma. Although the selling of military equipment was a controversial issue, the contract could be protected, since the equipment was to be used by West German vessels which were sold to Argentina. In this way the Netherlands could distance itself from the Argentine Junta. Besides, as explained in the Parliament in an answer to the UNKV by the end of July 1982, the equipment did not contain weapons but radar and fire control equipment which were not meant to kill people. During the Ministry Council of April 2nd the Falklands issue was not widely discussed, due to both scarce information on the occupation itself and due to events in El Salvador, where at the end of March four Dutch journalists were killed.²¹ Later, during the Ministry Council of April 8th, Van der Stoel stressed that the Netherlands had to take a clear position regarding the conflict due to its colonial dimension: the possibility that the Antilles would be occupied by Venezuela, following the Argentine example as seen in confidential reports²², was touched upon in some of the Council meetings and in the Parliament.²³ The media also paid attention to the colonial dimension; in the Dutch magazine Elsevier editor Daan van Rosmalen wrote in his column 'When international society resigns itself to conquests by the generals, it'll be a free for all.'²⁴ In addition to demanding a clear position of the Dutch Government regarding the conflict, Minister Van der Stoel numbered the steps to be followed. First, the Argentine Ambassador would be warned of the measures that the Netherlands would have to take if Argentina continued the occupation. Second, the Netherlands would support without reservation the UN Security Council's Resolution 502. This reso-

¹³ Koster, *De eenzame fietser*, 211.

¹⁴ Ibidem, 216-7.

¹⁵ Elsevier, 17 April 1982.

¹⁶ Koster, *De eenzame fietser*, 283.

¹⁷ D. Hellema, B. Zeeman, B. van der Zwan, *De Nederlandse ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken in de Twintigste Eeuw* (Den Haag 1999) 243.

¹⁸ Ibidem, 243.

¹⁹ Hellema a.o., *Nederlandse Ministers*, 326.

²⁰ Ibidem, 331.

²¹ Notulen Ministerraad, Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad, 1823-1988.

²² Archief Buitenlandse Zaken 1975-1984, 23 april 1982.

²³ De heer Kohnstamm, Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, zitting 1981-1982, Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1982.

²⁴ Elsevier, 10 April 1982.

lution together with article 51 of the Charter (the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, *red.*), were supposed to block Argentine occupation and force military withdrawal, favouring a diplomatic solution to the conflict. Third, the Dutch Administration Government would condemn the Argentine occupation in the EEC frame. Fourth, the Netherlands would implement economic measures in relation to Argentina. Finally weapon deliveries to Argentina would be stopped. Van der Stoel further stated that the violations of human rights in Argentina had to be strongly condemned with these measures.²⁵ During the Ministry Council session of April 16th, the Falklands conflict was again discussed. At that time, the British Task Force had



Helmets left by surrendering Argentinian troops

It would take two and a half months of fighting and 900 casualties, before the British could reclaim the islands.

Telegraph.co.uk

not yet arrived in Argentine waters and the diplomatic channels in London, Buenos Aires and New York had not reached an agreement on the issue. Notwithstanding, the EEC had in a short time (fourteen days) almost unanimously agreed on economic sanctions against Argentina and although Argentina took countermeasures to these sanctions, Van der Stoel did not expect consequences for the Dutch economy. However, he did not expect a solution to the conflict within a short period. The ministers were still worried about the Dutch investments in the South Atlantic. Minister of Economics Jan Terlouw (D66) noted that he had agreed with the EEC sanctions because the measures were not supposed to damage Dutch interests in the South Atlantic. This support of the sanctions was mainly meant as a sign of soli-

arity to the UK, but he, like Den Uyl, preferred purely political sanctions above economic ones. Then Prime Minister Van Agt asked those present whether it was true that the Dutch enterprise Boskalis was not allowed to build the gas pipeline in south Argentina. Minister Van der Stoel answered positively but insisted that the Dutch investments and contracts were protected.²⁶ Argentina reacted negatively to the Dutch economic sanctions and warned the Dutch government that the country was taking measures which would probably affect Dutch international trade and investments. They were disappointed in the support the Netherlands had given to the UK and in the delayed delivery of radar and military equipment, which had already been paid for by the Argentine government.²⁷ As a consequence of these developments, the Cogasco contract took shape differently than expected. Already in 1980 the Dutch State took the insurance for the Cogasco project, based on Prime Minister Van Agt's estimate of Argentina as a reasonably stable country in 1979. However, according to a report on the subject sent to the Parliament in 1982, payments were suspended because the Argentine economy was suffering serious troubles, 'mainly as a consequence of the Falkland War.'²⁸ Embassy reports coincide with this fact, adding that the situation in Argentina was deteriorating, which diminished the possibility of the country being able to assume its financial responsibilities.²⁹ Because of this the Dutch state had to give a loan to Boskalis in April 1982, to cover Argentine late payments, which were a direct consequence of the conflict³⁰ and later the *Nederlandsche Credietverzekering Maatschappij* (NCM) had to pay the insured loan.³¹ Thus, by the time Prime Minister Van Agt asked the session if the enterprise was allowed to build the gas pipeline, the duct was already working along most of its length. The Cogasco issue did not end together with the war. To find a suitable solution for the Dutch economy, a commission was set up in 1984 with State Minister Emile van Lennep at its head³², but the task was not easy. When asking the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for information on the contract, he was surprised to find out that the Ministry had no information on the subject.³³ Neither was the Cogasco investment included in the Dutch embassy report that came from Buenos Aires in early 1982.³⁴ This coincides with Van der Stoel's answer in the Council of Ministers when he declared that Boskalis would not build the gas pipeline, revealing the total ignorance of the Ministry of Foreign

²⁵ NL-HNA, Ministerraad, 8 April 1982.

²⁶ NL-HNA, Ministerraad, 16 April 1982.

²⁷ *La República*, 17 April 1982.

²⁸ Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, vergaderjaar 1986-1987. Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1987.

²⁹ Buitenlandse Zaken, 1975-1984, 26 April 1982.

³⁰ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1984-1985, 18600, IX b, nu. 11.

³¹ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1984-1985, 18600, IX b, nu. 11.

³² Van Lennep, *Emile van Lennep*, 299.

³³ *Ibidem*, 293.

³⁴ Archief Buitenlandse Zaken 1975-1984, memo 7 April 1982.

Affairs on this issue. Finally, after years of negotiations, the best and only solution found was to transfer, earlier than agreed, the gas pipeline to the Argentine State. It was not until 1987, after years of discussions in the Parliament and media that the Cogasco affair ended. Argentina became the new owner of the pipeline, with a final loss for the Dutch government of 2,4 billion guilders.³⁵ The Cogasco debt was considered by the Dutch Parliament as 'international debt' still to be paid, together with debts from other countries. Yet in 1987 there was still no resolution in sight.³⁶ In 1989, VVD deputy Weisglass, asked during a discussion on the late payments from Kuwait for the building of a hangar complex, if this payment would really be paid. He reminded the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the Cogasco issue and asked: 'In fact, what happened with that?'³⁷ Thus the Cogasco affair was clouded by uncertainty, not receiving the attention it should have had.

