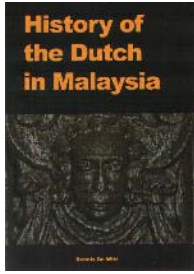


October 30th. 2008

History of the Dutch in Malaysia by Dennis De Witt -- USD 25.00.



Written in the perspective of a Malaysian Dutch Eurasian, this book divides the Dutch historical influences in Malaysia into four different eras. Each era is analysed and represented in relation to its respective social environment and political developments. Included are the historical contributions of individuals, such as the Dutch Admirals who attempted to capture Malacca, the Dutch Governors and their administrative ranks who governed the town and the contributions of the Malacca Burghers in shaping Malaysia's history.

Presented herein are the many vestiges from the Dutch that can still be found in Malaysia today. The author also sets the record straight on some misconceptions concerning historic monuments, identifies Dutch architectural influences, recounts an unusual tradition of reusing old burial tombs and *proposes a theory for the legend of Malacca's secret tunnels.*

Although Dutch-descended communities such as the Afrikaners of South Africa, the Ceylon Burghers of Sri Lanka and the Indo-Dutch Eurasians from Indonesia are known to exist, few are aware of the existence of the Malaysian Dutch descendants. Categorised in a broad sense as Eurasians, they exist as a minority within a minority in Malaysia. This book recounts their history, relates their ancestor's contributions towards Malaysian history and describes the development of this hidden and forgotten minority ethnic group.

14th. July 2009

Author Dennis De Witt: The Secret Tunnels Of Malacca – Fact or Fiction?

St Paul's Hill in Malacca is a mountain of mysteries. Whether it is an unexplained little indented circular ground at the entrance of a fort, an unusual arch supporting the base of a pillar or a recycled tombstone bearing names of Portuguese as well as the Dutch, they hold secrets more intriguing than the Da Vinci Code. The story that there are secret tunnels below the streets of Malacca is fact and not myth.

The three beliefs that have been circulating in Malacca since the old days are that of a big hole at a certain gate (and that there was a large snake that ate people who entered the hole), a tunnel running from the Stadthuys to Malacca River and a tunnel running from St Paul's Hill to St John's Hill.

The tunnels are most probably catacombs used first by the Portuguese and then the Dutch. The fact that so many historians, including Munshi Abdullah, wrote about tunnels at St Paul's Hill showed that there must be a grain of truth in the story.

Munshi Abdullah wrote in Hikayat Abdullah (1849) that one had to walk through a tunnel built into a hill to reach the elaborate residence of the Governor on St Paul's Hill.

Four other historians — Gaspar Correa, Reverend Father Georg Schurhammer, John Cameron and Reverend Father Rene Cardon — also wrote concretely of tunnels of sorts below St Paul's Hill.

To really carry out proper studies into the tunnels, one must be able to read the old writings and records of Portuguese and Dutch now mainly in Europe.

I hope I can get the backing from bodies such as the Malacca Museum Corporation as well as Badan Warisan Malaysia to carry out more research on these tunnels.

Tour guides in Malacca can also fire up the imagination of tourists about these tunnels. The next time we visit Malacca, perhaps we should all carry a cangkul and start digging!