Connecting colonies

Shipping, trade and administration between New Netherland and Curaçao, 1645-1664

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Research MA thesis
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Contents

Introduction

How could it not be a special day to him? On Saturday the 28th of July 1646, Petrus Stuyvesant appeared at the meeting of the States General, the sovereign body of delegates from the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic, to take the oath that was required to fulfil the office of Director-General of New Netherland and Curaçao. It was not an extraordinary procedure for the States General to take an oath of loyalty from a high colonial official leaving for one of the far away outposts of the Dutch empire. Stuyvesant was 35 or 36 years old at the time, he had been educated at the university of Franeker for a few years, and had one wooden leg. None of that made this short ceremony exceptional. What was exceptional about this, was that the colonies entrusted to his care were separated by a distance of over 3,200 kilometres.

The fact that two colonies, so far away from each other, were joined by a single Director-General is a very curious historical situation. It leads to two questions, to which this thesis shall provide an answer. First, why were the two colonies joined? This question is relevant as an administrative union between two colonies that are so far apart is not an obvious thing to implement. As shall become clear, the objectives of the connection were not reached, so the next question to be answered is why it did not work out.

New Netherland was a Dutch colony located around the Hudson river in the modern American state of New York. The first European to explore the area was Henry Hudson during an expedition organized by the Dutch East India Company in 1609, but a permanent colony was only founded in 1624. In 1664 the whole area was surrendered to England. Curaçao, previously a Spanish possession, was conquered by the Dutch in 1634. As an administrative unit during the era discussed, it also consisted of the nearby islands of Aruba and Bonaire. These three islands still are part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The Dutch West India Company (WIC) or *Geoctroyeerde Westindische Compagnie* as its official name was, was chartered in 1621. Its charter granted it a monopoly on shipping and commerce in Africa and the Americas. It was also charged with the founding of colonies, but that was a less prominent task.[1] The structure of governance of the WIC within the Netherlands is, while complicated enough, well-known. The five chambers were ran by directors (*bewindhebbers*) who were also required to be major shareholders (*hoofdparticipanten*). The chambers had a large degree of autonomy in their business of conducting trade, outfitting ships and overseeing colonies. The directors often met multiple times a week. Above the chambers was the institution of the *Heren XIX* (gentlemen nineteen) which met two or three times a year and whose meetings could take

[1] Henk den Heijer, *Geschiedenis van de WIC: opkomst, bloei en ondergang* (fourth edition: Zutphen 2013) 30, 79.

several weeks. The *Heren XIX* consisted of eighteen delegates from the chambers, always directors: eight from Amsterdam, four from Zeeland and two from each of the other three chambers: North Holland, Rotterdam and Groningen. The nineteenth delegate represented the States General. The *Heren XIX* was tasked with setting the central policies for all Company matters, and had the authority to force the chambers to execute these decisions.[2]

The management of the colonies varied from case to case. All had of course local authorities whose appointment was made by the *Heren XIX* and ratified by the States General, but especially the metropolitan institution that was charged with overseeing a certain colony from a distance varied from case to case. Some, like Brazil, were managed by the central company, while others were administered by one of the chambers. New Netherland was from the establishment of the WIC overseen by a commission of the Amsterdam chamber, probably because merchants from Amsterdam were traditionally the ones who traded most in the area.[3]

In 1629, when the WIC had just had the greatest success of its existence with the conquest of a Spanish treasure fleet by the privateer Piet Hein off the coast of Cuba, the company issued an order of governance. This *Ordre van Regieringe* was the foundation of the government of all the company's colonies. The idea was to establish a single central government in Brazil, to which all other colonies would be subordinate. Jacob Schiltkamp, who has written an article on this order, notes that it failed to achieve its purpose. The explanation of this failure is limited to the observation that further territorial expansion in Brazil, where the order would be of most use, did not occur.[4] Another element that should of course be considered is that the high degree of rivalry between the individual chambers of the WIC was not a receptive ground to centralization and the surrender of power. This order of government probably is the cause of the sometimes mentioned situation that Curaçao was subordinate to Brazil before the union with New Netherland.[5] *De jure* that may have been the case, but there is to my knowledge no evidence that this subordination also existed *de facto*. Schiltkamp observes that this system never was applied on the Caribbean islands, nor in any other colonies except for a short time in Brazil.[6]

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[2] Ibid., *De geoctrooieerde compagnie: de VOC en de WIC als voorlopers van de naamloze vennootschap,* Ars notariatus 128, (Amsterdam, Deventer 2005) 112, 122-123, 129-130.
[3] Jaap Jacobs, *Een zegenrijk gewest: Nieuw-Nederland in de zeventiende eeuw* (Amsterdam 1999) 62.
[4] Jacob A. Schiltkamp, 'Legislation, government, jurisprudence, and law in the Dutch West Indian colonies: the order of government of 1629', *Pro memorie: bijdragen tot de rechtsgeschiedenis der Nederlanden,* vol. 5 no. 2 (2003) 320-334, esp. 320-322, 326.
[5] C. S. I. J. Lagerberg, *Onvoltooid verleden: de dekolonisatie van Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen* (Tilburg 1989) 192.
[6] J. A. Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak in de Nederlandse Antillen ten tijde van de West-Indische Compagnie* (Willemstad 1972) 8.

The government of New Netherland was from the very beginning placed in the charge of a council, chaired by the director of the colony,[7] which further consisted of two WIC-servants and two colonists. It is important to note that the director of the colony could not take decisions autonomously: decisions were only legal if the Council took them. This council was further limited by the orders it received from the Netherlands in the form of its initial instructions and subsequent letters. Deviating from these orders was only allowed if it was absolutely necessary and there was no time to consult the principals in the Netherlands. Although the size of the council would vary over the years and several advisory bodies of colonists were formed and abandoned as New Netherland developed, the principle of a director and council in charge of the colony was kept during the entire era of Dutch rule.[8]

Bernard Bailyn has noted two limitations that historians inherited from historiography, that must be overcome to write Atlantic history. These are 'the assumption that Atlantic history is the combination of several national histories and their extensions overseas', and 'the assumption that formal, legal structures reflect reality. […] Beneath the formal structures lies the informal actuality, which has patterns of its own.'[9] One can only discuss so much in an MA thesis, therefore it is impossible to address the first assumption properly: this thesis is written from the perspective of the Dutch Atlantic empire of the WIC. However, when a connection between two colonies within a single empire is discussed in-depth, it is difficult to avoid writing national colonial history. But the second assumption is directly addressed by the topic of this thesis. The political union of Curaçao and New Netherland, the reasoning behind it, and its effectiveness is an example of a formal structure that, although carefully thought-out by metropolitan policymakers, did not reflect the reality existing in the Dutch colonies in the Caribbean and North America.

As Karen Ordahl Kupperman has noted, an Atlantic approach 'allows us to understand the lives of people who were part of the Atlantic in ways that are truer to their actual experience.'[10] But a problem of Atlantic history is that many studies that claim to be Atlantic, are in fact histories of places *around* the Atlantic.[11] By studying a single maritime connection between two colonies belonging to the same state, this thesis may be susceptible to such criticism.

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[7] The title of the highest officer in New Netherland varied, Stuyvesant was called 'Director-General' while his predecessors were simply 'Director'.
[8] A more exhaustive discussion of the government of New Netherland can be found in: Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* chapter 3, esp. 108-109.
[9] Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic history: concept and contours* (Cambridge MA, London 2005) 60-61.
[10] Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Atlantic in world history* (Oxford etc. 2012) 1.
[11] Alison Games, 'AHR forum: Atlantic history: definitions, challenges and opportunities', *The American Historical Review,* vol. 111, nr. 3 (2006) 741-757, 745.

However, when the three types of Atlantic history described by David Armitage are taken into consideration, it becomes clear that the term 'Atlantic history' does not have to be just a label attached to a random study of some place near the Atlantic in order to follow the historiographical trend. Armitage sees three interconnected and overlapping types of the history of connections in the Atlantic: Circum-Atlantic history is the history of the ocean as a whole, 'as a particular zone of exchange and interchange, circulation and transmission.' Trans-Atlanic history is comparative history in an Atlantic context, wherein the Atlantic context creates common features that make comparisons meaningful. Cis-Atlantic history 'studies particular places as unique locations within an Atlantic world and seeks to define that uniqueness as the result of the interaction between local particularity and a wider web of connections (and comparisons).'[12]

Within this framework of Atlantic history, this study of the maritime connection between Curaçao and New Netherland is a form of Circum-Atlantic history. Of course it discusses only a single connection of the many that together made the Atlantic a zone of exchange, but that is definitely part of the whole. This thesis does not qualify as Trans-Atlantic and Cis-Atlantic history: though two colonies are studied, they are approached as the ends of the maritime connection between them. They are not compared, nor is substantial attention given to the wider web of Atlantic connections of each.

Recent bibliographies on the early modern Dutch Atlantic history are published by Victor Enthoven and Henk den Heijer.[13] This is not the place for an extensive bibliography on the history of New Netherland, but *Een zegenrijk gewest* by Jaap Jacobs should definitely be mentioned as the standard work on the colony.[14] The same author has also published a short biography of Petrus Stuyvesant and is currently working on a more extensive book.[15] There is no standard work about the history of Curaçao and the nearby subordinate islands of Aruba and Bonaire, but important works to understand the development of Curaçao into a major trading hub during the second half of the seventeenth century are written by Wim Klooster and Linda Rupert.[16] J. A. Schiltkamp has made important contributions to the institutional and legal history of Curaçao.[17]

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[12] David Armitage, 'Three concepts of Atlantic history', In: David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick (eds.), *The British Atlantic world, 1500-1800* (Basingstoke, New York 2002) 11-27, esp. 15-16, 18-19, 21.
[13] Victor Enthoven and Henk den Heijer, 'Nederland en de Atlantische wereld 1600-1800', *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis,* vol. 24, nr. 1 (2005) 147-166. Den Heijer, *Geschiedenis van de WIC,* 197-
[14] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest.*
[15] Ibid., *Petrus Stuyvesant: een levensschets* (Amsterdam 2009).
[16] Wim Klooster, *Illicit riches: Dutch trade in the Caribbean, 1648-1795*, KITLV Caribbean Series XVIII (Leiden 1998). Linda M. Rupert, *Creolization and contraband: Curaçao in the early modern Atlantic world* (Athens GA, London 2012).
[17] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak;* Ibidem, 'Curaçao onder vice-directeur Matthias Beck, 1655-1668', in: M. Ph van Delden, C. M. Grüning and E. E. Jonis-Kleinmoedig (eds.), *Het oog van de meester: opstellen aangeboden aan mr. C. E. Dip ter gelegenheid van zijn afscheid als raadadviseur belast met de leiding van het Centraal Bureau voor Juridische en Algemene Zaken* (Curaçao 1989) 249-279.

Although the number of publications on Atlantic history is steadily increasing in recent years, there has been no significant attention for the curious relationship between Curaçao and New Netherland yet. Most authors writing about either territory limit their discussion to the inter-colonial relationship to one or two lines, like: 'Stuyvesant's well-meaning project to strenghten [sic] the ties between the islands and New Netherland had not resulted in great advantages for either.'[18] Jacobs from time to time mentions contact with Curaçao in his work on New Netherland. His short biography of Petrus Stuyvesant mentions the suggestion of this Frisian to place the two colonies under single governance and that it was implemented, but does not discuss its implications.[19] Klooster mentions that Stuyvesant was director of both colonies and had a subordinate on Curaçao.[20] Linda Rupert writes: 'Curaçao was subordinate to New Netherland both commercially and administratively until the English seized the North American settlement in 1664 during the second Anglo-Dutch War.'[21]

There are many more examples to be found of this form of discussing the relationship between Curaçao and New Netherland between 1646 and 1664: casual remarks scattered around in chapters on government and trade. This is a great deficiency in scholarly literature, as a proper knowledge of this connection does not only improve our understanding of the history of both individual colonies, but is also illustrative of the wide gap between metropolitan schemes and plans for the organization of colonies and their trade and the actual situation in those colonies. The seventeenth century saw increasing attempts of metropolitan governments to control the trade of their colonies; but colonists could not work with the systems and restrictions imposed upon them, as recent research has convincingly shown.

Carl and Roberta Bridenbaugh mention several colonial comments from the seventeenth century which indicate that contemporary observers regarded trade with the Dutch as important for the welfare of colonies. They also observe that colonists relied on their old, now illegal, trade patterns.[22] K. G. Davies points out that such contemporary complaints, specifically about the falling price of tobacco, ignored the low prices in Europe in general and claims that holding mercantilist legislation responsible 'would be to exaggerate the effectiveness of seventeenth-century economic regulation'.[23]

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[18] Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *A short history of the Netherlands Antilles and Surinam* (The Hague etc. 1979) 35.
[19] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 194, 199, 270, 320; ibid, *Levensschets,* 46-47.
[20] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 63.
[21] Rupert, *Creolization and contraband,* 40.
[22] Carl Bridenbaugh and Roberta Bridenbaugh, *No peace beyond the line: the English in the Caribbean 1624-1690* (New York 1972) 206, 307.
[23] K. G. Davies, *The North Atlantic world in the seventeenth century,* Europe and the world in the age of expansion IV (Minneapolis 1974) 154.

Klooster shortly discusses the regulated Spanish trading system in his work on Dutch trade in the Caribbean. While he does observe that the fleet system and the additional register ships failed to supply the Spanish colonies in the Americas, his discussion of the reasons for this is very brief. Noting that the Spanish agricultural and industrial production were too low to supply both Spain and the colonies, illicit foreign trade seemed inevitable for an adequate supply.[24] The analysis seems in itself to be correct, but it has the characteristics of a specious argument: smuggling occurred, so obvious shortcomings of the Spanish system are given as reasons.

Christian Koot does not only describe how colonists, with the cooperation of the governors who had to enforce mercantile laws, relied on foreign (usually Dutch) suppliers in times of war and natural disaster, but also how they justified it. 'When they turned to Dutch sources for trade goods, even during the three Anglo-Dutch wars, colonists did not see themselves as acting traitorously, but rather pragmatically; without commerce, their colonies would not be worth fighting for anyway. Dutch trade was, in colonists' view, imperative for their survival.'[25] Self-reliance was vital for European colonies in the Americas: 'The carrying capacity of ships and the lengths of their voyages across the ocean did not yet allow for the great compression of space and time seen in later days. This forced colonial projects to rely on their own devices and not count too much on any metropolitan input.'[26]

The specific Dutch role in the early modern Atlantic economy is divided in four phases by Jan de Vries. Relevant to the period covered by this thesis are only the first two, these are the 'grand design' wherein Africa, Brazil, and New Netherland were supposed to form a large interconnected trade network. The second phase developed after the loss of Brazil in 1654: the WIC limited itself to trade in Africa and its governmental functions, private traders became active in the Americas and food production in New Netherland was stimulated to sustain Curaçao as a slave trading entrepôt.[27] A problem of this model is that it is very institutional in its focus on the activities in trade and colonization of the WIC, and thereby ignores private activities before the WIC was founded as well as the privateering activities of that Company.

The curiosity of the WIC is that even while by the 1650s 'it was clear that the company would never achieve a position equal to that of the VOC in Asia' it was only dissolved in 1792. Victor Enthoven has argued that the WIC could survive so long because it had developed into a

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[24] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 43-48.
[25] Christian J. Koot, *Empire at the periphery: British colonists, Anglo-Dutch trade, and the development of the British Atlantic, 1621-1713* (New York, London 2011) esp. 99-100.
[26] Karwan Fatah-Black, *Suriname and the Atlantic world, 1650-1800* (PhD dissertation Leiden University 2013), 18.
[27] Jan de Vries, 'The Dutch Atlantic economies', in: Peter A. Coclanis (ed.), *The Atlantic economy during the seventeenth and eighteenth century* (Columbia 2005) 1-29, esp. 4-10.

special-interest organization for merchants wo were active in Atlantic trade, 'and as its merit declined, its infrastructure was geared to serve private interests.'[28] This development, where a chartered company maintained the delegated authority over colonies even while it was unprofitable, is quite different from the general development in European states where the exploration and founding of colonies was initially left to private initiative and only later claimed by monarchs.[29] Of course the States General always had a delegate in the *Heren XIX,* giving it at least some influence in the management of the WIC and its colonies.[30] In relation to this, Piet Emmer and Wim Klooster have argued that a truly integrated Dutch Atlantic empire only existed between 1630 and 1645, a lack of maritime power resulted in failure to maintain it.[31] Donald Meining compares the Dutch empire with the commercial systems of Venice and Genoa, 'a network of collection centers and strategic points along critical trafficways [sic].'[32]

These authors do all, to a certain degree, challenge or at least nuance the 'overwhelming function of historical studies on transatlantic interactions during the colonial period [that] gives the impression of several, perfectly separated national Atlantic systems.'[33] European colonies in the Americas were heavily dependent upon supplies from the outside. In the eyes of metropolitan mercantile policy makers, these supplies should be provided by merchants subject to the state that also controlled the colony. The problem is that while the illicit trade networks as described by the authors cited above clearly demonstrate *that* the systems devised by metropolitan administrators did not always work as intended, it is much less obvious *why* that was the case.

'Despite all the commercial hostilities between rival nations and competitive interests, the pan-oceanic commercial webs that developed as the Atlantic world matured were interwoven, complex, and multitudinous-so complex, so numerous, that they can only be illustrated, not catalogued, enumerated, or fully summarized.'[34] While of course much remains to uncover, it seems to be a somewhat futile exercise to map out the illicit trade of the early modern Atlantic without inquiring into the causes of the failure of metropolitan mercantile systems.

This thesis is an attempt to illustrate how such an inquiry can be made, it is a case study of a single and relatively enclosed metropolitan scheme, the political union of New Netherland

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[28] Victor Enthoven, 'An assessment of Dutch transatlantic commerce, 1585-1817' in: Johannes Postma and Victor Enthoven (eds.), *Riches from Atlantic commerce: Dutch transatlantic trade and shipping, 1585-1817* (Leiden, Boston 2003) 385-445, esp. 396-397.
[29] G.V.Scammell, *The first imperial age: European overseas expansion c. 1400-1715* (1989, reprint: London, New York 1997) 141.
[30] Den Heijer, *De geoctrooieerde compagnie,* 123.
[31] Pieter C. Emmer and Willem W. Klooster, 'The Dutch Atlantic, 1600-1800: expansion without empire', *Itinerario,* vol. 23, nr. 2 (1999) 48-69, esp. 48-49.
[32] D. W. Meining, *The shaping of America: a geographical perspective on 500 years of history,* Atlantic America, 1492-1800, vol. 1 (New Haven, London 1986), 62.
[33] Claudia Schnurmann, 'Atlantic trade and American identities: the correlations of supranational commerce, political opposition, and colonial regionalism', in: Coclanis (ed.), *The Atlantic economy,* 186-204, esp. 186.
[34] Bailyn, *Atlantic history,* 84.

and Curaçao. It discusses how this union was formed by the WIC and how it worked out, both for the maritime connection between the two colonies and for the way they were governed. The advantage of studying New Netherland and Curaçao in this context is that the connection between the colonies was only short-lived, less than twenty years, and that the available sources allow an extensive study of the decision making process. While primary source-material on the WIC is scarce in the Netherlands, the records of New Netherland are largely preserved in the New York State Archives in Albany. The Atlantic serves as a barrier to the time-constrained Dutch researcher here, but the source publications of the New Netherland Institute (NNI) make these sources easily accessible.[35]

The primary sources on which this thesis is to a large degree based can be roughly divided in two categories. First there are the institutional sources produced by the WIC in the Netherlands, which are either part of the remains of the archive of the Company, or are kept in the archive of the States General. These are reports from the chamber of auditors of the WIC and minutes of meetings, and reflect how the metropolitan authorities perceived the situation in the colonies to be. The second category consists of the aforementioned source publications of the NNI: these are largely documents made by colonial officials and reflect much more closely the reality of the situation in the colonies. In between these categories are the letters written by the metropolitan authorities to their colonial subordinates. While these can be grouped in the first category, they are often responses to letters from the colony (which are themselves in most cases lost), so they tend to be a reflection of the colonial situation as well.

My approach of studying the patterns of maritime traffic, trade, and long-distance governance within the context of the system that was devised to channel them has the benefit of showing the shortcomings of that same system. The interaction between metropolitan planning and colonial reality reveals how misguided decisions were made. Knowing this does not only gratify scholarly curiosity; recognizing such patterns can be meaningful to modern policy makers. The drawback is that such an approach is very institutional and therefore incorporates the risk of overlooking factors outside the control and view of the WIC. However as we shall later see the colony of Curaçao especially was so small that the letters from the Vice-Directors give a proper indication of the conditions.

In this thesis a number of references is made to the people who already lived in the Americas before Europeans first arrived there in the late fifteenth century. The term 'Native American' is commonly used but refers to the European name of the continent which is based on

[35] New Netherland Institute, *Online publications,* http://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/research/online- August publications/ retrieved: 17 August 2015.

that of the Italian navigator and cartographer Amerigo Vespucci, while the word 'native' has a negative connotation due to its use in the British colonial empire.[36] I have therefore decided to use the term 'Indigenous', which is also adopted by the United Nations and is generally understood to refer to people who have a 'historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies'.[37] This is probably as good as a generic term referring to people who happen to share their ancestry on the same continent goes, and it suits the purpose of this thesis. A similar issue is related to the term 'slave'. Some historians chose to refer to 'enslaved people' or 'enslaved Africans' instead, a practise that is meant to emphasize the involuntary character of slavery.[38] As it should be completely obvious that slavery is not voluntary, I have chosen to stick with the term 'slave'.

This thesis is divided in three chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the problems that existed in the two colonies, early reports and plans regarding these, and the metropolitan decision making process regarding the union between Curaçao and New Netherland. It demonstrates why the two colonies were united. Chapter 2 looks at the practical matters of the maritime connection between the two outposts: the difficulties of sailing between them, the volume of the traffic and the trade in food, slaves, horses and salt. It thereby shows why the connection did not develop as planned by the metropolitan authorities. Chapter 3 covers the political connection between the colonies: it assesses the position of Stuyvesant as Director-General, the ways of metropolitan colonial authorities to check his policies and the problems that came with ruling two territories so far apart. This shows why the political connection was very limited.

[36] Christoph Strobel, *The Global Atlantic: 1400 to 1900* (New York, London 2015) 7-8.
[37] United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, *Who are Indigenous peoples?,* factsheet. http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf retrieved: 30 June 2015.
[38] Enthoven and Den Heijer, 'Nederland en de Atlantische wereld', 152.