The Netherlands, the EEC and the War

At the beginning of the conflict, for the British the European Economic Community was an important component in its attempt to gain international support for the conflict. UN Resolution 502 was not enough to force Argentina's withdrawal. The economic dimension of the crisis had to be used in the UK's favour. As soon as the hostilities started, British representatives in Brussels sent a petition to the Commission to apply economic sanctions against Argentina in order to reach a diplomatic solution to the crisis. These sanctions were rather symbolic, since it was generally accepted that the Falklands dispute would be solved within a short period. After the first official communiqué of the EEC, London asked the EEC countries for 'a ban on all trade in arms, munitions, and other war material, a ban on all or some imports from Argentina under article 224 of the Community (later 113), and suspend export credit guarantees and the discouraging of bank lending to Argentina on grounds of prudence and of solidarity with the UK.'³⁸ The arms embargo was an important factor. At the time, Argentina had different contracts with some European countries on military equipment: the French were delivering Exocet and Super Etendards missiles, the Germans had sold two submarines and were building frigates equipped with Dutch radar technology and the Italians were supplying aircraft and helicopters.³⁹ However, the EEC countries did

not accept the British petitions immediately. It is important to note that at the same time the UK pressed for support against Argentina, in the talks on European issues such as the agricultural budget, UK's budget contribution and the Genscher-Colombo Plan⁴⁰, the British representatives constantly threatened with the use of veto. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was playing two cards at the same time in the EEC: on the one hand, she demanded total support from the Community against the Argentine aggression, on the other hand, she would veto any development in order 'to get her money back.' Yet it seems that nobody dared to bluntly make from the EEC support a quid pro quo on the budget contribution.⁴¹ Another issue is the application of the sanctions based on the Community Articles 224 and 113. Article 224 broadly stated that member states contribute to economic common action through national legislation on political basis, whereas Article 113 determines that the EEC applies economic sanctions on trade basis. In the beginning, basing the sanctions on article 224 had more of a practical reason for the UK since, as the Danish had remarked during the Iranian embargo, an embargo was a political act rather than an economical one.⁴² However, during the discussions on the sanctions, article 113 appeared as an alternative to apply the sanctions and was chosen in the further EEC communiqués. This article changed the sanctions from a national measure to a collective Community measure. In this way, member countries saw themselves limited in their possibilities to take decisions, as it became more difficult to be against the sanctions. The United Kingdom made direct use of the EEC to punish Argentina on the Falklands conflict. At the beginning, the members of the EEC supported the UK to enforce a diplomatic solution to the conflict, but as hostilities started, the UK took an aggressive position which resulted in a decline of EEC support. Notwithstanding, economic sanctions were extended twice during the conflict, not without critics from some member countries. Thatcher's double standard was shrewdly accepted, as the Dutch Ambassador in the UK noted: 'Who is going to dare to tell the Iron Lady that she is wrong?'⁴³ Furthermore, the UK used the Community articles 224 and 113 in order to secure the total support of the EEC in an essentially political conflict.⁴⁴ For the Netherlands, its role in the EEC was quite weak due to the political instability of the country; they were powerless to refuse UK demands, since they were without Go-

³⁵ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1986-1987, 19700, IXB, nr. 60.

³⁶ Eerste Kamer der Staten-Generaal, Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1987, Beleidsdebat over onderwerpen van het Ministerie van Financiën, vergaderjaar 1986-1987.

³⁷ Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1988-1989, 21194, nr. 1.

³⁸ Buitenlandse Zaken 1975-1984, Codebericht 7 April 1982.

³⁹ G. Edwards, 'Europe and the Falkland Islands Crisis 1982' in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Volume XXII, No. 4 June 1984, p. 300.

⁴⁰ The plan 'proposed an extension of the EC's powers into new areas, including foreign policy, defence and justice, together with a revival of the role of majority voting, which had lapsed under Charles de Gaulle.' Euro Know www.euro-know.org, 10 August 2011. ⁴¹ Buitenlandse Zaken, 1975-1984.

⁴² Edwards "Europe and the Falkland Islands Crisis 1982", p. 303. The embargo was a Community reaction after Iranian students stormed the US embassy and took hostages in November 1979.

⁴³ Buitenlandse Zaken, 1975-1984, Codebericht 18 June 1982.

⁴⁴ G. Edwards, 'Europe and the Falkland Islands Crisis 1982', pp. 312-13.

vernment. Yet it was essential for both Max Van der Stoep and Prime Minister Van Agt to keep the unity in the EEC at all costs for the sake of a successful cooperation inside the Community. Therefore, they reluctantly supported the UK.

Conclusion

The Netherlands was closely implicated to the Falklands War in several dimensions. It was thus essential to adopt a position in relation to the conflict. The government, with all its problems, had to manoeuvre in a way as to defend Dutch interests and at the same time have a clear voice in the EEC. The Netherlands found itself constricted due to the political positioning of the UK and Argentina; it had to walk a thin line between condemning the Argentine Junta's human rights policies through the UK led sanctions and defending its own economic interests in the EEC frame. This is why the Netherlands did not enthusiastically support the UK in the conflict. The qualification of their support has to be taken into consideration, given the different interests the Netherlands had regarding Argentina. We now have a more nuanced view of the Dutch response; its support to the UK was tempered by their own economic concerns, which, as this research proved, largely determined the Dutch position towards the Falklands War.

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'Better shoot too many than too few'

The 'Soviet Eichmann' people's commissar Nikolay Yezhov

This article will look at the person of Nikolai Yezhov. Yezhov, who was the head of the Soviet NKVD (secret service) at the height of the Stalinist terror in 1936-1938, is widely held responsible for the atrocities committed against the Soviet people, army and Communist Party. His reign is known in Russia as the 'Yezhovshchina' or Yezhov times.

Yezhov's reign has only been a subject of academic attention in the past decade. First of all, a biography on him and his reign was published by Mark Jansen and Nikita Petrov called *Stalin's loyal executioner: people's commissar Nikolai Yezhov 1895-1940* (Stanford 2002). This biography describes Yezhov during the 1930's (especially during his campaign against foreign elements, his role in eliminating Stalin's competitors for power and the terror against the party). The main thesis of the authors is that Yezhov was a man who was viciously loyal to Stalin. They state that Stalin thought everything up, whilst Yezhov was left with '[e]xecuting the technical details'. As an answer to this, Arch Getty and Oleg Naumov wrote a book called *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'* (Yale 2008). In this book, they focus more on the person of Yezhov and his career prior to his 'involvement in security matters in 1934'. Their view is that Yezhov was a man with his own ideals, who very strongly believed in the Communist system and that his experiences in 1917 and the Civil War had a large influence on him as a person. But who was the real Yezhov? To answer this question, this article is based on memoirs by men like Nikita Khrushchev, Genrikh Yagoda and sources from Yezhov's own personal archives. Nikolai Yezhov is seen as a dark and evil figure by many people. It is of course true that he was responsible for countless executions in Stalin's Russia. But, at the same time, the question arises whether he was just a cold-blooded killer or a man with his own beliefs? Was he a simple tool, used by Josef Stalin to carry out arrests and discarded when he was no longer necessary? This review of Yezhov as a person will also add another element to the discussion about the nature of the Bolshevik and Stalinist systems. The structure of this article is as follows: first it will focus on Yezhov's career prior to his involvement in security affairs in Moscow (which only happened in 1934). Second, his career after 1934 and his eventual downfall and execution. As mentioned earlier, the focus will be on the memoirs and quotes from Yezhov himself and those of his colleagues.

