



## Two hundred years Dutch-Asia relations: Dutch East India Company 1602-1800 Lezing met dia's door: Femme Gaastra

**Datum en tijd:** Maandag 16 maart 2009 om 20.15 uur

**Locatie:** Stedelijk Museum Het Prinsenhof, Van der Mandele-zaal, Oude Delft 183, Delft.

**Taal:** Engels

**Door:** Studium Generale TU Delft & Etnografische Vereniging Delft

**Entree:** De zaal is open vanaf 19.45 uur. Voor leden gratis koffie en thee vanaf 20:00 uur. De toegang tot deze bijeenkomst is **gratis**.

The Dutch East India Company (Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie or VOC) was founded in 1602 and became the world's largest enterprise of the 17th century. Within three decades it had replaced the Portuguese as the dominant commercial power in the trade between Europe and the East. Several factors accounted for the commercial success of the VOC. A major innovation was the fact that its share capital became permanent, thus enabling the directors to formulate a long-term strategy and to invest money in factories and ships and trade in Asia. The directors and their representatives in Asia realized that the intra-Asian trade could be very profitable for the Company.



The Company was determined and ruthless in its policy, using commercial tactics, diplomatic interventions and military force to reach its goal. The Company employed an impressive workforce in Asia, rising to over 35.000 men in the 18th century. During its existence, the VOC sent some 950.000 men – mostly sailors and soldiers – to Asia, of whom only one third returned to Europe.

This lecture will address the complex organization of the VOC, the way in which the directors were able to cope with the problems of the intercontinental trade in the early-modern time and the cultural impact of this meeting between West and East.

*Femme Gaastra is Professor of Maritime History at the University of Leiden and a leading expert on the history of the Dutch East India Company.*



Voormalig VOC-hoofdkwartier in Batavia