1. Plans and decisions

Curaçao and New Netherland had different functions within the WICs colonial empire. When the *Heren XIX* in 1634 decided to conquer Curaçao from Spain, the governing board of the WIC hoped to find salt, wood and unspecified other goods there.[39] They knew what to expect, Dutch ships regularly loaded salt at Bonaire after 1630,[40] and in 1633 Dutch ships were reported to call at Bonaire and Curaçao in large numbers to obtain wood.[41] The decision to conquer an island to obtain such mundane commodities as salt and wood requires some explanation; the Netherlands consumed large amounts of salt to conserve the production of the extensive fishing industry. Traditionally this salt was imported from the Iberian peninsula, but the Dutch revolt against Spain had made that impossible, so salt traders switched to Punta Araya at the coast of Venezuela. During the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) imports from Portugal were again possible, but after 1621 the Iberian salt trade was again blocked and worse, the salt traders found that the Spanish authorities had effectively blocked the salt pans of Punta Araya and other places in the Caribbean. After 1641 the newly independent Kingdom of Portugal again allowed salt exports to the Dutch Republic and the problem was solved.[42] This explains why the *Heren XIX* were so keen to obtain salt from the West Indies in 1634: the uncertainty of the supply at that moment made it advisable to place at least some sources of the product under Dutch control, and no doubt the WIC thought it could profit from the shortages. Only a year before, in the autumn of 1633, the Dutch had, as Jonathan Israel describes it, 'been finally and decisively defeated in the battle for Caribbean salt.'[43]

More importantly, the island was also considered to be in an excellent position to attack the Spanish possessions in the West-Indies.[44] Obtaining a base to attack foreign vessels may seem to be a strange plan for a privately funded company, but in the seventeenth century the Dutch and other European governments were unable to wage costly overseas wars. Therefore the States General left attacks against Spain in the Americas to the WIC.[45] It should also be remembered that the Dutch Revolt was still going on and only six years before, in 1628, the WIC had a huge commercial success with the attack on the Spanish treasure fleet by Piet Hein. Warfare was a key

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[39] J. H. J. Hamelberg, *De Nederlanders op de West-Indische eilanden,* 2 volumes and two appendixes (Amsterdam 1901-1903) documents I, 18.
[40] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 29.
[41] Irene A. Wright and C. F. A. van Dam (eds.), *Nederlandsche zeevaarders op de eilanden in de Caraïbische Zee en aan de kust van Columbia en Venezuela gedurende de jaren 1621-1648(9*) (2 volumes: Utrecht 1934-35) vol. 1, 307.
[42] Pieter C. Emmer, 'The Dutch salt trade and the making of the second Atlantic system, 1580-1650', in: Stefano Pira (ed.), *Storia del commercio de sale tra Mediterraneo e Atlantico* (Cagliari 1997) 113-127, esp. 117, 121-124.
[43] Jonathan I. Israel, *The Dutch Republic and the Hispanic world 1606-1661* (Oxford 1982) 204.
[44] Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden,* documents I, 18.
[45] Gerrit Knaap, Henk den Heijer and Michiel de Jong, *Oorlogen overzee: militair optreden door compagnie en staat buiten Europa,* Militaire geschiedenis van Nederland 5 (Amsterdam 2015) 13.

feature of the WIC in its early years: while the Company was chartered by the States General to become a monopolistic trade organisation, in practise it became an instrument of war in this last phase of the Dutch Revolt.[46] Curaçao turned out to be a barren island: all attempts to grow cash crops failed, and even sustaining the population with local agriculture turned out to be impossible.[47] Only during the 1660s would Curaçao develop into a regional entrepôt for the trade with the Spanish mainland.

New Netherland attracted Dutch interest primarily for its fur trade. After Henry Hudson was the first European to sail to the area in 1609, a Dutch trade in furs, especially beaver skins, began. These furs were supplied by the Indigenous population. Initially this was private trade, but after 1623 the newly founded WIC took over. In the same year the *Heren XIX* decided to found a small trading colony in the area, mainly to secure the Dutch claim on New Netherland. The income from the fur trade was too low to cover the costs of colonization, leading some directors of the WIC to the opinion that it was best to invest as little as possible in the administration and defence of New Netherland and reap the profits of the fur trade until the colony would inevitably be lost. Opposed to this trade faction was a colonization faction, arguing that while a settlement colony would be more expensive on a short term, it could be a very profitable supplier of grain and timber in the long run. As a compromise between the two factions, the system of *patroonschappen* was introduced, allowing individuals to settle agricultural colonies in New Netherland. This meant that the ownership and lower jurisdiction of an area within the colony was transferred to a private individual, the *patroon*, together with some tax exemptions. In return, the *patroon* had the duty to occupy his land with a predefined number of colonists within a certain time. This privatisation of the colonisation was thought to be a cheap way for the WIC to increase the agricultural output of the Netherlands and strengthen the Dutch claim to the area by effectively occupying it.[48]

It is clear that the two colonies had little in common, but there was a relationship: due to the prevailing ocean currents and winds in the Atlantic the fastest route from Europe to New Netherland passes the Caribbean. A more in-depth explanation of this situation and its consequences will follow in chapter 2. It is also noteworthy that New Netherland had something that Curaçao lacked: arable land. Even while the agricultural production never seems to have reached high levels, some contemporaries looked forward to the possibility of exporting grain,

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[46] Victor Enthoven, Henk den Heijer and Han Jordaan, 'De Nederlandse Atlantische wereld in militaire context, 1585-1800', in: Victor Enthoven, Henk den Heijer en Han Jordaan (red.), *Geweld in de West: een militaire geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Atlantische wereld, 1600-1800* (Leiden, Boston 2013) 15-42, esp. 20.
[47] Schiltkamp, 'Curaçao onder Beck', 252.
[48] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 55, 63,118-120.

either to other WIC colonies like Brazil or to the Dutch Republic itself.[49] In the second half of the seventeenth century, trade with the Atlantic coast of North America became important for Curaçao, Venezuelan cacao, Peruvian silver, textiles and European commodities were shipped north, while provisions from the English colonies in North America were crucial to sustain Curaçao. This traffic, a violation of the English mercantile laws, especially began to attract attention of the English authorities around 1700.[50]

Inter-colonial trade proved to be crucial in the later development of Caribbean islands into plantation colonies, solely focused on the production of cash crops. Without shipment of provisions from North America such a high degree of specialization would never have been possible.[51] Inter-imperial trade also functioned as a safety-net for economic survival: conflicts like the War of the League of Augsburg (1689-1697) and the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) took the shape of war between the English and French in the Caribbean, disrupting shipping and turning planters to inter-imperial markets to sell their products and buy their provisions.[52]

It is important to acknowledge the difference between legal trade in a connection carefully planned by the directors of a chartered company on the one hand, and generally illicit trade between colonies belonging to different empires on the other hand. Despite that difference, research done in the past decades clearly shows a high degree of interdependence between colonies in the America's and the Caribbean.[53] Even though that research often focuses at the eighteenth century, it is clear that trade links could easily overcome mercantile barriers that were poorly enforced. It is unknown how much of this was known to the *Heren XIX*, but connecting colonies was not an unrealistic prospect to begin with.

Early plans for improvement

An early attempt to turn the island of Curaçao into a regional centre of the slave trade is visible in a resolution of the *Heren XIX* of the 12th December 1640. While the original resolution is lost with much of the WIC archive, it is mentioned in the minutes of the directors of the Zeeland chamber. The document referring to it is the draft of an instruction that would be given to

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[49] Ibid., 193-194.
[50] Wim Klooster, 'Anglo-Dutch trade in the seventeenth century: an Atlantic partnership?', in: Allan I. Macinnes and Arthur H. Williamson (eds.) *Shaping the Stuart world 1603-1714: the Atlantic connection,* The Atlantic world, vol. V (Leiden, Boston 2006) 261-282, esp. 280-281.
[51] Piet Emmer and Jos Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld: de geschiedenis van Nederland overzee 1600-1800* (Amsterdam 2012), 143.
[52] Koot, *Empire at the periphery,* 182.
[53] To mention only a few: Bridenbaugh, *No peace beyond the line;* Koot, *Empire at the periphery;* Johannes Postma, 'Breaching the mercantile barriers of the Dutch colonial empire: North American trade with Surinam during the eighteenth century', in: Olaf Uwe Janzen (ed.), *Merchant organization and maritime trade in the North Atlantic, 1660-1815,* Research in maritime history XV (St. Johns 1998) 107-131.

captains of privateers when they received their letter of marque. The resolution required all privateers who operated in the West Indies to bring any slaves they might find on the prize ships they captured to Curaçao and sell them to the director of the island for a set price of 65 guilders for each *leverbare* slave. The word *leverbare,* literally 'deliverable', refers here to a healthy slave between 15 and 35 years old.[54] The privateers would receive their payment in Amsterdam, two months after word of the sale was received.[55] The notion that this was the first attempt to turn Curaçao into a slave trade entrepôt is not new: in 1918 Van Brakel suggested that during the term of office of director Jacob Tolck (1638-1643) this measure was the first attempt to accomplish exactly that. Later authors agreed with this idea.[56] While the WIC apparently considered Curaçao a convenient base for regional slave trade, the Dutch slave trade in the 1640s was overwhelmingly focused on supplying Brazil.[57]

So while the WIC made some attempts to concentrate its Caribbean slave trade on Curaçao, It is not entirely clear where the Company expected to find customers. Goslinga mentions a request in 1639 to transfer a number of slaves from Curaçao to St. Christopher,[58] and no doubt such requests were more common. French and English governors of islands in the West Indies had a large degree of autonomy. The French governor of St. Christopher made a contract with Dutch merchants from Middelburg in 1640, allowing them exclusive trade on the island.[59] This suggests that there were close trading contacts between the Dutch and other Europeans settling in the Caribbean. That is illustrated by the reaction of some English governors to the first Navigation Laws in 1651. While this measure of Parliament outlawed Dutch trade to English colonies, Francis Lord Willoughby, the governor of Barbados, announced that the Dutch were free to continue their commerce with the island. Other governors made their gratitude to the Dutch, for supplying them with weapons, ammunition and other commodities, public as well.[60]

Illicit trade to Spanish colonies would be another option to sell slaves; the mercantile system to keep the supply of commodities to these colonies in Spanish hands led to an

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[54] Schiltkamp, 'Curaçao onder Beck', 278 n. 38.
[55] Nationaal Archief (NA), Den Haag, Oude West-Indische Compagnie (OWIC), 1.05.01.01, 24, 'Resoluties van de Kamer Zeeland', 2 January 1640-30 December 1641, scan 171.
[56] S. van Brakel, 'Bescheiden over den slavenhandel der West-Indische Compagnie', in: *Economisch-historisch jaarboek: bijdragen tot de economische geschiedenis van Nederland,* IV ('s-Gravenhage 1918) 47-83, esp. 48-49. W. S. Unger, 'Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse slavenhandel: I. beknopt overzicht van de Nederlandse slavenhandel in het algemeen', in: *Economisch-historisch jaarboek,* XXVI (1956) 133-174, esp. 142 n. 3. Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast 1580-1680* (Assen 1971) 352.
[57] David Eltis et al, *The Trans-Atlantic slave trade database,* www.slavevoyages.org retrieved: 18 August 2015.
[58] Goslinga, *Caribbean and Wild Coast,* 351-352.
[59] Monique Klarenbeek, 'Grutters op de Antillen: particuliere kooplieden uit de Republiek op het eiland Sint Christoffel in de zeventiende eeuw', *Tijdschrift voor zeegeschiedenis,* vol. 32, nr. 2 (2013) 20-37, esp. 23.
[60] Goslinga, *Short history,* 37.

insufficient supply of overpriced goods.[61] It is likely that the Spanish system of limiting the slave trade through the *Asiento* contracts (permissions to sell licenses for the slave trade) caused shortages of slaves as well, driving the price further up. The Portuguese revolt against Spain in 1640 resulted in an interruption in the *Asiento* system. As then all states that had bases on the African coast (Portugal, England, the Netherlands and France) were at war with Spain, the Spanish faced a dilemma. The problem was solved by giving out individual licenses.[62] These issues are probably the motivation for demanding that all slaves captured in the West Indies by Dutch privateers be brought to Curaçao: the WIC saw good opportunities for sale in Spanish and other colonies.

As the WIC was lacking appropriate funds for its activities during the greater part of its existence, many reports of the Company's auditor's office have been preserved. One, presented to the *Heren XIX* on June 22nd 1645 gives some interesting clues about the priorities within the WIC. The auditors expected to save 20,000 guilders annually by limiting the meetings of the *Heren XIX* to two per year and ensuring that all members would be present on time. They also called for a better organization of trade: the Company should keep less goods in stock in its trading posts and ensure that ships would call there in the right season, so waiting times could be reduced to the minimum. The number of ships sailing for the WIC should be limited to 48, with twelve serving Loando in Angola (no doubt for the slave trade), 24 connecting with Dutch Brazil and two serving Curaçao and New Netherland. The rest would mainly serve other ports in Africa. According to the report, the Company owned eighteen ships itself, so the other thirty would have to be chartered.[63]

It is clear that Curaçao and New Netherland played a small role in the Dutch Atlantic empire administrated by the WIC. As far as the number of ships assigned to connect each colony to the patria indicates, Brazil was considered the most important by far, followed by the African trading posts. It is noteworthy that New Netherland and Curaçao are grouped together as destinations: this could indicate the administrative grouping of the colonies that Stuyvesant proposed in September of the same year. However, as the report focuses on a more efficient use of resources by the Company, it seems more likely that the auditors intended to have the two ships call both at New Netherland and Curaçao on each journey. As mentioned the prevailing winds and ocean currents in the Atlantic could make this a logical combination, which makes it safe to assume that this was just a way to efficiently supply two small colonies.

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[61] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 44-46.
[62] Johannes Menne Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic slave trade 1600-1815* (Cambridge etc. 1990) 29-31.
[63] NA, Staten-Generaal (SG), 1.01.02, 12564.17, 'Consideratien van de Reeckenkamer', 22 June 1645.

The small role of Curaçao and New Netherland is also illustrated by the way they are often described in contemporary documents of the *Heren XIX*. The order of business for the meeting starting on 21 February 1643 mentioned that New Netherland cost the company much and gave little profit.[64] This observation was repeated in a similar document for the meeting starting on 12 December in the same year: both New Netherland and Curaçao were costly without giving any profits or useful goods.[65]

Forging links between different areas bordering the Atlantic Ocean was not a new idea. As we shall see several plans and precedents to such links already existed in the 1640s, and the connection between the Caribbean and North America would become reality later; in the eighteenth century the cash crop producing plantations in the Americas would, for a while at least, use food produced on the North American Atlantic seaboard, slave labour imported from Africa, and European capital. The scale and duration of such an Atlantic system is debated, however.[66] It is clear that contemporaries saw connections between colonies as a solution for the problems they encountered in their business ventures. The auditor's office of the WIC, in a report presented to representatives of the States General on May 27th 1641, considered New Netherland to be an excellent location for agriculture; the crop yield would be more abundant than in the Republic itself. But agriculture could only prosper with a larger population. The earlier measures had attracted some colonists and *patroons*, but the produce of the land could not be sold as the surrounding English colonies were self-sufficient. So the auditor's office proposed to allow the colonists and *patroons* of New Netherland to equip their own ships for voyages to Dutch Brazil where they could sell their agricultural products and bring slaves back. The benefit would be that larger tracts of land in New Netherland could be cultivated with slave labour while Brazil would be better supplied at the same time. The auditors commented that only colonists and *patroons* of New Netherland should be permitted to sail to Brazil, and no-one else, for merchants would just want to sell their goods and did not care about agriculture.[67] An Atlantic trade system similar to this proposal of the auditor's office would be developed in the eighteenth century, when many North American ships supplied the Dutch colony of Suriname. That breach of Dutch mercantile law was welcomed by colonists and winked at by the local authorities because ships from the Netherlands were unable to meet the needs of the colony.[68]

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[64] NA, SG, 5757, 'Poincten van beschrijvinge', 21 February 1643.
[65] Ibid., 12 December 1643.
[66] Emmer en Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld,* 153.
[67] NA, SG, 12564.21, 'Consideratien van de Reeckenkamer', 27 May 1641.
[68] Postma, 'Breaching the mercantile barriers', esp. 114.

Another report, dated 15 December 1644, discusses the problems of the Dutch colonists in New Netherland at the time. The problems of New Netherland, as mentioned in the report, were largely military: the director claimed he needed 150 armed soldiers to end the ongoing war with the Indigenous people (he planned to 'destruct and exterminate' the Indigenous population), and Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan had to be renovated. 'Which lies now so run down that one walks therein over the ramparts without using the gate.' To fulfil the need for colonists, the auditors suggested that passage to New Netherland should be provided for free, or at least on credit. Especially farmhands and slaves were needed to stimulate agriculture. Another consideration was that New Netherland could be a much better operating base for warships than Curaçao, due to the 'abundance of victuals and timber for carpentry'. Above that, one could sail faster to any place in the West Indies and 'keep the designs on the enemy covered'.[69] Overall, the report was 'destructive' for the position of both director Kieft and the Amsterdam chamber,[70] it clearly showed how poorly New Netherland had been administered.

When the auditors wrote this report, the Dutch Republic was still at war with Spain, though the peace treaty would be signed four years later, in 1648. The WIC had ceased its large and risky privateering expeditions by the early 1640s (the last great expeditions against the Spanish treasure fleet were led by Cornelis Jol in 1638 and 1640, but both failed) in favour of investments in Brazil.[71] So the vessels which the WIC imagined to be gathering in the harbour of New Amsterdam would be warships, bound to attack and conquer the rich possessions of the Spanish enemy in the West Indies, rather than privateers preying at the treasure fleets which took the spoils of the enemy's empire to his war chest. When that is taken into consideration, it indeed would be safer for the WIC to locate the rendezvous for its war ships at New Netherland: the ships would not be as close to the Spanish colony of Venezuela and be less at risk of meeting Spanish ships and thereby giving away their own presence.

Earlier in 1644, the WIC had opposed any moves towards peace with Spain, as warfare was the reason of existence for the Company. However, in 1646 the weakened WIC was unable to participate in a privateering war against Portugal, leaving it to a conglomerate of Zeeland firms. In that year the *Heren XIX* also ceased to oppose attempts to make peace with Spain. The WIC

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[69] NA, SG, 12564.30A, 'Rapport & advijs over de gelegentheijt van nieu-nederlant', 15 ecember 1644. A curiosity of this report is that in the introduction it is claimed that inhabitants of 'this city' (probably Amsterdam) sailed to New Netherland first in 1598, eleven years before Henry Hudson. These voyages were made in particular by the Dutch Greenland Company, so it is possible that the author refers to the general area of North America rather than the later colony. Perhaps the trade in stockfish produced at Newfoundland is meant here, Dutch merchants started to sail there around 1600. Source: Maarten Heerlien, 'Stokvishandel tussen de Republiek, Newfoundland en het Middellandse-Zeegebied (1590-1670)', *Tijdschrift voor zeegeschiedenis,* vol. 25, no. 2 (2006) 123-137, esp. 130.
[70] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 45.
[71] Den Heijer, *Geschiedenis van de WIC,* 61-63.

switched its focus from warfare to more peaceful trade with Spanish America.[72] The implication of this development was, of course, that the WIC never used New Netherland as a rendezvous for warships. When the poor financial situation of the WIC in the 1640s is considered, bankruptcy was a permanent threat,[73] it seems unlikely that the Company would ever be able to launch a feasible attack against the Spanish possessions in the Americas anyways.

The military aspects of this report are particularly important as it seems that the WIC tried to have New Netherland take over the function of Curaçao, its expensive and unproductive island in the Caribbean. This suggests that the resolution of 1640, commanding privateers to bring any slaves they captured to Curaçao, had not led to the development of a flourishing regional slave market there. The report was sent to the States General in 1644 and it seems to fulfil three purposes: first keeping the highest authority in the Dutch Republic informed, important as the state had delegated warfare, trade and colonization in the Atlantic to the WIC, and made a large financial investment in the Company as well. Second, the report shows the need for financial support from the States General. Third, it assures the States General that abandoning Curaçao would not cause significant damage to the WICs military function in the still ongoing war against Spain: military operations could be started from New Netherland just as well as from Curaçao. From the perspective of the Company this would make sense: it would be left with one costly colony (New Netherland) instead of two and no longer have the supply problems of Curaçao to worry about, as at least the auditors were convinced that the farms and forests of New Netherland could support a naval base there. The possibility of abandoning Curaçao was considered by Stuyvesant when he presented his plans for that island and New Netherland in 1645. The focus of is proposal was on reducing the number of soldiers, sailors and other WIC employees on the island and placing it in charge of a director who would also be responsible for New Netherland. The thought was that this would make it easier to supply Curaçao.[74]

So the elements of Stuyvesants plan were already known by the middle of the 1640s. Curaçao as a base for attacking the enemy and New Netherland as a producer of food for other colonies. The aspect of administratively linking two colonies within one chartered company, placing one under jurisdiction of the other, was a known principle as well. The Dutch East India Company (VOC) used a system wherein its Asian colonies were placed under the authority of the *Raad van Indië,* the 'Council of India' based in Batavia on Java (though it should be stressed that this organization functioned on a much larger scale).[75] The idea was also known in the Dutch

[72] Jonathan I. Israel, *Dutch primacy in world trade, 1585-1740* (Oxford 1989), 170.
[73] H. J. den Heijer, 'Plannen voor samenvoeging van VOC en WIC', *Tijdschrift voor zeegeschiedenis* vol. 13 no. 2 (1994) 115-130, esp. 115.
[74] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 46-47.
[75] Femme S. Gaastra, *Geschiedenis van de VOC: opkomst, bloei en ondergang* (eleventh edition: Zutphen 2012), 73.

Caribbean: before 1646, Curaçao was nominally placed under the jurisdiction of Recife in Brazil.[76] This was the result of the WIC's attempt to create a uniform, centralized colonial government in 1629. While this centralisation may have nominally existed, it is unlikely that the central government in Recife had any actual influence on Curaçao.[77] The specific connection between Curaçao and New Netherland was one Stuyvesant had already used himself: when he was director of the island the council decided on 3 March 1643 to send a ship to New Netherland to obtain flour and other food.[78] So when Stuyvesant proposed the connection between the colonies, it did not at all come out of the blue.