Yezhov's early life and career: the modest man

According to his official Soviet biography, Yezhov was born in 1895

in St. Petersburg, the capital of the Russian empire. His revolutionary career started at the Putilov steel factory, the largest factory of St. Petersburg, employing almost thirty thousand people. He was only seventeen when he participated in his first strike in 1912. In 1932 the Socialist writer Fadeev wrote about this: 'Yezhov was a genuine son of this most-revolutionary-in-the-world proletariat (...) an active participant on the fighting barricades of St. Petersburg'. However, asked about his own experiences, Yezhov himself commented in 1921: 'I was no different than any other of the masses, except that I read a lot. I was never a strike breaker, I participated in strikes, demonstrations and so forth, I suffered from repressions like many others'. His colleagues and friends called Yezhov 'Nick the bookworm', a testimony of the fact that he was 'self-learned'.¹ The difference between the testimonies of Fadeev and Yezhov himself can be explained by the different periods in Soviet history. The revolutionaries of 1917, who continued to hold the most influential political positions until the early thirties, had a different view of how a member of the Bolshevik party should behave himself. Bolsheviks were expected to give everything for the party, to live modestly and not to indulge in egoism (such as: 'look at the great things I did during 1917!'). In the early 30's, when Stalin put the arts and literature under state control, and with socialist realism as the only officially allowed expression of the arts, this changed. Getty and Naumov suggest that the massacre of strikers by the Russian government at the Lena goldfields in 1912 also had a big influence on the young Yezhov. The strike, that was violently put down, increased the influence of the radical Bolsheviks (who replaced the moderate Mensheviks) who put 'the battle' in a black versus white perspective. '[T]he battle lines were drawn and it had become a matter of violence and killing' Yezhov would later comment.² According to Getty this is when the idea of 'we' versus 'them' was planted firmly into Yezhov's consciousness. Yezhov was drafted into the Russian army in 1915, but was wounded and sent back to St. Petersburg to recover. He was put into a reserve regiment and stationed in Vitebsk³ (modern Belarus). He stayed there until the end of the war and was thus still in Vitebsk when the Tsar abdicated. Until the abdication of Nicolas II, Yezhov worked full time for the socialists (who were at the time a

¹ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'* (New Haven 2008) 19.

² Ibidem, 19.

³ Ibidem, 21.



The end of the 'Yezhovshina'

From left to right: K. Vorozhilov, V. Molotov, J. Stalin and N. Yezhov at the Moscow-Volga-Channel, 22th of April 1937. After Yezhov's execution Stalin tried to erase him from pictures and books as though he had never existed.

firstlightforum.com

rather heterogeneous group consisting of the radical Bolsheviks, Internationalists and Mensheviks). A colleague of his wrote in 1936: *'he was everyone's favourite and one of those people who always stood at the head. No matter what happened, he was out front. Nowadays [1936] we call this efficiency... What a lively and smart guy'*. At the same time, another colleague, A. Drizhul (a fellow workman at Artillery Workshop No. 5 in Vitebsk) testified⁴: *'at meetings and rallies, Yezhov said little. He would say two or three words. He was a laborious orator, and this trait remained with him. He did not love speaking'*. The similarity with Josef Stalin is interesting: Stalin himself was a 'laborious' orator as well. Instead, they both seemed to be 'do'ers⁵ rather than 'thinkers' (like Lenin or Trotsky). In October 1917 Yezhov was elected the leading political commissar at the Vitebsk railstation. It is there that he met Lazar Kaganovich, one of Stalin's lieutenants. Who, according to Montefiore, would become Yezhov's patron. Neither Arch Getty nor Mark Jansen mention this fact. It remains a curious observation. Vitebsk was an important city in the Russian Empire because, as a railroad hub, the city controlled the southern approaches to the city.

Even before the October Revolution Yezhov had to face Russian soldiers who were summoned by Alexander Kerensky of the Provisional Government (the so-called Kornilov Affair). He managed to save the Bolsheviks by a combination of promises and fraternization.⁶ After the Revolution, things suddenly became much harder: Yezhov had to face an invading Polish army (the Tsar was king of Poland as well). He managed to deceive them by using a clever tactic.⁷ In 1919, when the Civil War was raging in Russia, Yezhov was conscripted into the Red Army to fight the Whites. He first fought in a Special Designation Battalion that was tasked with guarding important installations and hunting down spies. He eventually became a political commissar at the 2nd Radiotelegraph Base in Kazan. Getty and Naumov state that his experiences during the Civil War had a big influence not just on him⁸ but on a whole generation of Bolsheviks who would later rise to prominence in the thirties. For example, Stalin had been a political commissar during the Civil War as well; just like Kaganovich, Kirov and Ordzhonikidze.⁹ It remains unclear how much influence the Civil War really had on Yezhov. He never wrote about how he experienced

⁴ Jansen, M. & N. Petrov, *Stalin's Loyal Executioner: People's Commissar Nikolai Yezhov, 1895-1940* (Stanford 2002) 14.

⁵ Yezhov was a very diligent person, organizing Marxist cells and workers' committees in the factory and was often elected as secretary. He organized street kiosks in Vitebsk to distribute revolutionary literature and he was responsible for the communication with comrades who got arrested by the provisional government in the wake of the 'July Days'.

⁶ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'*, 22.

⁷ A female railroad worker, who was Polish, was sent to parley with the Polish general. In the mean time Yezhov managed to charter trains from all over Belarus and Western-Russia and ordered them to drive to Vitebsk from the direction of Petrograd. He made sure the Polish general saw the trains pass them on the way to Vitebsk (thus it appeared that Yezhov was receiving reinforcements). Eventually Yezhov told the Polish general that he should either disperse or face defeat. The Polish army retreated. Yezhov never received any reinforcements: the trains were empty.

⁸ Even though Yezhov was never on the front lines during the Civil War.

⁹ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'*, 30.

the Civil War. This might be because he was not on the front line. On the other hand, death was everywhere: large numbers of people were dying of starvation. If we look at experiences of other people during the Russian Civil War we notice a number of things. First of all, death and dying at the hands of the enemy produced deep grudges against 'the other side' (the Whites). Secondly, the war militarized the Bolsheviks and brought about a 'siege mentality' (images of real battle were used even when referring to education or agriculture). Lastly, internal conflicts were internationalized (and vice versa) in Bolshevik thinking, leading to the idea that the party was always at war - even when the international scene was peaceful. The struggle against domestic and foreign agents was never ending.¹⁰ During the Civil War, millions of people died, either directly as a result of violence or indirectly, of starvation. In this sense, terror did not seem evil or outrageous. After his stay in Kazan Yezhov was sent to the Mari Republic and appointed to the post of secretary of the Mari regional party organization. Yezhov was proud of his new job; in 1922 he wrote to a friend 'they put their hopes on me thinking I can uphold the class line'.¹¹ This friend, Yevgeny Sudnitsyn, would later write: 'I remember Yezhov as a friendly fellow whose subordinates called him by his first name, who shared his ration packet with hungry soldiers and who loaned money to his travelling companions, later, when times improved, he refused to accept repayment'. There seem to have been two reasons why Yezhov was sent to the Mari Republic. First of all, Mari was close to Kazan. Secondly, the party had massive problems with finding new and able people to run the country, especially in the regions outside Leningrad and Moscow. Before the revolution in 1917, the Bolsheviks numbered about 24.000, but their numbers had grown to 390.000 by March 1918 and by March 1921 there were 732.000. In addition, many 'old', pre-1917 Bolsheviks had died in the Civil War. Lenin feared the new recruits: he worried that many of these people were not 'real' Bolsheviks but that the party was now full of 'careerists' and 'people who merely joined the winners'. This seems to explain why Yezhov, with all his good deeds and the talent he had shown in 1917, was not offered a job in Moscow: his talents were needed elsewhere. As a whole, it seems that the Mari assignment was not such a prestigious assignment and one could even wonder why one would send Yezhov there: it had a population of just 367.000. However, Yezhov found that running the Mari Republic posed an incredible challenge. Just before 'Moscow' made the decision to send Yezhov to Mari, the Central Committee emissary, N. Kubiak reported to the party's Orgburo on his recent trip to the Mari Province. According to his reports, Mari was a mess.¹² First of all, there was the party orga-

nization. Support for the Bolsheviks always rested in the big cities of Russia with many factories. However, in Mari there were only 398 full members and 154 candidate members: a membership smaller than a single large factory elsewhere, and representing about ten percent of Mari's population. Most were peasants and there were only two major factories in the entire province; employing about 500 people of which only 3 percent belonged to a trade union. Second, there were huge economic and social problems in Mari. The Bolshevik secret police wrote in a report: 'hunger has assumed enormous proportions here: 97% of the population regularly suffers from hunger and there is a typhus epidemic going on'. And if this was not enough: the timber industry was hard hit by forest fires causing major unemployment. There were also severe ethnic conflicts between the Mari and the Russians (the former outnumbering the latter two to one). Despite all these problems, it is in the Mari republic that Yezhov became accustomed to the routine of party leadership. For example, he mastered the 'odnako'¹³ (the 'although') style of report writing. With similar difficulties in other areas in Russia, the writers of the regular

