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The Early Dutch Sinologists : a study of their training in Holland and China, and their functions in the Netherlands Indies (1854-1900)

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EPILOGUE

Around 1905, ten years after Schlegel had finished teaching his fourth and last group of students, the number of active Officials for Chinese Affairs in the Indies had again diminished to four. Therefore, after selection by a competitive examination in 1906, De Groot began training a new group of four students in 1907. These were J.A.M. Bruineman (1885–1945), H. Mouw (1886–1970), J. Snellen van Vollenhoven (1885–1975), and C.G. Riem (1889–ca. 1968). He taught them Chinese for six hours per week, just as Schlegel had done, but he also taught a one-hour-a-week course in Chinese history, Chinese customs and law in the Indies to the 'indologists,' future Indies officials, which the sinologists must also have attended. De Groot enjoyed teaching Chinese, and in 1909 he proposed a plan to train sixteen candidate-Officials for Chinese Affairs during the next years. This ambitious plan was rejected by the Indies government, since not so many sinologists were needed; he was only allowed to train one or two others. In 1911, just before leaving for Berlin, he had personally selected two candidates, A.D.A. de Kat Angelino (1891–1969) and J.Th. Moll (1891–1985), both university students, who would follow him to Berlin and finish their studies there after three years, on a stipend of *f* 70 per month. He taught them written Chinese and spoken Hokkien, not Mandarin; he was opposed to his students learning Mandarin in China, since according to him that language was of no use for their service in the Indies. But one of his students, De Kat Angelino, would during his second year in China become the first candidate-Official to study Mandarin.

After De Groot left Leiden, it took more than five years before a decision was made about a successor. Two Indies sinologists, De Bruin and Borel, both applied for the position but were rejected. Instead, an interpreter at the Dutch Legation in Peking, J.J.L. Duyvendak, was asked to become Lecturer in Chinese in Leiden in 1917. He returned to Holland in early 1919 and gave his inaugural lecture on 19 March of that year.[1]

Around the same time, the first detailed study programme was stipulated for the training course in Leiden. This new programme and Duyvendak's appointment marked the change from Hokkien to Mandarin as the main language taught in Leiden. As before, candidate-Officials were to study in Europe and in China, but now only for two years in Holland and three years in China. No competitive examination was required (but it would later nevertheless be held); passing the final examination of HBS or *gymnasium* was sufficient for acceptance. If they left government service within five years after finishing their studies, they still had to refund all allowances,

but now with 10% interest: the guilder was not as hard as before. The study programme comprised:

a. Mandarin and Amoy Chinese;
b. Geography, Ethnography, Customs and Traditions, and History of China;
c. The Main Principles of Netherlands-Indies polity (*Indische staatsinrichting*);
d. The Former and Present Legal Position of the Chinese in the Netherlands Indies;
e. The Malay Language.

The stipend was now *f* 1,000 per year (or *f* 83.33 per month), and other allowances were largely unchanged, such as an advance pay of *f* 400 for books.[2] Just as for Malay and Javanese the previous year, in 1919 for the first time a native language teacher was engaged, teaching Hokkien for one or two hours per week, since Duyvendak could not speak that dialect.[3]

Apart from training the candidate-Officials in the skills necessary for their work in the Indies, Duyvendak also strove to teach them scholarly skills,[4] and with success. Some well-known candidate-Officials for Chinese Affairs were A.F.P. Hulsewé[5] and M.H. van der Valk (both in 1928–31), and R.H. van Gulik (1930–2). The latter was obliged to quit as candidate-Official after two years because of cuts in the Indies budget; later he became an interpreter at the Dutch Legation in Japan and pursued a career in diplomacy.

On 15 May 1930, Duyvendak was appointed Professor of Chinese in Leiden after declining an offer from Columbia University. He had accepted on condition of obtaining better financial and other facilities. For this purpose, on 14 January 1930 the Foundation for the Promotion of Chinese Studies in Leiden (*Stichting ter bevordering van de studie in het Chineesch aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden*) was established. Similar foundations existed for other languages, such as Arabic. On 20 December 1930 its material representation, the Sinological Institute (*Sinologisch Instituut*), was opened at Rapenburg 71, where the Foundation had its seat as well.[6] The Institute comprised a lecture hall and a reading room, where both Chinese and Western books on China from the University Library were conveniently placed.[7] From 1933 on the Foundation received financial support derived from the Dutch Boxer Indemnity.[8] In 1935 the Sinological Institute moved to the previous University Hospital building on the Eerste Binnenvestgracht 33, sharing the building with the Ethnographic Museum.[9]

From 1920 on, the Ministry of Colonies wished to have special sinologists trained for the newly established Tax Service in the Indies. Since no