Uniting the colonies

The *Heren XIX* as highest authority in the WIC decided to place Curaçao and New Netherland under the authority of one man in the fall of 1645, when it met in the city of Middelburg in Zeeland. Stuyvesants plans to merge the colonies were first discussed in the afternoon of the 21st September. Several authors claim that Stuyvesant was present himself,[79] though the minutes of the meeting do not explicitly state so: they only mention that his plan was read. It does seem likely that he was there, however, as on the 5th of October he was present at a meeting of the directors of the Zeeland Chamber,[80] which was based in Middelburg and hosted the meeting of the *Heren XIX*.

It is tempting to think that Stuyvesant made the suggestion of merging New Netherland and Curaçao for his personal profit. After all, as director of Curaçao he was a likely candidate to be promoted to Director-General of both colonies, and that would mean an increase of his own prestige and probably also his salary. But we also have to consider that the directors of the WIC, as well as the *Heren XIX* were not stupid; they would notice if a proposal like that, made by Stuyvesant, purely served his personal ambitions, so compelling arguments would be required to convince them to agree. Also, while it is easy to focus completely on Petrus Stuyvesant as an important historical figure, we should not forget that he was a human being with empathy as well. He had personally witnessed the food shortages on Curaçao while he served the WIC there, so why would he not suggest a solution for this returning human tragedy? Of course Stuyvesant had a personal interest in the new scheme, but that was definitely not the sole reason for its adoption.

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[76] Lagerberg, *Onvoltooid verleden,* 192. It should be noted that Lagerberg gets the dates wrong: claiming that Curaçao was managed from New Netherland only after the loss of Brazil in 1654.
[77] Schiltkamp, 'Legislation, government, jurisprudence', 326.
[78] Charles T. Gehring and Jacob Schiltkamp (eds.), *Curacao papers 1640-1665: transcription*, (2011) 21.
[79] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 46. Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden I,* 40.
[80] NA, OWIC, 26, 'Resoluties van de Kamer Zeeland', 16 June 1644-31 May 1646, scan 227.

A major power within the WIC was the Amsterdam chamber, it was charged with the management of both Curaçao and New Netherland. Because of previous doubts about the value of maintaining Curaçao, the Amsterdam chamber was requested to supply more information to the *Heren XIX*. Stuyvesant was the natural person effect this, so he wrote his report on the matter of the two colonies.[81] Problems in general were a common element of both colonies and this leads to a potential reason for the merger: if colonies that were the responsibility of the Amsterdam chamber were poorly managed, that would diminish the standing of that chamber and perhaps lead the other chambers or the States General to interfere. Around this time the States General were considering the renewal of the charters of the WIC and the VOC, and a merger between the trading companies was proposed.[82] While the merger in the end did not happen, the directors obviously were aware of the situation and might have anticipated a rearrangement of responsibilities within the joint companies. Under such circumstances it would be wise to consolidate their influence in New Netherland and Curaçao by creating a permanent connection between the two.

Creating a durable connection between New Netherland and Curaçao in order to provide the latter with victuals could of course also be beneficial to the long-term attempts to turn New Netherland into an agricultural colony. Providing an extra market for surpluses could stimulate the development of a strong agricultural sector in New Netherland, increasing both the income from taxes paid by the inhabitants as well as the Dutch claim on the area against the English (the English crown claimed North America and already protested against Dutch activities there in the 1620s[83]).

New Netherland and Curaçao were not the only problematic colonies that the *Heren XIX* had to deal with in this meeting. Just a week before the delegates gathered, the directors of the Zeeland chamber, whose turn it was to host and organize the meeting, received bad news from Brazil. In this largest of the WIC's colonies, a revolt had broken out. Portuguese planters, heavily indebted to the company, 'had plotted to murder nearly the entire staff of the Dutch colonial government.' Even though the plot was foiled, the planters managed to escape and organize a revolt.[84] Naturally this was the major issue discussed at the meeting.

The *Heren XIX* did not decide immediately upon the matter of Curaçao and New Netherland, but appointed a commission to study it. This procedure is connected to the decentralized chamber structure of the Dutch chartered companies. Such an organization led to a

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[81] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 45-46.
[82] Den Heijer, 'Plannen voor samenvoeging', esp. 116-117.
[83] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 63.
[84] Alexander Bick, *Governing the free sea: the Dutch West India Company and commercial politics, 1618-1645* (PhD dissertation Princeton University 2012) 41-42.

strong rivalry between some of the chambers and a heavy emphasis on regional interests, it resembles the decentralized structure of the Dutch Republic. The six members of the commission were Johannes de Laet, Jacob Hamel and Johan van Halewijn, representatives from Amsterdam, Adriaen van Heche of Zeeland, Floris Huige of North Holland and Thobius Iddekinge of Groningen. While delegates from Amsterdam formed half of the commission on Curaçao and New Netherland, it goes too far to say that the chamber was overrepresented; Amsterdam had the most representatives in the *Heren XIX* of all the chambers and it was the chamber that traditionally had the most intensive trade with New Netherland, and it directed the policies in the colony.[85] This makes it not unlikely that the delegates from Amsterdam had some specific knowledge on these colonies, for instance through membership of the commissions within the chamber that managed them. This could, unfortunately, not be verified.

A significant figure amongst the commissioners is Johannes de Laet. Born in Antwerp in 1581 out of a wealthy family, he became a scholar at Leiden University, but also invested no less than 54,000 guilders in the WIC. This large investment was probably due to his religious and anti-Spanish sentiments. As a result of this he became a director for the city of Leiden in the Amsterdam chamber of the Company.[86] By the middle of the 1640s, De Laet was one of the most senior, experienced and knowledgeable directors in the Company. 'For potential allies as well colleagues within the Dutch Republic, De Laet's intimate knowledge of the company's history and structure made him the ideal person to represent its interests at the highest levels of government.'[87] De Laet also had a personal interest in New Netherland: he had bought the 1/5 share of Albert Coenraetsz. Burgh in the partnership to found *patroonschappen* in New Netherland. The only successful colony of the four that were to be founded was Rensselaerswijck, and as he had sold half his share between 1636 and 1639, De Laet owned 1/10 of the *patroonschap* at the time of the meeting.[88]

One of the concerns of the commissioners was to find support within the WIC for more investments in especially New Netherland. They found that while the chambers of Amsterdam, Rotterdam and North Holland were willing to invest more, the chambers of Zeeland and Groningen refused to do so. So it was proposed to leave the investments in and management of the colonies to the first three chambers, while the other two would 'take their hands off' meaning that they would no longer have a say in their administration. This proposal was discussed in the *Heren XIX* on the 12th of October, the representatives of Zeeland were asked to discuss it in the

[85] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 107.
[86] Ibid., 'Johannes de Laet en de Nieuwe Wereld', in: *Jaarboek van het Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie,* 50 (Den Haag 1996) 109-130, esp. 109-110.
[87] Bick, *Governing the free sea,* 87.
[88] Jacobs, 'Johannes de Laet', 113.

chamber and reply tomorrow, while the chamber of Groningen was to reply in a letter to the chamber of Amsterdam within a month.

The representatives of Zeeland reported back the next day, stating that their chamber was not willing to contribute anything to New Netherland, as they had declared before. They had not discussed the matter in the chamber however; New Netherland was not discussed by the directors during the meeting on 12 October, and the next meeting was on the 14th. The minutes of the chamber Zeeland show that the directors had decided on the 30th of September not to invest more in New Netherland. When Stuyvesant met them on 5 October, he recommended that they facilitated the outfitting of ships to New Netherland. The directors told him that their representatives at the *Heren XIX* had been instructed on the matter already, and he was dismissed with their best wishes.[89] The *Heren XIX* decided that a failure to pay the agreed investments would be reported to the High Government in Brazil, still a Dutch colony, which would then balance the deficit with the debit of the chamber involved, and send a payment in sugar to the Amsterdam chamber. The fact that sugar shipments from Brazil were used as a collateral to enforce investments in New Netherland says as much about the financial position of the WIC as it says about the decentralized organization: the chambers clearly did not trust the promises of others that they would pay their share.

The disagreement and mistrust between the chambers of the WIC was not exclusively related to New Netherland. The representatives of the States General at the meeting of the *Heren XIX* in April 1644 reported that internal disagreements led to inadequate governance of Brazil, Guinea and Angola. Zeeland and the other chambers accused Amsterdam of not sending ships when it was required; the conflict between Zeeland and Amsterdam went so high that the representatives of the States General had to intervene before the deliberations could continue. The basis for the problems was that the Dutch provinces did not pay the subsidies to the WIC they had promised for its military activities, and that the WIC had invested heavily in warfare as it expected to receive these subsidies.[90] This situation left the Company heavily indebted.

These underlying problems no doubt influenced the decision making regarding expensive and unprofitable outposts like New Netherland and Curaçao. It is important to realize that the different chambers in the WIC had varying interests: even before the Company was founded, merchants from Amsterdam dominated the fur trade to New Netherland.[91] Zeeland, on the other hand, had a strong interest in the colonies in Guyana, also known as the Wild Coast; the unwritten rule was that the Zeeland chamber was the only one in the WIC that founded colonies

[89] NA, OWIC, 26, 'Resoluties van de Kamer Zeeland', 16 June 1644-31 May 1646, scan 225, 227, and 229.
[90] NA, SG, 5757, 'Rapport van die gecommitierde van haer Hooch Mog.', April 1644.
[91] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 55-60.

and sent ships there.[92] The governance of these colonies was also the responsibility of the chambers of Amsterdam and Zeeland respectively.

The commission appointed on the 21st September did not only investigate the support of the chambers for more investments, but also wrote a report on the required investments and the budget needed. The extensive budget was added to the minutes of the 14th October.[93] It is not clear how much of the document is based on the plan of Stuyvesant, as the latter does no longer exist, but it seems likely that the commissioners relied on his information about the situation on Curaçao. Stuyvesant had decided to leave the island on 22 August 1644 and arrived in Amsterdam in December,[94] so he must have had the most recent knowledge on the situation available. The commissioners suggested to reduce the garrison of Curaçao, which counted 318 men on 1 September 1644 (that date is another indication that the commissioners relied on information from Stuyvesant: he left Curaçao around that time) to 116, specifying how many men were required for each function; the barber and the baker would both have a helper and 60 soldiers were deemed enough to defend the island, though the garrison would of course include officers and supporting staff as well. These 116 men included twenty men for the vessel *Parguit.* To resupply Curaçao and relieve the garrison, two ships were needed, the commissioners pointed out that these could also bring the 2,200 skins from Caracas that were in store at Curaçao to the Netherlands, as well as unnecessary artillery. One of the ships present at Curaçao, the *Swol,* was so worn out that the report suggested to use it for a single journey to New Netherland, loaded with horses, salt and scrap iron, and then sell both the ship and its cargo there. Another ship would be needed, however, to supply Curaçao with victuals and New Netherland with horses (which were bred on Aruba). Before providing the lists of required supplies to maintain Curaçao, the commissioners gave a few reflections on their proposal:

> 'Whereby Curaçao is placed under management of New Netherland, with little costs the garrison is maintained & the poor people saved from the terrible hunger, which they have sometimes suffered from.
> It would truly be for the Company more serviceable to leave the island of Curaçao, but that may not come to pass without communication of the High Mighty [the States General], as well as His Highness [the stadtholder] & if that may be done, are we equally held to pay the majority of the aforementioned expenses by removing the populace from there.
> In the meantime communication will be done to Her High Mighty & His Highness of the situation of aforementioned island, and that one can have all the advantages of New Netherland on the enemy, except the many horses from Curaçao, which one can use on Terra Firma, and also the aforementioned island, to keep with the aforementioned

[92] Den Heijer, *Geschiedenis van de WIC,* 88.
[93] The budget as presented by the commissioners is also published in: Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden,* documents I, 59-66. But this publication is not as extensive as the original document.
[94] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 41.

garrison, until and when Her Highest mentioned, such as requested, shall please to abandon the aforementioned island.'

The priorities are clear: this plan was a way of cutting the expenses on Curaçao as much as possible, but also to make the food supply of the island more secure. The commission had little faith in the use of Curaçao, however. The reasoning that New Netherland could take over the military function of Curaçao fits in very well with the earlier conclusion of the auditor's office. It is noteworthy that the horses of Curaçao were considered to be potentially useful in Tierra Firme. From the context it becomes clear that a military function is intended here, though it seems unlikely that the WIC was ever again in a financial position which allowed a large-scale invasion of the Spanish colonies on the mainland.

Perhaps here we see the influence of Johannes de Laet; in 1644 he had published his *Iaerlyck Verhael,* a history of the WIC in the first years of its existence between 1624 and 1636. In this work he emphasized how the Company had hurt the Spanish interests, estimating that the total damage done to the enemy by the WIC was just over 118 million guilders. In this work he clearly shows his anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish sentiments.[95] De Laet saw the WIC as an instrument to wage war against Spain. Curaçao would of course be a suitable base to support that effort, and is as such mentioned in the report. Yet it seems that De Laet had little influence on the final report, as it emphasizes how costs can be saved by reducing the size of the garrison, and even more so by abandoning the island completely. That is not a suggestion that is to be expected from De Laet.

The commissioners added a few remarks to their advice, the most interesting are those concerning trade. One of their considerations was that the free trade to New Netherland should be limited to the *patroons* and colonists who lived there. It turned out that free trade for all inhabitants of the Netherlands had caused many merchants to sail back and forth rather than settle there and gave room to smuggling, strengthening the enemy and destabilizing the colony with alcohol. They also advised to demand that all ships sailing to New Netherland first called at Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan to be searched for contraband and to ensure that the taxes due were paid.[96]

Concluding remarks

None of the principles introduced with the governmental connection of Petrus Stuyvesant were really new. Subordination of one colony to another was practised by the Dutch East India

[95] Ibid., 'Johannes de Laet', 112.

[96] Except where indicated otherwise, these paragraphs are based on: NA, SG, 12564.17, 'Notulen van de Heren XIX, aan de Staten-Generaal overgeleverd op 19 oktober 1645'.

Company and the WIC had used a similar principle in Brazil. While the influence that Stuyvesant could exercise in Curaçao from his residence in New Netherland will be discussed in chapter three, the fact that he now had two colonies to govern is an indication that at least in the mind of the metropolitan elite this was a perfectly feasible arrangement. Supplying Brazil from New Netherland had been suggested before, so this notion of long-distance inter-colonial food supplies was not new either. Stuyvesant himself had during his service on Curaçao send a ship to New Netherland to obtain food there, so he was aware of the possibility. The compromise to leave investment and responsibility for the two colonies with a limited number of chambers is a reflection of the distrust, disagreement and conflict of interests within the WIC. When Stuyvesant appeared in the meeting of the States General on 28 July 1646 to take his oath of office before the highest authorities of the Dutch Republic,[97] everything seemed to be in place to create a small part of an Atlantic system before the term existed.

[97] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 47.

2. Shipping and trade

It may be obvious, but sailing against the wind is difficult on a ship without an engine.[98] Therefore in the age of sail a great amount of time could be saved by following the ocean currents and prevailing winds, even if that meant that a distance travelled became longer. The most optimal sailing route to the Caribbean was known early: Columbus himself has remarked that on the way from Europe to the Caribbean it was best to take a southern route.[99] The primary factors to consider are winds and ocean currents, whose directions generally coincide. In the age of sail this had to be taken into account, especially in the equatorial Atlantic region, where the currents go in three different directions.[100] Ships sailing from the Netherlands to North America could do so the fastest by sailing south first: via the Portugal Current and the Canary Current until catching up with the North Equatorial Current between 10° N and 20° N, which would take them west across the Atlantic. This would lead towards the Lesser Antilles where the crew could either sail north by the Antilles Current, the Florida Current and the Gulf Stream or west into the Caribbean. Sailing back from New Netherland to Europe could be done on the Gulf Stream via the direct route.[101] Ships sailing to Europe from the Caribbean would take the shortest route via the Bahama's, ships sailing out of the Gulf of Mexico could only do so through the Straits of Florida.[102]

So while sailing to Curaçao on the way from Europe to New Netherland was only a slight detour from the fastest route (this southern route was used almost exclusively since the 1620s)[103] the Atlantic Ocean's currents made it unlikely to sail from New Netherland to Europe by way of Curaçao. This has a major implication: it would be difficult to supply Curaçao with food produced in New Netherland; the ocean currents made it logical for merchants on their rounds through the Atlantic to make their last calls before sailing to Europe in North American colonies like Virginia, New Netherland and New England, if they did not sail directly from the Caribbean to Europe.

Dutch private shipping focused on profit rather than maintaining the WICs empire, and Dutch merchants gladly sold their commodities in the colonies of other states in exchange for cash crops. In 1662 between 120 and 150 Dutch ships were reported to be calling in the French

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[98] N. A. M. Rodger, 'Atlantic seafaring', in: Nicholas Canny and Philip Morgan (eds.), *The Oxford handbook of the Atlantic world c. 1450-c. 1850* (Oxford etc. 2011) 71-86, esp. 80.
[99] G. Asaert et al (eds.), *Maritieme geschiedenis der Nederlanden,* vol. 2 (Bussum 1977) 199.
[100] J. R. Bruijn et al*, Dutch-Asiatic shipping in the 17th and 18th centuries,* vol. I (The Hague 1987) 58.
[101] For information on ocean currents in the Atlantic: Arthur J. Mariano, *Ocean surface currents,* http://oceancurrents.rsmas.miami.edu/atlantic/atlantic-arrows.html retrieved: 2 March 2015.
[102] Asaert et al, *Maritieme geschiedenis*, vol. 2, 199.
[103] J. A. Jacobs, *De scheepvaart en handel van de Nederlandse Republiek op Nieuw-Nederland 1609-1675,* 2 volumes (undergraduate thesis Rijksuniversiteit Leiden 1989) 54.

Caribbean, as opposed to only three or four French ships.[104] This number of Dutch ships might be exaggerated, but it is worth to note that in 1664 the French government was planning to close its colonies to foreign trade. This measure would not only be ruinous to Dutch merchants living on the islands, but it is especially a strong indicator that foreign trade in the French Caribbean was, whatever the exact numbers, perceived to be problematically large.[105] The French government was by no means alone in its mercantilist policies: the English Parliament passed its first Navigation Act in 1651 to prevent the colonies from trading with the Dutch,[106] though planters on Barbados protested vigorously against it and claimed they would not abide by the restrictions of the new law.[107]

In the same year when 120 to 150 Dutch ships were claimed to call in the French Caribbean, 1662, only ten ships sailed to New Netherland. A possible explanation for such small interest of Dutch merchants in New Netherland is the limited size of its primary export products; according to contemporary estimates, in 1660 between 25,000 and 30,000 beaver pelts were exported, the trade was already declining by then. Export figures for tobacco are more difficult to find, but it is likely that in the early 1660s New Netherland exported 400,000 pounds of tobacco. To put that number into context: the exports would fit in one thousand barrels, while Amsterdam imported 12,000 barrels of Virginia tobacco in 1675.[108] So the tobacco export of New Netherland was very small in comparison to Virginia.

To put this into perspective it is useful to give a rough estimate of the load a ship could take. In 1647 the vessel *Prinses* was shipwrecked and 16,000 pelts were lost.[109] This indicates that the entire export of pelts could be sent to Europe on two ships. Perhaps the tobacco export was somewhat more voluminous, but it seems that the small number of ships calling at New Netherland each year could easily meet the demand for cargo space on export, even while the six ships calling in 1647 form a somewhat low number compared to other years.

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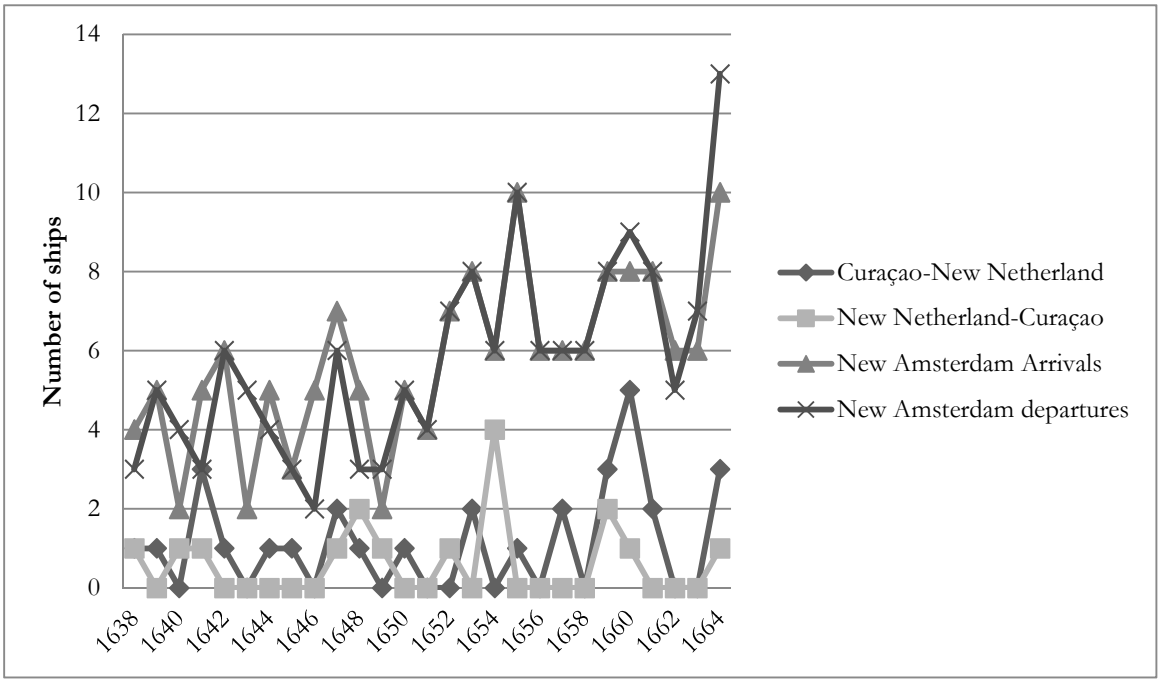
104 Klarenbeek, 'Grutters op de Antillen', 23-24.
105 Henk den Heijer, '"Waeren wij maer soo geluckigh dat de negotie op d'eilanden liber mochte blijven": brieven aan koopman Jan Passchier op Guadeloupe, 1664', in: Erik van der Doe, Perry Moree and Dirk J. Tang (eds.), *Buitgemaakt en teruggevonden: Nederlandse brieven en scheepspapieren in een Engels archief,* Sailing letters journaal V (Zutphen 2013) 65-72.
106 Bridenbaugh, *No peace beyond the line,* 177.
107 Koot, *Empire at the periphery*, 93.
108 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 183, 204.
109 Janny Venema, *Beverwijck: a Dutch village on the American frontier, 1652-1664* Hilversum 2003) 195.