'internal conflicts were internationalized (and vice versa) in Bolshevik thinking, leading to the idea that the party was always at war even when the international scene was peaceful.'

reports to Moscow had to find a way to emphasize their success and cover up failure without explicitly lying to the Orgburo or Secretariat. So, when they could, they would report general success in one area followed by sentences like 'however, serious problems remain' or 'we also do not want to hide our shortcomings'. On the other hand, in the case of a failure they would use the exact same approach in reverse: 'The party committee has failed to' or 'has resisted our efforts' followed by recommendations and correction. Bolsheviks were thought to behave 'self-effacing, impersonal and emphasizing discipline, selflessness and party unity.' Success was often attributed to the 'help of the Central Committee' whilst failure was attributed to a shortage of personnel or the pressure of work. Yezhov was eventually transferred from the Mari republic to Kyrgyzstan and from there to Moscow.

Yezhov and the terror

Little is known about Yezhov's activities during his fifteen month study in Moscow, that started in March 1926. Eventually, the direc-

¹⁰ E. Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (London 1987) 51.

¹¹ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'*, 40.

¹² Ibidem 42

¹³ Ibidem, 45.

tor of Orgaspred (the director of the Central Committee's organizational-assignment department), Ivan Moskvín, appointed him as a personal assistant of one of the many department heads. He now found himself at the center of power in the Soviet Union. Moskvín liked Yezhov a lot, as the writer Lev Razgon would later comment¹⁴: 'Moskvín took a liking to this quiet and efficient secretary'. Indeed, Yezhov spent a lot of time at Moskvín's house. Razgon thought he understood why: 'he was not very talkative, slightly shy, he drank little and did not take much part in the conversation'. Moskvín considered Yezhov a competent and trustworthy worker and 'did not know of a more ideal administrator than Nikolai Yezhov'. Moskvín went to great lengths to keep Yezhov on his staff. At one point in 1928, the Tatar regional party committee requested Central Committee Secretary Kosior to send Yezhov, telling him: "[h]e is a strong guy... he will keep the Tatars in order'. But Moskvín managed to keep Yezhov in Moscow. Moskvín later told Razgon that Yezhov only had one shortcoming: '[He] does not know how to stop and sometimes you have to keep an eye on him in order that he stops at the right time'. Yezhov emerged as a 'can do man'; a man who preferred actions over words. Getty and Naumov call this the 'steamroller style'. According to them Stalin favored these kind of people because he was like that himself (see the comparison with Stalin made earlier). Party meetings were typically 'long displays of oratory replete with vague generalities and repetition of correct slogans'. People like Stalin, Molotov, Kaganovich and Kosior typically intervened impatiently and called on the speaker to make his point. Yezhov was like this as well. During a meeting considering 'bourgeois specialists' he commented that: 'the report is vague and without any concrete conclusions' he urged people to work harder as *'this is not like discovering America but rather a simple matter of the Central Committee giving practical help to trade unions in the future'*.¹⁵ By 1929, Yezhov had caught the attention of Stalin who was looking to establish an all-union Soviet ministry of Agriculture to enforce collectivization. Stalin made Yezhov deputy commissar at this new ministry, putting him in charge of the personnel department. Once he was transferred to Narkomzem¹⁶ Yezhov was tasked with reorganizing all the agricultural universities and training facilities in the Soviet Union. Yezhov was a staunch supporter of the new 'cultural revolution' under Stalin and had always opposed the NEP (New Economic Policy) which he called 'annoying', 'expensive' and 'robbery'. Once the new Ministry of Agriculture was established, Yezhov was removed from his post and was sent to work under Sergo Ordzhonikidze, the head of the Supreme Council of National Econo-

my (the predecessor of the planburo). He was not removed because his results were unsatisfactory but because of his experience in personnel policy: he was assigned to whatever institution needed him the most. Eventually, Yezhov was named chief of the new Raspredotdel¹⁷ responsible for the distribution of cadres to all state agencies. He was also made a member of the Orgburo, together with people like Kirov and Zhdanov. In 1934 an important event would catapult Yezhov to the function of most powerful man of the Soviet Union:



'Yezhov's Iron Fist'

A 'friendly' caricature by Boris Yefimov, 1937

www.day.kiev.ua

the murder of Sergei Kirov, the secretary of the Communist Party in Leningrad. Yezhov was appointed chief of the investigation and this would eventually enable him to become the chief of the NKVD, the predecessor of the KGB. Jansen and Petrov argue in their biography that Stalin had meant for Yezhov to become head of the NKVD early in 1934. They argue that Yezhov's involvement in security matters started in february 1934, when the NKVD was formed (Kirov was murdered in december 1934).¹⁸ They point to a plan by Stalin and Yezhov to kill Kirov, who was seen as a competitor of Stalin. This is partially true, but, as was made clear in the previous paragraph, Yezhov was sent to whatever institution needed him the most; be it Narkomzem, the Supreme Council of National Economy or the NKVD. At the same time, Yezhov seems to have done what Stalin wanted: pointing to a Zinoviev-Trotskyist opposition movement. Yezhov eventually ordered the arrest of about one thousand Leningrad oppositionists. He continued to complain about the NKVD to Stalin: 'Judging from what I saw in Leningrad, I must say that those people do not know how

¹⁴ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'*, 102.

¹⁵ Ibidem, 111.

¹⁶ Ibidem, 113.

¹⁷ Jansen, M. & N. Petrov, *Stalin's Loyal Executioner: People's Commissar Nikolai Yezhov, 1895-1940*, 90.

¹⁸ Ibidem, 110.

to conduct an investigation'.¹⁹ Just after the investigation and the murder of Kirov, in the beginning of 1935, Yezhov wrote a book (On the Zinovievist Counterrevolutionary Organization) with its main thesis being that 'opposition would lead to terror'. Remarkably, Stalin edited the book and changed the characterization of Zinoviev from 'counterrevolutionary' to the less harsh 'anti-Soviet and harmful to the party'. Still, Stalin would never allow Yezhov to publish it. Around the same time, Yezhov held a speech in front of the Politburo where he accused Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev of plotting to assassinate Stalin and Kirov. However, no one (neither Stalin nor any other high-ranking officials) agreed with him, and the names of the three people were barely mentioned by the Soviet media until 1937.²⁰ After Yezhov became the head of the NKVD the great terror started in earnest, with trials against the army, former oppositionists and the entire populace. His reign was marked by a Yezhov cult: stadiums and streets were named after him, songs were sung about him and there were posters of him everywhere crushing a snake with the words 'ezhov rukavitsy [Yezhov's hedgehog's gauntlets of steel]. Portraits of Yezhov were borne past the Mausoleum of Lenin on all the state holidays and posters of him holding the heads of Trotsky, Rykov and Bukharin were everywhere. Remarkably, many people did not expect that Yezhov presided over the Great Terror. Bukharin for example, considered the appointment of Yezhov the end of the Terror rather than the beginning: 'I respect his good heart and clean conscience'.²¹ Kaganovich however, praised Yezhov's 'superb interrogations'. The people called the disappearance of tens of thousands the 'Yezhov times' or *Yezhovshchina*.²² According to Robert Conquest it was Stalin's triumph that the Great Purge was so heavily associated with Yezhov.²³ Indeed, the writer Ilya Ehrenburg commented that, during a meeting with Boris Pasternak on a snowy night, Pasternak raised his hands and exclaimed 'If only someone would tell Stalin about it!'²⁴ Meyerhold too remarked: 'They conceal all this from Stalin'. There are more of these interesting stories. There was a story going around in the NKVD that on one night, during a drink (just a week after Zinoviev was executed), a few employees of the NKVD were reenacting the trial of Zinoviev. 'Zinoviev' was brought in and was reportedly screaming 'O, no, please tell Iosif Vasironovich of this injustice'. Stalin laughed about it. This attitude toward Yezhov and the Great Terror seems to play an important role in remembering this period of Soviet history. In-

