

Singapore History Anthology Project

The Singapore History Anthology Project (SHAP) has been spearheaded by A/P Peter Borschberg (Principal Investigator) and Mr. Kwa Chong Guan (Collaborator). Its principal objective is to bring testimonies on Singapore and the surrounding region (c.1500-1800) closer to an English-language readership in Singapore. This involves the translation into English of documents, letters, diary entries, travelogues, memorials and other materials, including cartography. The SHAP project is generously funded by a Ministry of Education Tier 1 Grant, the National Archives of Singapore (National Heritage Board) and the Lee Foundation Singapore. The first deliverables of the project are expected to be published in late 2012.

A/P Peter Borschberg and Mr. Kwa Chong Guan have extensive experience in researching and publishing on the Singapore-Johor-Riau region during the latter middle ages and the early modern period. The project expands significantly on the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, German, French, Italian and Latin language sources earlier retrieved and processed by A/P Borschberg in his works *The Singapore and Melaka Straits: Violence, Security and Diplomacy in the Seventeenth Century* as well as *Hugo Grotius, the Portuguese and Free Trade in the East Indies*. Both monographs have been jointly published by NUS Press Singapore and KITLV Press Leiden in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

Although considerable groundwork has already been laid over the past few years in uncovering letters, logbooks, travelogues, treaties, rutters and memorials, a more systematic search, has been made possible thanks to the abovementioned research grants. The project leaders hope to be able to include a meaningful number of non-European materials.

The most significant deliverable of the SHAP project is a 2-3 volume set that will publish historical testimonies on Singapore, the adjacent straits and the immediate Johor-Riau vicinity. The volumes will also republish articles in their original English or in English translation that are difficult to find. The map compendium will finally feature a total of 70-90 maps and charts that have been retrieved in public and private collections across Europe, Asia, the Americas and South Africa.

Over the past year A/P Borschberg has been working on a translated source edition of Jacques de Coutre's biography and memorials that are preserved in the National Library of Spain in Madrid. The edition, which is nearing completion, provides an annotated translation of book 1 of de Coutre's autobiography. This touches on his life between 1594-1603 in Melaka and includes comprehensive accounts of sojourns in Siam and Manila. The forthcoming source edition also provides translations of five memorials that de Coutre addressed to the King of Spain and the Portuguese viceroy in Goa. These yield a sweeping overview of the

commercial networks across the Indian Ocean and South China Sea regions spanning from the eastern coast of Africa to Japan. As per January 2013 the edition is currently in production and is expected to be released around May 2013.

A/P Borschberg is currently in the process of finalizing the edition of excerpts from the travelogue of Cornelis Matelieff de Jonge. The Dutch admiral set sail from Europe in 1605 with instructions to attack the Portuguese colony of Melaka. On his return to the Dutch Republic in September 1608, he also penned a series of epistolary recommendations in which he set out a blueprint for fundamental changes in the way the Dutch East India Company (VOC) operated in Asia.