

Mario Rutten (1958–2015)

Mario Rutten, professor of comparative sociology of Asia at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology and the Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), University of Amsterdam, and a well-known scholar of India, passed away at a tragically young age on 26 December 2015.

Mario's doctoral research on agricultural development and rural entrepreneurship in central Gujarat continued a long tradition of scholarship in The Netherlands. A student of Jan Breman, he received his PhD with cum laude at the University of Amsterdam in 1991, and his thesis became his first book, *Farms and Factories: Social Profile of Large Farmers and Rural Industrialists in West India* (OUP Delhi, 1995). Mario also carried out comparative research in Malaysia and Indonesia, leading to the publication of *Rural Capitalists in Asia: A Comparative Analysis on India, Indonesia, and Malaysia* (RoutledgeCurzon, London, 2003).

From the time of his PhD research in 1986 until last year, Mario based himself in a village in Anand District, where he maintained close relations with his extended "family" and friends. His sociological research was distinguished by detailed empirical fieldwork grounded in a deep knowledge of Gujarat's society and economy. From the vantage point of central Gujarat, Mario pursued a variety of research themes, from his early work on economic diversification by capitalist farmers to Patel migration, the Gujarati diaspora, and the transnational networks that connect this region and other parts of the world. This long-term research engagement has produced a unique archive on economic development, social change, and mobility in Gujarat, including extensive unpublished material. Mario was also deeply interested in visual anthropology, and (together with colleagues) produced two documentary films: one on Gujarati youth in London and the other on a "transnational village" in Gujarat.

In Amsterdam, Mario was a passionate, popular, and committed teacher; an able

and energetic administrator who fought for fairness and democracy within the University; and a public intellectual who provided balanced insights into political events in Asia. Mario was very active in several institutions and committees that fostered the study of Asia within The Netherlands and promoted academic exchanges between India and The Netherlands.

From 2010 to 2015, Mario co-directed "Provincial Globalisation," a collaborative research programme of the AISSR and the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bengaluru, which explored the developmental impacts of transnational flows in three regions of India. With several outputs still in the pipeline when he became ill and was later diagnosed with terminal cancer, Mario continued to work almost till the last day of his life, guiding students and collaborating on various projects. With his gregarious and warm personality, Mario always dealt with difficulties with humour, and he handled his impending death in the same way—with openness, selflessness, and humour.

Mario's untimely death is a great loss to the academic community in India, where he will be remembered with affection and respect by his many colleagues and friends.

Carol Upadhy
NIAS, BENGALURU

Bastiaan Wielenga (1936–2015)

Bastiaan Wielenga was born on 10 November 1936 in Wunseradiel, Vriesland (The Netherlands) as the eldest son of Wietske Eland Visser, a school-teacher and Johan Lodewijk Wielenga, a pastor of the Gereformeerde (double reformed) church. His childhood and youth were determined by where his father was posted. He had three sisters and a brother and at the birth of his fourth sister his mother died in childbirth. He died in Madurai in December 2015.

From the early 1940s, The Netherlands were occupied by the fascists. Bas's mother, a very independent woman, was

temporarily hiding Jews in the attic. Food was scarce and the desire for food and freedom as intrinsically connected was dominant in these experiences. It came as a "natural" choice to Bas to study at the theological college in Kampen, a centre of the double reformed church. He got exposed to the wider world through the Student Christian Movement (SCM) and also attended a youth conference of the Christian Peace Conference (CPC) in Prague which opened his eyes to the problems of Eastern Europe. The CPC had a strong stand on recognising the German Democratic Republic (GDR) as a socialist country.

At the age of 24 he decided to work as an assistant pastor at an ecumenical centre, the Hendrik Kraemer House, in West Berlin. He worked there for 10 years under a woman pastor, Be Ruys, who had moved to Berlin from The Netherlands as a fraternal worker, to help pick up the lives of former forced labourers of Dutch origin. Thus was formed the Ecumenical Dutch Congregation which was spread out through Berlin and the GDR. This was a natural terrain for Christian Marxist dialogue and Bas, side by side with his pastoral work, read up his Marx and Lenin. He learned to interact with atheists and agnostics and was deeply inspired by the CPC and Josef Hromadka, a Hussite reformed theologian in Prague. There was a deep commitment to the Prague Spring of 1968.

He registered for his doctoral studies with Helmut Gollwitzer, who had been leading the Confessing Church in Berlin. Later, Gollwitzer volunteered for work with the Red Cross to avoid military draft with weapons. Gollwitzer had studied Marxism in the prison camps in the Soviet Union and came back only in the early 1950s. So the Marxism he himself developed was highly critical of Stalinism and clearly anti-fascist. He was a famous liberation theologian who supported the students' revolt of the 1960s. Bas Wielenga's dissertation "Lenin's Path to Revolution: A Confrontation with Sergey Bulgakov and Petr Struve in the Interest of a Theological Reflection" was favourably received by Marxist friends but the theological reflection was not accepted

by the theological authorities to whom it had to be submitted, though Gollwitzer fully supported it. So, strictly speaking, Bas held a theological doctorate for his work on Lenin.

