

In 2011 the Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies had a productive, but in an administrative sense extremely difficult year. In the past years we were able to announce in the foreword to the annual report the institute's exceptional achievements, but in the report on 2011 we cannot but review in brief the exceedingly trying situation in which KITLV was put.

Mid-March the director learned that the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences (KNAW) seriously considered placing the institute outside the Academy and cutting off its funding. The reason for this, it was stressed, was not the quality or quantity of work produced by KITLV. The plan came from the Academy's desire to implement government-decreed cutbacks selectively within the organization and, additionally, from its goal of reorienting the Humanities institutes towards e-humanities and of physically clustering the humanities institutes in Amsterdam.

Naturally the Learned Society of KITLV and KITLV-KNAW stood to arms. The arguments buttressing their defense were of a scholarly and political nature. In addition, the Learned Society chose the legal path since the plans of the KNAW contravened the letter and spirit of the covenant signed by both parties in 2001 when KITLV joined the KNAW. There was also vigorous reinforcement secured from prominent institutes and persons in the Netherlands and Indonesia. All this brought the KNAW to reconsider its plans. Several alternatives have circulated since and the KNAW has assured KITLV that it wants to retain the institute within the Academy. Concrete decisions were not, however, made in the year under report, nor were there at the time of printing, May 2012. Meanwhile there are legitimate reasons for optimism about the future of KITLV, particularly given the results of an international evaluation of the institute held at the end of 2011, which will be discussed further on.

Obviously this situation in the year under report required a great deal of administrative energy and attention, as well as causing much unrest among personnel and members and board members of the Learned Society. One very painful choice was unavoidable. It was necessary to agree with the very keen wish of the KNAW to move KITLV Press – one of the pillars of the institute since its founding in 1851 – outside the KITLV-KNAW. Explorations into opportunities for outplacing at least part of the publishing activities were started. The Learned Society intends to earmark a considerable portion of its own yearly resources for this. This choice is even more painful since KITLV Press has, since its reorganization in 2010, as projected, indeed become considerably more efficient, which has led to greater productivity. As part of the clearly defined course for KITLV, the KNAW unilaterally cancelled its agreement to realize a new building for the institute. The start was projected for 2011, the delivery for 2012. At least for the short term there were solutions sought and found.

After the KNAW informally indicated that it wanted to retain the institute within the Academy, with the consent of the board of management of the KNAW, talks with the University of Leiden about the participation of KITLV-KNAW in an interdisciplinary Leiden institute for comparative regional studies were resumed. The intended opening for this institute is in 2012. Decisions by the KNAW about the future of KITLV were ultimately put off pending the results of a clustered international evaluation, in which four KNAW institutes (IISG, KITLV, Meertens and NIOD) were evaluated. For this KITLV wrote a comprehensive self-evaluation of the period 2005-2010 (*Crossing borders*). The site visits took place in December, but the evaluation procedure has not yet been completed at the time of writing. The

outcome of the evaluation process, the responses from the institutes and in particular KITLV, and the stance of the Academy must therefore be included in the annual report for 2012. For now it is with great satisfaction that we can relay that KITLV was judged to be 'very good to excellent', which is a higher qualification than was ever obtained previously.

Despite the administrative state of high tension, which, as said, caused a great deal of unrest internally, 2011 was a productive year. In particular the very high number of peer-reviewed publications by KITLV researchers deserves mention, a number that was considerably higher than the average from the preceding six years that the evaluation commission had praised so highly. The research department concluded three research projects, 'Tracking Development', 'De Geschiedenis van de Politie in Suriname en Caraïbisch Nederland' (The History of Police in Suriname and the Caribbean Netherlands) and 'De Ontmanteling van de Nederlandse Antillen' (The Dismantling of the Netherlands Antilles). The former director of KITLV, Peter Boomgaard, having reached the age of retirement, formally took leave of the institute with a congress and a public lecture. Even after his stepping down as the director in 2000, Boomgaard, with his impressive oeuvre on the ecological, economic and demographic history of Indonesia, set the example and was reference point for all researchers in the institute.

Thanks to the subsidies from the Metamorfoze programme, the Department of Collections invested a great deal of energy and resources in the building of a digital library. To this end, tens of thousands of scanned pages from original source publications, such as, for example, more than sixty volumes of *Indische Gids* and twenty-five volumes of *Koloniale Studiën*, were made available direct to researchers.

The Press too, with financial support from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), oriented itself toward digital services, in particular Open Access, free online publication. Since 2011 the *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (BKI)* and the *New West Indian Guide (NWIG)* have been published directly online for free. In March the first book to be published Open Access followed; eight other titles were, immediately upon publication, added to the OAPEN digital library of European academic publishers on the humanities and social sciences.

KITLV Jakarta again acquired and catalogued a great number of publications and audiovisual material, partly analogue, though in part and increasingly so 'digitally born'. With external financing KITLV Jakarta published its own publications together with local co-publishers. A great deal of energy was devoted to the programme 'Academy Professorship Indonesia', run by the Indonesian Academy of Sciences (AIPI) and the KNAW. The professor of social sciences and humanities ended her term at the Universitas Indonesia (Jakarta) successfully and the professor of life sciences began his term at the Universitas Hasanuddin (Makassar).

Finally, Peter Nas stepped down as the chairman of the KITLV Learned Society. Since 2004 Nas, professor of urban anthropology at the University of Leiden, was an enthusiastic chair who worked in harmony with the directorate of KITLV-KNAW. The Learned Society found an excellent replacement, Susan Legêne, who is professor of political history at the VU University Amsterdam.