deed, it seems that Stalin went to considerable length to place all the blame on Yezhov. First of all, immediately after Yezhov's death, he ordered the release of many of those who had been arrested by Yezhov. Robert Tucker states: '*Several thousand terror victims were then released from custody, very likely because Stalin wanted people to believe that the fallen Yezhov was the prime terrorizer. The maneuver had a certain success*'.²⁵ Secondly, Stalin rarely spoke during the terror: both in public and during Central Committee meetings. Between 1937 and 1939 he did not make one major public speech. He limited himself to discussing three publications and meetings with Soviet families (for propaganda reasons). Vyacheslav Molotov was tasked with delivering the annual November 6th address in both 1937 and 1938.²⁶ It is quite possible that in 1935, Stalin had attempted to probe the attitude of fellow Politburo members towards a cleansing campaign. For Stalin, Robert Tucker argues, it was a win-win situation: if people agreed with Yezhov, the terror could start, if they didn't Yezhov could be presented as the organizer of all this. Ironically, this even continued after Khrushchev had made his secret speech condem-

stadiums and streets were named after him, songs were sung about him and there were posters of him everywhere crushing a snake with the words 'ezhov rukavitsy [Yezhov's hedgehog's gauntlets of steel]

ning Stalin: instead of calling this period the Stalinshchina the term Yezhovshchina was confirmed as the proper naming of the Great Terror once again. It is not clear why Stalin ordered Yezhov's execution. There are several reasons to be found. First of all, Stalin had cleansed the Soviet Union of everybody who could pose a threat to him. Secondly, during a cleansing campaign of the Communist Party in Kiev, Yezhov had boasted that he had the Politburo under control and that he knew Stalin's role as a spy for the Ochrana, the Tsarist secret police. Thirdly, Stalin had apparently noticed that the terror under Yezhov went too far, especially in 1938. It is for these reasons that Yezhov received a new post: Commissar of Water Transportation and that Stalin got Yezhov a new deputy: Lavrenti Beria. Yezhov noticed his decline in power and started to drink heavily. In November 1939 he was relieved of his duties and executed in February 1940.

¹⁹ Getty, J. & O. Naumov, *Yezhov: The Rise of Stalin's 'Iron Fist'*, 135.

²⁰ Tucker, R., *Stalin in power: The Revolution from Above - 1928-1941*, 167.

²¹ Montefiore, S., *Stalin. The Court of the Red Tsar* (London 2003) 153.

²² Conquest, R., *The Great Terror* (Oxford 1999) 63.

²³ Ibidem, 63.

²⁴ Montefiore, S., *Stalin The Court of the Red Tsar*, 205.

²⁵ Tucker, R. *Stalin in power: The Revolution from Above - 1928-1941*, 590.

²⁶ Ibidem, 444.

Conclusion

So who was Yezhov, what was his role, how did he remember things and how is he remembered? On the basis of this article, we can make several observations. First of all, the man was a genuine believer of Communism and his perception of what was happening in the Soviet Union had a great influence on his character and way of thinking. His (and other) memoirs on his time in Petrograd, Vitebsk, the Mari Republic and Kyrgyzstan give us important information. By all accounts he was a very hard working man, almost zealous. He was a good organizer and very focused. His support for Stalin, and his experience in dealing with administrative problems (careerists) meant that he was the ideal man for the job as director of the NKVD. Secondly, as far as his role in the Great Terror is concerned, he was indeed the 'Soviet Eichmann' working together with Stalin to carry it out. Judging by his experiences, he genuinely believed that enemies were everywhere. At the same time, he was a useful instrument of Stalin as the memoirs of Pasternak and Ehrenburg prove. Stalin himself has had an important influence on the construction of the memory of the Great Terror. He ensured that many people placed the blame of all the disappearances on Yezhov. The fact that the time of the Great Terror is called *Yezhovshchina* (instead of *Stalinshchina*) is a clear sign of this. Also, after Yezhov's death, Stalin released many of Yezhov's victims; helping to modify the memory of future generations. The fact that Stalin drastically reduced his appearances during the Great Terror and the fact that he rarely spoke at committee meetings helped as well. Yezhov is rightly associated with the Great Terror. After all, he was the second most powerful man in the Soviet Union. At the same time, it is wrong to put all the blame on him, even though it seems that, judging by his own memoirs, he was a strong believer in what he was doing. This article has sought to compare the difference between the real Yezhov and the imagined Yezhov (reality versus reputation) on the basis of 'useful idiot' versus 'man with his own agenda'. Of course, the size of this article as well as the quantity and quality of information mean that it is difficult to provide a definitive answer. This is because both the real and imagined Yezhov are pieces of the same puzzle. The end conclusion therefore is that Yezhov was both a man with his own agenda and an instrument of Stalin.

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Global History in perspective

The potential of Global History in historiography

'There are other ways of obtaining freedom, and one of them is joining hands with our Indian brothers so that they and we be stronger to fight against English tyranny.'¹

This quote comes from an article in *Irish Freedom* at the beginning of the 20th century. The most striking of it is that Irish people who were opposed to British rule felt connected in their fate with people living in India, even though both colonies had a very different past and are geographically over 7,000 kilometers apart. When studying Irish or Indian freedom movements, one normally focuses on one of these two regions. Apparently a connection can be made, which is in the very least interesting and should be examined more closely. Why not study this theme of freedom movement in more than one region? Can this lead to new information or new perspectives to understand the individual phenomena? Global history is the branch of historical research that deals with this type of questions. But what is global history exactly? And what are the potentials and drawbacks of it? These questions need to be answered before we can determine the value of global history for historiography in general.

Meta history

Global history is a form of meta history. In other words history that places historical events, phenomena and processes in a broad context. There is always a tension with micro, macro and meta histories. Macro history often researches a certain process. Micro history consists mostly of research to individual sources, events or persons.² A macro history can be viewed as the accumulation of micro histories. Meta history compares or combines macro histories, as is visualized in figure 1. Global history has emerged from other meta histories. First, we need to determine the distinction between them. Global, world and transnational history will be analyzed; three branches in history that are handling themes which are exceeding the study of mere regions. Some academics, like Chris Bayly, see overlap mainly between global and world history.³ Bayly does have a point here, but if he is right why do we have global history at all? Starting with world history, the similarities and differences between these forms of meta

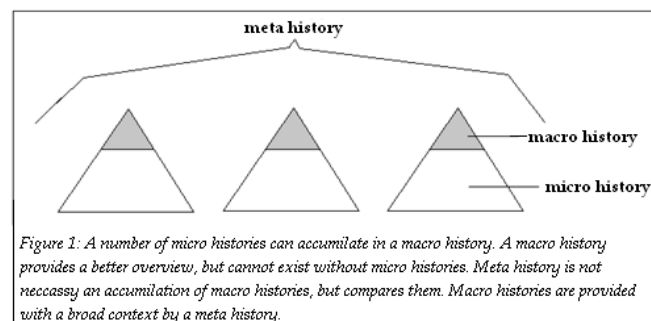


Figure 1.

history will be addressed.