Figure 1. Ship journeys to New Netherland, 1638-1664[110]



When looking at Figure 1 the first thing that becomes clear is that the trade between Curaçao and New Netherland was hardly significant when compared to the total maritime traffic to and from New Netherland. While it should be stressed the data used here is incomplete, it is the best currently available and serves the purpose of placing shipping between New Netherland and Curaçao in its perspective. The majority of these ships were on their way to or from the Netherlands, but at least one merchant resident in New Netherland, Augustus Heermans, was outfitting his own ships and sending them to Curaçao for dyewood and cotton wool around 1650.[111] More important than the number of ships, is their payload.

[110] Wherever this graph indicates zero journeys in a particular year, I have not found any journeys. This data is derived from multiple sources, the total arrivals and departures at New Amsterdam are derived from H. J. den Heijer et al, *Dutch Atlantic connections: the circulation of people, goods and ideas in the Atlantic world, 1600-1795* (6 June 2009) http://www.persistent-identifier.nl/?identifier=urn:nbn:nl:ui:13-82v-78l except for the data for the years 1650-1659, these are not displayed correctly in this database and are therefore copied from: Oliver A. Rink, *Holland on the Hudson: an economic and social history of Dutch New York* (Ithaca, Londen 1986), 73. I have assumed that each sailing to New Netherland counted by Rink consists of an arrival and a departure. The data on shipping between New Netherland and Curaçao was collected from various sources, most notably notes made by Jaap Jacobs who was so kind to share these. Additional information was found in: Jacobs, *Scheepvaart en handel;* Gehring, *Curacao papers;* Charles T. Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* New Netherland documents series vol. XI (2000); Ibid., *Correspondence 1654-1658,* New Netherland documents series vol. XII (2003); Den Heijer, *Dutch Atlantic connections,* and in various notarial deeds: Stadsarchief Amsterdam (SA) 5075: notarissen ter standplaats Amsterdam. A problem with the charter contracts found amongst the notarial deeds is that they are often unspecific: generally they only state a few ports where the ship is to call, but mention that it can go, load and unload 'wherever necessary' leaving the details to the captain or *supercargo*.

[111] Cathy Matson, *Merchants and empire: trading in colonial New York* (Baltimore, Londen 1998) 26.

The food supply of Curaçao

As pointed out in the previous chapter, one of the arguments for creating a durable connection between Curaçao and New Netherland was that the food supply of Curaçao was insufficient: the WIC hoped to sustain the inhabitants with imports from New Netherland. While sixteen sailings from New Netherland to Curaçao are known, of only four ships it is certain that they carried food.[112] But then there are good reasons to assume that other ships carried provisions for Curaçao as well, ships were chartered by the WIC to sail to the Caribbean, assigned as ferry between the colonies or sent from New Netherland to Curaçao to obtain goods there. In all such cases it is possible or very likely that the vessels maintained the supply line. The effectiveness of this food supply to Curaçao will be discussed later.

The problem here is that the journeys have to be reconstructed from scattered sources and that complete bills of lading are only preserved in the most extraordinary of circumstances. For most ships it is entirely unknown what their load was when they left the port of New Amsterdam for Curaçao. It is however not unreasonable to assume that all ships sailing on this particular route carried at least some victuals for Curaçao in their holds. After all, we have seen that while sailing from the Caribbean to New Netherland is not a great detour on the journey home (though crossing the Atlantic directly was faster), sailing to Europe from North America by way of Curaçao is not logical. So ships sailing from New Netherland to Curaçao had a specific reason to go there, especially for ships chartered by the WIC there is a good chance that their purpose was to save the population of Curaçao from starvation by delivering food.

So rather than trying to give a good estimate of the food supply from New Netherland to Curaçao, it makes more sense to establish if that supply was sufficient. It was not. On 11 June 1657, Matthias Beck reflected that the WIC had relied too much on New Netherland to supply Curaçao. When the Spaniards still controlled the islands, they relied on locally produced food, like the abundance of fish. But the Spanish had only few people on the island, and no garrison. The eighteen thousand (!) cattle that apparently were on Curaçao in 1634 had all long been slaughtered by the Dutch, as well as the many goats and sheep. Fishing was troublesome: the men ruined their shoes when standing in the water, fishing barefoot was impossible due to the sharp rocks, and providing fishing boats incorporated the risk that someone (either slave or free) would use them to escape. Furthermore, the soldiers felt that fishing was a task below their profession. Agriculture had its own difficulties on the arid island, making it impossible to produce enough food locally to supply the Dutch garrison.

[112] The *Neptune* in 1640/41, the *Swol* in 1648, the *Haen* in 1654, and the *Nieuw Amstel* in 1660.

This letter describing the problems of the food supply is more detailed than others, but the central message that more food was needed is by no means unique. A list made on September 11th 1658 recites the goods that are required on Curaçao 'in service of the Company'. These include carts to be drawn by horses, a plough, materials to build a mill, materials to repair ships and make barrels and 'fresh victuals of the fruits grown in New Netherland, as much as can be missed there'. The word 'fruits' (*vruchten*) seems to refer here to all vegetable foods. Beck also asked for 'all kinds of fresh garden seeds'. So clearly he had not given up on his attempts to grow food on the island, as the requested plough also indicates.

Despite the constant messages about food shortages, consignments of food did reach Curaçao from time to time. L. van Ruyven wrote a statement on 2 May 1659 that he had received a consignment of supplies, sent by Stuyvesant, in the Company warehouse, this included pork, meat, wheat, peas, beer, and brandy. However, Beck wrote on the 23rd August of that year: 'we wait here anxiously for one or the other ship from the fatherland that might bring us the aid of victuals'. So it seems that the supplies that arrived were too small and irregular to be really sufficient. Curaçao was not only supplied from New Netherland, on 4 March 1660, supplies were bought from captain John Alen, who had arrived on his ship *Den Bloesem* from New England (the name of the captain and the port of origin indicate that the name of the ship was made Dutch), these supplies included white oats, tobacco, meat, and pork. Even in 1664, Matthias Beck still requested food supplies from New Netherland.[113]

Before the Dutch takeover, Curaçao was basically a large ranch where cattle and other livestock was raised for their hides. These were shipped to Europe, but the resulting enormous quantities of meat outstripped the needs of the local population. So it was available cheap or even for free, as the English privateer John Hawkins reported in 1565.[114] While Beck in his 1657 letter fumed at the slaughtering of this massive herd of cattle by the Dutch, it is understandable that it happened. As shown in the previous chapter, the garrison of Curaçao counted 318 men in 1644, and the force that conquered it in 1634 consisted of 180 sailors and 225 soldiers.[115] When the regular reports of food shortages are taken into account, it is only understandable that the cattle was eaten so quickly: it was either that or starvation.

Of course the 1645 reforms, which included a reduction of the garrison to 116 men, must have made the stocks on the island last longer, but even then a regular supply of food was needed. The supplies that were shipped to Curaçao also left plenty of room for improvement, in the same letter to the directors in Amsterdam of 11 June 1657, Beck wrote that he did not dare to

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113 These paragraphs are based on: Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 121-124, 144, 157, 169-170, 211, 230.
114 Linda M. Rupert, 'Contraband trade and the shaping of colonial societies in Curacao and Tierra Firme', *Itinerario,* vol. 30, no. 3 (2006) 35-54, esp. 36.
115 Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden,* I, 22.

give the beans and peas delivered by the *Bontekoe* to the slaves, as he feared it would cause disease amongst them: 'these are better suited for animals than for humans to eat.'[116] It is also questionable whether New Netherland was able to produce enough food for Curaçao by the middle of the 1640s: there are indications that the colonists in New Netherland had to buy food from the Indigenous regularly because they could not produce enough themselves. When director Kieft and his council decided to demand a tax from the Indians in 1639, as contribution to the defence of the colony, they wanted it to be paid in maize. Possibly to prevent famine amongst the European population.[117] That is not exactly a good basis to supply other colonies like Curaçao with food.

Another potential explanation for the taxation plan of Director Kieft is that he hoped to export the maize as an extra source of income. But there are other indications that the food supply of New Netherland was insufficient, even in later years. A paragraph of the letter from the directors in Amsterdam to Stuyvesant and the Council, dated 4 November 1653, is quite clear on the issue:

> 'The crops, which had been raised, have, we hope, been safely harvested and although we can hardly believe that the people of New England would have the audacity to blockade and besiege us there, which you apprehend most, the grain and other victuals must not be consumed lavishly at this time; we are told that the Colony of Renselaerswijck use their grain to brew strong beer etc., and you have done well and acted with due caution by giving them a timely warning. As by prohibiting the trade with New England no more meat or bacon can be drawn from the north, which you fear will cause a scarcity of these provisions, therefore we have at this time resolved to affix handbills proclaiming that all who will send victual to New Netherland shall pay no duties on them; that will encourage merchants to ship them.'[118]

We can see here how the directors reacted to the message of Stuyvesant, who was not only worried about the meat imports from New England, which were apparently blocked by the First Anglo-Dutch War, but also about the food consumption within New Netherland. The obvious explanation is that New Netherland relied on food imports and that the measures to limit consumption and increase alternative imports from the Netherlands were aimed at preserving the stocks until the normal import pattern could be resumed. However, the remark of the directors that they did not expect hostile activities ('to blockade and besiege') of the inhabitants of New England suggests that all described measures were aimed at potential hostilities within New Netherland. Of course, Stuyvesant considered the possibility that the colony would be invaded, which might result in a long siege of Fort Amsterdam on Manhattan, or a retreat by the Dutch troops to Fort Orange. In such circumstances agriculture would be difficult and the crop yield insufficient. That was no doubt why the directors hoped that private merchants would replenish the food stores in New Netherland.

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[116] Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 125.
[117] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 133, 194.
[118] Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 230.

While it is not possible to definitely say if New Netherland was able to generate an agricultural surplus large enough to make regular exports to Curaçao feasible, its relatively small population[119] makes a comparison with New France possible. That colony also had an equally small demographic development. 'Canada provided no significant agricultural surplus to the mother country, nor was the integration between mainland and islands comparable to the British case.'[120] So the small population of New France limited the agricultural output to such a degree that it could not export significant amounts of food. Though it should be noted that this comparison between French and British colonies is made with the slave societies in the Caribbean in mind, these plantation colonies had a lot more mouths to feed than the small outpost Curaçao.

Providing ships

The directors in Amsterdam recognized in their letter to Stuyvesant of 7 April 1657 that the connection between Curaçao and New Netherland did not work out well, so they decided to designate a ship to serve solely as *veerman* (passage boat) between the two colonies. 'You must not omit to keep up on all occasions a good correspondence with the island and whenever possible provide for it.' The directors had the confiscated Swedish ship *Hay* repaired, renamed it *Diemen* (after a town near Amsterdam) and send it to Curaçao to bring horses and salt to New Netherland. It is not clear why the Swedish ship *Hay* was confiscated in the first place, likely for trading in the Swedish colony on the Delaware river, which the WIC would consider a breach of its monopoly as it claimed the Delaware as part of New Netherland. In the same letter, the directors asked Stuyvesant for more information on the load that was on board when the ship was confiscated: 'If any reclamation had been made here, we would have been thoroughly embarrassed'. In other words, the directors wanted to avoid legal problems. That they wrote to the Director-General and Council of New Netherland about the issue is of course a clear indication that the ship was confiscated under the jurisdiction of that colony.[121]

The ship *Diemen* is referred to by Beck as a *jacht* or a *scheepien*,[122] both terms refer to a small ship.[123] While the concerns about the connection between Curaçao and New Netherland were no doubt genuine, the fact that a small confiscated ship was used shows that the directors aimed at a

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[119] Ernst van den Boogaart, 'The servant migration to New Netherland, 1624-1664', in: P. C. Emmer (ed.), *Colonialism and migration: indentured labour before and after slavery* (Dordrecht, Noston, Lancaster 1986) 55-81, esp. 77.
[120] Silvia Marzagalli, 'The French Atlantic world in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries', in: Canny and Morgan (eds.) The Oxford handbook of the Atlantic, 235-251, esp. 240-241.
[121] Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 128, 133.
[122] Ibid., *Curaçao papers,* 157, 203.
[123] Asaert et al, *Maritieme geschiedenis,* vol. 2, 54-55.

limited investment. On the other hand, the notion of designating a ship solely for the connection between the colonies was not new, already on 18 May 1654 the directors had promised Stuyvesant to look out for a ship sized between 70 and 80 *lasten* for this purpose, and send it at the earliest convenience.[124] As it took the directors three years to find a ship that they had confiscated rather than bought, it truly looks like the WIC could not or would not invest any more than strictly necessary in the colonies.

'We presume that the yacht *Diemen* has been lost, because of her long delay, and have therefore written to Vice-Director Beck on the 7th of August, that in place of her he should employ for the trade between New Netherland and Curaçao the ship *St. Jan,* which was expected there daily with slaves from the coast of Guinea and which, we learn, is well adapted for it.'[125] This quote from the letter the directors sent to Stuyvesant on 22 December 1659 shows that the *Diemen* did not only sink fairly soon, but also that the WIC found the connection between Curaçao and New Netherland important enough to appoint a replacement ship immediately. Earlier that year, Matthias Beck had already expressed some doubts about the ship in his letter to Stuyvesant of 30 April:

> 'I am sorry that we here have so little occasion and opportunity to correspond with your Honour and that there is no capable little ship so to remain in the water between N. Netherland and here continuously, to take the necessary from there to here and from here to there in return, that should be a more capable vessel than the little ship *Diemen,* with a loyal shipmaster and crew thereon, so to dare send something of importance on it.'[126]

Beck clearly had little faith in both the quality of the ship and the reliability of its crew, which again indicates that the directors of the WIC had spent little money on it. Beck wrote on 4 February 1660 to the directors that he presumed that the *Diemen* had sunk because of its old age and the weight of the salt that had been loaded into it.[127] The *St. Jan* suffered the same fate as the *Diemen,* however, as it was wrecked on the island of Rocas. 'We hope and do not doubt, that in consideration of your own and of our urgent projects […] you will dispatch another suitable frigate to this coast before winter.'[128] Stuyvesant wrote to the directors on 21 April 1660, so the *St. Jan* sank within a year after assuming her duties as ferry between the colonies.

These were not the first vessels that the WIC specifically employed for use in the colonies placed under Stuyvesants authority; in 1652, the directors ordered Stuyvesant to build a new sloop for the local traffic between the islands of Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire. The sloop that was previously used for that purpose was lost, and the directors judged that it was more

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[124] Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 13.
[125] E. B. O'Callaghan and B. Fernow (eds.), *Documents relative to the colonial history of the state of New York,* (fifteen volumes, Albany 1856-1883) vol. XIV, 448-449.
[126] Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 151.
[127] Ibid., 203.
[128] O'Callaghan, *Documents relative*, vol. XIV, 469.

convenient to build the replacement in New Netherland than to send one from Europe. 'The necessary materials for it can be found among the present shipment.' They wrote on April 4th that year.[129] It seems that this small ship was also lost while on the way to New Netherland, so in July 1654 the directors instructed Stuyvesant to buy a vessel of about 18 to 20 *lasten* and send it to Curaçao, fully equipped and with a good pilot who knew the waters.[130]

Ten months later, on May 26th, 1655, the directors wrote to Stuyvesant that they had received word from him that he had bought the ship *Abraham's Offerande* to use between the islands and if necessary for the connection between Curaçao and New Netherland. They approved of the transaction, but not of the bill of 800 guilders they received for it: 'for we have on several occasions expressed our displeasure with such transactions and given special orders not to trouble us with such drafts.'[131] The directors refused to pay and informed Stuyvesant that they would return all such bills received from him. This seems a bit strange as this letter was written by the WIC chamber of Amsterdam, the same that instructed Stuyvesant to buy a ship. The two letters were written by different directors, but one would expect that they in both cases spoke for the chamber. The formulation of the directors suggests that there already was an understanding that Stuyvesant had to manage the colonies with his own budget, even if the instructions of the directors meant extra expenses.

The question remains if 800 guilders for a ship is expensive. The price of newly built ships in 1676 ranged between 90 guilders per last in Zaandam (a Dutch town north of Amsterdam) and 142 guilders per last in England, though these prices were charged for newly built, large ships.[132] These prices are an indication of the total amount Stuyvesant would have to pay for a ship. The intention to use the *Abraham's Offerande* primarily for local connections between the islands of Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire and only optionally for journeys from there to New Netherland suggests that it was a small vessel. Stuyvesant was instructed to buy a ship of 18 to 20 lasts, if he would have bought a new ship of 20 lasts that would have cost him between 1,800 and 2,840 guilders. A used ship would probably be cheaper than that, but as the bill to the directors was 800 guilders, it seems that Stuyvesant paid at least a part of the expense from the regular budget of New Netherland.

The constant efforts by Stuyvesant and the WIC directors in Amsterdam to find a ship to connect the islands around Curaçao and to bridge the distance between Curaçao and New Netherland shows that the other maritime traffic in those waters was exceptional and infrequent: it was clearly not enough to establish the desired durable connection. That situation remained at

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129 Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 156.
130 Ibid., *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 22-23.
131 Ibid., 57-58.
132 Asaert et al, *Maritieme geschiedenis,* vol. 2, 73.

least until the late 1650s, as the directors even by the end of the decade decided to replace the *Diemen* when they learned that the ship was lost at sea. There seems to have been some urgency to the case, as the directors dedicated a slave ship on the way to Curaçao as ferry, rather than finding a suitable vessel in the Netherlands. This may be explained by the comment that the *St. Jan* was 'well adapted', in other words: a suitable ship would be there soon, best use that and be done with it.

In 1660, the directors seemed to be content with the work done by Stuyvesant, as they wrote to him on 9 March: 'we approve of the orders, issued by you, for provisioning the people of Curaçao and sending there commodities and wooden wares'. The directors hoped that the salt taken from Curaçao on the return journeys would cover the expenses for provisioning the island. They also reflected that the maximum had been done to stimulate private trade: trade in horses and salt for private merchants had been made as easy as possible and as the trade was already growing a recent raise of export duties was not considered to be a problem.[133]

Schiltkamp has claimed that the trade between Curaçao and New Netherland never developed into its intended regular form due to a lack of ships.[134] This was indeed an important factor, as the attempts to designate a ship solely for this connection show: a dedicated vessel would not be necessary if the other shipping was sufficient. The distance between the colonies may have been a contributory factor, but this could be overcome: in the eighteenth century Curaçao relied on food imports from New York and New England to support a much larger population.[135] What matters is that Curaçao had, by then, developed into a regional trade centre. Large amounts of colonial products were shipped through the port of Willemstad,[136] providing a good supply of commodities to take in return for the delivered food. New Netherland merchants could also trade in Virginia, where a monoculture of tobacco created good possibilities for profits.[137] That market obviously was also open in the eighteenth century, when supplying Curaçao was perfectly feasible for merchants from North America, but by that time the population and agricultural production of the British colonies on the mainland had obviously grown. New Netherland was only a small colony, and its merchants may have been perfectly happy with the commercial opportunities that Virginia and other nearby places offered, thereby avoiding the longer and riskier journey to Curaçao.

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133 O'Callaghan, *Documents relative*, vol. XIV, 458.
134 Schiltkamp, 'Curaçao onder Beck', 253-254.
135 Wim Klooster, 'Curaçao as a transit center to the Spanish Main and the French West Indies' in: Gert Oostindie en Jessia V. Roitman (red.), *Dutch Atlantic connections, 1680-1800: linking empires, bridging borders* (Leiden, Boston 2014) 25-51, esp. 26-27.
136 Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 181-197.
137 Claudia Schnurmann, *Atlantische Welten: Engländer und Niederländer im amerikanisch-atlantischen Raum 1648-1713*, Stuart Jenks, Michael North and Rolf Walter (eds.), Wirtschafts- un Sozialhistorische Studien IX (Köln, Weimar, Wien 1998) 127.

Shipping the other way around, from Curaçao to New Netherland was a lot more intensive, as we have seen the Atlantic Ocean's current and wind patterns make this order of traffic the easier navigable of the two. The flow of goods from Curaçao to New Netherland is also far better documented than the other way around, as Stuyvesant was kept informed by his deputy on Curaçao and those letters remain while nothing is left of the seventeenth-century archives of Curaçao. The primary goods sent from Curaçao to New Netherland were salt, *stokvishout*[138] and horses; not coincidentally goods originating from Bonaire, Curaçao and Aruba. Other exports included unspecified 'merchant's goods' (European manufactures and the like), slaves, sugar, and assorted small goods like four parrots for Stuyvesant himself.[139]

The slave trade

The number of Africans (*negers,* literally 'negroes' are often mentioned in documents relating to New Netherland, but while many will have been slaves the legal status is seldom mentioned) in the total population of New Netherland is estimated at about 100 in 1639, growing to around 500 in 1664, these numbers include both slaves and manumitted people.[140] These numbers indicate that the slave trade to New Netherland was relatively small, and the number of slave ships arriving at the colony reflects that. Three ships had New Netherland as their principal place of slave landing after the middle passage, delivering in total 1,004 slaves.[141] In addition to this, ships from Curaçao brought slaves as well.

Eight ships are known to have sailed from Curaçao to New Netherland with slaves on board. Among these are the *Gideon* and the *Bontekoe*, both had made a transatlantic voyage. The *Gideon* called at Curaçao in 1664 and continued to New Netherland without delivering any slaves at the island. The *Bontekoe* arrived at Curaçao with 191 slaves in 1657, but it is not certain if any of them were brought to New Netherland when the ship went there. Two other ships that should be mentioned are the *Eyckenboom* and the *Vogelstruys:* they are reported to have brought slaves from Curaçao to New Netherland, but it is unknown how many. However, the former had 50 horses from Aruba on board, and the latter a load of wood and 'unsold goods' (probably European manufactures); it is therefore unlikely that the slaves on board of each of these ships numbered more than a few dozen: there cannot have been space for more than that. The other ships carried five (in two cases), ten, and one 41 slaves, all journeys recorded took place between

138 Wood of the *Haematoxylum brasiletto* also known as Mexican Logwood, used in Europe for making paint.
139 Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 146.
140 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 267, 320.
141 Eltis, *The Trans-Atlantic slave trade database,* retrieved: 10 March 2015. The ships are: *Witte Paard,* arrived 15 September 1655, voyage id 11295; *Wapen van Amsterdam,* arrived in 1663, voyage id 11294; and *Gideon,* arrived 8 July 1664, voyage id 11414.

1657 and 1664.[142] So the slave trade from Curaçao to New Netherland was small in comparison to the trans-Atlantic trade.