Move to India

He was part of the students' movement in Berlin in the 1960s, where he met me, his future wife. I was working on a PhD in history of religions. As the war in Vietnam, the anti-racism struggles in South Africa and the liberation struggles in Latin America were of central concern to us we decided to have a period of exposure in a "third world country." Since India was a country famous for its non-violent freedom struggle but also with a sizeable left movement, this was a plausible choice, facilitated by the fact that M M Thomas was at that time the chairman of the executive of the World Council of Churches and invited us to be with the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society (CISRS) in Bengaluru.

At CISRS Bas Wielenga wrote his book "*Marxist Views on India in Historical Perspective*." Bas was deeply interested in the biblical narratives of slavery and liberation. He was altogether a biblical theologian and could interpret texts in a narrative style that won him many admirers. He had a healthy aversion to doctrines and to the hair splitting of academic text criticism. He developed inspiring methods of biblical theology. He was a Marxist humanist and a follower of Jesus, but felt very uneasy with church hierarchies and church politics.

Bas was a librarian and a migrant at heart. In the Heinrich Kramer House in Berlin, he lived in the library as there was lack of space in the house. In Bengaluru and Madurai our house became a library. We had a phase in the late 1970s and early 1980s, during and after the Emergency, in the time of non-party political process, when we worked training many social activists in Marxism, feminism and ecological perspectives. We built up the Centre for Social Analysis which was inaugurated by M M Thomas in 1984.

In the late 1970s Bas published *Introduction to Marxism* which is still widely used. In the 1980s many young activists

were influenced by this work. Trade union activist Gita Ramakrishnan was deeply impressed by Bas and Sebastian Kappen. Babu Mathew was one of the members of the "Free University" in Bengaluru and has struggled with leftist orthodoxy all his life. Bas and myself were key members of the Christians for Socialism together with Pierre Gillet, Nalini Nayak, Thomas Kochery and many others and had many followers, while my own feminist theology was met with scepticism.

Bas was a traveller between different worlds. Like a good eldest son of a joint family, he visited The Netherlands and Berlin regularly and was part of the group in Berlin which has been editing the *Historical Critical Dictionary of Marxism* for 30 years.

Christian Secularist

Theologically his book *A Long Road to Freedom* has been most influential among students. One of the most moving books has been the commentary on the *Revelation to John* which is a vision against imperialism and exploitation. He also wrote on Marx and ecology and took Ambedkar on board while the collected works came out in English. He was a great communicator, a scatterbrained

professor, a loving father and a self-critical and supportive husband. Bas Wielenga belonged to the rare breed of Christian secularists who cherished freedom of religion but also respected freedom from religion. He was totally free from notions of superiority and inferiority as long as democracy was respected. "Conversion" for him meant first of all self-criticism and repentance and, secondly, the endeavour to create hope without illusions.

During the last 10 years of his life, his body was wrecked with Parkinson's disease. The hallucinations that he often had dealt with the fear of Stalinist conspiracies being hatched in the living room and the anxiety to reach an imagined train or flight or a speaking assignment. He commanded a great sovereign dignity even while his body was totally out of control. It was immensely difficult to let him go.

His last writings were two articles for the *Historical Critical Dictionary of Marxism* on Mammon (Capital) and Moloch (tyrannical human sacrifice), two phenomena which Marx had commented on, and against which Bas struggled till the end.

Gabrielle Dietrich
MADURAI

Journal Rank of EPW

Economic & Political Weekly is indexed on Scopus, "the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature," which is prepared by Elsevier NV (<http://tinyurl.com/o44sh7a>).

Scopus has indexed research papers that have been published in EPW from 2008 onwards.

The Scopus database journal ranks country-wise and journal-wise. It provides three broad sets of rankings: (i) Number of Citations, (ii) H-Index and (iii) SCImago Journal and Country Rank. Presented below are EPW's ranks in 2014 in India, Asia and globally, according to the total cites (3 years) indicator.

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- Highest among 36 journals in the category, "Economics, Econometrics and Finance" in the Asia region, and 36th among 835 journals globally.
- Highest among 23 journals in the category, "Sociology and Political Science" in the Asia region, and 15th among 928 journals globally.
- Between 2008 and 2014, EPW's citations in three categories ("Economics, Econometrics, and Finance"; "Political Science and International Relations"; and "Sociology and Political Science") were always in the second quartile of all citations recorded globally in the Scopus database.

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