World history

World history is a field of study that tries to create a narrative composed of histories of areas divided over the world. The division between these areas is made by vague boundaries of civilizations.⁴ World history, as a matter of fact, does not create a meta-narrative, for there are not necessarily connections between these civilizations that are strong enough to influence each other's course in a perceptible way. Of course, world history does not neglect interaction between different empires, civilizations or whatever unit a researcher is studying, but the focus is still on one subject at a time. World history is actually a branch of historical research with a very long tradition. Examples include the report of Ma Huan from the 15th century⁵ and the *Historia [de regibus] Gothorum, [Vandalorum et Suevorum]* of Isidore of Seville from the 7th century.⁶ They divide the world, as far as they know and study it, in different 'people' or civilizations which they analyze and describe. Although the scale, research method and amount of information differs from contemporary world history, the

¹ Reprinted in *The Indian Sociologist* 7,1 (1911) 4 in: H. Fischer-Tiné, 'Indian Nationalism and the "world forces": transnational and diasporic dimensions of the Indian freedom movement on the eve of the First World War' *Journal of Global History* 2 (2007) 325-44, see 340.

² C. Lorenz, *De constructie van het verleden: Een inleiding in de theorie van de geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2006) 120. Micro history was mostly introduced by postmodernists. Before, historical research was practically always macro history.

³ Anonymous (AHR Editor), 'AHR Conversation: On Transnational History, C.A. Bayly, S. Beckert, M. Connelly, I. Hofmeyr, W. Kozal and P. Seed' *The American Historical Review* 3,5 (2006) 1441-64, see 1442. Chris Bayly does see a distinction: global history focuses more on processes, but he emphasizes the similarities, as well as the similarities between international and transnational history.

⁴ B. Mazlish, 'Global History and World History' in: B. Mazlish and A. Iriye eds., *The Global History Reader* (New York & London 2005) 16-20, see 20.

⁵ Ma Huan, *The Overall Survey of The Ocean's Shores* (publishing place unknown 1416), in: J.V.G. Mills ed., Ying-yan Sheng-lan: *The Overall Survey of the Ocean's Shores [1433]* (London 1970) 67-178.

⁶ Isidore of Seville, *Historia [de regibus] Gothorum, [Vandalorum et Suevorum]* in: G. Donini and G.B. Ford transl., *Isidore of Seville's History of the Kings of the Goths, Vandals, and Suevi* (Leiden 1966).

aims seem to be the same. These days, in an age in which the world is globalizing and thus becoming more interactive, it became and still becomes more important to understand the backgrounds of this interaction. Because of the process we have named globalization, a need came into being for a history of globalization.⁷ As early as 1955 it was viewed this way,⁸ but only in the 1990s did global history start to separate from traditional world history. It took another decade for journals to arise. By that time, the term 'global history' had already gained popularity,⁹ but most people did not know exactly what it meant. As a consequence a lot of misconceptions are still circulating, even in academic circles. But despite that, there is still a very clear distinction between global history and world history. The first focuses on processes, while the other just studies civilizations scattered over the world. Also, world history implies that all civilizations on this planet are being surveyed. Not at one time, but the aim is to contain them all, which means all 'world historians' contribute to the whole picture of their branch. Of course they also criticize each other, but moreover, they make complementary studies. Global historians do not seek to make such a complete picture. If it suits their other aims, naturally they will try to achieve it, but it is not the main target. Global historians seek to understand processes between regions, scattered around the world. Therefore they seek parallels and differences, but they do not need to include all regions on this planet.¹⁰ The extent of included regions depends on the theme chosen by the global historian.

Transnational history

Now that we know the main differences between world and global history, what about transnational history? It seems to have many of the characteristics of global history, especially if we look at the aim not to include the whole world, but only the relevant regions for the research theme.¹¹ This kind of study is also a reaction to the growing interconnectedness of the world, in particular a reaction against the use of 'nations' as the framework for research. The main difference with global history is that transnational history still needs the nation state for its programs.¹² This is not very surprising, considering the name of this branch of history, but think over the consequences.

Transnational history is bound by nation states as units of comparison. Whatever process is examined, even migration or product flows, it is studied within the framework of that particular nation state, where global history can construct a different framework, adapted to the chosen research theme.¹³ Let's consider a small example concerning the study of contemporary U.S.A. trade networks. A transnational historian will study the contact between the United States and other countries, or between citizens of these countries (most likely entrepreneurs and producers). A global historian can do the same, but has also the option to consider a framework based on geographical circumstances of the environment of entrepreneurs. Those bases can be very different, even if entrepreneurs are living in the same states. Naturally a transnational historian will additionally look at this kind of perspectives, but it will never be his/ her basis, which

Transnational history is bound by the nation states as units of comparison. Whatever process is examined, even migration or product flows, it is studied within the framework of that particular nation state.

will influence the research. A global historian thus has less restrictions on his framework of comparison. This thinking outside the box concerning frameworks, is also known as the 'spatial turn' in the entire field of Humanities.¹⁴ Before the time of nation states, and before nationalism, the transnational historian has an even bigger problem, for his framework does not exist. The only alternative is to construct a 'proto-nation' that is more or less the same group that later became a known nation. This kind of tactics are very slippery, but if done and defined well, there are groups categorized which can be used for comparisons. But those will never be the same as a nation. Paradoxically, by using such constructed frameworks, the transnational historian accidentally has entered the field of global history.

Global history

Global history overlaps transnational history and world history. But it is certainly not the same. So what exactly defines global history? Firstly, global history, like transnational history, focuses on analyzing

⁷ Mazlish, 'Global History and World History' 16

⁸ W. Schäfer, 'From the End of European History to the Globality of World Regions: A Research Perspective' *Globality Studies Journal: Global History, Society, Civilization* 1 (2006) 1-9, see 2

⁹ Anonymous, 'AHR Conversation' 1454. Apart from 'global history', also words as 'globalization' itself become vaguer because of their high popularity a sometimes misuse.

¹⁰ J.L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York & Oxford 1989). This work can be viewed as one of the earliest 'global history' books and is about a 'World System', but it does not include northern Europe, northern Asia, Africa, both the Americas. There still is a striking connectedness between regions, many thousands of kilometers apart from each other.

¹¹ Anonymous, 'AHR Conversation' 1448

¹² M. Middell and K. Naumann, 'Global history and the spatial turn: from the impact of area studies to the study of critical juncture of globalization', *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 149-70, see 160

¹³ Mazlish, 'Global History and World History' 20

¹⁴ Middell and Naumann, 'Global history and the spatial turn' 155

processes.¹⁵ It is not just a geographical unit, a person or an event that is chosen to study, but an occurrence that develops. Themes can be very diverse, for example research about commodities¹⁶ and the study of Osamu Saito about forests.¹⁷ Secondly, there is no restriction on the choice of research units.¹⁸ This choice is based on the choice of process that is studied. Research units that are connected, are being treated. Naturally, it is not always possible to investigate all research units. In that case units as representative as possible must be chosen. Often the words 'research unit' can be translated to 'region', because

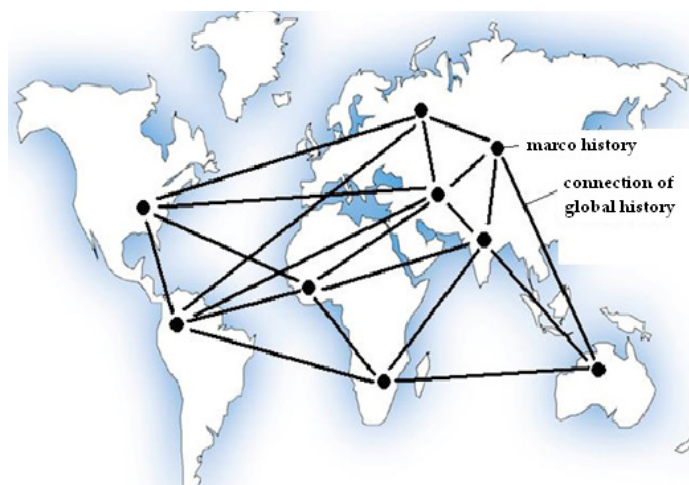


Figure 2: The dots represent macro histories. Macro histories are often bound to a certain geographical area. If they have the same theme, they can be compared. It is even possible that there is a direct connection between them. The total of the linked macro histories is a global history.

