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Layered loyalties: the Natuurkundige Commissie in the Netherlands Indies (1820-1850)

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Acknowledgements

This book was born from the chance reading of an English translation of *Histoire de l'ornithologie* by Valérie Chansigaud, a beautifully illustrated account of man's fascination with birds.¹ In her chapter on the nineteenth century, she mentioned something called the Natuurkundige Commissie. When I went looking for a book on the Commissie and could not find a recent and comprehensive one, I decided to have a go at it and write the book that I wanted to read. The rest is history.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my supervisors, Frans van Lunteren and Andreas Weber. Both, independent of each other, responded positively to my request for a meeting to discuss the possibility of a PhD on the Natuurkundige Commissie. We first met on August 24, 2017, in Frans' office in Leiden. During the next five years, Frans and Andreas helped me to navigate the pitfalls of writing a PhD. I'm grateful for Frans' early advice that writing is thinking. As a result, I wrote 50,000 words of comments and reflections on my reading that allowed us to identify emerging themes that could work as a topic for this PhD. I'm grateful to Andreas for his guidance in approaching the archival material. This has prevented me from drowning in a large and unwieldy collection of fascinating documents and helped me to ground myself in Forsten's narrative and then approach the rest of the archive with a much more specific goal in mind.

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¹ Valérie Chansigaud, *The History of Ornithology* (London: New Holland, 2009). For the North-American market this translation was published as *All About Birds: A Short Illustrated History of Ornithology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010). The French original was published as *Histoire de l'ornithologie* (Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 2007).

² I must mention Marie-Odet Scalliet, who kindly shared her research notes on Diard with me.

Curriculum Vitae

Pieter van Wingerden was born on November 5, 1980, in Utrecht, the Netherlands. He studied Greek and Latin Languages and Cultures at Radboud University in Nijmegen from 1998 to 2004. He graduated *cum laude* in 2004 with a specialisation in Ancient History. From 2004 to 2008 he taught classics at the Stedelijk Gymnasium Arnhem and the Canisius College in Nijmegen. Pieter and his wife Hanna-Ruth moved to England to study at All Nations Christian College from 2008 to 2009. Upon their return to the Netherlands, they briefly worked with IFES Nederland as local staff members in Tilburg before taking up a job in Astana, Kazakhstan. They lived and worked there from 2010 to 2014 at a local language centre where they mostly taught English to students. When they returned to the Netherlands in 2014, Pieter started working as librarian at the International Baptist Theological Study Centre (IBTS Centre) in Amsterdam, where his part-time job allowed him the space to pick up his PhD-studies in the History of Science at Leiden University as an external PhD-student in 2017. By the time this thesis was nearing completion, Pieter left IBTS Centre and accepted a position as collection specialist at the University Library of the University of Groningen in August 2022.

List of Publications

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- Wingerden, Pieter van, 'Science on the edge of empire: E. A. Forsten (1811–1843) and the Natural History Committee (1820–1850) in the Netherlands Indies', *Centaurus* 62, no. 4 (2020): 797-821. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1600-0498.1234>
- Wingerden, Pieter van, 'Goudkoorts in de gordel van smaragd', *Wonderkamer* 1 (2020): 48-50.
- Wingerden, Pieter van, 'Op reis vanuit een drijvende stad: De expeditie van de Natuurkundige Commissie op Borneo in 1836', *Indische Letteren* 38, no. 3 (2023): 181-200.