The directors of the WIC chamber in Amsterdam regularly pointed out in their letters to Stuyvesant that the importation of slaves should be promoted to stimulate agriculture in the colony. In a concept for the instructions to the director and council of New Netherland, dated July 1645, the WIC pressed the issue. Especially at the request of *patroons*, colonists and other farmers, as many slaves should be brought to the colony as these customers would want to pay a good price for. The *Heren XIX* had to be informed annually about the number of slaves arriving in the colony.[143] The same stipulation was included in the final version of the instructions for Stuyvesant and his council of July 1646.[144]

Apparently any efforts that Stuyvesant made to bring more slaves to the colony were in vain. Although the Atlantic slave trade remained a monopoly of the WIC and as such outlawed to all Dutch private traders until 1730,[145] the directors in Amsterdam wrote on 6 June 1653 to Stuyvesant that they had permitted some private merchants to buy slaves in Africa and sell them in the West Indies. This is related to the bad financial situation of the Company in the 1650s: the Brazilian adventure had led to a near bankruptcy, so the slave trade was largely left to private merchants between 1650 and 1675 (while the WIC was not obliged to give private merchants permission to enter the slave trade, it could do so).[146] As the directors expected that some ships might call in New Netherland to sell slaves there, they asked Stuyvesant not to charge the recognition fees normally required in such circumstances and to assist the slave traders instead, 'in order to prevent anything which might tend to the obstruction of agriculture [in New Netherland].'[147]

To waive the recognition fees and their income cannot be a decision that the WIC took lightly, especially in its dire financial situation. It was not the first attempt to stimulate the slave trade to New Netherland either: in 1648 the States General already permitted inhabitants of the colony to purchase slaves in Dutch Brazil, and in 1652 the WIC allowed them to buy slaves in Africa for use in the colony. Emmer observes that the WIC has not gone so far in any other colony before the eighteenth century. Even in Brazil where many monopolies were abolished quickly on instigation of governor Johan Maurits van Nassau-Siegen, the WIC held to its

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142 A list of these slave journeys can be found in the appendix.
143 NA, SG, 12564.30A, 'Instructies van de gecommitteerde ter vergaderinge vande xix…,' July 1645.
144 Ibid., 12272, 'Register van akten van aanstelling van Generaliteitsdienaren onder het zegel en cachet van de Staat', 1640-1650, folio 198r.
145 Postma, *The Dutch,* 201.
146 Den Heijer, *De geoctrooieerde compagnie,* 149, 186.
147 Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 214-215.

profitable trade in people.[148] This emphasis on promoting the slave trade to New Netherland shows that at least in the perception of the WIC's management in the Netherlands there was a great need of slaves in the colony.

Already in 1641 the auditor's office of the WIC reported that while New Netherland was one of the most fertile Dutch colonies, the agricultural yield was far below its potential. It was believed that the farm-hands, brought to New Netherland at the great expense of the colonists, concentrated on trade and neglected agriculture. A higher production would lower the price of agricultural products and make it feasible to ship them to the Netherlands and perhaps other parts of Europe. In the eyes of people within the WIC, slaves were required to achieve this.[149]

It looks like the colonists in New Netherland had different ideas about the use of slaves in agriculture. Few colonists could lease or buy an existing homestead: most would have to start out on an uncultivated piece of land. Adriaen van der Donck claimed that colonists who did this could already maintain themselves from the yield of their newly cultivated farmland in the second year of their residence, and make a profit in the third; but he was likely too optimistic.[150] It seems somewhat unlikely that small farmers who turned uncultivated soil into fertile farmland could actually afford, or use, slaves.

Making slaves affordable to common people was a concern of Director-General and Council: slaves sold by the WIC at auctions could be paid for in beaver furs or provisions like meat, wheat or peas. The reasoning was that if only payment in furs or tobacco was allowed, the slaves would all end up as property of a few people: the amount of furs and tobacco in circulation was so small that if only these goods were accepted, effectively only people to whom the Company was indebted could buy slaves. Company slaves were also leased to citizens, sometimes as part of the lease of a farm. This especially happened in the early years, but in 1656 the directors complained to Stuyvesant that too many slaves were working for private individuals.[151] Of course, allowing payment in common goods and the fact that Company slaves could be leased are indications that slave ownership was not common in the middle and lower classes of the free inhabitants of New Netherland. Also, if more people were able to buy slaves, there would be greater competition for them with higher sale prices for the Company as a result. Stuyvesant on the other hand, was probably the largest private slave owner in the colony.[152]

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148 P.C. Emmer, 'De slavenhandel van en naar Nieuw-Nederland', *Economisch- en sociaal-historisch jaarboek* 35 (1972) 94-147, esp. 110-111.
149 NA, SG, 12564.21, nr. 7, 'Consideratien vande Reeckenkamer', 27 May 1641.
150 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 90.
151 Joyce D. Goodfriend, 'Burghers and blacks: the evolution of a slave society at New Amsterdam', *New York History,* vol. 59, no. 2 (1978) 125-144, esp. 132-133, 141.
152 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 320-321.

One can wonder if small farmers in New Netherland actually needed the slaves they could not afford to buy anyways. Of course more labour made expansion possible, but as more labour was not available at an affordable price, farmers had to do without. And that could be possible: as long as the farm was small enough to be worked by the farmer and his family and could support them, the farmer would be fine. Sometimes farmers hired Indians to help them with the harvest,[153] and as we have seen they could lease slaves from the WIC. So while the small farmers of New Netherland could no doubt expand their farmland and increase their production with the aid of slave labour, it seems the WIC overestimated the possibilities of such farmers to make the required initial investment. Wim Klooster judges the demand for slaves in New Netherland to be 'rather insignificant.'[154] The fundamental problem was that the use of coerced labour did not lower the costs of food production to a degree that warranted the high initial investment in the purchase of slaves, as was the case in the production of cash crops.[155]

Piet Emmer has made a number of claims in his work on the slave trade to New Netherland that must be disqualified or nuanced when information from more recent publications is taken into account. He claims that as tobacco was the only cash crop of New Netherland, and even that was only cultivated on a small scale, the purchasing power of customers on the slave market was low, making it difficult for them to compete with buyers in the Caribbean plantation colonies. The relatively low prices paid for slaves could also be partly attributed to the lower quality of slaves arriving in New Netherland. He claims that a transit trade of slaves to surrounding English colonies hardly existed, and that the importation of slaves in New Netherland was a way to ensure that the garrison was well stocked with victuals: a small number of slaves was send from Curaçao and sold on Manhattan 'each year' in return for agricultural products. The WIC never imported slaves directly from Africa into New Netherland, as the profits were considered to be too small.[156]

This last claim is simply untrue, as it contradicts the three known trans-Atlantic voyages to New Netherland. However, as mentioned before the *Gideon* sailed to Curaçao before going to New Netherland, the *Witte Paard* was privately owned, and the *Wapen van Amsterdam* made a very atypical voyage; apparently the slaves on that ship came from the east coast of Africa and Madagascar. Unfortunately there is only one reference to this journey in literature, without a

[153] Kees-Jan Waterman, Jaap Jacobs and Charles T. Gehring (eds.), *Indianenverhalen: de vroegste beschrijvingen van Indianen langs de Hudsonrivier (1609-1680)* (Zutphen 2009) 12.
[154] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 108.
[155] Emmer and Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld,* 224-225.
[156] Emmer, 'De slavenhandel', 117, 121, 123.

source annotation.[157] The slave trade of the WIC was very small during the 1650s anyways: of all the slaves transported to Brazil by the WIC, 94 percent arrived between 1636 and 1645. The revival of the Dutch slave trade only came around 1657.[158]

The Dutch slave trade developed between 1625 and 1675 from a trade focused at supplying Brazil into one aimed at selling slaves in colonies belonging to foreign states.[159] This was in part a consequence of the loss of Brazil in 1654: there were no more Dutch plantation colonies that could be the destination of a slaving voyage. Instead, the ships went to the Spanish American Mainland and the Caribbean. The Caribbean destinations in the 1650s were mainly those ports that were not Dutch, like Martinique, Cartagena and Portobelo. This only changed after 1657 as the Dutch Caribbean became a prime destination.[160]

Emmer's claim that slaves were imported to buy food for the garrison of New Netherland appears to be untrue for several reasons. First because the regular garrison in the entire colony counted around 250 men in the early 1650s;[161] it was so small that supply problems are hardly expected in an agricultural colony counting several thousand colonists. If there were any supply problems it seems more likely that they were related to the distance between the fortresses and outposts in New Netherland than to the availability and price of victuals. Second, as we have seen, the explicit reason to allow payment in victuals in the first place was to make sure the required means of currency was available to everyone. While it is possible that the Company used the received payments to feed its troops, there is no reason to assume that that was a primary consideration when setting the conditions for the auction. If the WIC required supplies that were locally produced, it could simply accept them as payment for taxes, fines and other duties.

The slaves imported on the ship *Witte Paard* (supposedly the first slave ship outfitted in America in 1654) are claimed to be sold in New Amsterdam for the extremely high price of 1,200 guilders per person on average.[162] But this claim is problematic for a number of reasons: the author making the claim, Albert van Dantzig, does not provide an annotation to reveal his

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157 A. van Dantzig, *Het Nederlandse aandeel in de slavenhandel* (Bussum 1968) 110. This also seems to be the source for the entry of the journey in The Atlantic Slave Trade Database, which is completed with the (unsourced) numbers of embarked and disembarked slaves.
158 Postma, *The Dutch,* 21, 32.
159 Jelmer Vos, David Eltis and David Richardson, 'The Dutch in the Atlantic world: new perspectives from the slave trade with particular reference to the African origins of the traffic', in: David Eltis and David Richardson (eds.), *Extending the frontiers: essays on the new Transatlantic slave trade database* (New Haven, London 2008) 228-249, esp. 234.
160 Eltis, *The trans-Atlantic slave trade database.* Retrieved: 11 June 2015.
161 Jaap Jacobs, 'Soldaten van de Compagnie: het militair personeel van de West-Indische ompagnie in Nieuw-Nederland' in: Maurits Ebben and Pieter Wagenaar (eds.), *De cirkel doorbroken: met nieuwe ideeën terug naar de bronnen* (Leiden 2006) 131-146, esp. 134.
162 Van Dantzig, *Het Nederlandse aandeel,* 45.

source. Furthermore, 1,200 guilders was an extremely high price for a slave that was not even reached in the late eighteenth century. A third argument against this high price is that the captain of the *Witte Paard,* Pieter Dircksz. Waterhond, demanded before the court of New Amsterdam that the merchant Augustijn Heermans provided a security for the 840 guilders he had to pay for a number of slaves he bought from the captain.[163] Even if Heermans already made a payment and 840 guilders was only part of the agreed sum, the fact that this price was charged for a number of slaves, not for a single one, indicates that an average of 1,200 guilders is too high. So probably the quoted price of 1,200 guilders is the average per transaction, which could include multiple slaves, or it is the highest price paid at the auction.

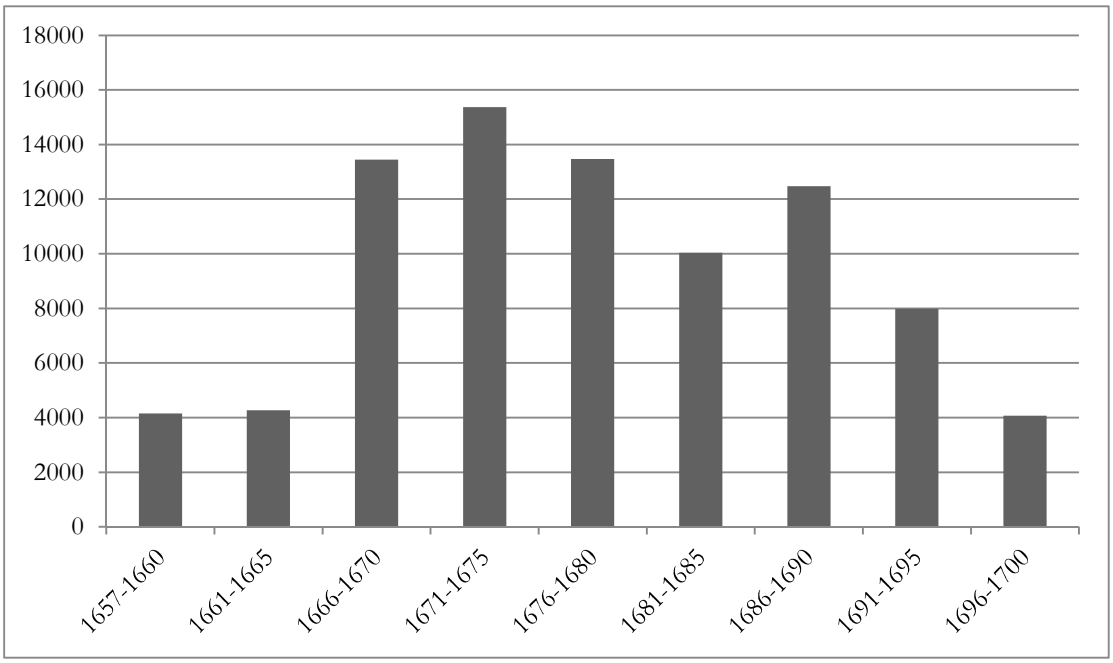
The normal price for a slave in New Netherland was between 140 and 375 guilders in the 1650s, but went as high as 600 guilders in 1664.[164] For Curaçao, prices of 120 to 130 pesos (300 to 325 guilders) are reported, though Beck also mentioned prices of 500 and 375 guilders for good quality slaves.[165] In a letter to Stuyvesant in 1659, he mentioned a price of 150 pieces of eight (375 guilders) per head for three hundred slaves that were sold to a Spanish merchant.[166] The price difference between Curaçao and New Netherland is remarkable. It partly explains why the slave trade to New Netherland was so small: better profits were within reach in the Caribbean and the Spanish Main, though the near bankruptcy of the WIC and the resulting inability to organize slaving voyages should not be ruled out as explanatory factor. The low prices in New Netherland are also a reflection of the low demand for slaves. As I have argued above, the ideas of the metropolitan directors about increasing the agricultural production with slave labour were not at all shared by the small farmers in New Netherland.

So the relatively small supply of slaves to New Netherland was caused by supply problems in general on the part of the WIC and a lack of demand on the side of the colonists. In 1655 high duties on the export of slaves were introduced, according to Jacobs because the demand for coerced labour rose.[167] The reason given for this export duty in the council minutes was that these slaves 'were transported and exported from here without the honorable Company or the inhabitants of this province having derived any revenue or benefit thereby'.[168] So the reason for introducing export duties was indeed that the authorities thought it would be more beneficial to keep slaves in the colony. It is interesting to see that the demand for slaves in the surrounding colonies was so great that it led to re-exports of a considerable size. However, this

[163] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 305.
[164] Ibid.*,* 320.
[165] Emmer, 'De slavenhandel', 117.
[166] Gehring, *Curacao papers,* 156.
[167] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 320.
[168] Charles T. Gehring (ed.), *Council minutes, 1655-1656,* New Netherland documents series vol. VI (1995), 70.

policy of Director-General and Council was a reflection of the persistent ideas about the usefulness of slaves in New Netherland that the directors in the Dutch Republic clearly held onto: in 1660 they wrote to Stuyvesant that they had decided to promote agriculture by sending some slaves from Curaçao to New Netherland. He was to sell them by auction on the condition that they would not be taken to other colonies, but employed to cultivate the soil of New Netherland. Stuyvesant was ordered to keep a register of the slaves to enforce this stipulation.[169]

Figure 2. Transatlantic slave imports to Curaçao, 1657-1700[170]



In 1661 the directors had changed their mind. In a letter to Stuyvesant of the 11th of April, they wrote that since the slaves delivered by the ships *Eyckenboom* and *Nieuw Nederlantschen Indiaen* had sold for such a good price, they had instructed vice-director Beck to send slaves to New Netherland whenever he could. The export of slaves from New Netherland would also be permitted, contrary to the earlier policy, on the condition that an export duty of two beaver skins per slave was paid. The directors had come to this decision as they did not only wish to promote agriculture, but also trade and they hoped that it would stimulate the traffic between Curaçao and New Netherland.[171] It is clear that the directors had accepted the fact that slaves were exported from New Netherland, contrary to their intentions to promote agriculture, and tried to make at least a profit from this trade through the export duties. At the same time, they seemingly used the slave trade as a leverage to stimulate the commerce between New Netherland and Curaçao. As

169 O'Callaghan, *Documents relative*, XIV, 459.
170 Eltis, *The trans-Atlantic slave trade database,* retrieved: 13 January 2015.
171 E. B. O'Callaghan (ed.), *Voyages of the slavers St. John and Arms of Amsterdam, 1659, 1663: together with additional papers illustrative of the slave trade under the Dutch* (Albany NY 1867), 183-186.

we shall see later, this is in line with the policy of the WIC to stimulate private trade between these two colonies.

A major factor in explaining the small scale of the slave trade from Curaçao to New Netherland is that the slave trade to Curaçao had not developed to anything near its later scale before 1664. As figure 2 illustrates, Curaçao only began to develop as a slave trade entrepôt during the second half of the 1660s (unfortunately no data is available of the slave trade to Curaçao before 1657, but it was likely negligible). Matthias Beck hoped that the slave trade with Spanish colonies would lead to trade in goods as well.[172] The WIC was not so keen to send slaves to New Netherland because human cargoes were also required in the company's more favoured colony, Brazil. And the demand in the latter was higher than in New Netherland. Slave imports from Africa were permitted to residents of New Netherland but, as Emmer points out, the required capital to fit out a ship and buy trade goods were not available there.[173] The rise of imports to Curaçao in the 1660s can be attributed to the role of the WIC as subcontractor for the Spanish *Asiento*, the royal licence to deliver slaves to Spanish colonies. Curaçao became an intermediate station for slaves being sold on the Spanish Main within this system.[174]

Even while the slave trade between Curaçao and New Netherland was of a small scale, demand was not entirely neglected, Beck wrote in a letter to Stuyvesant on 23 August 1659 that 'of the aforesaid negroes Franck Bruyn has selected for your honour two boys with a girl […] likewise has the same Franck Bruyn selected two for the commissioner Van Brugh' (probably Johannes Pietersz. van Brugh is meant here, who served multiple terms as alderman and orphan master in New Amsterdam between 1655 and 1663). So a potential shortage of slaves was partly addressed through deliveries on order, but whether these were sufficient is questionable and it led not to a workforce at the scale intended by the WIC. A concern for the local administrators was the cold in New Netherland, in the same letter Beck wrote that he had received orders from 'the honourable gentlemen masters' (the directors in Amsterdam) to send fifteen or sixteen slaves to New Netherland, but he had decided to wait until spring, as there was not enough roughen cloth in stock to dress them all.[175]

The horse trade

A primary use for horses in New Netherland was in agriculture. Like other livestock, horses had to be imported, whereby horses from the Dutch province of Utrecht were considered to be of

[172] Rupert, *Creolization and contraband,* 73.
[173] Emmer, 'De slavenhandel', 112.
[174] Postma, *The Dutch,* 25, 33.
[175] Gehring, *Curacao papers,* transcription, 156-157.

the highest quality. Horses from New England were not so well suited to work on farms but could be used as mounts and horses imported from Curaçao and Aruba were not so well suited to the cold winters of New Netherland; they were reported to die regularly in such circumstances. Nevertheless, importing the favoured horses from Utrecht was expensive and the animals often died during the Atlantic crossing.[176] The cost of transatlantic transport of livestock is illustrated by a description of such a transport in 1625: each animal had an individual stall and its own groom to look after it.[177] Only two animals died on that journey, but that was an exception. Around 1650 high prices were paid for livestock in New Netherland, when compared to surrounding English colonies, suggesting that there was a shortage of livestock. But the high number of seven horses per farm at Rensselaerswijck in 1651 suggests the situation was not that bad.[178] However, Kiliaan van Rensselaer had bought livestock on Manhattan when he founded his *patroonschap* in the early 1630s,[179] so his horses may have been better suited to the harsh winters in the colony making it more likely that they and their descendants survived in the long run. It is also possible that the *patroons* of Rensselaerswijck could afford to buy more horses than small independent farmers.

Under such circumstances it is easy to see why the colonists thought of importing horses from the Caribbean. The colonists in New Netherland regularly bought livestock from New England as well, since they were apparently not able to breed enough cattle themselves. The directors of the WIC were not happy about that.[180] Inter-colonial and transatlantic horse trade were nothing exceptional though: in 1683 a total of 277 horses arrived in Suriname on both English and Dutch ships, these horses originated from such diverse places as Norway, Scotland, Ireland, New England, Curaçao, St. Jago and Northern Brazil.[181] In the eighteenth century ships from British colonies in North America sailing to Suriname were required to include horses in their consignments, so this trade went the other way round by then.[182]

Though the evidence on the horse trade from Curaçao to New Netherland is scarce and incomplete, it is clear that it truly surged in 1660: at least 24 horses were sent North on the ship *Nieuw Amstel* and another 51 on the *Eyckenboom*. Other shipments occurred in 1661 (*Rebecca:* twenty horses), 1664 (*De Vergulde Vos:* nineteen horses) and 1656 and 1657 or 1658 (*De Liefde* and

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176 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 198-199.
177 Van Claef Bachman, *Peltries or plantations: the economic policies of the Dutch West India Company in New Netherland, 1623-1639* (Baltimore 1969) 84.
178 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 198-199.
179 Bachman, *Peltries or plantations,* 124n.
180 Virginia DeJohn Anderson, *Creatures of empire: how domestic animals transformed early America* (Oxford etc. 2004) 150.
181 Fatah-Black, *Suriname and the Atlantic*, 63.
182 Postma, 'Breaching the mercantile barriers', 116.

Wasbleecker respectively: the number of horses is unknown in both cases).[183] A good indication that this list is incomplete can be found in the contemporary publication *Beschrijving van Nieuw-Nederlandt* by Adriaen vander Donck, he is the one who claimed that horses from Aruba and Curaçao, which were 'sometimes' imported, were not able to deal with the cold winters and often died or fell ill from it.[184] So clearly there was enough experience with these horses in New Netherland to know their disadvantages, the formulation suggests that in 1655, when the book was published, the imports were already going on for at least a few years but that the total number of horses that came from the islands was small.