Figure 2.

in practice very large processes are researched which are occurring in several places around the world. global history chooses its units of research entirely in the interest of the research subject.¹⁹ Thirdly, models are often used in global history. These can be displayed with words, as a formula or as a graphic figure.²⁰ A model provides the base to make a solid comparison between the research units. Models are a necessity to keep the targets of a research in mind, due to the complexity of analyzed processes and the need to treat economic, social, politic and cultural elements.²¹ From the second and the third aspect,

a fourth one derives. Global history does not claim to encompass the whole world. Conclusions are only about the treated research units. Although models and frameworks are often created, they do not claim to apply to other research units or comparable processes. Therefore global history is not the same as positivist history, which does claim a universal appliance.²² Fifthly, global history is not deterministic.²³ It investigates connections and makes comparisons only within the research subject. Despite that global history derives from globalization, it stopped writing history in service of it. This is also a difference with transnational history. There is no extrapolating from the knowledge from research. In a way, global history takes a step back from the discussion to get an overview of investigated developments.²⁴ Sixthly, global history is not Eurocentric, but treats all research units equally. Hereby, also nonwestern concepts and knowledge are being addressed.²⁵ The use of this knowledge and concepts are growing in popularity in the academic world, although the call for this has existed for much longer.²⁶ This research outside the established order, mostly Western frameworks to be more precise, is also known as 'spatial turn'.²⁷ Seventhly, following the previous point, terminology used in a study of global history has to be well explained. Terminology is often cultural related and traditional historical vocabulary is based on Western historiography. By treating all research units equally, it is necessary to use local terminology. In order to compare units with each other, everything related to them, including local terms and names, have to be considered. Afterwards they can be provided with a common term. It is likely that in some cases a global historian has to formulate such a term himself. It is often viewed that there is a tension between the local and the common or global.²⁸ When practicing global history, it is essential to find a balance concerning the terminology of the local and the common. The choice for certain terms must be explained and clarified. Ambiguity may lead to a diversity of interpretations, which will damage the quality of the comparison, and therefore the research results. Finally, there are two directions a study of global history can take. A global historian can limit himself to a comparison between the chosen research units, but

¹⁵ B. Mazlish, 'An Introduction to Global History' in: B. Mazlish and R. Buultjens, *Conceptualizing Global History* (Oxford 1993) 1-24, see 5

¹⁶ S. Hazareesingh and J. Curry-Machado, 'Editorial – Commodities, empires, and global history' *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009) 1-5, see 2

¹⁷ O. Saito, 'Forest history and the Great Divergence: China, Japan, and the West compared' *Journal of Global History* 4 (2009) 379-404, see 379

¹⁸ Mazlish, 'An Introduction to Global History' 4. ¹⁹ Anonymous, 'AHR Conversation', 1448.

²⁰ P. O'Brien, 'Review Article: A conjuncture in global history or an Anglo-American construct: the British Industrial Revolution 1700-1850' *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 503-9, see 504-5. O'Brien discusses two works with models in it. Mokyr mainly uses formulas en descriptions. Allen prefers a graphical model. None of them is a global historian. But O'Brien, who is, comes with new conclusions and sees the Industrial Revolution in a more global context with the appliance of the models of Mokyr and Allen.

²¹ B. Mazlish, *The New Global History* (New York & London 2006) 22.

²² M. Leezenberg and G. de Vries, *Wetenschapsfilosofie voor geesteswetenschappen* (Amsterdam 2007) 120.

²³ Mazlish, *The New Global History* 17.

²⁴ M. Kossok, 'From Universal History to Global History' in: B. Mazlish and R. Buultjens, *Conceptualizing Global History* (Oxford 1993) 93-111, see 105

²⁵ Middell & Naumann, 'Global history and the spatial turn' 155-6.

²⁶ P. O'Brien, 'Historiographical traditions and modern imperatives for the restoration of global history' *Journal of Global History* 1 (2006) 3-39, see 35

²⁷ Middell & Naumann, 'Global history and the spatial turn' 155.

²⁸ Mazlish, *The New Global History*, 66.

ses mainly on Europe, especially on comparing Germany and France. The comparisons are mostly on nation level and therefore require the existence of nation states.

he can also trace connections between the units.²⁹ Michael Kempes' article about globalized piracy illustrates these possibilities. He sees a possible connection between piracy in Europe and Asia.³⁰ By naming the common aspects, he actually made the comparison. This results in extra information for a specialist dealing with, for instance, piracy in an area in Europe. Now this specialist can quite easily compare his findings and theories with colleagues who study Asian piracy, and vice versa. Kempe does not know whether or not Asian and European pirates have exchanged knowledge, methods or materials. Therefore he cannot identify a connection between them, but the comparison is made. Victor Lieberman has done research on internal economical, social, political and cultural integration of empires between 800 and 1800. He discovered a pattern of integration and disintegration with an upward tendency. He also managed to connect several areas by identifying 'agents'. Lieberman has found eight causes that could have contributed to the synchronization of the process he researched.³¹ Hereby specialists are supplied with elements that could influence their own areas of interest. Global history can be practiced in order to compare or to connect. In both cases macro histories are being provided with a broad context from which new insights, new perspectives or new information can come about. In figure 2 we see a visualization of this. With these characteristics of global history we can synthesize a definition. In practice, the bounda-

In theory we can describe global history as a form of meta history where a process is analyzed with selected units of research which are being compared or connected with each other with the use of a model or framework.

ries between different kinds of meta history are not always clear and there is space for overlap. In theory we can describe global history as a form of meta history where a process is analyzed with selected units of research which are being compared or connected with each other with the use of a model or framework. In this way global history is somewhat similar to *histoire croisée*, a branch that also makes comparisons between macro histories.³² On the other hand global history is clearly nondeterministic and not Eurocentric. Moreover, it is never

the target to squeeze the whole world in a given model and global historians always try to maintain local knowledge and terminology.

Dangers to global history

After defining global history more questions arise. What exactly is the use of global history? And what are the drawbacks? And lastly, what position in historiography could be taken by global history? Before examining the advantages of global history, some remarks will be made. Firstly, global history is not the only form of meta history. Other forms could fulfill a similar role, but have a different starting point. That does not mean they are per definition wrong. Secondly, types of meta history tend to be confused with each other, which makes the discussion about global history unclear. Global history is sometimes viewed as opposed to micro and macro history, due to this vagueness. In fact it is complementary to micro and macro histories. But to be so, it requires a certain open-mindedness of global historians as well as specialists. A third danger is the threat of global history becoming a Western type of historiography. The figures show that most academically trained historians are born in Western countries. Most other historians had their education by Western standards and they have to put these standards into practice to be able to publish internationally.³³ Again, global historians need to be open to nonwestern concepts and knowledge. Even if information does not originate from the usual academic circles, it can be valuable for a research. Moreover, local terminology of every research unit should be maintained. Global historians must be careful not to head in the same direction as orientalism.³⁴ Fourthly, there is a danger to emphasize too much on connections or too much on details. A global historian has to be able to see the generality as well as the uniqueness of research units and clearly make this separation. If too much attention goes to details a study loses its coherency. In the opposite case, when a model dominates, the research units lose their uniqueness. This degrades the value of a study. Although global history has got the potential to create a balance between the general and the unique, in practice it might still go wrong. Fifthly, when global history focuses too much on modern globalization, it could become deterministic. This threat is the highest for new global history, which in fact is a conversion to transnational history. Bruce Mazlish advocates this

²⁹ O'Brien, 'Historiographical traditions' 4-5.