Dutch sinologists were available except De Bruin, mostly Germans knowing only Mandarin were appointed. They had lost their jobs in Tsingtao after that leased territory was taken over by Japan in 1914. In 1931, finally a training course was created in Leiden for 'tax-sinologists' (*belastingsinologen*), officially known as "candidate-sinologists at the Tax Accountants Office in the Netherlands Indies." They received the same stipends as the candidate-Officials for Chinese Affairs, and they were to spend four years studying Chinese (the written language and some Mandarin), Malay, Indies civil and commercial law, management and economics in Leiden and elsewhere. They would not study in China. Afterwards they would have to work for the Tax Accountants Office (*Belastingaccountantsdienst*), checking the Chinese clerks/interpreters' work and taxing Chinese enterprises. Several groups of students were trained in this fashion.[10]

In the Indies also, some radical changes took place. In 1913 the Officials for Chinese Affairs came under the Director of Internal Administration (*Binnenlandsch Bestuur*), rather than Justice.[11] Having often been neglected by the civil administration and appreciated only by the judiciary, this measure was opposed by all sinologists, but to no avail. In 1916 the four active Officials for Chinese Affairs were concentrated in a Chinese Affairs Agency (*Dienst der Chineesche Zaken*), and stationed in the Bureau for Chinese Affairs (*Kantoor voor Chineesche Zaken*) in Batavia. This Bureau was headed by one Advisor for Chinese Affairs (with a salary of *f* 1,000 to *f* 1,100) and staffed by usually three to five Officials for Chinese Affairs (*f* 300 to *f* 900) and other assisting personnel.[12] Their work included all matters concerning the Chinese in the Indies in the widest sense. The Advisor was to give advice to the Director of Internal Administration and other Directors, and to the judicial and administrative authorities. It was now also explicitly stipulated that he should report all facts and information which could be of interest to the Director of Internal Administration—thereby diminishing the possibility of gaining the confidence of the Chinese and obtaining confidential information. The Bureau was to gather all information necessary for its work, and follow the press. If needed, the Officials were to make translations for the judicial and administrative authorities, and they could do the same for private parties, but the fees received were from now on destined for the government. In this way, the Bureau for Chinese Affairs became a bureaucratic intelligence agency for Chinese affairs. The relative freedom the earlier interpreters and Officials for Chinese Affairs had enjoyed was now gone, and it seems no more 'colourful' sinologists, such as Meeter or Borel, appeared on the scene.

Later, in 1925, the regulations were slightly changed, and combined with those of the Bureau for Japanese Affairs, established under Van de Stadt in 1922.[13] On 1 January 1933, the Bureau for Japanese Affairs was abolished for financial reasons; it was merged with the Bureau for Chinese

Affairs into the Agency for Chinese Affairs and East Asian Matters (*Dienst der Chineesche Zaken en Oost-Aziatische Aangelegenheden*).[14] Two years later, after protests from the Japanese government that in the name of this agency only China was mentioned and not Japan, the name was simplified to Agency for East Asian Affairs (*Dienst der Oost-Aziatische Zaken*), with a Chinese and a Japanese section.[15] At the same time, its focus shifted to East Asia in general rather than the Indies.

The first new-style Advisor for Chinese Affairs was Ezerman (1917–9), the second was H. Mouw (1919–35, also acting in 1916–7), and the third and last was A.H.J. Lovink (1935–42). The latter had not been trained in Leiden and Amoy, but had studied some Mandarin in Mukden (Shenyang).

During the late thirties much attention was given to intelligence, and the Bureau became a kind of counter-espionage agency against Japanese encroachment.[16] When the Japanese invaded the Indies in the beginning of 1942, the archives were purposely destroyed. After the surrender on 8 March 1942, at which Hulsewé acted as interpreter, the Officials for Chinese Affairs were, like other Europeans, detained in concentration camps by the Japanese. Thus effectively ended the position of Official for Chinese Affairs.

However, in 1947 some of the former Officials for Chinese Affairs reappeared as teachers at the newly created Sinological Institute in Batavia.

Although on 17 August 1945, two days after the Japanese surrender, Soekarno and others had proclaimed Indonesian independence, this was not recognised by the Dutch. After more than four years of 'police actions' and negotiations, the Dutch government accepted Indonesian independence and handed over sovereignty on 27 December 1949.

In the meantime, the Dutch in 1947 created the University of Indonesia, which included a Sinological Institute (*Sinologisch Instituut, Batavia*) as Leiden's little brother. It was staffed with former Officials for Chinese Affairs Van der Valk (director) and M.J. Meijer. The latter also taught Modern Chinese (Mandarin); he was first *conservator* at the Sinological Institute of Batavia (1947–53), and later lecturer at the University of Indonesia (1953–4).[17] In 1950, the last Dutch sinologist was sent to what had now become Indonesia: R.P. Kramers, right after defending his doctoral dissertation in Leiden. He was charged by the Netherlands Bible Society to contact Chinese Christians, but he also taught classical Chinese at the Sinological Institute. However, Van der Valk, whose health had suffered under Japanese detention, left in 1951 and became extraordinary professor of Chinese law in Leiden.[18] In 1953, in view of the tense situation in Jakarta, Kramers also left and was transferred to Hong Kong.[19] Finally Meijer left in 1954, joining the Foreign Service in 1955.[20] His departure marked the end of a full century of Dutch sinological involvement in the Indies archipelago.