Horse exports from Curaçao and Aruba were an issue of concern to the WIC. As we have seen in the previous chapter the Company saw the strategic advantage of having a supply of horses available for use on the mainland. Perhaps that is why the directors of the Amsterdam chamber voiced their concerns about the 'extensive trade in horses to the Caribbean islands' that vice director Roodenburgh was conducting, 'which can only lead to the islands of Curaçao and Aruba being destitute [of horses] in a few years, to the great disservice and detriment of the Company.' So they wrote to Stuyvesant on 4 April 1652.[185] But as the war against Spain ended in 1648, it is at least as likely that the directors considered the necessity to keep enough horses on the island to maintain a healthy population for future exports; if too many horses were exported, breeding them would no longer be feasible.

So in the early 1650s the trade in horses from Curaçao was extensive enough to be noticed in Amsterdam. The destination of the exported horses, 'the Caribbean islands', fits into the role of the Dutch in this era as the travelling vendors who supplied the plantation colonies of other states. The disapproval of the directors may be connected to three issues: the strategic military advantage of having horses on Curaçao (as it was expensive and troublesome to ship them across the Atlantic), the need of horses in New Netherland (and perhaps the directors also thought of Brazil until that colony was lost in 1654), and the necessity of breeding horses for either consideration.

In 1658 the directors at Amsterdam had shifted their opinion on the matter of horses. In a resolution dated at the eleventh March they wrote that the abundance of horses on the islands increased daily, but there were few buyers in New Netherland and on the Caribbean islands. The directors reflected that this would be due to the high prices charged, and they decided to supply New Netherland with more and more horses to serve the agricultural development there. Sales to other Caribbean islands were to be promoted as well. In order to achieve this increase in exports,

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[183] For a list of ships and sources used, see the appendix.
[184] Adriaen vander Donck, *Beschrijvinge van Nieuw-Nederlandt* (Amsterdam 1655), 32.
[185] Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 147.

the directors lowered the price of horses bound for New Netherland to 50 guilders each and horses bound for the Caribbean to 80 guilders each. Captains who promised to take the horses to New Netherland but sold them elsewhere would be charged a fine of 50 guilders per horse.[186] So rather than voicing concerns about the export of horses, the directors now wanted to stimulate exactly that trade.

A number of reasons for this jumps to mind. By the late 1650s English and French mercantilist measures will have started to have an impact on Dutch trade in the Caribbean. As the trade could no longer be taken for granted, it seemed prudent for the directors to stimulate the horse exports. One element is the specific export to New Netherland, which seems to have been effective as far as the number of horses sent there in the 1660s is considered. Another reason is that Brazil was lost to the WIC in 1654 and the Dutch Revolt against Spain had ended in 1648; chances are that the directors no longer saw a strategic value for the horses on Curaçao and Aruba. Lastly, the directors noted that horses were available in abundance again, while in 1652 they still feared that the stock might soon be depleted, they evidently considered that no longer a risk six years later.

The salt trade

As we have seen in chapter 1, obtaining salt was one of the explicit reasons given by the *Heren XIX* to conquer Curaçao in the first place. After 1641 the Portuguese supply of salt became available again, so the salt pans on Bonaire lost their purpose for the European market. The instructions of Mathias Beck of 1655 set the price of salt at 'no less than 5 to 6 pounds Flemish' (30 to 36 guilders) if it was sold to fishermen hunting turtles or manatees, the same applied to traders who were intending to sell the salt in New Netherland or Virginia. However, anyone promising to bring a large quantity of salt to the Netherlands would be charged two *rixdaalders* (five guilders) per last if they collected the salt from the pans and loaded it with their own people and materials, and ten guilders per last if it came from the stock collected by the Company's personnel and slaves. Salt from the Company's stock was only to be sold if there were no WIC ships around to carry it off. Fees were set for the use of the WICs equipment if private captains used that to collect and load salt.[187]

While it is clear that the WIC charged low prices for salt to be exported to the Netherlands, it is difficult to compare these to other prices. To start, the early modern measuring system is inconsistent and can use different size definitions depending on the subject of

[186] Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 140.
[187] Ibid., 91-92.

measurement. To make it more complicated, the measures also vary between the different Dutch provinces. Another problem of comparing prices is that the quality of the salt differs between the various sources from which it was obtained. So rather than trying to compare the price of Bonaire salt with that of others, it is more useful to look at the development of the salt prices in Amsterdam and use that information to analyse decisions regarding the salt trade made by the WIC.

By the middle of the 1650s, the salt price in Amsterdam seems to have been relatively high: the average price for Cadiz salt in 1654 was 810 guilders per hundredweight of 404 measures (28.67 guilders per *last*[188]) and for St. Ubes salt 831 guilders (29.4 guilders per *last*), but the price for the latter had dropped to 309 guilders (10.9 per *last*) in 1657. Nevertheless, these prices were remarkably higher than in the second half of the 1640s. However, when these prices are compared with the 1609 price for Cadiz salt, which was no less than 150 guilders per *last,* it becomes clear that the relatively high prices of 1654 were not extreme.[189] The directors of the WIC, in the Amsterdam chamber mainly merchants, of course realized that the prices were relatively high and tried to create a new market for salt from Bonaire.

It did not work out: most likely the price difference with European suppliers of salt was too small to make up for the longer journey. So on 11 March 1658 the directors of the Amsterdam chamber issued a new regulation regarding the salt trade. With the war with Portugal that was going on in mind, the directors decreed that ships calling at Bonaire or Curaçao would always find a load of salt ready on a first come, first serve basis. The salt would be delivered in the sloop or boat of a ship coming for salt without charge, on the condition that the shipmaster signed a statement that he would deliver a quarter of the salt or a quarter of the proceedings from its sale to the WIC, without charging the freight rate. The captain was still obliged to pay the normal recognition fee for operating in the Company's charter area. The directors hoped that this would be beneficial for ships sailing to the Caribbean or New Netherland (there was a special provision that if the salt was transported to New Netherland, the quarter of it had to be delivered to the Director-General).[190]

This offer has two sides: on one hand the merchants would pay more for their salt than previously if the price for which they sold it went above 40 guilders per last, assuming that they would have the salt collected by the WIC in any case. But it is unlikely that the salt price in Amsterdam would reach such heights. But this also meant that the WIC took a part of the risk by

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[188] According to Posthumus, 7 *lasten* are equal to 100 *maten*, so one hundredweight of 404 measures (*honderd van 404 maten*) is equal to circa 28.25 *lasten*. So the price per *last* can simply be calculated by dividing the price of a hundredweight by 28.25. N. W. Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis,* vol. I (Leiden 1943) LIV-LV.
[189] Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis,* 215, 218.
[190] Gehring, *Curacao papers,* 137-140.

letting the price it charged for salt purely depend on the market. Also, the WIC guaranteed that (within reasonable constraints, one expects) salt would be available for direct loading (previously, priority would always be given to Company ships). So in two ways, the 1658 regulation was more attractive to merchants than that of 1655.

The 1658 pricing can also be seen as a way to make the Curaçao trade more attractive for the inhabitants of New Netherland. The same resolution also included the previously discussed measures to stimulate the trade in horses. For a merchant living in New Amsterdam it would perhaps be feasible now to carry food to Curaçao, sell it to the WIC in return of a few horses, and have the remaining space in his hold filled with salt for free. For ships coming to Curaçao anyways, carrying salt would clearly be more beneficial than sailing in ballast: even if the salt could not be sold at the destination, there was no risk as the WIC would take a quarter of it in payment, whatever the value.

Dennis Maika claims that 'Manhatan merchants were eager to exploit these new opportunities.'[191] Unfortunately, he provides no proof for this claim. However, Stuyvesant and the Council considered the salt prices in New Netherland too low to make the journey profitable. In their letter to the directors of 30 October 1655, they wrote that the revenue for salt was about 18, 24, to 30 *stuivers* (a coin worth 1/20th guilder) per *schepel*, which was too low to import salt profitably from Curaçao or Bonaire, as the wages of sailors, the price of the vessels and the cost of victuals were all high.[192] This letter may have motivated the WIC to lower the price for salt: at least it demonstrates that that was perceived to be necessary.

It looks like the new pricing policy caused an increase in the salt trade from Curaçao to New Netherland: the *Diemen* left Curaçao on 13 September 1658 with 23.5 *lasten* salt on board (though this ship was lost on the way to New Netherland). Three more ships made the journey from the islands to Manhattan before 1661, with up to 81 *lasten* salt. Of course, at least the *Diemen* was owned by the WIC, so its load probably was too, but there was certainly an increase in private trade. While the number of salt carrying ships was still small, the loads had grown considerably: two vessels sailed with ten *lasten* salt each in 1653 and 1654 respectively for the WIC (one was lost at sea, the other captured by a Spanish ship).

But this increase in the salt trade was short-lived, as the directors of the WIC changed their mind quickly. Only three years after the previous policy was introduced, in 1661, the WIC gave Dirck de Wolff permission to build a salt refinery in New Netherland. The charter of privileges and exemptions included a ten year monopoly on salt refining in New Netherland. The

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[191] D. J. Maika, *Commerce and community: Manhattan merchants in the seventeenth century* (PhD thesis New York University 1995) 127.

[192] Martha Dickinson Shattuck (ed.) and Dingman Veersteeg (transl.), *New Netherland papers, c. 1650-1660: from the collected papers of Hans Bontemantel, director of the Amsterdam chamber of the West India Company* (2011) 31.

WIC also agreed to tax all salt imports so De Wolff and his partners, his son and son-in-law, could be competitive. The salt produced would be taxed at a much lower rate than normally and De Wolff could chose the site for his refinery himself. The directors were clearly willing to go very far to stimulate investment in New Netherland.[193] It is remarkable that no consignments of salt are recorded to be shipped from Curaçao to New Netherland after salt imports were taxed again, but it would be too quick to draw definitive conclusions from this. The sources are incomplete and as the salt refinery never became operational[194] it is unlikely that there were no more imports: after all it was still an essential commodity.

It is not entirely clear what the salt refinery was supposed to do. The term suggests that the business was supposed to refine natural salt, which often comes in the form of brine,[195] into a solid substance by cooking it. But that process would require a source of brine, which does not seem to be in the vicinity of New Netherland or well connected to it. The aforementioned instructions for Mathias Beck suggest that the salt produced on the island of Bonaire already was solid. First because the stock of salt available is described as *hoop* (heap or pile), referring to a solid substance. And second because the tariff for using the Company's wheelbarrows was set at four guilders per day for each.[196] A wheelbarrow is an unlikely piece of equipment to collect or load liquids, but it can be very useful for solid grains, like salt. So it is not very likely that De Wolff and his partners intended to refine imported salt.

De Wolff hired Arent Theunisz as his agent to select a site in New Netherland. He carried instructions to pick a suitable site near the sea where he was to 'cook salt day and night'. The instruction to build the refinery near the sea suggests that De Wolff intended to produce salt by boiling seawater in New Netherland, rather than refine salt produced elsewhere. With the privileges granted by the directors in mind, this is a very strong turn from the previous policy, under which cheap salt imports from Bonaire were permitted to merchants in order to stimulate trade. However, due to a problem with the ownership of the land at the selected site for the refinery, local villagers who claimed the location as a common meadow constantly sabotaged the refinery, it was never completed and after two years De Wolff abandoned the project completely.[197]

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193 Rink, *Holland on the Hudson,* 183-184.
194 C. H. Jansen, 'Geschiedenis van de familie De Wolff: sociale en economische facetten van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden in de zeventiende eeuw', *Jaarboek van het Genootschap Amstelodamum,* LVI (1964) 131-155, esp. 136.
195 R. B. Harteveld, 'Zoutwinning en zoutzieden in Nederland', in: R. J. Forbes (ed.), *Het zout der aarde* (Hengelo 1968) 265-306, esp. 272.
196 Gehring, *Curacao papers,* 91-92.
197 Rink, *Holland on the Hudson,* 184-186.

If the refinery would have ever worked, the chief customer for the salt would be the New England fishing industry.[198] This would not only be local fishermen: in the 1660s Boston transformed into the staple market of the trade in stock fish, salted and dried cod, which was produced at Newfoundland and in part exported to the West Indies as food for the slaves in the upcoming plantation economy.[199]

Concluding remarks

Ill-informed policies characterize the history of the relationship between New Netherland and Curaçao during the tenure of Petrus Stuyvesant as director-general of both colonies. Curaçao was not able to produce enough food for itself, but the attempts to supply it from the farms of New Netherland failed. This was largely due to a lack of sufficient shipping capacity, but there are also reasons to question the ability of the Dutch colony on the Hudson River to produce enough food. Furthermore, the geographical circumstances, particularly the prevailing winds and ocean currents in the Atlantic, made it illogical to sail from New Netherland to Curaçao. This is reflected in the number of ships that sailed in each direction: maritime traffic from Curaçao to New Netherland was much more intensive than the other way around. While the WIC tried to correct the lack of regular private shipping by assigning specific ships to the connection, this was costly and ineffective as those ships tended to sink quickly. The insufficient connection naturally led to many complaints from Curaçao, where the food shortages remained a reality of life.

The WIC tried to solve this problem through other means. One of these was increasing the agricultural production by importing slaves in New Netherland. These came generally in small groups via Curaçao, though there were also a few direct voyages from Africa. The Company had the explicit intention to make slaves affordable to small farmers and let New Netherland benefit from their labour, but small farmers did not have the means to buy slaves and did not really seem to need them either. Nevertheless, the WIC stuck to its policy to create an agricultural slave society in New Netherland until the loss of the colony in 1664.

Curaçao produced two commodities that could be of particular use in New Netherland: horses and salt. The WIC was initially concerned about the export of horses, as they were perceived to be of strategic value this trade was limited. Over the years the directors removed the barriers to the trade in horses and salt from Curaçao to New Netherland, but their policies tended to be changeable. This is especially clear in the case of the salt trade: the directors at one

[198] Ibid., 184.
[199] Heerlien, 'Stokvishandel', 132-133.

point tried to make this trade attractive to private merchants, but only two years later they created a levy on salt imports to New Netherland to protect a local salt refinery.

3. Governance

In the previous chapters I have demonstrated that the administrative connection between Curaçao and New Netherland was introduced to save costs and improve the food supply of Curaçao. Especially the latter motivation did not come true due to an insufficient maritime connection between the two colonies. There is another element to the connection: if one man, in this case Petrus Stuyvesant, is given authority over two far removed colonies, the question that naturally jumps to mind is how that influenced the governance of those colonies. To answer that question I shall discuss a number of topics in this chapter. First there is the structure of the relationship between Curaçao and New Netherland. I shall expand the argument made by Schiltkamp that this relationship was a form of personal union, not a system wherein one colony was subordinate to the other.[200] Further I will discuss the reasons why this personal union was created under direction of Stuyvesant, how the colonial government functioned in the relationship with the WIC chamber in Amsterdam and finally how much influence Stuyvesant had through the personal union.

The *Heren XIX* named Stuyvesant director of Curaçao on 10 July 1646, and he was sworn in by the States General on the 28th of the same month.[201] It seems likely that he was named Director-General of New Netherland around the same time: the instructions for the Director-General and Councillors of New Netherland were presented to the States General on the 11th of July and copied into the commission book shortly after. This instruction described the organization of the government in New Netherland and issues that required attention: the risk of English annexation of parts of the colony, improvement of the defences, agriculture and trade.[202]

It is remarkable that the instructions do not mention Curaçao at all. Of course these specific instructions are related to the appointment of Stuyvesant as the highest authority in New Netherland, and he was already named director of Curaçao in 1642, when his predecessor died.[203] Another commission of the States General, of 28 July 1646, names Stuyvesant director of New Netherland and the islands Curaçao, Bonaire, and Aruba, trusting in 'the experience and piety' of his personality.[204] The islands are mentioned as a group, but the phrasing makes it clear that the States General saw this group of islands as a separate political entity from New Netherland. The next part of the commission charges Stuyvesant with the government of the colonies and describes the duties connected to that responsibility: 'to attend carefully to the advancement, promotion, and preservation of friendship, alliances, trade and commerce; […] to administer law

[200] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 28.
[201] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 47.
[202] NA, SG, 12272, folio 197-199.
[203] Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 32.
[204] Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden,* documents I, 69-70.

and justice as well civil as criminal'[205] This looks more like the standard instruction for colonial administrators who took an oath before the States General than like a specific instruction on how the governmental relationship between Curaçao and New Netherland was to be shaped.

It is crucial that neither the WIC, nor the States General, seemed to bother about the juridical form of the relationship between the colonies. It is only mentioned that Stuyvesant was to be Director-General of both, but the instructions are no more specific than that. Therefore the decision to give Stuyvesant authority over both New Netherland and Curaçao was not an administrative merger of the two colonies: it should be seen as a kind of personal union, as has been suggested by Schiltkamp. He argues that there are no indications of subordination of Curaçao to New Netherland: no cases are known where the Director-General and Council in New Netherland gave an order to the authorities of Curaçao, and it was not possible to appeal in New Netherland to a judgement passed on Curaçao.[206] This observation of the way the connection functioned in practice corresponds with the lack of instructions. Of course it was possible for Stuyvesant to give instructions to his deputy on Curaçao, but he could only do that as absent director of Curaçao, and never within the institutional framework of New Netherland.

A personal union is generally defined as two sovereign states linked together 'through the accidental fact that they have the same individual as monarch.' The member states of a personal union remain completely sovereign and may even be at war with each other.[207] A characteristic of personal unions is that they generally exist between countries of which the populations belong to different nationalities or between countries that are far away from each other: if these barriers do not exist it makes more sense to merge the countries into one.[208]

This model of the personal union, as seen from a juridical or social sciences perspective is obviously not entirely applicable to the union of Curaçao and New Netherland: it must be stressed that Curaçao and New Netherland were not independent states or autonomous territories. They were colonies of the WIC and the directors of the Company made sure they were kept well informed of what was going on. However, the colonies also had a local authority in the form of the Director and Council, this authority was competent to take decisions in everyday matters and executed the orders given by the directors in the Netherlands. While sovereign power was formally with the States General in The Hague and the Amsterdam

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[205] O'Callaghan, *Documents relative,* vol. I, 178.
[206] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 28.
[207] L. Oppenheim and Ronald F. Roxburgh, *International law: a treatise, volume I: peace* (3rd edition: London etc. 1920) 154.
[208] John J. Lalor (ed.) *Cyclopædia of political science, political economy, and the political history of the united states* (first edition 1881; New York 1899) 824.

chamber of the WIC was the authority most involved,[209] distance decreed that colonial authorities had at least a degree of autonomy.

With these remarks in mind it does make sense to see the relationship between the colonies as a personal union: even while not all aspects of the model apply. The model makes clear how the relationship functioned: Stuyvesant in practice had two offices: he already was Director of Curaçao and its dependencies, and he later was also named Director-General of New Netherland. Stuyvesant was in both colonies the highest official.

While Stuyvesant was *de jure* the highest official in both Curaçao and New Netherland, it is important to consider if he had *de facto* much influence. When Stuyvesant returned to the Netherlands in 1644 to recover from his injuries, a deputy had to be named to replace him during his absence. Three resolutions related to this matter were taken on Curaçao on 22 August 1644. In the first it was decided to enlarge the Council with two members 'in the place of the absent sea captains' (normally, the captains of the WIC ships in port had a seat on the council). This expansion of the Council was further motivated by the wish to give proper account of the administration of the colony. The next resolution taken that day discussed how Curaçao should be governed during the absence of Stuyvesant. There were two options: a 'Council of the most esteemed and qualified persons' (it is not clear if the regular Council of the island is meant, or multiple persons who would share the authority of the Director) or a supreme officer; the latter option was chosen. In the third resolution, Stuyvesant nominated two candidates he deemed suitable as his deputy, captain-lieutenant Jacob Lopper, and commissioner Lucas Rodenborch. It was then left to the Council to elect the deputy, Rodenborch got the most votes and subsequently accepted the office.[210] This procedure seems quite straightforward and agrees with the ways of governance described in the introduction, where the director of a colony chairs its Council. In such a system it makes perfect sense that the director could make the nomination, but could not appoint his deputy autonomously. As this all happened on the same day, probably during a single meeting, it seems likely that Stuyvesant had already selected the two nominees. The appointment of Rodenborch was later approved by the States General,[211] and it seems likely that the directors of the Amsterdam chamber or the *Heren XIX* also had to give their retroactive approval of the appointment.

It is unknown if the same procedure was applied when a replacement was needed for Rodenborch in 1655. The Vice-Director had requested to be discharged several times by that time. When Stuyvesant was on Barbados in an attempt to have several captured Dutch ships

[209] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 105-108.
[210] Gehring, *Curaçao papers,* 53-55.
[211] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 26.

released, he met Matthias Beck. According to Schiltkamp, Stuyvesant was so impressed by Beck, who had made a career in Brazil and had been director in the Siara area, that he instantly offered him the position of Vice-Director of Curaçao.[212] I am inclined to believe this interpretation of the appointment of Beck as vice-director, but it should be nuanced. As we have seen, Rodenborch was appointed in 1644 only after the Council of Curaçao elected him from a shortlist of two candidates. There are two reasons to assume that the same procedure was applied for the appointment of Beck. First, he was installed in the same office that Rodenborch held earlier: that of deputy in the absence of the Director-General. Second, directors of WIC colonies could never take important decisions on their own, the Council as a whole decided, and this appointment definitely was important. So there probably has been at least one other nominee. The encounter of Matthias Beck seems to have been a coincidence, but perhaps Stuyvesant met more suitable candidates for the job on Barbados. If not, he will have nominated one of the higher officials at the time working in either New Netherland or Curaçao.

It is very important to note here that the Director-General and Council of Curaçao had the initiative in the appointment of a new Vice-Director. Rodenborch did not need to be replaced for an immediate reason, like illness or death, but because he had requested to be discharged. Even with the slow communications of the time, it is very unlikely that the directors in Amsterdam were unaware of his request, and still they left the matter to be deliberated and resolved in the colonies. In cases where an immediate replacement was necessary, like in 1644 when Stuyvesant returned to the Netherlands, it is natural that the Council would appoint a temporary Director while waiting for instructions from the Netherlands. This is not the case here: while the directors could appoint a new Vice-Director, they did not do so but left the matter to be resolved locally. Of course the directors still had to approve the appointment afterwards, but it seems they trusted the judgement of the local authorities enough to let them take the initiative. This is another indication that the double office of Stuyvesant was a form of personal union: the appointment of a Vice-Director is made through the same procedure in both cases. Even when there was no immediate need to name a new deputy on the spot, the appointment was made locally. So even while the office of Vice-Director was permanent, the procedure of appointment was like that used for the temporary absence of the Director.

The personal union between the colonies ended when New Netherland was conquered by the English in 1664. After that, Stuyvesant returned to the Netherlands to give account of the loss of the colony. When he planned to return to New York in 1668, after spending three years in the Netherlands, he apparently planned to return via Curaçao, so the *Heren XIX* instructed Vice-

[212] Ibid., 'Curaçao onder Beck', 250.