³⁰ M. Kempe, "'Even in the remotest corners of the world": globalized piracy and international law, 1500-1900' *Journal of Global History* 5 (2010) 353-72, see 357 and 360

³¹ V. Lieberman, *Strange Parallels: Southeast Asia in Global Context, 800-1800: vol. 2 Mainland Mirrors: Europe, Japan, China, South Asia and the Islands* (Cambridge etc. 2009) 77-92.

³² M. Werner and B. Zimmerman, 'Beyond Comparison: Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity' *History and Theory* 45,1 (2006) 30-50, see 31. *Histoire Croisée* focus

³³ A. Paasi, 'Globalization, academic capitalism, and the uneven geographies of international journal publishing spaces' *Environment and Planning A* 37 (2005) 769-89, see 770-1. Orientalism studies non-Western history with Western concepts. This danger is visible in the need of non-Western historians to publish in Western journals in order to communicate internationally. These journals require a academic education by Western standards. This forces historians to write in, for example, English. Which is at the expense of their own vocabulary and terminology.

³⁴ G. Prakash, 'Orientalism Now' *History and Theory* 34,3 (1995) 199-212, see 201 lose its unique characteristics in this new form.

form, despite the danger of determinism.³⁵ Finally, a global historian might be looking for nonexistent connections. It is possible that there are no connections between chosen research units or only between some of them. This danger must also be evaded. When there are no connections found, there is still the option of comparing the research units. Even without the appearance of 'agents' a study in the style of global history has a value.

Advantages of global history

Despite those dangers to the quality of global history, this form of meta history still has a value for historiography in general. This is because most dangers can be evaded by open-mindedness and a continued critical attitude towards sources and own work. Firstly, global history is a meta history and provides micro and macro histories with a broad context. In case a global history study is limited to comparisons, specialists still get the tools to compare their research with other studies. Conclusions can be compared and the uniqueness of certain causes and elements of individual researches can be adapted thanks to the larger context. This increases the reliability of those researches. Apart from that, after the comparison, specialists might see new possible elements or causes for their research subject. Possibly some influential elements are not enough explored due to a lack of sources. Information from other research could point out these gaps to a specialist. Secondly, global history breaks with the ties of traditional research units, like a nation state. Therefore, events and phenomena can be viewed from another angle, which can result in new knowledge or insights. Also, global history is very careful with terminology. Terms often have a certain background and cannot be applied to phenomena from other regions without a thorough analysis. Global history searches for umbrella terms to do justice to all researched regions. Also, local terminology is maintained so local phenomena are well understood before being compared to each other. Thirdly, global history rejects Eurocentrism. All research units are treated equally. Until now academic historiography has not entirely succeeded in this. This is because most historians are Western or because they have had an education by Western standards. Nonwestern history has to comply to these standards before being published. As a consequence, much knowledge and especially the nuances of non-western history is lost. global history offers the opportunity to practice and compare all histories on equal footing. This not only terminates a Eurocentric attitude, but also the constructed contradictions

between Western and nonwestern, the Orient and the Occident and between economically developed countries and third world countries. Nonwestern histories can get more attention without losing their authentic features, while a high standard of objectivity is being maintained. This potential should be more utilized. Global history is still subject to much skepticism and is mainly practiced by Western historians. Nevertheless this meta history is open for other regions to participate. In historiography global history can acquire a forum function. Because meta history is extensive as well as complex, a perfect research is almost infeasible. Specialists could acquire the role of indicating inaccuracies to global historians. A study of global history should always be dynamic and adapted. Nowadays the use of Internet is so widespread that a global history can be placed online and truly be constantly adapted without much effort. Specialists, in their turn, can profit from the opportunities offered by the comparisons and connections presented by the models. When obtaining the role of a forum global history can fulfill a central position in modern historiography and can catalyze debate and interaction of historians. Researches will become of higher quality, because of the amount of comparable studies and the number of historians who can criticize a certain work. This is a consequence of a better understanding of processes in a broad context and a reduction in the loss of information.

Conclusion

After analyzing several types of meta history, and especially global history, a much clearer idea of global history has arisen. Based on this analysis the advantages and disadvantages of global history are discussed. Global history offers a context for micro and macro histories, separates from traditional concepts, is nondeterministic and has the potential to break with Eurocentrism. Therefore nonwestern histories obtain more space and chances to present themselves internationally by their own standards. Global history has the potential to acquire a role of a forum in historiography and in so doing stimulate more interaction and discussion between historians from all over the world. The quality of researches can rise and the number of them increase by abandoning Eurocentrism. This is an enrichment for historiography in general.

³⁵ Mazlish, *The New Global History* 106. Mazlish responds to the need of a certain public to understand globalization. Unfortunately the label 'new global history' creates an intermediate of global history and transnational history. This causes more ambiguities about the distinction of the two. The character of global history is running the risk to lose its unique characteristics in this new form.

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L.P.M. (Luuk) Krijnen

Luuk Krijnen studeerde geschiedenis aan de Universiteit Leiden en is gespecialiseerd in de Mongoolse expansie tijdens de dertiende eeuw en 'Global History'. Na twee jaar als leraar op een middelbare school te hebben gewerkt is hij nu werkzaam als IT-professional.

Kevin de Kuyper

Nadat hij met succes zijn master *Russian Studies* aan de universiteit Leiden afrondde, heeft Kevin de Kuyper recentelijk zijn historiografische blik verruimd met een tweede master, *History of European Expansion and Globalisation*. Op het moment is hij bezig met de afronding van het onderzoek voor zijn masterscriptie, waarin de rol die de politie en Mobiele Eenheid speelden tijdens de treinkapingen in 1977 bij De Punt en Bovensmilde centraal staat.

Rodrigo Cortés Rios

Geboren in 1973 in San Fernando, Chili, heeft Rodrigo Cortés Rios de laatste acht jaar in Nederland doorgebracht, waar hij zich volledig richtte op het historisch onderzoek. Na het bestuderen van de Nederlandse taal, *European Studies*, de Spaanse geschiedenis en het afronden van de master *History of International Relations*, houdt hij zich vooral bezig met de politieke en culturele dimensies van Europese – Latijns-Amerikaanse verhoudingen gedurende de Koude Oorlog.

Martin Steegmans

Martin Steegmans rondde in 2011 zijn master *History of Society* af aan de Erasmus universiteit Rotterdam, met als specialisatie *Global History and International Relations*. In zijn scriptie, getiteld 'Vergeten glorie' onderzocht hij hoe de herinnering aan de slag bij Waterloo zich van 1815 tot 1965 manifesteerde in het collectieve geheugen van de Nederlandse samenleving. Op het moment is hij werkzaam als docent geschiedenis aan de middelbare school in Zierikzee en bezig met het behalen van zijn eerstegraadsbevoegdheid aan de universiteit Leiden.

Nils van der Vegte

Nils van der Vegte rondde in juni 2011 zijn master *Russian Studies* af aan de universiteit Leiden, met als specialisme de Russische politieke geschiedenis. Hij spreekt vloeiend Russisch en woonde onder andere enige tijd in Pskov, Moskou en St.Petersburg. Momenteel onderhoudt hij het weblog www.russiawatchers.ru waarop de ontwikkelingen in het huidige Rusland geanalyseerd worden. Ook is hij bezig met het schrijven van een boek over Poetin.