Director Matthias Beck of Curaçao to treat Stuyvesant as a private individual.[213] So Stuyvesants authority over Curaçao had clearly ended. It is less clear why he returned to his farm on Manhattan: perhaps he was discharged by the WIC, or he resigned himself. Either of these reasons of course explains the end of his authority on Curaçao.

The office of Director-General

Does a personal union make sense? It is clear that the WIC wanted to appoint a more experienced director in New Netherland than the generally incompetent people who had held that office previously. There were at least three major problems in New Netherland to be dealt with by the middle of the 1640s: the border between New Netherland and New England had to be defined and protected, a Swedish colony had been founded on the Delaware River - in the territory claimed by the WIC, and there was an internal conflict with the *patroonschap* Rensselaerswijck about the use and ownership of land around the Company's Fort Orange.[214] Besides that, there was the ever looming prospect of more trouble with the Indigenous people; it is easy to see that the WIC wanted an experienced man to rule New Netherland.

If anything is to be said of Stuyvesant, he was an experienced man: after halting his studies in linguistics and philosophy at the University of Franeker he took up service with the WIC, first at Fernando de Noronha off the coast of Brazil and later at Curaçao, of which colony he became director in 1642.[215] He had also led a military expedition to recapture St. Martin from Spain and lost his leg there.[216] Stuyvesant clearly had more colonial experience than his predecessors Wouter van Twiller and Willem Kieft, for whom family relations probably played a major role in their appointment.[217] The aforementioned commission of the States General of 28 July 1646 explicitly mentions this experience and previous duties: 'Ourselves with his service being pleased, the same Petrus Stuyvesant having appointed and commissioned, appoint and commission hereby…'[218]

After just a few years as director of the small colony Curaçao, Stuyvesant cannot have experienced the appointment to the small outpost of New Netherland as an insult. So his new job was by itself not extraordinary, the personal union of the two colonies was. An argument for this personal union was that Stuyvesant considered central direction a good way to promote trade

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213 Ibid., 251.
214 Charles T. Gehring, 'Petrus Stuyvesant, directeur-generaal van Nieuw-Nederland: een spannend begin 1647-1652', *Jaarboek van het centraal bureau voor Genealogie,* vol. 50 (Den Haag 1996) 69-87 esp. 72-76.
215 Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 17, 19, 26, 32.
216 Gehring, 'Petrus Stuyvesant', 69.
217 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 83.
218 Hamelberg, *West-Indische eilanden,* documents I, 69-70.

between the colonies: New Netherland could provide food for Curaçao, while that colony could supply salt, horses and slaves in return.[219] But another element cannot be neglected: the WIC still wanted to abandon Curaçao, as we have seen in chapter 1. It is possible that the Company kept the temporary arrangements made by Stuyvesant when he left for the Netherlands to recover from his injury in place until the Dutch occupation of the islands could be terminated altogether. That never happened, but as things were working well enough there clearly was no need to change the arrangements until New Netherland was lost in 1664.

Once he arrived in New Netherland in 1647, Stuyvesant showed his ability: through a treaty with New England the border dispute was settled in 1650. The Swedish colony was first locked in by a new fort,[220] but as the dispute continued the WIC conquered New Sweden completely in 1655.[221] Stuyvesant also resolved a conflict by banishing two recalcitrant persons from New Netherland and shaping the conditions for the formation of a new advisory body formed by citizens.[222] He was able to solve a conflict with a group of Indigenous people later that year through some bold diplomacy.[223] It should be noted that the directors in Amsterdam were not always completely satisfied with the actions of Stuyvesant, but these examples do show that he was a decisive administrator. Such decisiveness can also be seen in his resolution of the land dispute about the border between Rensselaerswijck and Fort Orange; it went on for several years, but was finally resolved in 1652 when Director-General and Council declared all land within a radius of three thousand feet around Fort Orange to be WIC territory and founded the village of Beverwijck there. When Brant van Slichtenhorst, director of the *patroonschap* resisted against this, he was arrested.[224]

It is tempting to contrast this action of Stuyvesant with a famous incident involving Wouter van Twiller, who was director of New Netherland between 1633 and 1638. When an English ship arrived at Manhattan in April 1633, Van Twiller found out that the intention of the merchant, a Dutchman named Jacob Eelkes, was to trade on the river. A dispute about whose property the land was followed, and after six or seven days, the English ship raised its anchor and sailed upstream in the direction of Fort Orange. Van Twiller summoned his men, had a barrel of wine brought and a glass poured out. He then called that all who loved the Prince of Orange and himself would follow his example and help him stop the English ship, which already was out of

219 Aller, *Van kolonie tot koninkrijksdeel,* 58.
220 Gehring. 'Petrus Stuyvesant', 79-80.
221 Jacobs, *Levensschets,* 84-89.
222 Ibid., *Zegenrijk gewest,* 139-140.
223 Ibid., *Levensschets,* 98-101.
224 A more extensive description of this conflict and its resolution can be found in: Venema, *Beverwijck,* esp. 36-39 and 47-51.

sight.[225] This story is often quoted as an example of Van Twiller's incompetence, though Jacobs has suggested that it also served as an excuse for the failure of the projects of David Pietersz. de Vries (who published the incident) in New Netherland and served his ambitions to become director himself. Though other sources, according to Jacobs, do indicate that Van Twiller was not exactly a decisive administrator and drank more than he should.[226]

The conflict with Rensselaerswijck and the arrival of an English ship were both major problems that the respective directors no doubt gave a lot of thought. At a first glance it looks like Stuyvesant was the better administrator in this comparison, as he dealt with the problem effectively. However, it is important to remember that Stuyvesant had several years to find a solution, and plenty of time to correspond about the issue with the directors in Amsterdam. Van Twiller on the other hand was suddenly confronted with the English ship. Moreover, he had previously been a clerk at the office of the WIC in Amsterdam,[227] not exactly a good preparation for a provocation such as this.

When Stuyvesant was Director-General, the directors of the WIC in Amsterdam sent a special sealed letter to the colony 'which we expressly order be kept there in a special locked place and not opened and read unless the honourable Director Stuyvesant (God forbid) should happen to die there. In which case our orders and intentions contained therein shall then be read, and which we also desire shall be obeyed and executed in such circumstances provisionally until further orders.' While it is curious that they wrote this letter only on 6 July 1653,[228] when Stuyvesant already was in office for several years, it can be assumed that the 'orders and intentions' of the directors were instructions on how the government was to be continued without Stuyvesant. This is a simple and obvious way to communicate instructions for such circumstances and no doubt the same system was applied to other colonies.

While the sources on New Netherland provide a lot of information about the way this colony was administrated, less is known about the seventeenth-century government of Curaçao. Like in all Dutch colonies in the Americas, the first system of government was adapted from the system used on board of ships.[229] A similar system was already used by the Dutch East India Company, which makes its application in the West Indies a logical next step. The captain of a Dutch ship sailing in Europe had 'natural disciplinary authority' over his crew and was expected

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225 H. T. Colenbrander (ed.) and David Pietersz. de Vries, *Kort historiael ende journaels aenteyckeninge van verscheyden voyagiens in de vier deelen des wereldts-ronde, als Europa, Africa, Asia, ende Amerika gedaen* ('s-Gravenhage 1911), 174-175.
226 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 115-117.
227 Colenbrander and De Vries, *Kort historiael*, 174.
228 Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 215.
229 J. A. Schiltkamp, *De geschiedenis van het notariaat in het octrooigebied van de West-Indische Compagnie: (voor Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen tot het jaar 1964),* ('s-Gravenhage 1964) 21.

to act as mediator if there were conflicts on board; he could not administer justice, however, as that was only allowed to authorities on the coast. That worked well on the short journeys in European seas, but became problematic when merchants started to make long journeys to Asia and the Americas, which could take years. A system based on that already used in the navy was developed around 1600, with a 'ship's council' (*scheepsraad*) administering justice on a ship sailing alone and a 'broad council' (*brede raad*) doing so over a fleet of ships. These councils would consist of the commanding officer of the ship or fleet and a number of other high-ranking officers. In colonies and trading posts in the Indies, justice was to be administered according to a similar system by the highest officials of the Dutch outpost.[230]

So a form of organic development is visible: whenever the situation requires a revision of the practises of government and justice (longer journeys, isolated colonies), an adaption of a familiar system is introduced. The continuity is also visible in the territory of the WIC: initially, the rule of law as existed on a ship, described in the 'letter of articles' (*artikelbrief*) was also valid in the colonies.[231] Hoogenberk notes that some practical adaptations were made to life in a stone lodge in the East Indies instead of a ship: he who drew a knife in rage would not be nailed to the mast with his knife through his hand (as was the punishment on board of a ship), but be 'nailed with his knife through his hand' in general. Nailed 'to what, was apparently left to the commander to solve himself, a tree, a beam of the trading post, or whatever.'[232] So this maritime practice, no doubt introduced with the crowding and resulting tensions on large ships in mind, was directly transplanted to a foreign trading post with only the most minimal revision of removing the specific maritime element in the regulation.

The Council was charged with decision making in all cases regarding government, justice, trade, war, and others, regarding the Company, but only if the Director submitted them. Decisions were made by a majority vote, in cases of equal division of the votes, the Director decided. It was not permitted to publicly mention any disagreement within the Council but it could be written in the minutes. While the Council could make ordinances, these had to be approved in retrospect by the *Heren XIX*. The instruction of Director Tolck stipulated that the Council would consist of the Director, the lieutenant of the militia, the commissioner of trade, and the present captains of the ships and yachts of the Company, who would take their seats in order of seniority, there could be no more than seven member on the Council. When Matthias Beck was Vice-Director of Curaçao, the captains no longer had a seat on the island's council.[233]

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[230] Hendrik Hoogenberk, *De rechtsvoorschriften voor de vaart op Oost-Indië 1595-1620* (PhD dissertation, Utrecht University 1940), 88, 100-102, 108-110, 140-141.
[231] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 39-40.
[232] Hoogenberk, *De rechtsvoorschriften,* 142.
[233] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 40-42.

So apparently, the organization of the government developed from that of a maritime outpost with a system of governance based on the law at sea to a more civil system befitting a permanent colony.

An important difference between the early government of Curaçao and that of New Netherland is that in the latter the Council did not only consist of the Director, two WIC employees and the present captains, but also of two colonists. This was already mentioned in the earliest instruction of 1625. In the 1640s several successive advisory bodies of colonists were created that the Director could consult.[234] The instruction for Matthias Beck permitted him to add two free men to his Council to vote on cases between two free men or between free men and the Company. It should be noted that these extraordinary members of the Council were not elected by their peers but appointed.[235]

So there is a difference in the participation of free colonists in both colonies, although it must be stressed that citizens were in both cases outnumbered by the WIC presence on the Council. A possible explanation is the different character of the two colonies: Curaçao was until the 1660s an arid island with a small population. A few colonists went there voluntarily in the 1630s and two Jewish *patroonschappen* were founded in the 1650s. People leaving the service of the WIC in some cases took up residence on Curaçao.[236] The population of Curaçao, excluding Indigenous people, totalled about 600 by the middle of the 1660s,[237] so Curaçao was only small as settlement colony in this era.

New Netherland was the larger colony of the two: estimates of the population in 1664 range from 'less than 5,000'[238] to a contemporary estimate of 10,000 people, which is the traditionally quoted figure. But this latter figure 'was not the outcome of a census and should be taken as an informed guess by the contemporary authorities to be checked against other, more detailed, data.' Ernst van den Boogaart gives a very comprehensive estimate of the population of New Netherland for each village, reaching a total of 6,030 in 1664. He notes, however, that this is 'not more than a very rough estimate.'[239] The point is that clearly New Netherland was a much larger colony than Curaçao both in terms of the size of its population and of the area covered. It should also be noted that the character of the European population was different; in New Netherland the garrison consisted of 250 to 300 men in 1664.[240] Of course the WIC also

[234] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 108, 483.
[235] Schiltkamp, *Bestuur en rechtspraak,* 42.
[236] Ibid., 29-31, 34-35.
[237] Klooster, *Illicit riches,* 59.
[238] John E. Pomfret, *Founding the American colonies 1583-1660* (New York etc. 1970) 283.
[239] Boogaart, 'The servant migration', 77-78.
[240] Jacobs, 'Soldaten van de Compagnie', 134.

employed civilian personnel, but those were only a few high ranking officials.[241] So the permanently residing employees of the Company never formed more than about five percent of the total European population. If we assume that the garrison of Curaçao consisted of 116 men, as was the intention of the *Heren XIX* in 1645,[242] the total resident WIC staff formed about one-sixth of the not Indigenous population of the island. The difference in size and scale of the colonies also influenced the development of decentralisation in New Netherland, where local courts and bailiffs received local juridical and administrative authority.[243]

If we take into account that the number of 600 people given by Klooster also includes slaves and Jews, the number of free citizens who would be considered worthy to participate in the government of the island is particularly small. While the Jewish community on Curaçao enjoyed considerable privileges, including full religious freedom, it still was discriminated against by government officials.[244] This makes it very unlikely that Jews could participate in the local government, especially in the seventeenth century. The experience with the colonists of Juan Dillian, who were cutting logwood on Curaçao rather than farm as they had promised, will not have inclined the directors of the Company to grant political rights to 'this deceitful nation'.[245]

Not only the better agricultural prospects of New Netherland attracted more colonists, the WIC also had the explicit intention to increase the population of New Netherland: when Juan Dillian, who had a *patroonschap* on Curaçao, asked for permission from the directors to send some slaves that were intended to go to New Netherland to Curaçao, he was refused, 'out of consideration that the Company would much rather see the population promoted first in New Netherland.' The directors wrote to Stuyvesant and the Council about the matter on 24 July 1653, and mentioned that they hoped New Netherland would flourish if the 'servants' were kept in it.[246] This role of New Netherland as a settlement colony was not always the intention of the WIC, disagreement within the Company led to a privatization of the colonization attempts in the form of *patroonschappen* in 1629.[247] It should also be noted that the Dutch in general had a shortage of colonists.[248]

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241 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 71.
242 Hamelberg, *De Nederlanders,* documenten I, 59.
243 Jaap Jacobs, '"Te fourneeren nae de loffelijcke costumen der Stadt Amsterdam": Nederlandse regelgeving in Nieuw-Nederland', *Pro Memorie: bijdragen tot de rechtsgeschiedenis der Nederlanden,* vol. 5 no. 2 (2003) 364-376, esp. 366.
244 Isaac S. Emmanuel and Suzanne A. Emmanuel, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles,* 2 volumes (Cincinnati 1970) volume 1, 99-115.
245 Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 213-214 (directors to Stuyvesant, 6 June 1653). This is quite a contrast to the proposition of Emmanuel that 'The directors of the Company recognized the Jews as a useful element that could be depended upon to develop Curaçao.' Though it should be mentioned that Emmanuel referred to a different group of Jews, namely those led by Isaac da Costa who settled on the island in 1659. Emmanuel, *History of the Jews,* volume 1, 50.
246 Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 222.
247 Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 118-132.
248 Davies, *The North Atlantic world,* 58.

So the differences in the size and composition of the population in the two colonies are large enough to justify the hypothesis that the system of government in general and the participant of free colonists in particular was adapted to the situation over time in an evolutionary process. An additional argument is that in 1653, New Amsterdam on Manhattan received a municipal charter, allowing the town a greater degree of self-governance than previously. This charter was introduced after a group of merchants had petitioned the States General.[249] This suggests that at least the colonial elite of New Netherland was quite articulate. Of course these merchants regularly communicated with their business partners and relatives in the Netherlands, making it easier for them to contact the authorities than for the average small farmer.

Correspondence with the patria

Besides the Council, an important mechanism to check the actions of Stuyvesant was his correspondence with the directors in Amsterdam. The letters written by the directors are lengthy and discuss point by point the current issues regarding New Netherland and Curaçao, instructing Stuyvesant what to do. There are two different types of letters: letters addressed to Stuyvesant alone, concerning sensitive information, and general letters to the Director-General and Council which concern the government of the colony. From these letters it becomes clear that the directors tried to keep the government of New Netherland closely under control. In one case in 1659, when Director-General and Council disagreed with the directors, they wrote that they found the lengthy discussion a waste of paper; too much input by the colonial officials was apparently undesirable.[250]

Striking about this collection of letters is that they are strictly business-like, while moral, religious or humane motivations for decisions are sometimes mentioned, sympathy for the recipients of the letters and the sometimes difficult circumstances in which they fulfilled their duty is very limited. Letters usually begin with an enumeration of the last letters sent and received between the correspondents, a practice that was of course vital in an age when communication was slow and letters could be easily delayed or completely lost together with the ship they happened to be on. Only after the instructions on current affairs and answers to questions are given, is some space left for a kind word: 'Meanwhile, Esteemed, Honorable, Pious, Beloved, Loyal, we commend your honor to God's protection and remain, Your good friends; the

[249] Maika, *Commerce and community,* 20-21.
[250] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 109.

Directors […] Amsterdam, the 12th of March 1654.'[251] But even this seems to be in part a form of decency and convention.

But it would be too quick to cut down the directors of the Amsterdam Chamber as heartless, profit-oriented merchant capitalists based on this observation. There are three elements to be considered: first, the letters presented here are translations, no doubt very well done, but it is always very difficult to translate the exact meaning of the author. This is especially true as we consider the second element: these letters date from the middle of the seventeenth century, a time with completely different norms and values where such a focus on business affairs was probably very normal and generally accepted. Then the third issue is the specific context: these are letters written by employers to their subordinates, making a somewhat harsh and strict intonation even more likely.

A case that illustrates the relationship between the directors of the chamber and Director-General Stuyvesant is the baptism of his second son in 1648. Stuyvesant asked the directors to be witnesses at this occasion, a request that they granted with the remark that this was unprecedented. They asked to be informed about the boy's name so they could send a fitting keepsake. Of course the directors could not be present at the ceremony in person, but it was common for witnesses in the Netherlands to be represented by a stand-in, in this case it is unknown who the stand-ins were. Jacobs interprets this request by Stuyvesant as an attempt to strengthen his own position in the colony as he recently had been involved in conflicts with the population. The acceptance by the directors in Amsterdam, with the remark that there was no precedent, indicates that they would have preferred to decline the honour, but that they also wanted to show their support for Stuyvesant.[252] This interpretation suggests that indeed the relationship between the directors of the chamber and Director-General Stuyvesant was primarily one between employers and their subordinate overseas. The personal component was limited but could serve the interests of the Company by improving the standing of the Director-General.

A recurring theme in the letters from the directors is that they required to receive the accounts of New Netherland, and they had to remind Stuyvesant and the Council numerous times to send them. They also complained about the way the accounts were organized when they finally were received.[253] While the original letters from the Director-General and Council are lost, some extracts are preserved. From these it appears that the many urgings of the directors to send the accounts were not caused by reluctance or disobedience of Stuyvesant himself, but by the poor bookkeeping of the *fiscaal*, Cornelis van Tienhoven.

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[251] Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 7.
[252] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 356-357.
[253] Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 80-81, 93, 113, 123, 192, 222. Ibid., *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 7, 129.

On 28 October 1655, Stuyvesant had already commented on Van Tienhoven in a private letter to the Company, claiming that the *fiscaal* was so much hated that it would be best to either discharge him or transfer him to Curaçao or Fort Orange. The general letter (written by Stuyvesant and the Council together) of 10 June 1656 promised to send the books quickly, but it could not be done yet because Van Tienhoven was still in the South River area (strangely enough, the same letter also mentioned that Van Tienhoven had been dismissed in accordance with the orders). On 11 August, a general letter reported that the accounts could not yet be sent, because they contained many errors. A year later, on 16 August 1657, Director-General and Council reported that Van Tienhoven had kept the accounts very poorly, they were to be corrected and any defalcations paid out of his property.[254]

Whether these excuses were plausible to the directors or not, it seems curious at least that Stuyvesant got away with failing to send the accounts for such a long time. It should of course be taken into consideration that disciplining or discharging the director-general of a colony would diminish the authority of the WIC, and finding a suitable candidate if the office became vacant would be difficult and time-consuming.

Ruling at a distance

As we have seen, Stuyvesant was closely involved in the appointment of the Vice-Director of Curaçao. Of course this was only one element of his dual office. As we have seen in chapter one, the idea behind the scheme was to save costs and improve the food supply of Curaçao. The former seems to have been largely achieved by trimming down the garrison, while the idea of the latter closely resembles the *Ordre van Regieringe* of 1629. This 'Order of Government' made the central government of Dutch Brazil responsible for supplying all its subordinate colonies with people, ammunition, and food.[255] Of course there are some differences: Curaçao was not made a subsidiary colony of New Netherland, the two colonies merely shared a single director-general. However, the fact that Stuyvesant held the highest office in both colonies implies that he could be held accountable for the well-being of people in both. If he was aware of food shortages on the islands, and was in the position to provide aid but failed to do so, it would be fairly easy to hold him responsible. Of course, that did not work out as planned, as we have seen in chapter two, the infrequency of the connection made the aspiration to supply Curaçao difficult to achieve.

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[254] Dickinson, *New Netherland papers,* 27, 39-40, 48.
[255] Schiltkamp, 'Legislation, government, jurisprudence', 325.

The distance and infrequency of the connection of course also had a certain impact on the influence Stuyvesant could exercise on the administration of Curaçao. European colonial administrators had to deal with slow communications and limited means, so they were largely left to their own devices.[256] The Director-General and Council of Curaçao were no exception, whether their master resided in the Netherlands or on Manhattan. In any case, the directors in Amsterdam kept Stuyvesant informed of what they knew about the situation on the islands. However, the question is what exactly their expectations were. The letters of the directors were not always related to WIC business, such as when the directors asked Stuyvesant to forward private letters for the officers on Curaçao that had been left with them. Apparently they expected the communication between New Netherland and Curaçao to be more frequent than direct shipping.

In the early 1650s, the directors asked Stuyvesant several times to communicate with vice-director Rodenborch. Such as when they had heard that Rodenborch kept a supply of dyewood at the island to secure the payment of his salary in 1650, Stuyvesant was asked to remind his deputy that he could only export wood with permission from the Amsterdam chamber, and to reassure him that his salary would be paid in full. In 1652 Stuyvesant was told to warn Rodenborch against exporting horses because the directors would feel compelled to take 'other measures' if the practice was not stopped.

That the directors asked Stuyvesant to correct Rodenborch instead of doing it themselves is very curious; they probably also corresponded with him directly, since they mentioned his complaints about the loss of a ship used for communication between the islands in their letter to Stuyvesant of 4 April 1652.[257] Possibly they thought that sending their message through Stuyvesant would be faster. But of course the Director-General also knew Rodenborch personally as they had been working together on Curaçao for several years. Perhaps the directors thought their messages would be more effective if they came from someone Rodenborch knew personally: of course this matter, wherein the directors thought that Rodenborch did not trust them, required a more delicate approach than the normal business of running the colony.

While in these cases Stuyvesant was only asked to forward instructions and messages from the directors to Rodenborch, in 1653 he was asked to intervene personally. The directors had been informed that Juan Dillian, a Jewish merchant who held a *patroonschap* on Curaçao, did not engage in agriculture with his colonists as was intended, but was exporting dyewood and horses from the islands. '… recommend hereby that your honor bring about good order and pay close attention that this deceitful nation neither be allowed to cut any wood nor take any out of

[256] Scammell, *The first imperial age,* 141-142.
[257] Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 60, 80, 154, 156.

the Company's woods'.[258] Of course Stuyvesant could in the fortress on Manhattan only do the same as the directors did in their office in Amsterdam: write letters to Rodenborch with orders to solve the problem, but bringing matters of government to the personal attention of the Director-General would give the case a higher degree of urgency.

After Matthias Beck had been installed as vice-director, Rodenborch first went to the Netherlands, and then left again on the ship *Vergulden Otter*. In their private letter of 14 June 1656 the directors wrote to Stuyvesant that Rodenborch still had a credit of 6,000 guilders for his salary, but unfortunately the WIC did not have enough cash to pay him in full. 'We allowed him therefore, pursuant to our resolution of the 16 of March, last past, to balance it *there* with Negroes, horses and whatever else may be of service to him; you are to act accordingly' they wrote to Stuyvesant.[259] While the directors did not specify where Rodenborch was going, we can assume that he went back to Curaçao, for two reasons. First, there would not be any need to tell Stuyvesant 'to act accordingly' if Rodenborch went to a place not under the jurisdiction of Stuyvesant. So his destination must have been New Netherland or Curaçao. The second indication of his destination is that the directors wrote this in a private letter; this suggests that Rodenborch went to Curaçao, as the Council of New Netherland would have to be informed if Stuyvesant was authorized to give WIC property to a retired vice-director. The directors probably did not want to spread the message that they were unable to pay salaries amongst more people than necessary. They could not get around Stuyvesant, as he was kept informed on what was going on at Curaçao, but no doubt they considered the risk of colonial officials turning corrupt if the news spread.

So the earlier assurances of the directors that they would pay Rodenborch's salary were somewhat misleading. Stuyvesant could expect to find himself in a similar situation one day: in August 1657, he wrote to the directors that his credit with them amounted to 132 months of salary, or 33,000 guilders.[260] This might explain why Stuyvesant probably was the largest private slave owner in New Netherland:[261] as is discussed in chapter 2, Director-General and Council took measures to prevent that only persons who had a large credit with the WIC could buy slaves.[262] It is not unlikely that Stuyvesant could afford to buy so many slaves as the Company still owed him so much money.

It is unlikely that Rodenborch's entire salary was paid in kind. 6,000 guilders divided by the 11 years that he was Vice-Director is 45.5 guilders per month. That is a lot less than the 250

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[258] Ibid., 213-214.
[259] Ibid., *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 97. My emphasis.
[260] Dinckinson Shattuck, *New Netherland papers,* 50.
[261] Jacobs, *Zegenrijk gewest,* 320-321.
[262] Goodfriend, 'Burghers and blacks', 141.

guilders per month Stuyvesant received (33,000 guilders divided by 132 months) and even below the salary of a few military officers on Curaçao according to the 1645 plan of the *Heren XIX*.[263] This observation makes it safe to conclude that a part of Rodenborch's salary was already paid in one way or another. The credit to receive payment in kind later does not seem to have been voluntary, 'which on account of scarcity of money in the treasury we have not been able to pay in full',[264] was the exact phrasing. As far as known, there have been no large shortages of coins in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century. On the contrary, Amsterdam developed as a kind of reservoir for precious metals and coins.[265] So the problem was likely related to the financial position of the WIC, which might have preferred to use the cash in its treasury for paying the salaries of lower ranking employees like sailors and soldiers.

Stuyvesant was also kept informed on matters of policy. Among his documents is a list of resolutions taken by the directors in April, May, and June 1656. Three of them concern personal matters regarding WIC-employees working in New Netherland, like housewives and mothers requesting that their husband or son would be discharged from service. These are clearly intended to inform Stuyvesant of the situation and have him handle the practicalities. The first resolution on the list, however, is one of 3 April. The directors had been informed that a private ship had received a commission from the WIC chamber of West Friesland and the North Quarter and intended to purchase slaves in Africa, 'with the intention to sell the same on the island of Curacao [sic] or to trade for them on the mainland, it was resolved to oppose the aforesaid sale or trade, and to write to Vice Director Beck there that he is to seize the aforesaid ship and slaves there, and to proceed therewith as he deems proper according to justice.'[266]

It is unknown if Matthias Beck did as he was ordered or if the ship even came within his reach. What matters about this resolution, however, is that it illustrates the relations between the chambers of the WIC. As the Amsterdam chamber did not recognize the authority of other chambers to give permission to trade in Curaçao, it looks like the directors considered that colony to be property of their chamber alone. A few years before, on 7 April 1648, the directors had explicitly written such a statement about New Netherland: they had received word that the ship *Hercules* with captain Cornelis Claassen Snoo had arrived there. The directors were 'properly astonished, that you should have entered into negotiations with such cheats and smugglers, especially as you must have known, that none of the other Chambers has been willing to contribute for the support of New Netherland and that in consequence that coast has been

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263 Hamelberg, *De Nederlanders,* documents I, 59.
264 Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 97.
265 Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *Nederland 1500-1815: de eerste ronde van moderne economische groei* (Amsterdam 1995) 107, 110.
266 Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658,* 91-92.

reserved for the Chamber of Amsterdam.' They reminded Stuyvesant not to allow traders without written permission from the Amsterdam chamber and confiscate the goods of merchants without a proper permission.[267]

Not only the contact between New Netherland and Curaçao could be problematic in the governmental relationship between the two colonies, the fact that the Vice-Directors of Curaçao were responsible for the islands of Aruba and Bonaire as well complicated the matter. On 2 April 1654 Rodenborch wrote a letter to the directors in Amsterdam. He had not had any contact with Bonaire since September 1653, and he was sombre about the situation on Aruba. He had received his last message from that island seventeen months before. The commander had rounded up a large herd of horses: 600 mares and 300 geldings and stallions, which could have been of great use in New Netherland. However, in August three ships had been seen near the island, so it was possible that all horses were already taken away. Unfortunately he could not sail there and check this 'from which your honours can lightly see how great the damage of the deficiency of a suitable vessel is'. Rodenborch continued his letter with his frustrations about how Stuyvesant year after year promised to build or buy a ship, but never delivered one.[268] This case is a clear illustration of the limits of colonial government in the seventeenth century: Aruba, an island within Rodenborch's jurisdiction, was visible from Curaçao. The Vice-Director was aware that something could be wrong, as he could see the ships sailing about, but he was not able to obtain a definitive confirmation or denial of his suspicions.

Concluding remarks

Overall, the role of Stuyvesant as Director-General of Curaçao was largely nominal. Like the directors in Amsterdam, Stuyvesant had to rely on an infrequent maritime connection to maintain contact with his Vice-Director, and even then he could only give instructions and orders to be followed. Of course he was kept informed and the fact that he had lived and worked for a few years on Curaçao and personally knew the people could be an advantage. The only real power that the Director-General had was the opportunity to nominate candidates for the office of Vice-Director, but that authority was rather limited as the Vice-Director was still elected by the Council of Curaçao. The symbolic value of it should not be underestimated, however, as it was an indication of the hierarchy within the WIC: the Vice-Director was only *acting* as the highest official in Curaçao, he always ranked below Director-General Stuyvesant.

[267] Ibid., *Correspondence 1647-1653,* 55.
[268] Ibid., *Curaçao papers,* 70-71.

Even while the directors sometimes asked Stuyvesant to pass certain messages to the Vice-Director or to forward letters, it is obvious from the context that they maintained their own correspondence with the island just as well. So from a governmental perspective, the real advantage of having one Director-General for both colonies was rather limited. But the office of Director-General implied a certain responsibility for the food supply of Curaçao, which could be an argument to maintain the relationship between the colonies. A modern observer should also take in mind that Stuyvesant was the most competent man to be placed in charge of New Netherland so far, so the directors of the Amsterdam chamber probably did not want to displease him and risk his resignation by removing Curaçao from his jurisdiction. The financial situation of the WIC (the inability to pay Rodenborch his 6,000 guilders is illustrative) could make it very difficult to find a new director, and paying Stuyvesant his salary could be problematic as well. An underlying element is that Stuyvesant as a person was a force to be reckoned with: he knew the island of Curaçao and at least the Dutch administrators stationed there and he had during his earlier career as well as during his tenure in New Netherland shown that he did not let himself get walked over and was willing to take decisive and violent action if necessary. Having a man like that in charge, even at a distance, could be of great value in both internal and external conflicts.

Conclusion

If success is purely defined as the reaching of pre-set goals, the connection made between Curaçao and New Netherland in the 1640s was only a partial success. While the objective of saving expenses on Curaçao by reducing the garrison was reached, there are good reasons to conclude that the attempt to improve the food supply of the island gave only mixed results at best. Ships loaded with victuals definitely sailed from New Netherland to Curaçao, and more than before Petrus Stuyvesant was named Director-General of both colonies. But the reports of food shortages on the islands are too numerous to disregard them as incidents, and the relatively small number of sailings on this route indicates that the Vice-Directors did not overstate the problems. Overall, while the food supply of Curaçao perhaps was more stable and less irregular than it was before, it definitely was not sufficient. The trade in salt, horses and slaves from Curaçao to New Netherland never developed to truly large numbers, but the size of the colonies and the infrequency of the traffic should be taken into account.

While the small size of the maritime traffic was the immediate cause of the shortages, there was an underlying problem; the WIC constantly had financial problems. Assigning a specific ship for the connection between the colonies took a long time because the Amsterdam chamber could not afford a large expense. That the subsequent ships that were assigned to the connection tended to sink fairly soon did not improve the situation, but it is clear that the Company was unable to maintain large enough stocks of food on Curaçao. The financial situation seems to be the reason that the WIC could neither send its own ships nor charter vessels to maintain the supply line. The route to Curaçao was not attractive enough for private merchants.

Salt, horses, and slaves each had their own problems in the trade with New Netherland. Salt from Bonaire had lost its market in Europe by the middle of the 1640s as cheaper Portuguese salt was available again. Several measures to lower the price did lead to an increased export of salt to New Netherland though. Horses from Aruba were considered unsuitable for use in the colder climate of North America, but as with the salt, the trade increased as prices decreased. The slave trade never developed to considerable numbers, primarily because slaves were of little use on the farms of New Netherland. Various mentioned cases of re-export in contemporary sources indicate that the colonists were not inclined to keep their coerced labourers around. Overall, Curaçao was not a very attractive destination for private merchants from New Netherland.

While the stated reasons for the uniting the colonies, cutting costs and improving the food supply of Curaçao, are quite obvious, it is clear that many other factors played a role in the decision. Both colonies had been in a worrisome state for quite a while, and previous proposals

and attempts to improve the conditions had been unsuccessful. Certain people had an interest in the union of the colonies as well: Stuyvesant was promoted to a more prestigious position and the directors of the Amsterdam chamber consolidated their influence over the two colonies, which could be of use in the constant rivalry between the chambers. Opening Curaçao as a market for food produced in New Netherland (even while the WIC would be the major customer) could also be helpful to stimulate agriculture on the Hudson River, a particular concern of some directors in the Amsterdam chamber.

An element that was not considered in the meeting of the *Heren XIX* was the shape of the institutions of the colonies to be united. In practise this turned out to be a personal union headed by Stuyvesant. However, the influence of the Director-General, who resided in New Netherland, on the administration of Curaçao was very small. He was kept informed by the subsequent Vice-Directors and he could send his instructions to Curaçao, but there was not much else that Stuyvesant could practically do. In the meantime, the directors of the Amsterdam chamber kept their eyes in the affairs of both colonies: they corresponded with the Vice-Directors directly, but also asked Stuyvesant to forward instructions at times. Stuyvesant could nominate candidates for the election of the new Vice-Director, but the choice was made by the Council of Curaçao and had to be approved by the appropriate authorities in the Netherlands.

The discrepancy between the formal system devised in the Netherlands and the actual situation in the colonies was largely caused by poorly informed decisions made by metropolitan policy-makers. This begins with the decision to supply Curaçao with food produced in New Netherland: the scheme simply did not work because the number of ships was too low. It is self-evident that the administrators of the WIC cannot be blamed for a lack of knowledge, after all they were informed by Stuyvesant who at least had colonial experience. Nevertheless, in the case of Curaçao and New Netherland we can see how the problem of food production and supply is delegated by the metropolitan authorities of the WIC to the colonial authorities in New Netherland. While the directors of the Amsterdam chamber were well informed about the problems this caused, they were unable to come up with an enduring solution.

This corresponds with the observations made previously by scholars, as mentioned in the introduction. Illicit trade was especially important where the formal systems failed. While there was no illicit trade to a large scale to supply Curaçao with food, the failure of this Dutch formal system was almost constant. Other European countries saw their mercantile systems fail in times of natural disaster or war, or when the licensed traders could not meet the large demand for their commodities. Of course there is a difference between mercantile systems introduced to exclude

foreigners from a profitable trade and an attempt to improve the food supply of one colony by administratively linking it to another, but the resemblance is that the metropolitan authorities were unable to meet colonial needs.

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Appendix: Journeys between New Netherland and Curaçao

Notes

All dates are given in European style (day-month-year), the journeys are ordered chronologically by date of departure, or by date of arrival if the departure date is unknown. Full titles of used sources can be found in the lists of sources and literature.

Abbreviations and sources

a.: after
b.: before
C.: Curaçao
Corr. XI: Gehring, *Correspondence 1647-1653.*
Corr. XII: Gehring, *Correspondence 1654-1658.*
Curaçao papers: Gehring, *Curaçao papers.*
DAC: database: Den Heijer, *Dutch Atlantic connections.*
Delaware papers: Gehring, *Delaware papers.*
DRCHNY: O'Callaghan, *Documents relative.*
Fol.: folio.
Jacobs: data collected by Jaap Jacobs, partly published in his undergraduate thesis: Jacobs, *De scheepvaart en handel.*
Loockermans Corr.: Vanraes, *Goovert Loockermans correspondence.*
NN: New Netherland
SA, NA: Stadsarchief Amsterdam, Notarieel Archief (5075).
Slavevoyages: *The Atlantic slave trade database.*

Sailings from New Netherland to Curaçao

ship	dep. NN	arr. C	des.	arr. des.	load	remarks	source
Hoop	a. 01-07-1638		Curaçao			Sent by directors	Jacobs
Neptune	a. 28-11-1640		Amsterdam	1641	Paper, cloth, food		Jacobs
Witte Valck	1641/42		Amsterdam	1642	Food?	Chartered by N. Engl. merchants	Jacobs
Groote Joris	a. 20-06-1647		Amsterdam ?			Sailed via Boston, lost at sea	DAC
Groote Gerrit	a. 20-06-1647	b. 19-02-1648	Amsterdam	1648		Bought food in Boston	Jacobs
Nieu Swol	a. 17-04-1648		Amsterdam	1648			Jacobs
Swol	a. 20-04-1648		Amsterdam	1648/49	Food	Former St. Beninjo, confiscated	Jacobs
Nieuw Nederland	1649?		Lost at sea		Worth 10,123 guilders	Might have departed from Holland	*Corr. XI,* p. 80
St. Pieter	16-10-	27-12-	Antigo	20-02-	Various		Jacobs, SA,

	1649	1649		1650	goods		NA, 1837, fol. 14.
't Hoff van Cleef	a. 06-12-1652		La Rochelle ("Rochel")		Carried wood and salt from Curacao		Jacobs, *Corr. XI,* p. 216.
De Goede Hoop		b. 02-04-1654	Amsterdam	b. 07-07-1654			*Curaçao papers,* doc. 14, 15.
Haen	Late June 1654		Curaçao		Grain	Should take wood or salt to NN	Jacobs, DRCHNY 2, p. 44-46, SA, NA, 1307, fol. 64v-65.
Peereboom	17-12-1654		Amsterdam	1655		Chartered by WIC	Jacobs
Abrahams Offerhande	a. 21-12-1654		Amsterdam	1655		Bought by Director-General & Council	Jacobs
Nieuw Amstel		30-04-1659	Curaçao		Victuals and wood	Will return to NN	Jacobs, *Curaçao papers,* p. 63, doc. 39
(Galliot)	December 1659		Curaçao			No inter-mediate calls, rented for three months	Jacobs, *Delaware papers,* p. 18, fol. 77
De Liefde	a. 23-04-1660		Amsterdam			To return via Curaçao on order of WIC	Jacobs
(Ship)	b. 25-06-1660				Goods		Jacobs
Musch	a. 29-07-1664	06-09-1664			Food and woodwork	Also car-ried letter to Beck from Stuyvesant	*Curaçao papers,* doc. 94

Sailings from Curaçao to New Netherland

ship	port of dep.	dep. date	arr. C	dep. C	arr. NN	load	remarks	source
Hoop	Amsterdam	1638	b. 01-07-1638		b. 01-07-1638		Sailed via Suriname	Jacobs/DAC
Neptune	Amsterdam	1639			b. 15-11-1639			Jacobs
Angel Gabriel	Amsterdam	1641			1641		Chartered by WIC	Jacobs
Reael	Curaçao				b. 09-10-1641			Jacobs
Brandaris	Amsterdam	29-09-1641			1641-42			Jacobs
Witte Valck	Amsterdam		11-10-1641		18-11-1641	Salt	Ship is present at arr. date.	Jacobs
De Wilde Boer	Brazil	1641						Jacobs
Blauwen Haen	Amsterdam	1644		a. 26-05-1644	b. 21-07-1644	130 soldiers	Continued to Amsterdam	Jacobs/DAC
De Tonijn	Brazil	1645						Jacobs
Wapen van Nieu Nederlandt	Amsterdam	b. 02-10-1646			b. 27-12-1646			Jacobs
Prinses Amalia	Amsterdam	1647			b. 27-05-1646		Likely shipwrecked sept. 1647.	Jacobs
Swol	Amsterdam	1647			b. 27-05-1646			Jacobs
De Cat					b. 14-12-1648	*stokvishout*	Goovert Loockermans bought part of the load.	Jacobs; *Loockermans Corr.*, 14-12-1648.
Curaçao	Curaçao	26-10-					Got in bad weather near	Jacobs

		1653					Cuba.	
De Hoop					1653		Carried goods of a wrecked ship.	Jacobs
[yacht]				24-10-1653		10 *lasten* salt	Lost at sea.	Curacao papers doc. 14, 15.
Haen	Curaçao	Sept. 1654				10 *lasten* salt	Captured near Sanoa.	Jacobs; DRCHNY 2, 44-46.
Jonge Tobias	Amsterdam	a. 23-11-1654				salt		Corr. XII, 44, doc. 12:17.
De Liefde	Texel	02-03-1655			10-07-1655	Salt, wood and horses	Stuyvesant traveled on this ship to NN	Jacobs; Corr. XII, 53, 87.
Bonte Koe	Amsterdam	08-05-1656	1657		1657	Slaves, 191 arrived at Curaçao		Jacobs; Slavevoyages id. 11362.
Vogelstruys	Amsterdam		31-05-1657	a. 28-07-1657		*Stokvishout,* slaves and unsold goods.	Chartered by WIC, sent to NN to sell cargo.	Jacobs; Curacao papers, 136-137; SA, NA 1309, fol. 7.
Wasbleecker	Amsterdam	b. 15-09-1657				Salt and horses	Shipwrecked near Martinique.	Jacobs; Corr. XII, 150.
Diemen	Amsterdam or Curaçao	a. 13-09-1658				23.5 *lasten* salt, small goods	Supposedly lost at sea, bought by WIC	Jacobs; Curacao papers, 145-146.
Vergulde Meulen			a. 30-04-1659				Not sure if this ship called at NN at all.	Curacao papers, doc. 40.
Nieuwe Amstel				a. 16-05-1659		Salt, *stokvishout,* Caribbean sugar.	Called at St. Kitts as well.	Jacobs; Curacao papers, 170-175.
Sphera Mundi	Amsterdam	1659		a. 24-	1659	Five slaves,		Jacobs;

				08-1659		50 *lasten* salt.		Curacao papers, 178.
De Liefde	Amsterdam	a. 26-09-1659		a. 04-02-1660		81 *lasten* salt		Jacobs; SA, NA, 1580, fol. 214; Curacao papers, doc. 58.
Eyckenboom	Texel	01-02-1659			b. 06-10-1660	50 horses from Aruba	Slave ship	Jacobs; Slavevoyages id. 11392
Nieuw Amstel				a. 08-05-1660		24 horses, money for Stuyvesant, goods.		Jacobs; Curacao papers, doc 60, 62.
De Vergulde Vos	Amsterdam	a. 24-03-1660			b. 12-02-1664	Various goods, horses.	Route not predetermined	Jacobs; SA, NA, 2881, fol. 159.
[Galliot]	Curaçao						Chartered by WIC in 1659, for three months.	Jacobs; Delaware papers 18, fol. 77.
Nieuw Nederlantschen Indiaen				a. 31-03-1660		Ten slaves, sixteen Indigenous from NN and C.		Jacobs; Curacao papers, doc. 69, 70.
Rebecca				a. 07-03-1661		Five slaves, twenty horses.	Captain will pay Stuyvesant for horses and slaves.	Jacobs; Curacao papers, 75.
Nieuw Nederlantschen Indiaen			a. 21-07-1661	b. 02-09-1661		41 slaves, various goods.	Slaves auctioned in NN.	Jacobs; Curacao papers, 72-73, 77-80.
De Vos	Amsterdam	1663		a. 04-03-1664		Sugar		Jacobs; SA, NA, 2220, fol. 365-366; Curacao papers, 82.

De Musch				a. 28-04-1664		Various goods		Jacobs; Curacao papers, 84.
Gideon	Texel	20-11-1663	08-07-1664	a. 21-07-1664		291 or 300 slaves	Slaver, called at Curacao but no slaves disembarked.	Slavevoyages id. 11414; Jacobs; Curacao papers, 86.